Freeman School honors Entrepreneurs of the Year

April 13, 2011

The Freeman School honored Albert R. Lepage, chairman of Lepage Bakeries Inc., as Tulane Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year and Phyllis E. Cassidy, executive director and founder of Good Work Network, as Tulane Social Entrepreneur of the Year at its annual Tulane Council of Entrepreneurs Awards Gala.



Albert Lepage, left, chairman of Lepage Bakeries, received the 2011 Tulane Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year Award from John Elstrott, executive director of the Levy-Rosenblum Institute for Entrepreneurship.

The ceremony, which also included the announcement of winners from the Tulane Business Plan Competition, took place on Friday, April 8, at the Audubon Tea Room.

The Freeman School’s Levy-Rosenblum Institute for Entrepreneurship presents the awards each year to highlight outstanding entrepreneurs. The Distinguished Entrepreneur of Year Award honors individuals who exemplify true entrepreneurial spirit and philanthropic generosity. The Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award recognizes individuals who are dedicated to improving the community through entrepreneurial initiatives. John Elstrott, clinical professor of entrepreneurship and executive director of the Levy-Rosenblum Institute, presented this year’s awards.

Lepage is chairman of Lepage Bakeries Inc., a leading commercial wholesale baking company based in Auburn, Maine, and serving the northeast United States. Founded in 1903, the company produces breads, rolls, English muffins and donuts for retail and institutional customers as well as whole-grain breads and organic specialty baked goods under the Country Kitchen and Barowsky’s brand names. Lepage joined the family-owned business in 1969 as vice president and treasurer. He became president in 1978 and chairman in 1983.

Lepage currently serves as chairman of Quality Bakers of America Cooperative, the national licensor of Sunbeam Bread, and as treasurer of the American Bakers Association, the industry’s leading national organization.

Lepage was chairman of the Sisters of Charity Health Systems, one of Maine’s largest healthcare providers, for six years, and he has served on the boards of the Portland Symphony Orchestra, Lewiston-Auburn Arts and Hebron Academy. Lepage has also served on the Maine Arts Commission and the Governor’s Business Council.

Lepage holds an undergraduate degree from Villanova University and a Master of Business Administration from Tulane.



Phyllis Cassidy, founder of Good Work Network, received this year's Tulane Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award.

Phyllis Cassidy is executive director and founder of Good Work Network, a nonprofit micro enterprise development organization serving the greater New Orleans area. Good Work Network provides educational programs, technical assistance, back-office support, capital access assistance and market access services to minority and women-owned community-based businesses in the New Orleans area. Since 2001, the organization has assisted more than 2,000 businesses.

Prior to establishing Good Work Network, Cassidy was president of First Capital Life Insurance Company of LA, a family-owned business. She also taught accounting and information systems at Dillard University and the University of New Orleans. Cassidy received an undergraduate degree from Duke University and a master’s in accounting from the University of New Orleans. She is a licensed CPA.

The Freeman School’s Levy-Rosenblum Institute for Entrepreneurship (LRI) inspires and trains prospective entrepreneurs through coursework, community service projects and internships. Freeman School students are provided the opportunity to work with experienced faculty members, network with a regional board of entrepreneurs and participate in a student-based entrepreneurial association which provides a training ground for business development. In 2010, the institute’s entrepreneurship program was ranked 13th in the nation by Entrepreneur magazine/The Princeton Review.