

The Teaneck

SUBURBANITE



Holland named NJ business man of the year

The Teaneck Suburbanite March 5, 2003



Holland honored

Town resident Ed Holland was recently named New Jersey Businessman of the Year 2003.

BY KIM JACK RILEY
Of Suburbanite

TEANECK— It is no surprise that coming behind three generations of family members in the food industry, business owner Ed Holland chose the same career.

It was a great surprise, he said, when he was recently named New Jersey Businessman of the Year 2003.

Awardees of this prestigious honor are selected by Congressman Tom Reynolds and a committee that reviews businesses in each state of the union, Holland reported. They select one award winner from each state.

"I am not aware of who nominated me for this award," said Holland, who owns the US Food Products Corporation in Teaneck, "but the process was lengthy. I received many telephone calls from the review committee and I was required to answer a lot of questions about my business."

Receiving this award is no lightweight achievement as other nominees included the likes of multimillion-dollar corporations like IBM.

"I think there are several reasons we stood out as a company even though we are much smaller than many of the other nominees," said Holland. "For one thing, many of my employees are minorities. We have mostly female employees and their ethnic groups representing Asians, African Americans and Latin Americans."

The award is especially meaningful to Holland because due to the nature of his business 9/11 took a severe toll on it. "I am proud that we were able to survive such a crisis," said Holland. "US Food Product Corporation is essentially a wholesale food service and exporter. We only sell to people who package prepared meals, like schools, cruise ships and hospitals."

"When 9/11 hit, the US ports were closed so our food was stuck at the warehouse. Then, the refrigeration at the warehouse broke and so we lost thousands in perishable food items."

In addition to the loss of warehoused foods, 9/11 caused the closing of all the downtown restaurants, which were patrons of Holland's business.

"As far as our competition in the local area," said Holland, "We are unique because we provide 24 hour service. For example, one of our major clients, the Hackensack University Medical Center, might need special food for a patient that arrives through intake in the middle of the night. Larger companies are most likely to persuade the client to settle for a different product, but we insist on providing the specific brand the facility requests and will deliver it at any time."

While Holland credits the success of his business to his wife and CFO, Chona, his unique expertise is the foundation of the company.

Holland advises customers who might request food that is out of season and therefore more expensive to acquire.

He makes recommendations as they apply to seasonal changes or even nationwide economic fluctuations.

"In addition to working for the military," said Holland, "we service their prepared foods. I've worked on some very interesting government projects, like developing an economic plan for Mongolia after the break up of the Soviet Union."

Holland will receive his award at a two-day affair March 16 and March 17. It is anticipated that President Bush will present the award, but his attendance is contingent on current global political affairs.