

Night of superstars ahead for annual DBA awards ceremony

By Jennifer Tranmer jtranmer@beloitdailynews.com | Posted: Thursday, January 29, 2015 4:00 pm

It's an evening among superstars this year when the Downtown Beloit Association (DBA) hosts its annual awards ceremony.

Each year, the association board picks a theme for the ceremonies to do something unique and fun, said Shauna El-Amin, executive director for the association.

"We kind of just think about the award winners and we play off that," she said. "So when people come, they will be greeted by superstars... and we're doing decorations with stars so they will be wowed when they come in."

The event is set for 6 p.m. Feb. 12 at the Ironworks Hotel and will include hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar. Admission is \$25, which includes a drink ticket, and is open to the public. Merrill and Houston's will be providing the food, and on the menu are savory treats like Baja chicken bites, stuffed mushrooms, bbq meatballs, bruschetta and more.

Emcee Jim Packard Jr. will be entertaining the crowd as awards are given out in several categories, including Best New Business, Best Business Expansion, Best Image Campaign and more.

El-Amin said when planning the event, the board just tries to keep it fun, avoiding a keynote address and keeping it more casual.

"This is definitely not a stuffy awards party," she said citing some of the unique entertainment offered each year, which is always kept as a surprise. "It's a lot of laughing if nothing else."

El-Amin promised this year's entertainment will be just as fun and attendees will have the opportunity to learn about some of the exciting developments in downtown, including the increase in attendance at Fridays in the Park and the downtown farmer's market. Another highlight in the development of downtown is the net gain of 194 jobs and eight businesses, she said.



Success in business

Malinda Obershaw hands off a raffle prize to Nicki Meyer at last year's Downtown Beloit Association awards ceremony. This year's event is set for 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 12 at the Ironworks Hotel.

“The last time we had an increase like that was a few years ago so that’s definitely something we’re very proud of,” she said.

Peter Fronk, chairman of the DBA board of directors, said it was important to host the awards and recognize individuals’ efforts.

“It’s obvious to us that you want to recognize efforts where it’s due and efforts that have been made by individuals and by businesses who help make the downtown a destination,” Fronk said. “People are putting on a new coat of paint, they’re replacing windows, they’re sweeping off their steps and putting forth that extra effort.”

Fronk said the awards are a great way to showcase all the ways the DBA is involved in downtown and the ways people can get involved in improving the downtown.

“Maybe they’ll be interested in volunteering, or making a float for the parade, or they’re an artist and they’ll say, ‘hey they have an Art Walk’ and get involved,” he said. “It doesn’t have to be every event... but they can get involved no matter how small or large.”