

FYI BUSINESS

» NEWS, TRENDS + EVENTS IN TULSA BUSINESS

Employment firm head inducted in IFA Hall of Fame

Robert A. Funk, founder, chairman of the board and chief executive officer of Express Employment Professionals, was inducted into the International Franchise Association's Hall of Fame during the group's 50th annual convention in San Antonio Feb. 6.

Funk was selected for exemplifying the optimum in franchising and contributing significantly to the advancement of franchising and the franchising community.

Funk co-founded Express in 1983. The Oklahoma City-based company is a leader in the staffing industry, employing 300,000 people each year in the U.S., Canada, South Africa and Australia. It operates several offices in the Tulsa metro area.

Oklahoma Prosperity Project announces changes

The Oklahoma Prosperity Project, a free nonpartisan voter education service, has elected Webco Industries President Dana Weber as chairman for 2010-11.

Weber is vice chairman and chief operating officer for the Sand Springs steel tubing manufacturer.

Also, the campaign this year will focus on using social media channels, such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, to encourage Oklahomans to educate themselves on economic issues. Voter drives will start in June and October to coincide with registration deadlines for the primary and general elections.

For more information, visit tulsaworld.com/okprosperity.

Tulsa Federal Credit Union president to retire

Tulsa Federal Credit Union President and CEO Phillip L. Hart has announced that he will retire effective Nov. 30.

"I have enjoyed serving our members as credit union president for more than 34 years, but I feel that the time has come for me to retire and enjoy more time with my hobbies, my family, and especially the grandkids," Hart said in a press release.

During his career, Hart saw Tulsa Federal grow from one office and \$26 million in assets to 10 offices and more than \$500 million in assets. It was organized in 1943.

Leadership Tulsa to host informational breakfasts

Tulsa-area residents interested in the Leadership Tulsa organization are invited to free informational breakfasts on Thursday and March 31.

Both breakfasts will be from 7:45 to 9 a.m. in the Aaronson Auditorium at Central Library, 400 Civic Center.

The breakfasts allow anyone interested in the organization to learn what it is about. Each will feature a short video presentation, followed by a question-and-answer session with board President Herald Givens and Executive Director Wendy Thomas.

The breakfast is free, but reservations are required by Monday and March 26, respectively. For information or reservations, e-mail nancy@leadershiptulsa.org, or call 477-7079.

Local companies nominated for Freedom Award

Several area companies have been nominated by their employees — members of the Oklahoma Guard and Reserve service members or their families — for the 2010 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award.

The award is the highest recognition given by the U.S. government to employers for their support of employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve.

Local nominees include Xeta Technologies and Performance Stage Inc., Broken Arrow; Baker-Hughes Centrifluff, Claremore; Crowe and Dunlevy PC, The Ross Group Construction Corp. and Cox Communications, Oklahoma City (with Tulsa operations); Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology, Okmulgee; CP Solutions, Bama Cos. Inc., ISTI Plant Services, Utica Park Clinic, Tulsa Zoo and Nabholz Construction Services, Tulsa.

A national selection board will select up to 15 recipients from the 2,500 nationwide nominations for the 2010 award, which will be announced in ceremonies on Sept. 23 in Washington, D.C.

Family business compensation focus of discussion

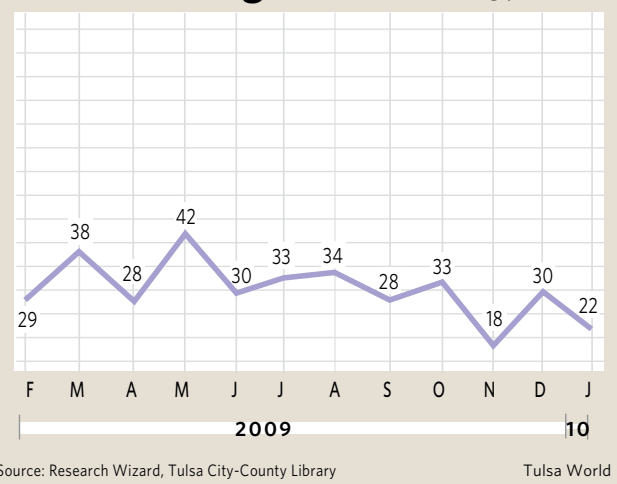
Compensation for family employees in a family business is the topic for the March business case discussion by The Family-Owned Business Institute at The University of Tulsa.

The event will be held from 4 to 6 p.m. March 22 at the University of Tulsa Collins College of Business, Helmerich Hall, 2900 E. Fifth St., Room 200D.

The family business compensation case explains family interests and other factors that shape family employee compensation

The Tulsa World welcomes briefs about new businesses, relocations and workshops. Briefs about awards are welcome, but they cannot be awards given within the company or from a business affiliate. Submit briefs to: Business FYI Sunday, Tulsa World, P.O. Box 1770, Tulsa, OK 74102 or by e-mail to business@tulsaworld.com. Photographs will be considered, and should be identified on the back; e-mailed photos should be in the JPEG format, and also should be identified. Photos cannot be returned.

The Tulsa Gauge Residential building permits



practices; distinguishing between achieving effective compensation practices; and strictly adhering to "professional" compensation principles, which are useful standards to try to follow but may not meet important personal and family interests or be politically feasible.

The case concludes with several recommendations to guide family employee compensation practices.

Forrest Cameron, FOBI member and editor of GTR Newspapers, will lead the discussion.

The cost is \$15 per person or \$25 for two from the same firm. To register or for more information, call Claire Cornell at 631-2684 or e-mail claire-cornell@utulsa.edu.

Beautiful Brands named No. 3 'Mover and Shaker'

Beautiful Brands International, the Oklahoma-based umbrella company for several worldwide franchises, has been ranked No. 3 on Fast Casual magazine's 2009 Top 100 "Movers and Shakers" list.

It's the first time BBI as a whole has been recognized in the restaurant magazine's yearly report. BBI's signature brand, Camille's, was ranked for the previous four years.

"It's an honor for us to be recognized in this way among industry elites," stated David Rutkauskas, founder, president and CEO of Beautiful Brands. "BBI's inspired innovation in the industry has really done a lot to pioneer new ways of franchising and creating worldwide brands that have universal consumer appeal. I'm thrilled to receive this ranking as we continue to set new milestones through a passion for excellence in what we do."

With 21 years of franchising experience, BBI has created a portfolio of brands ranging from fast casual salad to fast casual comfort food. In the past decade the company has sold more than 1,500 franchises in 38 states and 27 countries, spanning three continents.

BBI was founded under the leadership of David and Camille Rutkauskas. Their franchised brands included Camille's Sidewalk Café and FreshBerry Frozen Yogurt Café.

Tulsa businesses named Blue Ribbon award winners

Three Oklahoma businesses — each based in Tulsa and nominated by the Tulsa Metro Chamber — have been chosen as Blue Ribbon Small Business Award winners by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, based in Washington, D.C.

The businesses are AmericanChecked Inc., Helicomb International and Tulsa Tube Bending. The award recognizes each company's excellent business practices and the commitment made to its employees, customers and community.

"These Oklahoma businesses are innovators that will help lead the state out of this recession, create new jobs, and get our economy moving again," said U.S. Chamber President and CEO Thomas J. Donohue.

This year's 75 Blue Ribbon winners were selected from a record number of nationwide applicants and will be honored at America's Small Business Summit 2010 on May 17-19 in Washington, D.C. Seven of the businesses will be named finalists on March 15 for the "DREAM BIG Small Business of the Year" honor, which will be announced during the summit. The winning business will be presented with a \$10,000 cash prize courtesy of Sam's Club.

—NANCY HOLLINGSHEAD, World Staff Writer



Taxpayers who are paying college bills will find bigger tax breaks offered this year thanks to President Obama.

MIKE Mergen/
Bloomberg News.

A bigger tax break for college costs

Paying for college? You may be able to claim a big tax break, even if you've never before qualified.

That's because the Obama administration replaced an old break with a new and improved one — but only for a limited time.



Kathy Kristof

Tribune
Media Service

Breaks for tuition

The American Opportunity Tax Credit can reduce your tax — or increase your refund — by \$2,500. To claim the full credit, you must have paid at least \$3,000 in eligible college bills and must meet some income restrictions.

This year, the break is lost completely at \$90,000 in single income and \$180,000 in joint income.

But that's based on adjusted gross income, which is the income you declare after subtracting "above-the-line" deductions for contributions to your 401(k) retirement plan, health savings accounts, any alimony and student loan interest you pay.

Also important for lower-income taxpayers is that this break is partly "refundable." What does that mean? Most breaks stop once your tax bill is reduced to zero. This one is 40 percent refundable, said Mark Luscombe, principal tax analyst with CCH Inc., a Riverwoods, Ill., publisher of tax information. That means it can provide as much as a \$1,000 refund, even if you paid no federal income tax.

The tax code includes two other education credits — the Hope Tax Credit and the Lifetime Learning Credit. But because you can take only one tax credit per college student, you have to choose among these and the American Opportunity Credit.

Because the Hope Tax Credit provides a maximum write-off of \$1,800 annually and the Lifetime Learning Credit provides a maximum of \$2,000 annually, the American Opportunity Credit is going to be the best for most filers.

There is one exception: If you happen to have a student attending college in one of 10 Midwestern states that were affected by floods in 2008

(Oklahoma is not included), you can double the value of either the Hope or Lifetime Learning credits on your 2009 return.

Another education tax break that you'll probably want to forgo this year is the tuition and fees deduction. The maximum deduction is \$4,000, but it's limited to \$2,000 for those who earn more than \$65,000 single or \$130,000 married, and is eliminated completely once single income exceeds \$80,000 and married income exceeds \$160,000.

Remember that a credit reduces your tax on a dollar-for-dollar basis, while a deduction just reduces the income subject to tax.

Write-offs, exclusions

There are other special breaks for paying education bills that can be used in conjunction with credits.

If you take money out of a 529 savings plan, the investment income (and the principal) is tax free, as long as you use it to pay for qualified education expenses.

Likewise, money taken out of a Coverdell Education Savings Account is tax-free as long as it's used for qualified education expenses.

As much as \$2,500 in student loan interest also is deductible for taxpayers earning less than \$60,000 when single or \$120,000 when married (and lesser amounts for those earning up to \$75,000 single and \$150,000 married).

And, in some instances, interest earned on savings bonds cashed in to pay for education can be exempt from tax.

If your employer provides tuition assistance, it's tax-free if less than \$5,250 a year.

Contact Los Angeles Times staff writer at Personal Finance, Business Section, Los Angeles Times, 202 W. 1st St. 90012 or e-mail kathy.kristof@latimes.com.

BUSINESS CALENDAR

Monday

Engineers' Society of Tulsa, 11:30 a.m., ONEOK cafeteria, 100 W. Fifth St. Topic: "Trash Recycling." Speaker: John Robertson, director, Okmulgee Area Development Corp. Qualifies for ¾-hour PDH credit. Information: Call 492-9715, or e-mail billsey@cox.net.

Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship, noon, Furr's Cafeteria, Farm Shopping Center, 5321 S. Sheridan Road. Speaker: Julio Vega, originally involved in drugs and gangs in New York City, found Christ and started preaching, eventually internationally. For 15 years, he pastored churches in Tulsa, including Victory Christian Center's Spanish church. Vega is currently involved with Wendy's Corp.. Meeting open to public. Cost: Free; lunch on own.

Tuesday

Oklahoma Inventors Congress, 7 to 9 p.m., Village Inn, 5230 S. Yale Ave. Meeting will focus on patents and trademarks. Free; dinner on own. For information, call Leo Byford at 902-5730 or e-mail leobyford@yahoo.com.

University of Tulsa Friends of Finance Executive Speaker Series, check-in 11:15, luncheon 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., TU Allen Chapman Activity Center, 440 S. Gary Ave. Topic: "Carbon Caps and Climate Change: An Investor's View." Speaker: Chansoo Joun, managing director of Warburg Pincus LLC. Cost: \$20 members; \$30 nonmembers. Reservations: Call Judy Adair at 631-2588, e-mail judy-adair@utulsa.edu or visit tulsaworld.com/fofregister. Parking:

Shuttle service provided from parking lot north of Reynolds Center from 11:00 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Career Advocates of Tulsa Inc., 5:30 p.m., Ricardo's Mexican Restaurant, 5629 E. 41st St. Topic: "Legal Requirements for Caring for Your Aging Parent." Speaker: Erin Donovan, former family counselor with Tulsa Police Department and attorney with 25 years of experience working exclusively in trust, probate and guardianship law. Social and gathering time at 5:30 p.m.; program begins at 6 p.m. Reservations: E-mail lindatracy@cox.net or call Janet at 798-4428.

Chamber's Circuit Networking Series — Breakfast Network, 7:30 to 9 a.m., Renaissance Tulsa Hotel and Convention Center, 6808 S. 107th East Ave. Guest speaker: Jeff Magee, certified speaker and leader of Jeff Magee International/JMI Inc.; he also publishes Performance magazine. Event provides opportunity for business professionals to meet, promote their businesses and build contact lists. More than 200 attendees expected; bring plenty of business cards for the two table rotations. Cost: \$25 at door. Information: Contact Elaine Walsh at 560-0298, e-mail elainewalsh@tulsachamber.com or register online at tulsaworld.com/tulsachamber.

"Employment Resource Fair for Women," 2 to 6 p.m., OSU-Tulsa, Room 150, 700 N. Greenwood Ave. The City of Tulsa Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women and Tulsa Women's Foundation are hosting the event for women affected by the

economy, those who have lost their jobs or are re-entering the workforce, as well as women who want to start a business or to improve their skill sets. Tulsa Women's Foundation will be accepting applications for seed scholarships. Special workshops include self-improvement, building resumes, interviewing, business etiquette and image. Cost: Free. Registration: Call Darlene Hall at 596-2461 or e-mail dhall@cityoftulsa.org.

Wednesday

Desk & Derrick Club of Tulsa, 5:30 p.m., The Summit Club, 15 W. Sixth St. Topic: "Tulsa's Energy Initiatives." Speaker: Tulsa Mayor Dewey Bartlett, president of Keener Oil and Gas. Location: 31st Floor of Summit Club, Bank of America Building, 15 W. Sixth St. Reservations: Call Melissa Dailey at 488-7655 or e-mail mdayley@stmaryland.com.

"What You Should Know ... Preparing Your Will and Estate Planning," 9:30 a.m. to noon, Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St. Description: Attorney Rita Foster and Brady Pringle, financial consultant with Wells Fargo, will discuss will preparation, establishing a trust, powers of attorney and probate procedure. Cost: Free. For adults; seating limited. In Pecan Room. Reservations: Call 596-7985. Sponsored by Tulsa Library Trust.

Thursday

Business Plan Basics with SCORE, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd

St. Description: Volunteers from SCORE: Counselors to America's Small Business will take you through the steps to develop your own business plan. Learn why a business plan is important and what research is required. Cost: Free. Reservations required; call 596-7985. For general information, visit tulsaworld.com/score.

Financial Literacy @ the Library series, 7 to 8:30 p.m., Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St. Description: The Tulsa City-County Library's Research Center and the Tulsa County Bar Association is offering a series of free seminars to help educate the community about financial matters in difficult economic times. Topic: "Debt Management and Consolidation." Speakers: Iris Philbeck with Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma and Robert Johnson with Debt Reduction Services. They will dispel the myths of debt elimination services and offer solutions to debt issues. Cost: Free. Information: Call Robbie Sittel at 596-7946 or e-mail rsittel@tulsalibrary.org, or call John Thomas Hall at 284-0310 or e-mail john_hall70@yahoo.com.

Institute of Internal Auditors, Tulsa chapter, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., OSU-Tulsa, North Hall, BS Roberts room, 700 N. Greenwood Ave. Topic: "Implementing Continuous Auditing." Speaker: Gary Armstrong, senior IT audit manager, Cherokees Nation Businesses. Cost: \$25 members, \$30 nonmembers, \$10 students (with valid student ID), \$12 for IIA retirees. Registration: Deadline Monday; visit tulsaworld.com/ia0307; or call Andrea Harman at

728-3300, or e-mail andrea.harman@stinnett-associates.com.

Natural Gas and Energy Association of Oklahoma, 11:30 a.m., Renaissance Tulsa Hotel and Convention Center, 6808 S. 107th East Ave. Topic: "Shale Revolution, and the Implications for Natural Gas Pipeline Flows, Price Differentials and Processing Economics." Speaker: E. Russell (Rusty) Brazeal, managing director, Benteck Energy LLC. Cost: \$35. Reservations: Must be made online at tulsaworld.com/ngeo.

American Concrete Institute, Tulsa chapter, lunch 11:30 to 11:45 a.m., speaker starts at 12:05 p.m., ONEOK Cafeteria, 100 W. Fifth St., lower level. Topic: Designing with Precast/Prestressed Concrete." Speaker: Rick Tejada, Tulsa Dynaspan Inc. Cost: Free; lunch on own. Meeting room inside the cafeteria. Information: Call Elli Johannsson at 557-8241.

RSU Executive-In-Residence luncheon, 11:30 a.m., Rogers State University, 1701 W. Will Rogers Blvd., Claremore. Rogers State University in Claremore is holding its featured Executive in Residence. Topic: "The Federal Deficit Crisis and Market Update." Speaker: Jim Arens, senior vice president and chief investment officer at the Trust Company of Oklahoma. Location: Ballroom of the Centennial Center on the RSU campus. Cost: \$20. Reservations: Call (918) 343-7803.

"Take Your Business to New Heights: Doing Business with Tinker Air Logistics Center," 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., SpiritBank Tower, 1800 S. Baltimore Ave. Speakers: Joanne Davis, director of the Small Busi-

ness Office at Tinker Air Logistics Center, will discuss how small businesses obtain contracts with the Department of Defense, how businesses can prepare for the bid process and future opportunities; and Larry Findeiss, bid coordinator with the Oklahoma Bid Assistance Network, who will discuss how local companies can take advantage of his assistance. Reservations: Encouraged, as seating is limited; call Valerie Renz at 295-7434 or e-mail her at vrenz@spiritbank.com.

Saturday

Business Plan Basics with SCORE, 10 a.m. to noon, Rudisill Library, 1520 N. Hartford Ave. Volunteers from SCORE: Counselors to America's Small Business will take you through the steps to develop your own business plan. Learn why a business plan is important and what research is required. The session will cover how to research, create and present a business plan, as well as how to acquire financial assistance for a business startup or expansion. Reservations required; call 596-7280. For general information, visit tulsaworld.com/score.

Information for this listing should be submitted to: Business Calendar, Tulsa World, P.O. Box 1770, Tulsa, OK 74102 or fax 581-8353 or e-mail business@tulsaworld.com. Items must be received by 5 p.m. Wednesday for inclusion in the following Sunday's calendar.