

The Otsego County Chamber

Strengthening Our Economy  Shaping Our Future

Media Release

The Otsego County Chamber **ANNOUNCES SMALL BUSINESS AND BREAKTHROUGH AWARDEES**

For More Information Contact:

Rob Robinson, President & CEO (607) 432-4500
rob@otsegocountychamber.com

(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE) Gruver, Zweifel and Scott has been selected to receive *The Otsego County Chamber/KeyBank* 12th Annual Small Business Award and Cleinman Performance Partners has-been selected to receive *The Otsego County Chamber/Excellus BlueCross BlueShield* 6th Annual Breakthrough Award.

“These awards celebrate the true backbone of the upstate New York’s and the nation’s economy,” offered Rob Robinson, President & CEO of *The Otsego County Chamber*. “Small business and innovation: it is where it all happens!”

“The Greater Otsego County region is fortunate to have the business of Gruver, Zweifel & Scott with its longevity in the public accounting field serving our area,” offered Roxana Hurlburt, Chamber Board Chair. “As the recipient of the Breakthrough Award, Mr. Cleinman, a local entrepreneur, is an inspiration to all. Please join me in congratulating these great businesses as we honor them.”

These awards will be presented at the 12th Annual Small Business Banquet, Thursday, October 13, 2011 at The Otesaga Resort Hotel in Cooperstown.

"Key Bank is proud of its longtime affiliation with *The Otsego County Chamber* and to recognize many outstanding businesses over the years through our support of the Small Business Banquet. This year is no exception with the honor going to Gruver, Zweifel, & Scott LLP, stated KeyBank's Jim Empie.

"We want to thank *The Otsego County Chamber* for the honor of being chosen to receive the 12th Annual Key Bank Small Business Award," said Steve Gruver, Senior Partner of Gruver, Zweifel & Scott, LLP. "It is a great honor and achievement to receive such a prestigious award. Our community is very fortunate to have so many fine small businesses providing high quality personalized services to its citizens. We are proud to be amongst that group."

Gruver, Zweifel & Scott, LLP is a full service Certified Public Accounting firm, with its predecessors, has been in existence for more than 50 years providing accounting, auditing, tax, and client advisory services to businesses and individuals, local governments, nonprofit organizations and trusts. GZS is deeply committed to its diversified client base as a provider of the highest quality personalized service.

At GZS, the operating philosophy is simple. Listen to clients and allow the client to set the limits of their service needs. The firm has created an environment that allows its clients to receive individual attention, at the same time having access to the resources of a larger firm.

GZS continually strives to set themselves apart from other firms by looking beyond the compliance work. They look beyond the necessity of compliance and act as business advisors and consultants. They listen to clients to find out their needs as well as ways for them to achieve their goals. GZS provides professional services to a large part of Central New York as well as out of state clientele.

The Partners and staff are involved in many local activities and organizations, including *The Otsego County Chamber*, the Oneonta Rotary Club, the Oneonta Rotary Foundation, the Otsego County Development Corporation, Otsego County Industrial Development Agency, Oneonta Kiwanis, Catholic Charities, Saturday's Bread and the Oneonta Country Club. Many of their partners also serve as officers and board members of several volunteer organizations and community youth organizations.

“Based in Oneonta and serving clients across the country, Cleinman Performance Partners is a real Upstate success story”, said Eve Van de Wal, regional president for Excellus BCBS. “Al Cleinman has used his many years of experience in the optometry business to create a unique business that helps ensure the success of private optometry practices. And with an eye towards the future, he's also created a pipeline for future practice owners through a professional development grant program. It's a privilege to present this award to this job-creating company.”

“We are honored to have received this award. I am humbled to work with a talented group of professionals, said Al Cleinman. “We appreciate that the business community is recognizing Cleinman Performance Partners’ twenty-two years of hard work and dedication with this distinction.”

Cleinman Performance Partners, Inc. was founded in 1989 to provide business solutions to independent optometry practices and select vendors who serve them. Their mission is to help their clients recognize and realize all their possibilities.

The consultancy was based on the personal interests and unique experiences of Alan Cleinman, the firm’s President and CEO. Al has 40 years in the eye care industry, beginning his career as a telephone salesman at Brillen Optical in Oneonta while still a high school student in Gilbertsville. Eventually, he founded and nurtured several firms and created scores of products and services.

Highlights include the founding of Co-Optics of America in 1979, the country’s first industry buying group. In 1986, Al began publishing the first eye care consumer magazine, “Sight,” and has since been a columnist for Optometric Management and Eyecare Business Magazine. After establishing Cleinman Performance Partners, Inc., Al went on to help establish Innotech, a high-tech lens company that went public in 1996 and was ultimately acquired by Johnson and Johnson, Inc.

Today, Cleinman Performance Partners employs 22 individuals at its home office in Oneonta, and another 12 consultants across North America, delivering a host of business support services to our chosen markets. The firm is organized around operating divisions that focus resources on distinct development areas.

The 12th Annual Small Business Banquet on October 13th will feature a cash bar reception at 5:45 pm with the dinner starting promptly at 7:00 pm. Price is \$60 per person, or tables of 10 for \$575, and reservations are required. For further information please contact Rob Robinson at the Chamber office at (607) 432-4500, extension 202 or rob@otsegocountychamber.com.