



St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

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NEWS RELEASE

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Phoenix Physical Therapy Wins SBA Small Business Excellence Award

Akwesasne, NY -- Phoenix Physical Therapy, a small business on the Saint Regis Mohawk territory of Akwesasne was honored Monday with an SBA Small Business Excellence Award in Syracuse, N.Y. The U.S. Small Business Administration and the New York Business Development Corporation hosted the 16th annual luncheon to recognize the achievements of local small businesses. Small businesses are selected for the Excellence Awards based on their company's longevity, innovation, sales growth, increased employment, ability to overcome adversity or community contributions.

"The 16th Annual Small Business Excellence Awards luncheon gives us the opportunity to celebrate our business community leaders for their small business successes," said Bernard J. Paprocki, Syracuse district director. "Entrepreneurs find success not by avoiding failure but by dreaming the impossible and taking chances. From Main Street stores to cyber merchants and all the companies in between, small businesses keep our economy innovative and vibrant."

Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Chief Ron LaFrance attended the award ceremony and proudly stated, "Small business is the backbone of an economy. It was an honor to witness Phoenix Physical Therapy receive this award. I look forward to the day when more of our local businesses are nominated for their success." The business was a recipient of the Akwesasne Revolving Loan Fund, administered through the Tribe's Economic Development Division, currently led by Lindsay Tarbell. Ms. Tarbell was in attendance and commented, "the business model was developed with the vision of providing a much needed service within the community, while creating a business model built for longevity."

The Canton Small Business Development Center selected **Phoenix Physical Therapy** owned by Andre Rieksts, Lisa Francis, and Michelle Gauthier in Hogansburg. Phoenix Physical Therapy opened on the Saint Regis Mohawk territory as a result of a successful cooperative project between commercial, private and public funding. Owner and General Manager Andre D. Rieksts worked with the SUNY Canton SBDC in developing a business plan and financial analysis. Teaming up with Licensed Physical Therapist Lisa S. Francis and Licensed Physical Therapy Assistant Michelle M. Gauthier, Mr. Rieksts developed a full-service physical therapy practice to provide innovative, top-notch outpatient physical therapy services in the community of Akwesasne which was previously not served.

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The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly elected and federally recognized government of the Saint Regis Mohawk People.

Helping Build A Better Tomorrow

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