

# THE BUSINESS TIMES

THE DEFINITIVE SOURCE FOR GRAND JUNCTION BUSINESS NEWS SINCE 1994

JUNE 29 - July 12, 2017 ISSUE

THEBUSINESSTIMES.COM

## Companies to Watch: Grand Valley firms among award winners



Page Tucker, president and chief executive officer of ProStar Geocorp, received award recognizing 50 fast-growing Colorado companies.  
*Business Times photo by Phil Castle*

June 26, 2017 Article - Phil Castle Business Times

Two Grand Junction firms are among the latest winners of annual awards honoring fast-growing Colorado companies.

Bonsai Design and ProStar Geocorp were among the 50 winners in the Colorado Companies to Watch program. Networks Unlimited, another Grand Junction firm, was among the 100 finalists for the 2017 awards.

Sarah Shrader, co-owner of Bonsai Designs with her husband, Thaddeus Shrader, said she's honored their firm was among those selected for the award. "These winners are fantastic companies doing groundbreaking things, and we are grateful to be included in such an esteemed group."

Page Tucker, chief executive officer and president of ProStar Geocorp, said he was pleased as well. "It is always nice to receive this level of acknowledgement from your peers and to have a spotlight shining on your company. But what I am most excited about are the doors this award opens to other entrepreneurs and business leaders throughout the state."

The Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade joined with the Edward Lowe Foundation to launch the program to honor so-called second stage companies for their innovative products, unique processes and performance in the marketplace as well as their philanthropic efforts. To participate, firms must be privately held, headquartered in Colorado, employ the equivalent of six to 99 full-time employees and generate \$750,000 to \$50 million in annual sales or working capital.

"The 2017 Colorado Companies to Watch Winners represent the most innovative and impactful companies that are fueling the economic fire of our state," said Rick Ninneman, chairman of the Colorado Companies to Watch board of directors.

Bonsai Design designs, builds and installs adventure courses and ziplines for customers around the world. Bonsai Design recently entered into negotiations with the City of Grand Junction over incentives to make the company the anchor tenant of a new business park proposed for south of downtown. The Shraders expect to invest \$2 million in new facilities at the site and hire 15 additional employees to bring its staff up to 50.

“The Bonsai team is excited about the future for our company in the Grand Valley,” Sarah Shrader said. “We can’t wait to play a part in making our community the best place in the Western United States to live, work and play.”

The Grand Valley is gaining recognition as an attractive community, Shrader said. “Our goal is to play a part in diversifying the economy to make the Grand Valley a vibrant and healthy place to live for millennials, families and seniors. We are proud to raise our family and run our business in the Grand Valley, and we can’t wait to see more companies and families relocate here that love the natural assets and strong community like we do.”

ProStar Geocorp combines geographic information systems and data to offer computer software and services to the pipeline and utility industries. The software and services help customers manage infrastructure whether it’s displaying, collecting, storing or using information about the location of pipelines, fiber optic cables or other facilities.

ProStar Geocorp was among the first companies in Colorado to participate in the Rural Jump-Start Program offering state and local tax incentives. The company also received a \$250,000 grant awarded through the Advanced Industries Accelerator Program.

Tucker was among the latest winners of 10 Apex Awards presented by the Colorado Technology Association. Tucker won the award for entrepreneur excellence.

Tucker said the Colorado Companies to Watch awards draw attention not only to ProStar and Bonsai Design, but also the Grand Valley and its technology and outdoor recreation sectors. “I think the spotlight now shines even brighter on the Grand Valley and sends a positive message that both tech and rec are thriving in our great community.”

Bonsai Design and ProStar Geocorp bring to six the number of Mesa County businesses that have been named Colorado Companies to Watch. Timberline Bank, a community bank with three locations in Western Colorado, was among the 2016 award winners. Other past winners from Mesa County include Frank Henry Equipment, Mountain Racing Products and JG Management Systems.