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National Jeweler Announces 2nd Annual America's Best Jewelers Couture Category Winners

25 Couture Jewelers from Across the U.S. Set the Benchmark for Retail Excellence in 2009

New York, NY – July 7, 2009 – National Jeweler unveiled its 2nd Annual America's Best Jeweler Winners in the prestigious Couture category (full winner's list enclosed below). America's Best Jewelers program launched in 2008 and gave a fresh approach to educational offerings for the retail community by providing a venue where successful best practices exemplified by retailers are shared with other retailers. The profound success of 2008 only became more evident with high percentage of repeat 2008 participants entering for the 2009 awards program.

Chris Casey, Nielsen Jewelry Group Vice President, expressed his content with the retailers' deep involvement with the program and their participation in face-to-face events and online networking. Casey says, "I find the 2008 program built a strong foundation for 2009 and will now enable us to add more educational and networking elements that will prove more beneficial to the retailers. The enthusiasm and appreciation for the program from the winners and the participating retailers is exciting and we look forward to building on it. This is truly a unique program answering a pent-up demand for retailers."

The 2009 America's Best Jeweler Winners include some repeat winners from 2008 and some emerging retailer stars in the Couture category. Whitney Sielaff, editorial director of National Jeweler and ABJ program director, finds the mix of winners a perfect blend for the 2009 program. "Seeing some of the 2008 winners repeat their performance in 2009 exemplifies the purpose of the ABJ program. The repeat winners show not only they can achieve success but they know how to maintain it; they are setting an important standard for all retailers and for the class of 2009."

Beyond receiving recognition as an America's Best Jeweler, 2009 winners are invited to participate in unique retailer-to-retailer educational symposia during JA-New York and Couture events. The spirit of America's Best Jeweler program is not tied to winning an award, but to the idea of sharing best practices and helping the community move forward as a whole. The America's Best Jewelers Winning Class of 2009 will hold its first series of face-to-face educational sessions on July 26, 2009 at JA-New York Summer at the Javits Convention Center. Only qualified retailers are invited to attend the sessions starting at 10:00AM.

After the July 26, 2009 in-person event, the winning retailers will take to the digital forum through the America's Best Jeweler Network. The ABJ Network, the cornerstone of the program, welcomed its 500th member back in June. The ABJ social network is the online venue where retailers can conveniently access, connect, and share best practices on-demand throughout the year. The ABJ Network is exclusively open to retailers who must qualify to gain access. For more information on the topics

beings presented at the July 26th sessions and how to attend visit www.abjnetwork.com

2009 America's Best Jewelers Couture Category Winners

1. Ballew Jewelers	Freehold, NJ
2. Beiced Jewelers	Shakopee, MN
3. Ben David Jewelers	Danville, VA
4. Benari Jewelers	Exton, PA
5. Bigham Jewelers, Inc.	Naples, FL
6. Blue Marlin Jewelry	Islamorada, FL
7. Clarkes Jewelers	Shreveport, LA
8. Clodius & Co. Jewelers	Rockford, IL
9. Duncan and Boyd Jewelers	Amarillo, TX
10. Edmund T. Ahee Jewelers	Grosse Pointe Woods, MI
11. EE Robbins	Tacoma, WA
12. H.E. Murdock Co. Inc (DBA Days Jewelers)	Waterville, ME
13. Hamilton Jewelers	Lawrenceville, NJ
14. Houston Jewelry	Houston, TX
15. Hyde Park Jewelers	Denver, CO
16. James Free Jewelers	Dayton, OH
17. Mountz Jewelers	Carlisle, PA
18. Nancy And David Fine Jewels	Millburn, NJ
19. Northeastern Fine Jewelry	Schenectady, NY
20. Susan Eisen Fine Jewelry and Watches	El Paso, TX
21. Tappers Fine Jewelry	West Bloomfield, MI
22. Van Cott Jewelers	Vestal, NY
23. Vincents Jewelers	Creve Couer, MO
24. Wyatt Austin Jewelers	Schaumburg, IL
25. Yanina & Co.	Cedar Grove, NJ

About America's Best Jewelers Program

The America's Best Jewelers program, produced by National Jeweler, is a one-of-a-kind program paying tribute to successful jewelry retailers transforming their businesses through innovative, leading-edge business performance management techniques. The program facilitates an environment of taking a leadership position that will allow for the betterment of an industry as a whole. It fosters peer-to-peer education to give retailers practical, real-world successful strategies that can be immediately and easily applied to their business. The program is presented in a multi-media format– online social network and face-to-face events- giving jewelry retailers on-demand and convenient access to interact, share and acquire knowledge from peers on how to better their retail operations. In order to enter the Awards program, all retailers are required to complete a comprehensive business operations survey. Finalists are selected based on exceeding a benchmarking standard set by an aggregate average derived from all retailers' survey responses. Finalists are then vetted by an independent agency to ensure data accuracy and along with reference checks. For more information on the ABJ program visit www.abjnetwork.com.