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**CBICC/Pennsylvania Business Central Excellence in Business Awards recognize best of Centre County's business community**

STATE COLLEGE, PA, Dec. 8, 2017 – The **Chamber of Business & Industry of Centre County's** 2017 Excellence in Business Awards, presented in partnership with *Pennsylvania Business Central*, was held Thursday, Dec. 7 at the Nittany Lion Inn. PSECU served as Presenting Sponsor.

The Excellence in Business Awards recognized the best of Centre County's business and entrepreneurial community in six categories:

- Technology Company of the Year – EnergyCAP
- Startup Company of the Year – ConidioTec LLC
- Business Leader of the Year – Patrick Irwin, Vice President of Construction, Leonard S. Fiore
- Corporate/Community Impact – West Arete/Contributory platform
- Small Business of the Year (retail, service/professional service, hospitality, restaurant/caterer) – Tait Farm Foods
- Young Professional of the Year – Amanda McClellan, Doing Better Business

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A total of 48 businesses and individuals were among this year's nominees. Winners were chosen by an Independent Selection Committee comprising local and area business leaders.

The CBICC/Centre County Economic Development Partnership also recognized the **2017 Economic Development Champion – Jeff Fortin, Ph.D., Penn State University Associate Vice President for Research and Director of the Office of Industrial Partnerships**. Previous honorees included State College Borough Manager Thomas Fontaine and Penn State University President Dr. Eric J. Barron.

"The Excellence in Business Awards are a wonderful opportunity to showcase the strength and diversity of Centre County's business community," said Vern Squier, CBICC President and CEO, who noted that the event was attended by nearly 250 business, community, government and academic leaders. "We welcomed the opportunity to celebrate local business while specifically acknowledging the achievements of this year's finalists and winners."

Bernie Swain, co-founder and chairman of the Washington Speakers Bureau, served as keynote speaker, with Forever Broadcasting radio personality Jeff Brown serving as emcee.

Excellence in Business Award sponsors included: PSECU; FirstEnergy; First National Bank; Ben Franklin Technology Partners; Homeland Manufacturing Services; CPI Foundation; Miller, Kistler & Campbell; Invent Penn State; RJ Lee Group; Doing Better Business; and AmeriServ.

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