



**Southern Oregon Regional
Economic Development, Inc.**
Wildly Serious About Business

**PRESS RELEASE
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SORED I Honors Four Companies and One Inspirational Individual with 2020 PROSPER Awards

Medford, Oregon – SOREDI has recognized four companies and one individual with annual Prosper Awards at their virtual 2020 annual meeting, The Prospers, live streamed on June 25.

Each year, SOREDI recognizes four companies in our region that exhibit the qualities of Ingenuity, Tenacity, Prosperity, and Collaboration. These are the defining characteristics that SOREDI recognizes as vital to successful business growth in our region. This is the ninth year of awards since inception.

The **2020 Ingenuity Award** went to Rentec Direct, of Grants Pass. Founded in 2007 by Nathan Miller, this technology entrepreneur worked his way up the ladder to chief technology officer for a local wireless billing software company before creating an award-winning property management software company. Miller is a former high school graduate of Illinois Valley High School and a self-taught programmer.



After 13 years of business, Rentec Direct now employs 15 professionals in Grants Pass and boast 16,000 clients nationwide representing 600,000 property units. Rentec Direct is one of Inc 5000's fastest growing private companies in the nation, 3 years in a row. Further, it was named one of the Best Entrepreneurial Companies in America in 2017, 2018 and 2019 by Entrepreneur 360.

The **2020 Tenacity Award** went to Braun Brush, formerly known as Project Prickly, which relocated to Southern Oregon in 2018 and has continued to expand in the region. Braun Brush is currently located in Ashland. It has been in business for 145 years and was founded in New York. It is 4th generation, family-owned business.

Braun Brush manufacturers specialized industrial brushes for high-end applications in Pharmaceutical, aerospace, firearms, automotive and food and beverage industries. Its Wheel Whoolie auto detailing brush is currently manufactured in Ashland after a 2018 move their former San Francisco-based facility. Currently, the company is developing a brand-new facility in Medford, is expanding upon its long-standing success, and employs 10.

Grants Pass based Dutch Bros received the **2020 Prosperity Award** for continuing to expand upon its beginnings in 1992 with 2 entrepreneurial brothers, to its current 7- state operation with 393 stands and over 12,000 employees nationwide.

Dutch Bros roasts over 100,000 coffee beans weekly from its roasting facility in the North Valley Industrial Park, while being headquartered in downtown Grants Pass. The rapid expansion has also resulted in a generous spirit with over one million samples donated yearly and over \$2 million in donations made annually to local communities and non-profit organizations.

The 2020 Collaboration Award went to all 15 jurisdictions served by the region for their collaborative and collective work to unify the region over the last 18 months. The jurisdictions include Jackson and Josephine County, along with the cities of Ashland, Butte Falls, Cave Junction, Central Point, Eagle Point, Gold Hill, Jacksonville, Phoenix, Rogue River, Shady Cove, and Talent.

Often referred to as the 15 jewels in Southern Oregon’s regional crown, the communities were enthusiastic in issuing “Business Friendly” Proclamations at their public meetings and in financially supporting SOREDI’s 5- year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, know as the One Rogue Valley CEDS.

The 2020 Inspiration Award went to Stacie Grier, an employee of Quantum Innovations of Medford. Grier is the first female to have received the award in the history of the Prosper Awards.

Grier is honored for her vision and assistance in creating opportunities to educate and inspire youth, high schoolers, and college students toward local careers in manufacturing, technology, health professions and more.

Her own career and volunteerism path included an 11-year stint with a high-tech manufacturer, 5 years with The Job Council, 13 years as a Junior Achievement consultant, and short stay with College Dreams. Grier is the creative mind behind Careers in Gear, a high school career fair that began in 2010 with 350 students, 7 exhibits and 35 business volunteers. This year the event, which was held at Central Medford High School hosted 1650 students, 200 business volunteers, and nearly 60 exhibits.



Moreover, Grier has been a valuable partner to SOREDI in its long history of industry tours in the region, and learning tours among high performance manufacturers. She is a 15-year volunteer and past board member for Wilderness Trails, co-leader of the Barnyard Critters 4-H Club in the Applegate Valley and founder of an after-school club for elementary school children at Ruch Community Bible Church.

About SOREDI: SOREDI is a private, membership-based, non-profit organization, governed by a board of directors. Its six-person staff is charged with local business expansion and new business recruitment efforts, financial assistance to start-up companies through its business loan fund, and management of Enterprise Zones in Jackson and Josephine Counties. The agency was formed as a regional economic development agency in 1987. Learn more at <https://www.soredi.org>.