

2007 Associate Member of the Year

Ned Alan Sokoloff, CEO & Founder, Specialty Group, Pittsburgh, PA; Western Chapter

Ned Alan Sokoloff, CEO & Founder of Specialty Group in Pittsburgh, is the 2007 Pennsylvania Restaurant Association Associate Member of the Year.

Ned's career in the Pennsylvania Bar and Restaurant industry has spanned over 37 years; his dedicated commitment and work have led him to a reputation and name synonymous with success in the Hospitality industry. Ned's efforts have created hundreds of new restaurants and bars along with thousands of jobs throughout the region. Specialty Group was created in 1986 as a result of Ned's vision and his ability to identify the need for a specific company designed to help aspiring restaurateurs and bar people achieve their dreams. Ned's vision also included those already in the business offering comprehensive boutique of services exclusively tailored for the industry; financing, liquor license brokerage, Bar & Restaurant Business/Real Estate Brokerage and preparation and filing of all PLCB documentation. In the year's prior to Specialty Group, Ned's father had owned twenty five liquor licensed establishments in the Philadelphia area. Ned grew up in the business and understood what the business challenges are. Ned attended Penn State University and worked under liquor attorney Barry Goldstein. Liquor and later with attorney David Litman who recruited Ned to Pittsburgh in 1975 and he worked until 1986 and opened Specialty Group. Ned has been a licensed Pennsylvania Real Estate Salesperson for 31 years, is a

Pennsylvania Notary Public, and has been instrumental in handling over 2,500 liquor license transfers and the opening of over 1,300 licensed restaurants since 1970.

Ned's leadership roles include service on the Western Chapter Pennsylvania Restaurant Association Board of Directors, the Pennsylvania Restaurant Association Government Affairs Committee, the Advisory Committee of the Pennsylvania Culinary Foundation, the Hospitality Alliance of Western Pennsylvania, and Big Brothers 1975-1987.

Ned has been published in the Server Magazine, Pennsylvania Real Estate Journal, New Jersey Real Estate Journal, Pennsylvania Restaurant Matters magazine, and has had a column in the Observer, Pennsylvania's Beverage Journal, for 8 years. Ned has given seminars for the Small Business Association, Entrepreneurs Day, and the Pennsylvania Restaurant Association and has been interviewed in the following: Pittsburgh Post Gazette, Small Business News, Pittsburgh Courier, Enterprise Journal, Pittsburgh Business Times, The Observer, The Server, Nations Restaurant News, Night Club and Bar Magazine, and Pittsburgh Tribune Review.



Ned Sokoloff accepts the 2007 Associate Member of the Year Award from 2008 Chairman Joseph DiSalvo

Chapter Membership Awards

New Member Percentage Growth Award, Metro Chapters

Philadelphia-Delaware Valley Chapter

2007 Chapter President: Jim Creed,

Creed's Seafood & Steaks, King of Prussia, PA; 36% Growth in New Chapter Members in 2007

New Member Percentage Growth Award, Core Chapters

Lehigh Valley Chapter

2007 Chapter President: Kevin Transue,

Dunderbak's Restaurant, Allentown, PA; 28% Growth in New Chapter Members in 2007

Chapter Top Ten Award

Central Chapter

2007 Chapter President: Artie Tafoya, Appalachian Brewing Co., Harrisburg, PA, Lancaster Chapter

2007 Chapter President: Glen Lapp, Good 'n Plenty Restaurant, Smoketown, PA

Tied with 4 New Members of Top 10 Prospects in 2007



Michael Passalacqua & Vera Lynn DiPietro present Chapter Membership Awards to Artie Tafoya and Glen Lapp

PRA Membership Committee Chair Michael Passalacqua of Angelo's Restaurant presented the 2007 membership awards recognizing significant achievements in membership growth at the PRA chapter level. The Philadelphia-Delaware Valley Chapter, with new membership growth of 36% in 2007, won for largest membership growth percentage amongst PRA Metro Chapters. And among the PRA Core Chapters, the Lehigh Valley Chapter won the award for new membership growth of 28%. In the Chapter Top Ten Award contest, chapters compete to sign ten hot chapter prospects for the year. This year, there was a tie between the Central Chapter and Lancaster Chapter, each of which signed 4 new members from their 2007 chapter top ten list.

Excellence in Food Safety Awards

Giant Center – Hershey Entertainment Complex, Hershey, PA; Central Chapter

Lawrence Street Seafood Co. Inc., Philadelphia, PA; Philadelphia-Delaware Valley Chapter

Lehigh Valley Restaurant Group, Allentown, PA; Lehigh Valley Chapter

Marion Center Area School District, Marion Center, PA; Midwestern Chapter

Messiah College Dining Services, Grantham, PA; Central Chapter

Starters Riverport, Bethlehem, PA; Lehigh Valley Chapter

PRA is committed to food safety and to educating our members in the best food safety & sanitation practices. Each year, the PRA presents awards to establishments who go above and beyond in their commitment to food safety. PRA Director of Education Laurie Williams presented 2007 Excellence in Food Safety Awards to Hershey Entertainment's Giant Center in Hershey, Lawrence Street Seafood Co. Inc. in Philadelphia, Lehigh Valley Restaurant Group in Allentown, Marion Center Area School District in Marion Center, Messiah College Dining Services in Grantham and Starters Riverport in Bethlehem, PA. These members have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to food safety and PRA is proud to recognize each of their efforts with the 2007 Excellence in Food Safety Award.



Laurie Williams presents the Excellence in Food Safety Award to Dave Rank of Starters Riverport