

PRESS RELEASE

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Rory Lee Nay, President
Proto Technologies, Inc., Liberty Lake, WA
Named Washington State Small Business Person of the Year
Celebration honoring winners on April 23rd, Marion Oliver McCaw Hall, Seattle Center

SEATTLE – The U.S. Small Business Administration’s Seattle District Office has named **Rory Lee Nay, President, of Proto Technologies, Inc.** as the **2009 Washington State Small Business Person of the Year**. Proto Technologies, Inc. (PTI) is a rapid prototyping service bureau, a leader in providing customer’s model prototyping and low-volume needs.

Need a prototype for your invention? Need help in getting your product to market? Then you need PTI. Rory Lee Nay and her husband Greg help companies achieve a competitive edge by reducing their product development cycles. They thrive on daily challenges to create something new and different for their customers. In other words, PTI makes stuff - high-tech models of parts or items that would not otherwise exist – producing just about anything a client can dream up. And they do it precisely for companies whose Research and Development departments are developing new products and need their prototypes manufactured in a matter of hours or days.

Proto Technologies started out in a 1200 square-foot facility in Spokane Valley in 1995 and expanded to a 20,000 square-foot facility in Liberty Lake that PTI moved into in 2003 to better serve its U.S. and international customers. Two SBA Express loans from Wheatland Bank in 2007 for a line of credit and equipment purchases also boosted PTI’s capacity. The 3D state-of-the-art rapid prototyping machine most recently purchased enables modeling in both hard and soft plastic – the first such machine on the west coast! PTI staff has grown from 15 to 27 employees and business increased 35% in 2008.

PTI experienced adversity from day one as a start-up company trying to sell across the U.S.A. to customers who were mostly in large metropolitan areas and wanted prototyping services to be close by in order to reduce lead times. But PTI filled a niche with customers who needed small quantities – not large enough to go to a production facility – and became a viable competitor in the industry due to great customer service, quality of products, and the use of state-of-the-art equipment to constantly expand its capabilities.

Proto Technologies is no stranger to tough economic times. Through slumps in economic cycles as customers’ stopped their R&D operations and just sold what was in their warehouses, PTI kept employees busy by finding odd jobs for them to do such as cleaning and maintenance of facility equipment. Over the years during rough economic times American ingenuity has also benefited PTI as their innovative customers responded to crises, shortages or new needs by creating whole new products or business operations. PTI’s ability to help bring their cutting-edge ideas and products to fruition often resulted in large volume increases in prototype demands during these same economic crisis eras.

Rory volunteers her time and expertise by belonging to Spokane’s Manufacturing Roundtable. As a member of the Liberty Lake Advisory Group and of Greater Spokane Incorporated (GSI), PTI joined ten other companies affiliated with Greater Spokane Incorporated to host a job fair in Anaheim, CA last year to recruit top-notch workers to the Spokane area. Two-year technical degrees are valuable portals to lucrative job opportunities and in 2008 Rory donated resources to Spokane Community Colleges to develop manufacturing workshops to expose high-school students to technical career options.

“Rory has spent the past fourteen years improving PTI and herself – learning lessons daily in how to balance and manage family, employees, finances and customers. It is her tenacity in the face of adversity, her business acumen, her dedication to excellence, and her outreach to share the fruits of her success with others makes Rory Nay a prototype for all entrepreneurs”, said SBA Seattle District Director, Nancy Porzio.

An independent panel of judges selected the winner based on several criteria, including staying power, business growth, increase in employees, response to adversity, innovation, leadership and contributions to the small business community, and evidence of community-oriented projects. As the state winner, Rory Nay will be traveling to Washington DC next month to compete with 53 other winners from across the country for the National Small Business Person of the Year Award.

For their outstanding reputation as employers, innovative creative work product and generosity to the community, Rory Nay is enthusiastically selected as Washington State SBA Small Business Person(s) of the Year. “Our winners remind us that the entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well in Washington State, and we look forward to honoring their success” said SBA Seattle District Director, Nancy Porzio.

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