

Presenter: Oz Nelson

Award: CEO/President/Managing Partner – Large Co.

Recipient: Jim Geiger

It's my distinct pleasure today to present the award to one of our four outstanding nominees in the CEO/President/Managing Partner – Large Company category.

Leadership character is important at every level of an organization, but it's certainly needed at the top. Kelvin Cochran, Jim Geiger, Gary Price, and Dan Reardon are ALL role models for "best in class" leadership. From this stellar slate, the advisors selected our 2013 winner--- and he is **JIM GEIGER**, founder, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Cbeyond, Inc.

According to his nominator, "Jim's biggest accomplishment isn't attached to any corporate title – but rather to his roles as husband, father, mentor, philanthropist, and community leader – all of which provide him with a platform to demonstrate integrity." We couldn't agree more.

Jim started the company with 15 employees in 1999, relocated from Tampa, and determined from day one that he and his team would build a values-based, open, and high integrity culture - one that would extend to employees and customers alike. His vision to build a technology ally for small and mid-size companies has grown into a publicly traded enterprise, with over a 1000 associates, and approximately 60,000 customers in 14 major markets across the country.

Not surprisingly, Jim and his team have been recognized with numerous awards including the 2012 Corporate Engagement Award of Excellence and the 2013 Achievement in Customer Excellence Award. Also this year, Cbeyond earned it's fifth U.S. President's Volunteer Service Award for continuous commitment to community involvement and corporate volunteerism.

As the team leader, Jim demonstrates his leadership character everyday in every possible way. Never one to seek status, instead he chooses a cubicle for an office, has eliminated titles on business cards and emails, personally delivered coffee and doughnuts to a skeleton staff during a snow storm, has monthly “listening” lunches with 10-12 employees, hosts 5-year employee anniversaries in his home, and freely shares his experience with other rising entrepreneurs.

Jim has created a culture around 4 principles referred to as Cbeyond’s CALL statement. **CALL stands for: CARE relentlessly; ACT graciously; LEAD courageously; and LEARN continuously.** To encourage living these values he established a quarterly, peer-based program which recognizes groups of employees who have gone above and beyond their role. This award is the highest level award at Cbeyond.

While there is much more I could say about Jim, at this time, I’d like to ask him to join me on stage as I present him with Turknett’s highest level award – the 2013 Leadership Character Award in the CEO category.