



*"Never Mistake Activity  
for Achievement"*  
— John Wooden

## **The Howard Ford Small Business Achievement Award OEM Fabricators, Inc. Woodville, WI**

In 2007 OEM Fabricators, Inc. received the award as Wisconsin Manufacturer of the Year for a medium sized company. OEM did not receive this award for its activities, but rather for its achievements.

Since its beginning in 1986, OEM has focused on delivering. Most of all they deliver quality products- medium to heavy gauge components- on schedule. That is what they do. But they also deliver on their professed commitments to their communities, their employees, to continuous improvement and manufacturing excellence, and a special commitment to workforce development through support of manufacturing education. These are not just words included in mission statements, but values incorporated in operating plans.

A major achievement of OEM was an expansion in 2007 to a second manufacturing facility in Neillsville, Wisconsin. Over 200 employees had lost their jobs in Neillsville due to a plant closing. OEM specifically chose this community to build its new plant to access this pool of skilled talent. OEM and Neillsville have embraced each other bringing opportunity and ability together to produce success.

The Howard Ford Small Business Achievement Award was created by Wisconsin Business Development to honor the memory of one of its founding Board members. Howard devoted his career to the service and achievements of small business, most notably through his career with the U.S. Small Business Administration. With this focus on small business excellence as advocated by Howard, Wisconsin Business Development each year acknowledges the achievements of one Wisconsin business that has shown the business leadership and community support to help Wisconsin grow. We are proud to extend the 2008 award in Howard's name to the employees of OEM Fabricators for their contributions to Wisconsin's business reputation and growth.

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