

# Edwards named Small Business Person of the Year

By **SUZANNE ULBRICH**

Daily News Staff

Those who know her say this year's Small Business Person of the Year is deserving of the recognition.

The recipient, however, said she was "blindsided" by the award.

Cindy Edwards, owner of By His Design, was chosen as the recipient of the 2011 award by the Jacksonville-Onslow Chamber of Commerce during a breakfast celebration held at Onslow Memorial Hospital Thursday morning.

"To be recognized for having some measure of success is phenomenal," she said. "I am thankful to God, family, the college and my customers. We have been very blessed."

By His Design, LLC, what Edwards describes as "a turnkey marketing and creative services firm," has been in Jacksonville for 10 years. In



Chuck Beckley/The Daily News

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In addition to running By His Design, Ed-

wards is involved in various community af-

fairs. She has been taking and teaching small business seminars on an ongoing basis through the Small Business Center at Coastal Carolina Community College, Anne Shaw, the director of economic development at the college, said.

"It just doesn't take you long to be around Cindy to see how fired up and passionate she is about entrepreneurship and driving her own business results," Shaw said. "She has truly earned this award through her hard work and also through an incredible amount of services to our businesses, to the college Small Business Center and to the chamber of commerce and the community — she's given back more than she's gotten. That's what makes her so special."

Ronald Lingle, president of Coastal and the chairman of Small Business Council, said he could not agree more.

"Cindy is a very deserving recipient of this award ... She doesn't know how good she is, but her customers do," he said. "It doesn't matter what problem a business is having she can help you solve them ... She comes up with incredibly creative solutions that work; she's that good."

As a former teacher, Edwards remains connected to Onslow County Schools by serving as a role model to students involved in the Information Technology and Engineering Academy at Jacksonville High School and mentoring a student completing a senior project. She has also spoken to high school students about her small business experience in encouraging students to create a path of their own. She remains active in a variety of church and school events by providing technical assistance with lighting, sound, video and production.

She is also involved in various facets of the Jacksonville-Onslow Chamber of Commerce, and serves on the Governmental Affairs, Minority Business Services and the Small Business councils.

Bundage Guy, the 2010 recipient of the award and owner of AD Guy Insurance, presented Edwards with her award. Since 1989 one chamber member has been selected annually for doing an outstanding job with their small business in the community, said Mona Padrick, the president of the Jacksonville-Onslow Chamber of Commerce.

Greg Edwards said he could not be prouder of his wife.

"She deserves it; she works very hard," he said. "It's tough on her because it requires a lot of involvement, but I think that is what she is supposed to be doing right now."

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