

Linda Rey is The Westchester Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Businesswoman of The Year

Linda Rey is one of the principals at The Rey Agency, an independent insurance broker located in Sleepy Hollow. The company, begun in 1978 by her father Frank Rey, has always served the area's large bi-lingual population with insurance and financial products. Linda Rey was recently named Business Woman of the Year by the Westchester Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Entegrate had a chance to talk with her about her success and the growth of this family-owned business.

EM: How did it feel to receive this award?

LR: It's a great achievement. This award was an absolute honor, and candidly, a surprise indeed. I dedicated my WHCC award to my parents, Lois and Frank, for all the times I "didn't listen but watched" what they did with their family, work and community.

EM: What is the history of the Rey Agency?

LR: My father started this business in 1978 to service the bilingual community. It was—and is—a small business focusing on the residents of Sleepy Hollow. Today, we employ 4 full-time staffers and 1 part-time person, which is a great achievement since my dad was the agency's only fulltime employee from 1978 to 1995.

EM: Did get any assistance from the Small Business Association (SBA), or targeted loan programs?

LR: We've been lucky to have the right resources to build the business. We used working capital for marketing and improving technology to achieve efficiency, which is always a challenge. Recently, we have been able to work with the various insurance companies that we represent and they have begun to provide sponsorship monies for certain projects, events, and ideas.

EM: Plans for growth?

LR: Our plans for growth continue to include aggressive marketing. We also recently purchased a building on North Broadway in Sleepy Hollow, so that's a huge achievement.



Linda Rey (left) of Rey Insurance Agency in Sleepy Hollow was presented with the "Business Woman of the Year" Award by Westchester Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (WHCC) by WHCC president, Aleida Frederico (right).

The move will allow us to double our workspace, which is quite a coupe since we have been working in 400 square-feet since 1978!

EM: Why is the Rey Agency successful?

LR: My father started the business so most of my success is dedicated and attributed to him. My sister Laura is also in the business. She is a workhorse in the office; she makes so much happen and keeps it moving at an unbelievable pace. The success of the company has been a team effort.

EM: Where are you targeting those efforts?

LR: A large portion of our clientele is Hispanic, families, and small businesses. About 80 percent of our book is personal lines (home, auto, umbrella) and 20 percent is commercial (small business owners). Eighty percent of the business is property & casualty (P&C - auto, home), and the rest is financial services such as life insurance, 401k, and disability.

EM: What projects are you involved with outside the office?

LR: I have been President of the Sleepy Hollow Chamber of Commerce since 2004. I'm also involved with the events committee of the Westchester Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors (WAIFA). I am also Treasurer for the Westchester Association of Women Business Owners (WAWBO), and was invited as an Advisory Board member to the Westchester Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. I also chartered the first business networking interest group for the American Association of University Women (AAUW).

EM: What are your goals for your business in 2006?

LR: I am inspired and motivated to continue building the agency so that people will realize you don't have to be a big conglomerate corporation to have a purpose, a product and a passion. Has the award helped in this regard? Yes! We have had people inquire about how we can help them get their insurance in order and that is what we try to do.