

# Susan Finco named 2015 Free Enterprise Award recipient



**Richard Ryman**, Press-Gazette Media 6:02 p.m. CST February 3, 2015



(Photo: Submitted)

Susan Finco, owner and president of Leonard & Finco Public Relations, is the 2015 Free Enterprise Award recipient.

Finco is the first female recipient of the award given by the Rotary Club of Green Bay. She is the 34th recipient in 33 years.

"It's not why you go into business, but for them to say we think you deserve to be in this group is very much an honor," Finco said.

The Free Enterprise Award recognizes people and organizations in Brown County that exemplify the American free enterprise system. The recipient must have served as a company or organization president, CEO or owner, represented a business with significant growth in the community and have an office in Brown County.

"Leonard & Finco Public Relations is a small business that has had a big impact locally as well as nationally," said Ian Griffith, Rotary Club of Green Bay president. "Plus, her dedication and involvement in our community has been significant."

Finco founded her company with Charlie Leonard in 1992 and became sole owner when he retired. She expanded the Green Bay-based company beyond public relations to include crisis management, large-scale public outreach campaigns, image campaigns, social media and litigation public relations. She said issues management and crisis management are the biggest parts of the business.

"We started adding services that allowed us to help our clients get through those things. People today expect communication on a regular basis and that can be overwhelming for some companies," she said. "Social media really has been a game changer. It can flare up in a minute and catch organizations off guard."

Finco worked for more than 15 years as a broadcast journalist for WBAY-TV and WFRV-TV before joining Leonard to found their firm. She is a native of Cudahy and received a degree in communications/journalism from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

She is member of the Green Bay Packers board of directors, chair of the community relations committee and member of the directors affairs committee. She is a trustee of the U.S. Army War College Foundation and of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. Finco is a director of the Bellin Health System, was 2014 chair of the United Way of Brown County Campaign, and is a member of the 8th Congressional District Military Academy Candidate Interview Committee.

She founded "A Pair & A Spare: The Undercover Challenge" to provide socks and underwear for thrift stores. The campaign, now run by the Brown County Coalition on Homelessness and Housing, has collected more than 100,000 items.

As part of the award, the Rotary Club will make a \$5,000 donation to the charity of Finco's choice.

The award will be presented during a banquet May 4 at the Radisson Hotel & Conference Center, Ashwaubenon.

Tickets are \$100 per person or \$1,500 for a corporate table of 10. For information, go to <http://www.greenbayrotary.com> (<http://www.greenbayrotary.com/>) or call (920) 422-4296.

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## Free Enterprise Award recipients

2015: Susan Finco, Leonard & Finco

2014: Mark McMullen, Associated Bank

2013: Tim Weyenburg, Foth

2012: Mark Skogen, Festival Foods

2011: Terry Fulwiler, WS Packaging Group

2010: Rick Chernick, Camera Corner/Connecting Point

2009: Robert Gallagher, Associated Bank

2008: George Kerwin, Bellin Health Systems

2007: Larry Ferguson, Schreiber Foods

2006: Timothy Howald, Tweet/Garot Mechanical

2005: Larry Weyers, WPS Resources Corp.

2004: Frank Wood, Green Bay News-Chronicle

2003: John "Jack" Meng, Schreiber Foods

2002: James Kress, Green Bay Packaging

2001: Carl Kuehne, American Foods Group

2000: Harry "Nick" Conlon, Associated Bank

1999: K.C. Stock, KC International/Stock Lumber Co.

1998: James Madigan, FEECO International

1997: Leo Frigo, Frigo Cheese/Paul's Pantry

1996: Don De Meuse, Fort Howard Corp.

1995: Louis Konop, Konop Vending

1994: Robert Bush, Schreiber Foods

1993: Robert Harlan, Green Bay Packers

1992: Donald Schneider, Schneider National

1991: Ron Weyers and Wally Hilliard, American Medical Security

1990: Donald Long, Imperial Inc.

1989: Steven Van Dyke, Foth & Van Dyke

1988: Frederick Baer, Paper Converting Machine Co.

1987: Paul Ziemer, Wisconsin Public Service Corp.

1986: Phil Hendrickson, Krueger International (KI)

1985: John "Jake" Rose, Associated Kellogg Bank

1984: Merlin Bush, Schreiber Foods

1983: George Kress, Green Bay Packaging

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