



Pete Gimre, on left, was presented the small-business customer service award by CEDR Executive Director Kevin Leahy.

Outstanding Customer Service, small business

Pete Gimre, owner of Gimre's Shoe Store, won the small-business award for outstanding customer service.

His grandfather, Sven, emigrated from Norway to the U.S. in 1892 and started the company.

"In that time, the retail environment has changed vastly — and then changed again but Gimre's has remained a viable and even vibrant player for 125 years because they focus on what matters: the interaction with the customers," said Kevin Leahy. "Gimre's Shoes is one of the top five anchors of downtown Astoria."

Upon accepting the award, Pete Gimre recognized longtime co-worker Chris Stevens.

"Customer service isn't about me — it's all about our employees," Gimre said. "I'm lucky to have Chris with me, who's been with me forever."



Greensmith Landscapes owner **Anthony Smith**, on left, accepted the innovation award for small business. A 2006 graduate of Warrenton High School, Smith moved back after attending college in Florida to take over the family's landscaping business.

Innovation Award

Anthony Smith, owner of Greensmith Landscapes, won an innovation award for small businesses. A 2006 graduate of Warrenton High School, Smith moved back after attending college in Florida to take over his family's landscaping business. Smith's business is now the largest commercial landscape company in Clatsop County. In the peak operating months, he has around 20 employees.

"Anthony is an innovative, forward thinker who takes full advantage of new technology both in field work and in the office," said presenter Chris Breitmeyer, president of Clatsop Community College.

Smith said the company success starts with his team of employees.

"If you take good care of your employees, they'll take good care of the clients," Smith said.



Jeremy Mills, a State Farm agent based in Seaside, won a customer service award for his service to the community in support of youth programs. CEDR Executive Director Kevin Leahy presented the award.

Business Service to the Community, small business

Jeremy Mills, a State Farm insurance agent based in Seaside, won a small-business award for service to the community for his support of youth programs.

"Jeremy has sponsored events totaling in the thousands of dollars," Leahy said. "He just loves seeing our community offering positive opportunities to our youth."

Mills said he felt fortunate to be in a position to help.

"To have the opportunity to give back has meant more to me anything else I've ever accomplished," he said. "It has touched me more than the kids it involves."

Brittany Israel, co-owner of the Astoria Dairy Queen, received the legacy award. Her parents purchased the Dairy Queen on Marine Drive in 1973. She and her husband, Kent, took ownership in 2016.



Legacy Award

Brittany Israel, co-owner of the Astoria Dairy Queen, won the legacy award. Her parents purchased the Dairy Queen on Marine Drive in 1973. She and her husband, Kent, took ownership in 2016.

"Since taking over full ownership, Brittany has remodeled the property, adapted the menu, and greatly expanded her knowledge of the management responsibilities of an owner, and has embraced all the changes with a smile," Breitmeyer said.

Since starting at age 12, Israel's passion has remained.

"I love walking out into the DQ lobby and seeing all the familiar faces," she said. "Astoria is home to me. I look forward to carrying on the legacy for years to come."