

## **Firm Gets State Award: Wheatfield's OGSi gets it done with help of NCCC**

A Wheatfield firm was honored Friday as the New York State Small Business Development Center Export Company of the Year.

Oxygen Generating Systems International principals accepted the award during ceremonies held at the Niagara County Community College Small Business Development Center in the Niagara Office Building. Following the presentation, they provided guided tours of the company's facilities in the former Bell Aerospace Textron building on Niagara Falls Boulevard.

"Today is not about NCCC. It's about a company that has done an outstanding job," college President Antonette J. Cleveland said.

"This award speaks to where companies in New York state and Western New York need to look: business in a global economy," said James L. King, director of the New York State Small Business Development Center, who presented the award.

Founded in 1995 by Terry Grant, Joseph McMahon, Robert Schlehr and Joseph Koessler, OGSi produces oxygen generating equipment used in industrial and commercial applications such as waste treatment, water treatment, metal cutting and aquaculture and fish farming. Its breathable oxygen units are used in clinics and small hospitals.

The firm has sold oxygen units not only in the United States, but in 40 other countries as well, including China, Argentina, the Cayman Islands, Sweden, Ukraine, and Ghana. Exports now account for 70 percent of its sales, company officials said.

"Many of our customers are in isolated areas where it is difficult to truck liquid oxygen in," Schlehr said.

Oxygen Generating Systems came to the Niagara Small Business Development Center and its International Trade Resource Center for help in business planning and identifying export opportunities.

"They helped us put together our business plan to get started," Schlehr said.

The company subsequently participated in export seminars offered by the Small Business Administration, Small Business Development Council and the Department of Commerce.

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