



NEWS RELEASE

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FND, INC. / AUTOTRONICS NAMED MAINE AND NEW ENGLAND 2006 JEFFREY H. BUTLAND SBA FAMILY-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Augusta, Maine -- FND, Inc., a third generation family-owned business and its President, Ferdinand “Paul” Daigle III, have been named the U.S. Small Business Administration’s (SBA) Jeffrey H. Butland Family-Owned Small Business for the State of Maine and New England for 2006. The 53-year-old business headquartered in Frenchville, Maine, is now New England’s largest retrofitter of ambulances.

“This award has special meaning for Maine and for New England,” said SBA New England Regional Administrator Charles Summers. “Jeff Butland was the champion for family-owned businesses during his tenure as New England Regional Administrator. His leadership convinced the SBA Administrator to honor this vital segment of our economy. After his death, the SBA named this award in his honor.”

Ambulances and emergency vehicles repaired and equipped at this northern Maine facility are sold to the Department of Homeland Security and cities and hospitals around the country. The vehicles delivered by General Motors and Ford go through extensive high tech modifications in Frenchville, then are trucked to Bangor and flown to their final destination.

When the events of September 11, 2001, caused a jump in ambulance sales, AUTOTRONICS was asked to equip thirty two new ambulances for the City of Boston. Daigle approached NorState Federal Credit Union, and with an SBA loan guarantee, purchased, retrofitted and delivered the vehicles on time. The ambulances will eventually return to Maine for refurbishing and upgrades.

The modern facility in Frenchville is the center of operations, but work was recently completed on a new facility in Bangor. AUTOTRONICS also employs sales workers in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

Paul continues FND’s reputation of producing high quality work on time and at a reasonable price. The AUTOTRONICS division ensures that police cars, fire trucks and ambulances throughout New England have the electrical and high tech systems they need to perform in any emergency.

“With support from NorState FCU and the help of an SBA guaranteed loan, I have been able to grow this business to the level it is today,” said Paul Daigle. “I have been involved in the business for as far back as I can remember. As a boy, I worked with my father and grandfather in all aspects of the business. They instilled values in me that could not be learned in any classroom or textbook. This award is a great honor that must be shared with all involved, my parents, my wife and children and all my valued employees that make our company a great success.”

Jim Pelletier of NorState Federal Credit Union nominated FND for the award. “Congratulations to FND, Inc., to Paul Daigle and the entire Daigle family for being recognized for your many years of support to the Maine economy,” said Pelletier. “I have seen this business grow from a small garage on US Route 1 in Frenchville to standing in the middle of Boston and seeing a Boston EMS Ambulance with a sticker reading, ‘Built by AUTOTRONICS, a division of FND, Inc’. Knowing that NorState Federal Credit Union had a small part in getting this business to where it is today gives me a great sense of pride.”

AUTOTRONICS and Paul Daigle will be honored at the SBA celebration dinner on May 24th at Spectacular Event Center in Bangor. For further information on the award recipients or celebration, please contact Bonnie Erickson at the Maine District Office, 622-8275 or bonnie.erickson@sba.gov.