



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AGENDA ITEM REPORT**

Requested Board Meeting Date: February 21, 2017

**Title:** Pima County Small Business Commission 2016 Annual Awards

**Introduction/Background:**

The Pima County Small Business Commission has presented the Pima County Small Business of the Year Awards since 2010. Nominations are received community wide and the final selection of winners is made by the Commission. Awards are given to an urban small business and a rural small business. The urban award winning business must be located within the city limits of Tucson. Rural winners are selected from any rural or small community outside the city limits of Tucson. Nominees must be located in Pima County and have no more than 100 employees.

**Discussion:**

At its November 17, 2016 public meeting, the Pima County Small Business Commission selected Plum Windows and Doors as the Urban Small Business of the Year and Vistoso Automotive Repair located in Oro Valley as the Rural Small Business of the Year. Each business will receive a plaque and a check for \$500.

**Conclusion:**

Pima County believes the awards serve to bring recognition and publicity to small businesses in the community. Small businesses are engines for the local economy, important job creators and serve a vital role in public affairs in Pima County.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors present the 2016 Pima County Small Business Commission Small Business of the Year Awards to Plum Windows and Doors, and Vistoso Automotive Repair at its February 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.

**Fiscal Impact:**

\$1000.00 (Economic Development Office)

**Board of Supervisor District:**

1       2       3       4       5       All

Department: Economic Development Office Telephone: (520) 724-3296

Department Director Signature/Date: *J. Moffat* 2/7/17

Deputy County Administrator Signature/Date: \_\_\_\_\_

County Administrator Signature/Date: *C. Dulleberg* 2/7/17

**Aurora Hernandez**

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**From:** notification@pima.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 26, 2016 1:47 PM  
**To:** Aurora Hernandez  
**Subject:** Small Business of the Year Award Feedback Form 2016-10-26 01:46 PM Submission Notification

Small Business of the Year Award Feedback Form 2016-10-26 01:46 PM was submitted by Guest on 10/26/2016 1:46:37 PM (GMT-07:00) US/Arizona

<b>Name</b>	<b>Value</b>
<b>Business Name</b>	Plum Windows & Doors, Inc.
<b>Number of Employees</b>	32
<b>Years in Business</b>	28
<b>Street Address</b>	1221 E. 22nd St.
<b>City</b>	Tucson
<b>Owner Name</b>	Desiree Williams
<b>Application Contact</b>	Sheena Saint Charles
<b>Contact Phone</b>	5207954104
<b>Contact Email</b>	sheena@plumwindows.com
<b>Locale</b>	Urban

**Your\_main\_business\_focus** Since 1988 Plum Windows & Doors has set the standard in Southern Arizona for Window and Door Installations. We are a Green Build & Energy Star Certified Company, we're Accredited by the Better Business Bureau and hold an A+ Rating. We specialize in Fiberglass Windows and Doors, which are not only energy efficient, but also virtually maintenance free. Pultruded fiberglass is a product made from the desert for the desert; designed to hold up to the extreme temperature fluctuations of the Arizona climate. We also offer Velux Skylights with a Leak-Free Guarantee. To make it even easier for client's to upgrade their home and make it more energy efficient, we offer FREE Estimates, with no obligation to purchase and our quotes are good for up to 1 year. We also offer our client's flexible financing options, helping to make energy efficiency available on almost any budget. Our name and products have evolved over the years but our Mission remains constant: To provide our community the opportunity to improve their quality of life with energy efficient, environmentally friendly, secure and aesthetically beautiful window and door systems. As a 28 year old local business, Plum has enjoyed successful longevity in Southern Arizona. Adapting to and embracing changes in technology, the economy and social trends, has allowed us to thrive.

**Significant\_Accomplishments** We made the Top 500 Re-modelers in America List in 2005 and 2007. Plum received the 2011 Most Innovative Product Award and the 2016 Judges Choice Award from SAHBA. We were finalists for the 2016 BBB Torch Awards for Ethics and Good Neighbor and are nominated again for 2017. I was nominated for 2016 Woman Business Owner of

the year by NAWBO. We're proud of our exclusive dealership with Marvin Infinity Replacement Windows as well as Fleetwood Windows and Doors. This year we united in a common vision to elevate our sales, customer service and community involvement to attain our goal of hosting Marvin's first AAMA Training Certification Program. Plum met the criteria for sales, staff, manufacturing department and warehouse space, despite being smaller than other candidates. Our collaborative efforts paid off and Marvin Windows selected us, out of several hundred dealers, to host the Western Master Installation Training Program. This honor has afforded us the opportunity to ensure ALL of our installers, will receive AAMA certification and recognition by the end of 2016. We will be the first window and door company in Southern Arizona to have all 10 installers AAMA accredited and certified. We've come a long way from the original two person staff that started our company in 1988. Teamwork, collaboration and motivation toward a common goal are an essential aspect of Plum's culture. We start each meeting with an inspiration and recitation of our mission to remind us of our company vision and values. We encourage our team to focus on goals while allowing individuals room to creatively achieve them in their own unique ways. If Plum's style of leadership were summed up in one phrase, it would be "Come with me." Our executive team maintains an open door policy, inspiring an entrepreneurial spirit and vibrant enthusiasm when coaching and mentoring team members. We encourage our team to speak up, step up and think outside the box, ensuring all voices are heard at Plum. This allows us to find new and unique ideas and opportunities that otherwise might be over looked. At Plum we recognize that a Job is only work, if you don't enjoy it, which is why we find a fun yet professional atmosphere to be the best fit for us.

#### **Culture\_Management\_practices**

As a local company of 28 years, Plum's impact on the community is far reaching. Pima County holds a special place in the hearts of the Plum Team, it is our home after all, however we are aware that no place is perfect. Homelessness and poverty are causes we take seriously and have partnered with Milgard to provide windows to Habitat for Humanity in an effort to help create homes for people in need. We support our Local Humane Society and shelters such as Chiluvbug Small Dog Rescue, with a vision of helping all of our furry friends find their forever homes. In an effort to support our local community we have partnered with influential organizations such as Downtown Tucson Presidio Rotary & Rio Nuevo. We make a point of looking to our neighbors first for our own consumer needs to ensure we're putting money back into the Pima County economy first, by supporting other local companies. We specifically selected a location within the empowerment zone known as the sun corridor to promote economic development in Tucson.

#### **Impact\_on\_Pima\_County**

#### **Community\_Involvement**

We have a Community Outreach Manager dedicated to seeking out and coordinating volunteer and philanthropic opportunities for our company and our employees. We encourage our team members to give back to the community on their own as well as by participating in

company scheduled volunteer efforts. We have continued to support local charities such as Habitat for Humanity, Humane Society, The Local Food bank, Angel Charity and Chiluvbug Small Dog Rescue, to name a few. We participate in charity events such as the Tucson Police Charity Golf Tournament and The Annual Sweat For Pets walks. At Plum we understand that supporting our community's success is vital to our own.

Plum has faced many challenges since 1988 but it was an internal change in management in 2015, that sent shock waves through our team. This was the lowest point for Plum and for me personally, as the owner. On June 25, 2015, for the first time in the history of Plum, I sat in my office sobbing, I was devastated. Plum was on the brink of collapse, an ex-partner willfully damaged the company without regard for our team who had helped make a life for our families. Defeated and ready to close the doors for good, I was met by a young woman arriving to work. I advised her that there wouldn't be a shift that day; sensing my despair she panicked exclaiming, "Are you closing? People rely on this job, people who take a bus or a taxi to work. You can't do this!", I realized she was right. At that pivotal point in time, she was my American flag and I drew strength from her. I rolled up my sleeves, rallied our team, worked hard and never looked back. We managed to turn a profit in 2015 and are already surpassing our goals for 2016. The moment I thought was the end, was truly, the beginning. So, why do we deserve to be named Small Business of the Year? Grit, stamina, passion, product and people, because that is why People Love Us More at Plum Windows and Doors!

**Why\_the\_business\_should\_be\_selected**

**Referred\_Page** <http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=301732>

Thank you, Pima County, Arizona

**Aurora Hernandez**

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**From:** notification@pima.gov  
**Sent:** Friday, October 21, 2016 3:18 PM  
**To:** Aurora Hernandez  
**Subject:** Small Business of the Year Award Feedback Form 2016-10-21 03:18 PM Submission Notification

Small Business of the Year Award Feedback Form 2016-10-21 03:18 PM was submitted by Guest on 10/21/2016 3:18:20 PM (GMT-07:00) US/Arizona

**Name** **Value**

**Business Name** Vistoso Automotive  
**Number of Employees** 11  
**Years in Business** 4  
**Street Address** 12945 N Oracle Rd  
City Oro Valley, 85739  
**Owner Name** Jeff Artzi  
**Application Contact** Lindsey Wiederstein  
**Contact Phone** (520) 468-7171  
**Contact Email** lindsey@vistosoautomotive.com

**Locale** Rural

**Your\_main\_business\_focus**

Vistoso Automotive provides complete automotive repair service. Our highly experienced technicians use the very best technology to diagnose issues with precision and efficiency. We service most makes and models, including imports and domestic cars and trucks. We offer a 24 month/24,000 mile warranty on all parts and labor anywhere in the United States. We also offer complimentary roadside assistance one year from the date of product/service purchase. Vistoso Automotive was founded in 2010 in Oro Valley, Arizona to provide a much-needed alternative to the negative customer experiences and unscrupulous practices that have plagued the auto repair industry for decades. Given this unsavory industry history, transparency in our business is especially important in building trust and loyalty, which must be earned every day. Our mission is "to be the most trusted source for auto services by delivering the highest level of expertise, safety, care and convenience." We fulfill our mission by following these values: • Embrace a culture of honesty, transparency, and integrity • Vow to continuously improve our knowledge and skills • Operate with a deep sense of caring for our customers • Lead as champions of safety • Value people before parts • Elevate the customer service experience • Deliver our very best in everything we do The first letter of each line spells the word "EVOLVED," which is a reminder of our tagline and mantra: "Auto Care. Evolved."

**Significant\_Accomplishments**

Enthusiastic customer response in person and online (referrals, comments, reviews) and recognition from community organizations are two ways through which we measure our success. As evidence

that our way of doing business is much needed and appreciated, our business has grown significantly—more than 60% in the last two years, with 2-3 referrals from current customers each day. Recent recognition for our efforts on behalf of customers and our community include: Winner • Better Business Bureau Ethics Award 2016 • Northwest Explorer’s “Best of the Northwest” 2016 • Greater Oro Valley Chamber Pinnacle Awards 2015 - Small Business of the Year Finalist • Greater Oro Valley Chamber Pinnacle Awards 2016 - Small Business of the Year • Tucson Metro Chamber’s Copper Cactus Award 2015 - Best Place to Work • Northwest Explorer’s “Best of the Northwest” 2015 • Better Business Bureau Ethics Award 2015 As a result of this enthusiastic response, our immediate growth plans include additional stores in Pima County.

**Culture\_Management\_practices**

The essence of our company culture can be summed up in this quote by a team member, Tommy: “The difference is the way this company really cares about our customers. The work environment is less stressful because management isn’t trying to push unneeded work on the customers. I enjoy coming to work every day for a company that really cares for people, including its employees.” We’re deeply committed to ethical behavior and integrity, as addressed in the following excerpt from our Team Member Policy Handbook on Business Ethics and Conduct: “We must always conduct ourselves with the highest standards of personal integrity and ethical behavior—our team members and customers should expect no less. Examples of acting with the highest level of integrity are: only charging customers for services actually performed and parts actually installed, never selling services or parts that are unnecessary, and never ‘overselling’ diagnostic time when an issue can be found quickly and easily.” Our transparency is reflected in how we complete transactions. Customers are informed along the way of any issues we find. We prioritize repairs based on safety concerns, and provide information so that customers can make informed decisions based on their own priorities and budgets. Our hope is that through our efforts in transparency, open communication, and ethical practices, auto shop practices will improve to the benefit of automotive-service consumers and employees throughout Tucson.

**Impact\_on\_Pima\_County**

We’ve grown our employment by 50% in the last two years and have become an employer of choice in our local industry because of our generous benefit package (including a retirement plan), our Monday through Friday workweek, and overall positive work environment and culture—none of which are common in our industry. With plans to expand, our employment growth will continue to make a difference in our community and industry. Auto care is fraught with anxiety for the consumer. Because of our ethical standards and “people before parts” philosophy, our customers enjoy peace of mind knowing that they’re not paying for services they don’t need, aren’t being over-charged, and that we’re keeping their families safer than when they came in. We consider ourselves a part of the community and consider the community a part of us. Our mission of taking care of people is intimately tied to not only the work we do fixing and maintaining

vehicles, but also to taking care of people outside the four walls of our shop. We invest significant time and dollars to improve the lives of members of our community. We contribute to various schools (including Project Graduation to keep kids safer on graduation night) and organizations in our community. For example, we've sponsored the Law Enforcement Wives Club (LEWC) Annual Lights and Sirens Golf Tournament, which benefits Pima County law enforcement families in need.

### **Community\_Involvement**

Vistoso Automotive works to be an active part of the Tucson Community. So far in 2016, we've contributed to more than 25 local schools, charities, and community organizations. An additional project we completed this year was inspired by our past work with Ben's Bells. With our staff, customers, school kids, and community, we painted tiles now displayed as a backsplash in our refreshment area. Basis Oro Valley and Wilson K-8 School students and staff helped to make these 4"x4" pieces of art in June 2016. Like the Ben's Bells mural in our front lobby, the theme of this project is caring and kindness, and participants were given free reign to paint the tiles with this theme. Earlier this year we launched a charitable organization funding program. Pima County charitable organizations had the opportunity to apply for funds generated from the sale of our OOROO (our brand name) merchandise, including t-shirts and hats, and mugs. Community members voted for the winning charity, Earn to Learn, from among many worthy organizations. One hundred percent of the profits from the sale of the retail items will go to ETL at the end of 2016. We're launching a pro-bono initiative this holiday season where we repair vehicles without charge for those who cannot afford car care and who's everyday needs depend on having a working vehicle. We're accepting nominees through November 1st and then a separate panel of judges will pick winners to be awarded in December.

### **Why\_the\_business\_should\_be\_selected**

We founded Vistoso Automotive to make a significant impact on our industry and community. We pursue our mission and values every day in order to elevate the auto care experience, prompting customers to express their sincere appreciation and continued loyalty. Our tagline, "auto care, evolved," expresses this commitment and serves as a reminder to constantly raise the standard for our customers, our company, and our industry. One customer describes what we're doing in a review they posted on Yelp: "If it were possible to give Vistoso more than 5 stars I would. I leave this shop feeling like I still owe them money because they constantly go above and beyond for me when I'm there. It doesn't even feel like a shop: great coffee and snacks, Wifi, comfortable seating, clean bathroom, and friendly/helpful employees. Their prices are also incredible and I have never once felt like they were trying to sell me something I didn't need - quite the opposite actually. This business has changed the way I see auto repair shops and I will forever be a customer of theirs!" - Ashley Z. We're honored to have the opportunity to be recognized by the Pima County Small Business Commission. We feel that the care we give our customers and team members, the positive responses we've seen as a result, our business accomplishments, and the impact we've

made on our community merit our selection as the Pima County Small  
Business of the Year.

**Referred\_Page** <http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=301732>

Thank you, Pima County, Arizona