



Jewelers of America press release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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19th Annual JA Affiliate Design Competition Winners Announced

Winning Jewelers of America-member jeweler exhibit creativity and craftsmanship

New York, NY – Jewelers of America (JA) has announced the winners of its 19th annual Affiliate Design Competition, held during the JA New York Show, January 18-20. Designers from Alabama, Kansas, Missouri, New Jersey and Ohio took home the prizes in four categories (based on the cost of materials used): \$1,000 and under; \$1,001-\$3,000; \$3,001 and over; and a Buyer's Choice Award.

The Affiliate Design Competition features unique jewelry designed and crafted by Jewelers of America members nationwide. A panel of industry experts judged the 27 entries on craftsmanship, marketability, practicality/wearability and overall design. JA New York attendees determined the fourth honor, the Buyers' Choice Award, with a separate ballot.

“Each year, the Jewelers of America affiliate design competition showcases the exceptional talent that can be found at JA-member jewelry stores throughout the country,” says Jewelers of America Chairman John Green, Lux Bond & Green. “We congratulate all of the contestants on their award-winning designs.”

This year's designers showed a flare for the dramatic, with many of the winning pieces (*pictured on next page*) involving striking, beautifully set gemstones and high-concept designs.

The winners of the 19th annual JA Affiliate Design Competition are:

(Photos by Karen Janowski of Diamond Vision Services)



Category I (\$1,000 & Under)

Jonathan Smiddy, Regan Jewelers; Garden City, KS

Titled: "Accupressure." A rutilated quartz pendant, cut by Rick Stinson in an elongated kite-cut cab. Smiddy completed the wire fabrication with laser and torch.



Category II (\$1,001 – \$3,000)

Bill Wismar; Metal Benders Jewelry Gallery; Fairhope, AL

A handmade fancy-link necklace in 14K gold with multi-color gemstones and pavé diamonds.



Category III (\$3,001 and Over) (TIE)

Jason Baskin; The Gem Vault; Flemington, NJ

A custom-made and hand-engraved 14K white gold pendant with African cuprian tourmaline (21.54 ct) as the center stone. The stone is surrounded by pavé-set, bezel-set and channel-set diamonds totaling almost 3 carats. Custom-cut diamonds dangle from the main pendant to finish the piece.

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Category III (\$3,001 and Over) (TIE)

Randall R. Hurt; AVA Goldworks; Hannibal, MO

Concept: "The Earth is Our Pearl." A Tahitian pearl necklace with an 14K white gold and 18K yellow gold oyster-like pendant featuring sphene, black opal, moonstone, and white and natural yellow diamonds. The pendant opens and closes to reveal the intricate design inside.



Buyer's Choice Award

Mark Abbott; Mark Abbott Jewelers; Powell, OH

A pendant made of hand-sculpted black jade with a marquis-cut diamond (1.73ct) center, and six opals inlaid on sides. Abbot finished the piece with a 14K white gold bail with opal inlay.

Jewelers of America awards the winners with an engraved trophy and a framed certificate.

The Jewelers of America Affiliate Design Competition is open only to Jewelers of America members and their employees. For more information, visit www.jewelers.org or call 800-223-0673.

Special Thanks

Jewelers of America would like to recognize all participants in the 2009 JA Affiliate Design Competition:

- Mark Abbott, Mark Abbott Jewelers, Powell, OH
- Ross Arterberry, Moyer Fine Jewelers, Carmel, IN
- Peter Barr, Peter Barr Designing Jewelers, Corpus Christi, TX
- Jason Baskin, The Gem Vault, Flemington, NJ
- Sara D. Commers, Studio C Designs, St. Louis Park, MN
- Steve Copley, Copley Fine Jewelry, Vinton, IA
- Sharon Curtiss-Gal, The Gem Vault, Flemington, NJ
- Jason Fiedler, Sartor-Hamann Jewelers, Grand Island, NE
- Peter Fusaro, Bella Jewelers, New Milford, CT
- Marc Gillihan, Shelton Jewelers, Albuquerque, NM
- Jesse Hathcock, Treasures Jewelers, Glendale, AZ
- Paul Henriques, JWR Jewelers, Athens, GA
- Rhonda Henson, Kelley Jewelers, Weatherford, OK
- Timothy Hipkins, Galloway & Moseley, Sumter, SC
- David Holloway, Swift's Jewelry, Fayetteville, AR
- Randall Hurt, Ava Goldworks, Hannibal, MO
- Steven P. Kistner, Steven Paul Designs, Delafield, WI
- Greg Kooch, Parris Jewelers, Hattiesburg, MS
- Julian Lin, Warren Jewelers, Kirkland, WA
- Sean Olufson, Olufson Designs, Corvallis, OR
- Fred Pearce, Pearce Jewelers, West Lebanon, NH
- Cheryl Petroski, Gold in Art Jewelers, Mt. Dora, FL
- Chris Roussel, Roussel's Fine Jewelry & Unique Gifts, La Place, LA
- Jonathan Smiddy, Regan Jewelers, Garden City, KS
- Michael Van Ly, Maui Divers Jewelry, Honolulu, HI
- John Varner, Morning Star Jewelers, Evergreen, CO
- Bill Wismar, Metal Benders Jewelry Gallery, Fairhope, AL

Jewelers of America would also like to thank those who donated their time and expertise to serve on **the panel of judges**:

Amanda Gizzi, Jewelry Information Center; Victoria Gomelsky, *Couture Jeweler*; Cheryl Kremkow, *Modern Jeweler*; Helena Krodel, Jewelry Information Center; Andy Macaulay, Chippenhook; Teresa Novellino, *National Jeweler*; Hedda Schupak, *JCK Magazine*; Arthur Skuratowicz, GJG, Jewelry Training Center; and Tina Snyder, *MJSA Journal*.

Jewelers of America is the national trade association for businesses serving the fine jewelry retail marketplace, representing 11,000 member stores. Jewelers of America's primary purpose is to improve consumer confidence in the jewelry industry by: serving as a forum for discussion and analysis of issues; playing a leadership role in public, government and industry affairs; advocating professionalism, including high ethical, social and environmental standards; and facilitating members' access to education.

For more information about Jewelers of America, visit www.jewelers.org.

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