



March 25, 2008
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Winners Of 2008 JA Affiliate Design Competition Announced

Jewelry from Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas and Wisconsin win awards

New York, NY – Jewelers of America (JA) has announced the winners of its 18th annual Affiliate Design Competition, held during the JA New York Show, March 9-11. Designers from Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas and Wisconsin took home the first place 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 that has won design contests sponsored by JA's regional affiliates throughout 2007. This year, Jewelers of America expanded the competition by allowing submissions from member jewelers whose affiliate organization did not hold a local competition.

A panel of industry experts judged the 30 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. This year, the designers displayed an inclination for innovative designs. Many pieces involved movement and complex construction, while others emphasized elaborate detail, like the winner of the \$3,001 and over category: a necklace and earrings set with hundreds of pave diamonds in a flowing leaf design.

"Jewelers of America is pleased to recognize the talents of regional jewelers, whose designs demonstrate the remarkable jewelry available from our members nationwide," says JA Chairman John Green, Lux Bond and Green. "We congratulate all of the contestants on their award-winning designs."

The winners of the 18th annual JA Affiliate Design Competition are (Photos by Alfredo Parraga):



First Place, Category I (\$1,000 & Under)

Steven Kistner; Steven Paul Designs; Delafield, WI
Representing Wisconsin Jewelers Association
Gentleman's ring in 14-karat white gold, with 12 trapezoidal pieces – nine that move – inlaid with black onyx and diamonds totaling .44 carats.



First Place, Category II (\$1,001 – \$3,000)

Joel Wiland; J. David Jewelry; Broken Arrow, OK
Representing Oklahoma Jewelers Association
Large blue topaz pendant on white-gold omega chain, the topaz is set over a selection of trilliant and round diamonds.



First Place, Category III (\$3,001 and Over)

Ziad H. Noshie; Almaza Jewelers; Houston, TX
Representing Texas Jewelers Association
Necklace and earrings in 18-karat white gold, with more than 600 pavé-set diamonds in total and 11 freshwater pearls.



Buyer's Choice Award

Dale Hurt; Gold-N-Designs; Lee's Summit, MO
Missouri Jewelers & Watchmakers Association
Platinum and 18-karat yellow gold pendant with tanzanite, pink tourmaline, opal doublet and diamonds.

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

The JA Affiliate Design Competition is open only to JA members and their employees. Any member interested in participating in next year's competition must first enter the design competition held by their state or regional JA affiliate. For more information, visit www.jewelers.org or call 800-223-0673.

For high-resolution images of the above photographs, contact Lauren Thompson at lthompson@jewelers.org or 646-658-5817.

Special Thanks

JA would like to recognize all participants in the 2007 JA Affiliate Design Competition:

- Jason Baskin, The Gem Vault, Flemington, NJ
- Michael Boillit, Michael's Creative Jewelry, Phoenix, AZ
- Joseph Bonasso, JAB Jewelry McMurray, PA
- Kevin Cramer, R.F. Moeller Jeweler, St. Paul, MN
- Sharon Curtiss-Gal, The Gem Vault, Flemington, NJ
- Jack Demirjian, Mastercraft Jewelers, Livonia, MI
- Steph Farber, LeRoy Jewelers, Tacoma, WA
- Jason Fiedler, Sartor-Hamann, Grand Island, NE
- Peter Fusaro, Bella Jewelers, New Milford, CT
- Marcus Gillihan, Shelton Jewelers, Albuquerque, NM
- Dan Grunwald, Grunwald & Kiger Fine Jewelers Mason City, IA
- Tim Haggard, Hofmeister Jewelers, Indianapolis, IN
- Karen Hauser, Gold In Art Jewelers, Mt. Dora, FL
- Solon Holt, Cox's Gifts & Jewelry, Lebanon, TN
- Dale Hurt, Gold-N-Designs, Inc., Lee's Summit, MO
- Gary Kamin, R. C. Wahl Jewelers, Des Plaines, IL
- Mikheil Kautzengzhi, Tena's Jewelry, Elberton, GA
- Charles Kingrea, C.K. Jewelers, Palmyra, VA
- Steven Kistner, Steven Paul Designs, Delafield, WI
- Robert Mills, Amrhein's Fine Jewelry, Roanoke, VA
- Ziad H. Noshie; Almaza Jewelers; Houston, TX
- Sean Olufson, Olufson Designs, Corvallis, OR
- Michael Ponthieux, Ponthieux's Jewelry Design Greenville, SC
- Paul Ritcher, Ritcher's Diamonds & Fine Jewelry Londonderry, NH
- C.Y. Sheng, Cecil's Fine Jewelry, Little Rock, AR
- Leonard Strnad II, Vivid Diamonds, Design & Timepiece Gallery, Bay Village, OH
- Kim Tefft, Kizer Cummings, Lawrence, KS
- Matthew White, Ed White Jewelers, Cullman, AL
- Joel Wiland, J. David's Jewelry, Broken Arrow, OK
- Layne Zuelke, Pattons Fine Jewelry, Baton Rouge, LA

Jewelers of America would also like to thank those who donated their time and expertise to serve on **the panel of judges**: Beth Bernstein, Bethany B Jewelry; Elesia Dillon, *Southern Jewelry News*; Amanda Gizzi, Jewelry Information Center; Paul Holewa, *Instore* magazine; Brad Huisken, IAS Training; Matthew Kramer, *Modern Jeweler* magazine; Helena Krodell, Jeweler Information Center; Kate Peterson, Performance Concepts; Ryan Petrozello, Tiffany & CO.; Denise Solay, Denise Solay Designs; Raimie Weber; George Fillmore Goldsmith and Jewelers; and Mary Wisniewski, *National Jeweler* magazine.

For more information contact the Public Affairs Department:

Peggy Jo Donahue
Director of Public Affairs
pjdonahue@jewelers.org
(646) 658-5802

Susan Thea Posnock
Public Affairs Manager
sposnock@jewelers.org
(646) 658-5806

Lauren Thompson
Public Affairs Coordinator
lthompson@jewelers.org
(646) 658-5817

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

Jewelers of America is the national trade association for retail jewelers. With 11,000 member stores, JA is both a center of knowledge for the jeweler and an advocate for professionalism and high social, ethical, and environmental standards in the jewelry trade. JA provides access to meaningful educational programs and services and leadership in public and industry affairs.

###