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BUSINESS

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Hoffman Wins Award of Distinction

A Blooming Landscape Company

By JOAN LOWNDS

Mike Hoffman has always had a green thumb. The president of the award-winning Hoffman Landscapes got his first lawn account cutting grass when he was in the first grade, and never looked back.

His business, established in Wilton in 1987, recently won a 2009 Distinction Award by The Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) in the 40th Annual Environmental Awards Program. "Hoffman's winning design/build plan was for a Wilton home, and focused on linking a new patio expansion with a kitchen, seating and dining area as one large outdoor space," Mr. Hoffman said.

"We redid the existing patio and linked it together with the kitchen to make it flow," he said. The design fit the lifestyle of his clients, who like to entertain.

"Hoffman's LEED-certified landscape architects use environmentally friendly designs. For example, there is "zero net water runoff," he said.

The Professional Landcare Network represents about 3,500 green industry service providers nationwide that specialize in design/build/installation, lawn care, interior plantscaping and landscape management. The awards program "reflects the association's commitment to creating and preserving the natural beauty of the landscape. "It's important and gratifying to discover how your peers feel about your work & to compare your efforts to other projects around the country." He continues, "If you're fortunate enough to win, the award tells you and your customers that your work is among the best in the land. In addition, the honor is a morale booster for everyone involved and puts a real charge into the workplace."

Brian Cossari, the lead landscape architect on the



Hoffman Landscapes was recently honored with a Distinction Award by The Professional Landcare Network. Hoffman's winning plan for a Wilton home focused on linking together a new patio expansion with a kitchen and dining area as one large outdoor space.

project, said he was faced with solving several construction



Brian Cossari, LA and lead designer on the award-winning project

issues, including crushed footing drains causing flooding and erosion, faulty septic piping and a sloping grade.

After removing the existing patio and replacing drains and piping, Mr. Cossari designed a series of patio areas that were tiered and linked together by plantings. "Fairy roses, nepeta, lady's mantle and spirea were added around the terrace. A pergola with Japanese wisteria over the dining table cuts down on reflective sun," he said.

This is Hoffman's Seventh PLANET award. The company took home Grand Awards in

2008, 2006, 2002 as well as a Merit Award in 2001.



Mike Hoffman President Hoffman Landscapes, Inc.

The business, which began as Mr. Hoffman's childhood lawn service, expanded when he attended college at Clemson University in South Carolina, where he studied civil engineering and finance. "I used it to pay my way through college," Mr. Hoffman said. "During spring break, I was mowing lawns and doing tree removal."

Each year, he devoted more and more time to the company. Then he decided to make it a full time career after graduation. "We've seen steady growth ever since," said Mr. Hoffman who now lives

in Redding with his wife, Sandra and their three children.

In the early 90s, he added the design/build services, along with property maintenance, installation and snow services.

It is through his customers, that Mr. Hoffman hears of the many charities he is actively involved with, including the Center for Hope in Darien, a counseling center for terminally ill patients and their families. Each year, Hoffman Landscapes helps coordinate the lighting of approximately 2,000 luminaries throughout town, part of the "Hope Lights Lives" benefit for the Center.

But Mr. Hoffman's charity work does not stop there. The company is also involved with Toys for Tots, Time for Lyme, & the Make a Wish Foundation.

"I hear about them from my customers," he said. "I have the best customers in the world and I want to give back to them."

Hoffman Landscapes has three Connecticut locations: Wilton, Greenwich and Washington. To find out more, call 203-834-9656 or visit: www.HoffmanLandscapes.com