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Morrisville chamber honors small businesses

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The Morrisville Chamber of Commerce presented its first-ever small business of the year award to Atlantic Tire & Service Thursday during its 17th annual meeting at the Hilton of Raleigh-Durham Airport at Research Triangle Park.

"I am thrilled about the award," said Anthony Blackman, owner of Atlantic Tire & Service. "I am proud to be associated with the chamber; they do a fantastic job with community economic development and have a great staff."

To determine this year's winner, small businesses were critiqued on having a sound financial standing, a high level of customer service, a followed strategic plan and involvement in the chamber.

Members also heard from the keynote speaker, N.C. Department of Transportation Secretary Lyndo Tippet, who addressed traffic topics related to Morrisville and western Wake County residents. He spoke of the importance of gap funding and the possibility of toll roads to fund the I-540 outer loop project.

Tippet also talked about the idea of light rail transit in the Triangle. He said if the Triangle doesn't invest in light rail transit at this time, "it will never happen. ... [We will have] a better quality of life if we make commitments now," he said.

The evening also included the chamber's celebration of the year's progress with the hiring of its new president Sharon Rosche, a net increase of 40 new members and the development of the member-to-member discount program. Chair Dan Dzamba encouraged continued growth in chamber membership, a more interactive and user-friendly Web site and an increased partnership with the Town of Morrisville.

More than 230 people attended. While many members came for the presentation of the small business of the year award and hear Tippet's comments, others used the evening to network.

"I'm here to meet new people and get involved," said Laura Piercy of Edge Office.

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