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# KANSAS CITY BUSINESS JOURNAL

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## Area companies are finalists for entrepreneur award

Kansas City Business Journal

**Ernst & Young LLP** on Wednesday announced finalists for its Entrepreneur of the Year award in the Central Midwest.

An independent judging panel comprising regional business, academic and community leaders chose the finalists, Ernst & Young said in a release. Winners will be announced on June 18.

"These finalists are the best of the best, embodying the unique spirit of entrepreneurship," Randy Buseman, strategic growth markets partner for Ernst & Young's Kansas City office, said in the release. "They positively impact our region in a major way, through jobs, community growth and development and innovation."

Kansas City-area award finalists for the Central Midwest are:

- Keith Molzer, president of [Balance Innovations LLC](#), Lenexa
- Charles Berkel, chairman of [Berkel & Co. Contractors Inc.](#), Bonner Springs
- Greg Graves, CEO of [Burns & McDonnell](#), Kansas City
- Robert Hatch, CEO of [Cereal Ingredients Inc.](#), Leavenworth
- Bob Cutler, CEO of [Creative Consumer Concepts](#), Overland Park
- Joe Smith, president of Embassy Landscape Group Inc., Riverside
- Bob White, CEO of [IDEX Inc.](#), Overland Park
- Dave Scheer, CEO of [Inland Truck Parts Co.](#), Overland Park
- Michael Haverty, chairman and president of [Kansas City Southern](#), Kansas City
- Gary Walker, CEO of [Magic Touch Cleaning Inc.](#), Lee's Summit
- Dr. F. Nicholas Franano, founder and director; William Whitaker, vice president and general counsel of [Proteon Therapeutics Inc.](#), Kansas City
- Phillip Short, CEO of [ViraCor LLC](#), Lee's Summit

Regional award winners will be eligible for consideration in the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year 2008 national program, whose winners will be announced at the annual awards gala in Palm Springs, Calif., on Nov. 15.

This is the 22nd year for Ernst & Young's awards program.

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