



**ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AWARD**

Pauline Lee  
Owner - Frangipani Nailbars

**YOUNG BUSINESSWOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD**

Brigitte Sitzberger  
Managing Director, B-ASIA Human Capital Consulting

**SOCIETAL CONTRIBUTION AWARD**

Sue Ferry  
Director, River of Hearts

**BUSINESSWOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD**

Cherry Chu  
Vice President, Jiangyin Venture Interior Systems

**EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AWARD**

Deborah Lightwood  
Training Director, Keystone Leadership

**LEADERSHIP IN BUSINESS AWARD**

Eddie Chan  
Manager, KABB

# Shanghai Businesswoman of the Year

The achievements of Shanghai's businesswomen were recognized at a recent awards ceremony

by WAN LIXIN

**O**n Saturday March 5, The Expatriate Professional Women's Society of Shanghai (EPWS) and City Weekend magazine recognized Shanghai's exceptional businesswomen with the first annual Businesswoman of the Year Awards. Cherry Chu, vice president of Jiangyin Venture Interior System, was named the city's Businesswoman of the Year at a gala dinner celebration at the Grant Hyatt Hotel, Shanghai. Chu won the award for her contributions in creating, building, developing and running one of the leading automotive interior systems suppliers in China.

"We wanted to organize these Awards to gain recognition for the hardworking and inspirational women of Shanghai, in recognition of those individuals who strive toward the highest levels of professional accomplishment, excel in their chosen field and have devoted time and energy to their community," said Alison Hassanein, EPWS President.

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This is the first year of the awards but the response has been overwhelming. "We received 60 forms across all 6 categories. The quality of nominees was high and it was a difficult task to pick on one winner per award, but everyone who has been nominated feels honored and has and it's a great recognition for the individuals. We are hoping that this event will happen annually," said Hassanein.

Nominees must be women currently resident and working in Shanghai, with Chinese citizens fully eligible, but because of the EPWS's nature, response from local companies were low.

"Entrepreneurs in my view share determination, patience, flair and innovation and are generally focused on their goals - this does not matter what their nationality is," Hassanein continued. "The challenges of doing business today means it is hard for anyone to succeed, man or woman. In China there are very few senior business-

women, which could present additional barriers in a male dominated culture."

In China, women enjoy equal legal status, but when it comes to business, barriers exist. Statistics show that female entrepreneurs account for 20 percent of the national total, though 41 percent of the country's private business owners are women. In addition, pregnancy and the arrival of children often means a temporary hiatus in the pursuit of professional objectives, and for those young mothers who have to juggle between careers and families, it is harder for them to excel in the workplace.

"These candidates appeared younger compared with similar competitions held in China," said one panel judge, adding that this may be because China still places a high premium on seniority. "Another phenomenon is that some candidates have young children, meaning they have pursued their studies and proved their excellence while their children are still small."

EPWS is a professional women's organization that bring like-minded women together. Every month EPWS organize events with speakers on different topics. For more information, see [www.epws-shanghai.org](http://www.epws-shanghai.org).