

The National Cosmetology Association of Minnesota VERA SLATER MEDALLION

presented to

Steven Lai

October 16, 2005

Vera Slater was a member of the National Cosmetology Association of Minnesota who gave to her professional association in many ways that exceed the commitment level of the majority of association members, and she was truly part of the infinite success of NCA. In this spirit, the medallion is given to others who have shown Vera's high level of dedication and are a part of the continued success of NCA of Minnesota, as well as those who form the basis and criteria for those yet to come. Past Vera Slater Medallion recipients who welcome the 2005 candidate are:

*Alice Trowbridge~1980; Kay Duchene~1981; Richard M. Swinney~1982; Stan Foss~1985;
Don Pendergast~1986; Debi Anderson~1987; John Doll~1988; Sharon K. Carlson~1989;
Danny Ewert~1990; Yvonne Berg~1991; Richard Steine~1992; Jerry Nord~1993;
Beatrice Clark~1994; Marla Tracey~1995; Carol Lyman~1996; Louise Leidner~1997;
Sue Ferkingstad~1998; Bev Getschel~1999; Jim Turner~2000; Marianne Borgeson~2001;
Susan Brinkhaus~2002; Steve Ukes~2002; Judy Garcia~2003; Sue Faulk~2003; Bob Salmonson~2004.*

The 2005 Vera Slater Medallion is awarded to a man whose professional cosmetology life very closely follows the precepts of Vera, herself. He is known to say, "I believe that the more you share, the more you gain." With a natural flair in the craft of his industry, the associated people skills needed to succeed, enthusiasm for competition, personal dedication and belief in education, he is also out in front for his commitment to his professional association, which he joined as a student member in 1986.

His various national and international competitions include the National Coiffure Championship, and his achievements earned him positions as Trainer in Taiwan, Japan, Canada and the USA. He was named Trainer for the 1994 USA/NCA Ladies Student Hairdressing Team and represented the USA at the 1994 World Championship of Hairdressing in London. The Team received the "Continental-Americas Award" that honors the highest scoring Student Team in North and South America, and a team member captured an individual bronze medal. He was also named Trainer for the World Championship of Hairdressing/USA Ladies Team, Tokyo, and the winning team in the Taiwan Skilled Olympics.

His platform artistry has showcased in the USA, Canada, Taiwan and Japan. His first feature presentation, "Spotlight" in Hair, Beauty and Fashion was the opening show for the Chicago Cosmetologists Association in 1991. His photo work is published in notable hair fashion magazines and industry publications in North and South America, Asia and Europe. For two years, he led NCA of Minnesota's Education Committee. He is a member of NCA's HairAmerica Education Committee and was Ladies Hair Designer for the NCA 1994 and 1998 Fall/Winter Design Teams. As Design Team Director for the NCA 1999 Spring/Summer Collection, E.A.S.E., he created one of the most memorable design collections for the NCA.

He served NCA of Minnesota as President, 2001-2003, and the Association realized a 33% membership growth and 10 of 15 total national awards under his leadership. The national Association named him State President of the Year for two consecutive years. He has been an innovative committee member and Chairman of the Heartland Beauty Expo and currently is a member of the National Cosmetology Association's Board of Directors and leads the national membership committee. In protection of the industry, he served the Minnesota Cosmetology Advisory Council as Chairman, 2000-2004, and successfully guided the Association through progressive legislative change.

NCA of Minnesota presents the Vera Slater Medallion to a man who is motivated, full of energy and has the dedication symbolized by this award. Steven Lai says he gets his inspiration from others, but the fact is he inspires others all around him. In recognition of all that he accomplished and all that he has given to his family, friends, the community and everyone within the cosmetology industry and its Association, NCA of Minnesota says "thank you, Steven" with its highest recognition.