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Press Inquiries:
Vanessa Coria
757-340-7425

vanessa@themeridiangroup.com

Art Gallery and Frame Shop in Spartanburg, S.C. Receives National Small Business Award *Art Lounge named 2019 Indie Award winner, just in time for Small Business Saturday*

VIRGINIA BEACH — With Small Business Saturday (Nov. 30) fast approaching, [Independent We Stand](#) is pleased to announce the winner of the 2019 [Independent Small Business of the Year](#) award — [Art Lounge](#) in Spartanburg, S.C. This year's Indie Award recipient not only specializes in custom framing for art and sentimental objects but also takes pride in featuring Spartanburg-based artists in its gallery to promote a thriving community of artists. Since opening its doors in 2011, Art Lounge has also helped raise more than \$25,000 to benefit numerous community nonprofits.

Each year, Independent We Stand, a national small business movement, empowers Americans to recognize businesses like Art Lounge for their focus on customers and community through the Indie Award.

While Art Lounge specializes in custom framing, it is also an asset to the local artist community. The Art Lounge gallery features the works of more than 20 local artists along with some regional works. In addition to providing a local place to display and sell their works, Art Lounge hosts monthly art walks to help promote local artists and features nearly two dozen vendors at a biannual outdoor artists' market. To date, Art Lounge has helped artists sell more than \$50,000 of their creations to art lovers in the region.

"As a small business owner, I've made it my mission over the last eight years, to give back to the community that has shown overwhelming support for both my framing shop and the artists who display their works in our gallery," said Brandi Dice, owner of Art Lounge. "Being recognized for giving back to the community by the community is a great feeling. It means we're doing something right — our vision of a fun, laid-back environment where all people feel welcome is resonating. With this grand prize, we can share our vision with even more people."

Of equal importance to her support for local artists is Dice's fundraising efforts for local nonprofits. Over the years, Art Lounge has hosted numerous fundraisers. For [PAWS](#), which stands for Paws Animal Wildlife Sanctuary, Art Lounge brings rehabilitated animals to the shop to educate and promote responsible animal care. Other beneficiaries of Art Lounge philanthropic efforts include:

- [Carmen's Rescue](#), a nonprofit animal rescue
- [Monroe's Mighty Mission](#), a nonprofit providing food and other necessities to animals in need
- [Piedmont Care](#), a nonprofit providing HIV/AIDS care, prevention and advocacy in the region

"We couldn't be more pleased to recognize Art Lounge as the Indie Award winner this year. The shop is a perfect example of how small, independent businesses incorporate the community into their day-to-day business model," said Bill Brunelle, co-founder of Independent We Stand. "Serving as both a framing shop and a gallery for local artists, Art Lounge exemplifies the spirit



and impact of small businesses on us all. With Small Business Saturday just days away, this is the perfect chance to support not only this year's winner but all the independent businesses in your community.”

Art Lounge will receive a prize package valued at more than \$25,000, including:

- Branding, advertising and public relations makeover from independent advertising agency — [The Meridian Group](#) — valued at \$25,000
- \$1,000 STIHL equipment certificate
- Plaque to display at Art Lounge
- Public relations and social media recognition

The 10 submissions that received the highest number of public votes online were deemed finalists. A panel of judges chose the winner of “The Indie.”

The top 10 semifinalists including the winner, in alphabetical order, are:

- [ABC Discount Appliances](#), an appliance and electronics store in Pennsauken, N.J.
- [Art Lounge](#), a custom frame shop and art gallery in Spartanburg, S.C.
- [Artisana Gallery](#), a gallery for local artisans in Pacific Grove, Calif.
- [Beacon Services & Appliances](#), an HVAC and appliances sales and repair store in Beverly Hills, Fla.
- [Corner Financial Corporation](#), a consumer and business lender in Orlando, Fla.
- [Dana's Fine Jewelry, Inc.](#), a jewelry store in Newton, N.C.
- [From My Shelf Books & Gifts](#), a new and used bookstore and gift shop in Wellsboro, Pa.
- [Hen & Chicks Studio](#), a quilting and scrapbooking studio in Conrad, Iowa
- [Travis Jean Emporium](#), a gift shop featuring carefully curated Georgia-made products in Macon, Ga.
- [Ziegfield Florist and Gifts](#), a novelty gifts and floral shop in Maple Shade, N.J.

Both the quarter and semifinalists for this year's Indie Award will receive an Independent We Stand [Premium Membership](#) for life.

To learn more about the Independent Small Business of the Year award, visit www.IndieBizAward.com or www.independentwestand.org.

About Independent We Stand

[Independent We Stand](#) is a nationwide movement of independent small business owners whose mission is to inspire other small business owners to better understand and celebrate their locally owned status while educating consumers about the importance and strong economic benefits of supporting them. The Independent We Stand movement is sponsored by [STIHL Inc.](#) [STIHL products](#) are sold through more than 9,000 [authorized local STIHL dealers](#) from coast to coast – not big box stores. Associate sponsors include [Nationwide Marketing Group](#), [PPG](#) and [Do it Best Corp.](#)

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