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13 finalists named for Entrepreneur of the Year

By Alvin Foo

MS ANNIE Gan is a rare breed - a successful woman entrepreneur in the male-dominated construction industry.

Yesterday, the managing director of Jian Huang Construction was one of two women named among 13 finalists for the Entrepreneur of the Year Award.

The other was Ms Yvette Chiang, director of Rustic Nirvana spa.

Ms Gan, who has been in the industry for 15 years, said in Mandarin: 'Hard work and determination are the key ingredients. Besides, we women have good intuition and are able to communicate better.'

'I hope my being named as a finalist will encourage other women to step forward and make a difference in the business world.'

Started in 1989, the Entrepreneur of the Year Award is an annual accolade given out by the Rotary Club of Singapore as well as the Association of Small and Medium Enterprises to recognise local entrepreneurs who have shown excellence in business while significantly contributing to the economy and society.

Each year, candidates undergo a judging process that involves interviews, site visits and careful evaluation of qualitative and quantitative records before they are selected by a panel of judges.

Noted OCBC Bank's head of enterprise banking, Mr Sng Seow Wah, whose bank is the award's main sponsor: 'It shows that women entrepreneurs are a force to be reckoned with, that the entrepreneurial fraternity is not solely an all-boys' club.'

Other notable businessmen among the 13 finalists are Mr Kang Puay Seng and Mr Loh Jwee Poh. Both are from the Mr Bean Group - famous for its soya bean drink.

This year will also see two new sub-category awards - for e-commerce and social contribution.

These awards highlight the organising committee's endeavour 'to keep the award relevant and dynamic in view of the ever-changing business landscape, and the need for entrepreneurs to do likewise for their businesses', said the Rotary Club of Singapore's Mr Paliath Mohandas, the award committee's co-chairman.

The overall winner will be unveiled at a ceremony on Oct 11.



POWERING AHEAD: Ms Yvette Chiang (above), director of rustic Nirvana spa, and Ms Annie Gan, managing director of Jian Huang Construction, made it to a list of 13 finalists for the Entrepreneur of the Year Award. OCBC Bank head of enterprise banking Sng Seow Wah says Ms Chiang and Ms Gan are solid proof that women entrepreneurs 'are a solid force to be reckoned with'. OCBC is the award's main sponsor. -- PHOTOS: LIANHE ZAOBAO

THE FINALISTS

Mr Lawrence Low, Alpatron Asia managing director

Mr David Chung, Biomedia Group executive chairman

Mr Neo Nam Heng, Cheng Yong Credit Enterprises chairman

Mr Sam Yap, Cherie Hearts Group International executive chairman

Mr Chan Chong Beng, Goodrich Global chairman

Mr Jay Chiu, Grandwork Interior managing director

Mr Roger Tan, Image Creative Design director; Mr Elson Tan, Image Creative Design director;
and Mr Randy Tan, Image Creative Design director

Ms Annie Gan, Jian Huang Construction managing director

Mr Kang Puay Seng,

Mr Bean Group managing director; and Mr Loh Jwee Poh, Mr Bean Group executive director

Ms Yvette Chiang, Rustic Nirvana director

Mr Gerald Lim, Subtle Senses chief executive officer

Mr Lau Kok Hui, Vector Infotech managing director

Mr Elvin Tan, Xin Ming Hua managing director

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