

Business Report The Chronicle with Bloomberg

Bay Area business owners honored by Women Presidents' Organization

Sunday, May 9, 2010



Sonu Ratra

none

Lori Matthews and Sonu Ratra are being honored by the Women Presidents' Organization as owners of two of the nation's 50 fastest-growing woman-owned businesses.

Matthews, 54, owns San Francisco's Isoflex, a four-person company that imports nonradioactive isotopes from Russia and distributes them to laboratories and research institutes around the world. The company's gross revenue jumped from \$7.3 million in 2007 to \$9.1 million in 2009.

Ratra, 38, is co-owner, with her husband Amar Panchal, of Sunnyvale-based Akraya, which places high-skilled consultants with corporate clients. Akraya - the Sanskrit word for commerce - employs 30 people in the Bay Area and another 30 in India and

currently has about 220 consultants in the field. It grew from \$20 million in gross revenues in 2007 to \$32.3 million in 2009.

The third edition of the annual list was released by the WPO, a nonprofit organization with 1,400 members and 84 chapters, and American Express OPEN, the AmEx division dedicated to small business. The group said the top 50 woman-owned firms generated \$2.3 billion in combined gross sales in 2009 and averaged 128 employees. WPO's member firms average \$13 million in annual revenues and have 97 employees.

"There are 10 million women-owned businesses in the US that (employ) over 13 million people and generate nearly \$2 trillion in annual sales," Nancy Hood, vice president at American Express OPEN, said in a statement.

- *Tom Abate*

This article appeared on page D - 7 of the San Francisco Chronicle