

O'Keefe & Associates and Director Top Winners at 6th Annual Turnaround Awards



THE M&A ADVISOR

Competing against industry leaders from across the nation, financial consulting firm **O'Keefe & Associates** won the **Turnaround of the Year Award** (Lower Middle Market) and the **Industrial Manufacturing/Distribution Deal of the Year Award** for the successful turnaround of Graceland Fruit. **Meagan Hardcastle**, a Director in O'Keefe's Strategic Advisory Services Group, was also individually honored with the prestigious **Turnaround Professional of the Year Award** in recognition of her body of work in the industry.

The Turnaround Awards Gala was held on January 31, 2012 at the Colony Hotel in Palm Beach. An independent judging committee of industry experts reviewed over 160 nominations representing over 250 companies to determine the ultimate recipients of the awards. The winners were announced "Academy Awards style" to a sold-out crowd at the Gala event, which was hosted by Bloomberg Television's Carol Massar and featured a keynote address by Dennis Shaughnessy, Chairman of FTI Consulting. "O'Keefe & Associates and Meagan Hardcastle represent the best of the turnaround, restructuring and distressed investing industry in 2011, and earned this honor by standing out in a group of very impressive finalists" said Roger Aguinaldo, CEO of The M&A Advisor.

Meagan assists middle market companies with performance improvement, turnarounds, bank workouts, financial restructuring, business valuation, and other related corporate finance services. She has a strong focus on technical expertise and fundamental disciplines; she is a Certified Turnaround Professional and a Certified Fraud Examiner, is Accredited in Business Valuation, and holds an MBA from the University of Chicago. Meagan began her career in commercial banking where she discovered her passion for helping troubled companies. Since then, she has built a successful track record working on a wide variety of deals. In 2010 she was recognized as a leading middle market finance professional by the M&A Advisor at its inaugural 40 Under 40 Awards event, and she has received similar recognition for her professional achievements from Crain's Detroit Business and D-Business Magazine.

In her most recent role as Chief Restructuring Officer and Interim CEO of Graceland Fruit Meagan executed a remarkable turnaround, protecting equity value, keeping ownership intact, and preserving much needed jobs in the community. Meagan demonstrated tremendous leadership and perseverance in successfully guiding the Company, its Board of Directors, and its employees through a challenging and complex turnaround process. John Dimovski, a Director with O'Keefe & Associates and a key member of the CRO team, successfully led several critical restructuring initiatives that drove the Company's recovery. This award-winning turnaround was achieved through the CRO team's unwavering resilience, creative ingenuity, tireless work ethic, and extraordinary commitment to the client.



Carol Massar, Bloomberg Television's National Chief Correspondent and Roger Aguinaldo, CEO of The M&A Advisor with Meagan Hardcastle



Meagan Hardcastle and John Dimovski



Alan DeVore and Troy Terwilliger, CEO and CFO of Graceland Fruit, Meagan Hardcastle, John Dimovski and Patrick O'Keefe of O'Keefe & Associates, and Bill Fetterman, Principal of Advanced Manufacturing Group



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