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## THE ROUNDUP

## GOLDEN GROVE: IT'S TROPHY TIME FOR ONE OKIE

• BY HOLLY WALL •

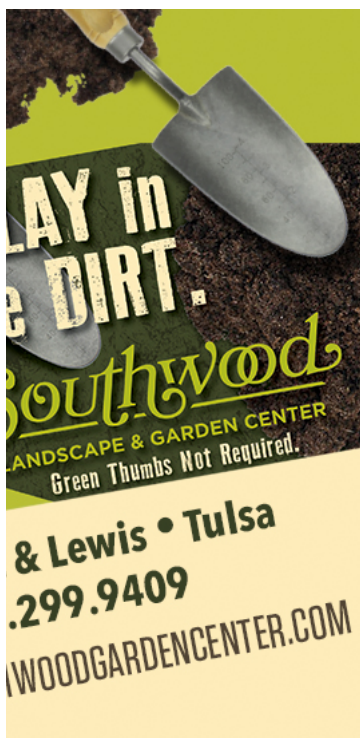
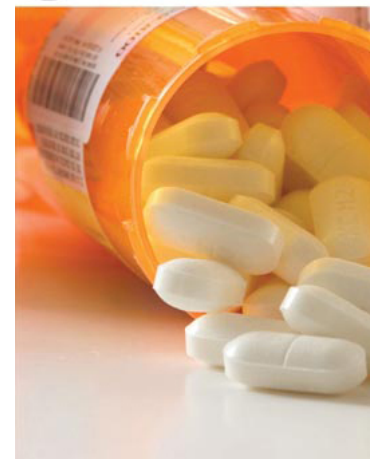
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On Sunday, thousands of Oklahomans watched as some 25 movie and television makers took home Golden Globe awards—awards manufactured in their home state.

Society Awards, which occupies a “tiny” (according to [BuzzFeed](#)) warehouse in Grove, Oklahoma, 100 miles east of Tulsa, spearheaded the award’s redesign in 2008 and manufactures it, along with the ESPY, the MTV Moon Man, the MTV Movie Award, the Clio, “and many, many other awards,” BuzzFeed reported. The company also created new badges for the [Grove Police Department](#).

Company CEO David Moritz, who attended high school in Grove and college on the East Coast, was on track to be a lawyer when he decided to set out on his own venture. According to a profile last week in [Inc.](#) magazine, “a friend tipped Moritz off that the awards industry lacked a clear front-runner—he says it was a hodge-podge of small trophy shops and custom manufacturers. He wanted to create a company with Hollywood appeal.”

“I wanted to make a company the client could be proud of—with the cachet, exclusivity, and style to match,” Moritz told the magazine.

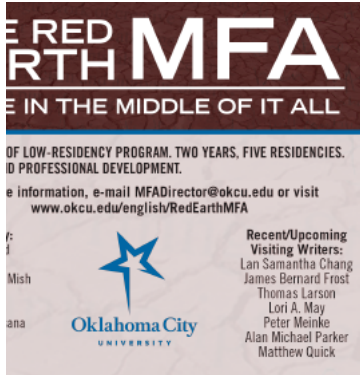
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Even the hallway leading to the manufacturer's warehouse is trophy material. Moritz described it to BuzzFeed's Tessa Stuart as "a 50-foot hallway, the walls and ceiling of which are coated in a thick, vinyl, gold wallpaper. Gold chandeliers hang from the ceiling, and gold sconces line the walls."

"Nobody ever, uh, comes there," he told her. "But just in case they do, it will be a really nice, um, hallway."

Society Awards is based in Queens, but his manufacturing operation was lured to Grove last summer when the city doubled the size of its industrial park and promised free land to any business that committed to staying more than five years, *Bloomberg Businessweek* reported in June. "Grove officials see the push as a way to diversify the town, which has long relied on the aerospace industry, primarily manufacturing parts for fighter planes," *Bloomberg* reported. City Manager Bruce Johnson told the magazine, "Because rural America is more likely to grow a Fortune 500 company than to recruit one, we are betting on small businesses."

Moritz's small business—it employs about 14 and recorded \$2.5 million in revenue in 2011—built its brand by first winning a commission from *Billboard* magazine to create a "small, acrylic memento for Neil Diamond."

"Over the past three years, Society Awards has established sturdier footing in the industry by working with a number of high-profile clients, including the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, the organization that created the Golden Globes 70 years ago," *Inc.* reported.

Moritz's team spent more than two years bouncing ideas off the HFPA before striking a chord with the president at the time, Philip Berk. The shining idea was an update of the statuette's almost matte, yellowish exterior to a richer, shinier gold. The HFPA was also interested in changing the kind of marble that was used for the base of the award ...

What did getting the Golden Globe contract do for Moritz's business? He calls it "monumental."

Moritz explained the manufacturing process to BuzzFeed's reporter:

The Globe, made of die cast zinc, starts off in a huge casting machine, Moritz says. "Basically, you would use it for auto parts. It creates a really hard, quality, dense metal that we can then polish to a mirror-shiny finish." That's all done by hand, he adds.

Next, the awards (are) electroplated. "Electroplating is when you have an actual molecular bond of one metal to the surface of another. It's about a dozen steps that build up different layers of silver and copper underneath, and then the final layer is 24-karat gold," Moritz explains.

The awards are assembled a year in advanced and stored, snuggled in bubble wrap at the factory in Grove, then delivered to Beverly Hilton Hotel on the day of the Golden Globes ceremony. Next, Moritz said, he plans to go for the Academy.

"We don't yet make the Oscars—we hope to soon—but we make pretty much everything else," he told BuzzFeed.

