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Service

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grows old

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By Kayla Bunge

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MONROE -- Charlie Baumann thought he was too old to be nominated.

And when it came time for Green County's first Young Professional of the Year to receive his award, he wasn't even there.

"That said, I was both surprised and honored," Baumann, 43, said of being the named the award-winner during Thursday night's event for young professionals.

"Being a young professional in a place like Green County is especially meaningful," Baumann said. "The decisions we make daily not only impact our careers and organizations, but have a profound effect on the prosperity of the small communities we live in as well."

He said Green County is "very dependent" on the growth and stability of the organizations based here.

"If we worked in Madison or Milwaukee or Chicago, the impact we make as individuals just wouldn't be the same," he said.

Baumann is president of Integrated Marketing Solutions, one of The Swiss Colony's family of companies. He holds a bachelor's and master's degree in direct marketing from Northwestern University and received his executive Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Baumann also is involved in the community. He

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has served as president of the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Green County and Green County Family YMCA boards and as a member of the Monroe Rebels soccer board. He recently served as the chairman of the Association for a Better Community and Schools (ABCs), a citizens group that worked to pass the Monroe schools referendum. He also is a youth basketball coach and school volunteer.

His success as a young professional comes mostly from "being in the right place at the right time," Baumann said.

He said at first, he was "more focused on the immediate job and the hands-on impact I made personally."

"As time has gone on, I've placed greater emphasis on helping others succeed, giving back to the community and the time I spend with my wife and children," he said.

Baumann and his wife, Wendy, have two children: Kelley, 10, and Nick, 8.

Based on his experience, he believes the way to foster a healthy environment for young professionals in Green County is to "have the right career opportunities for young people."

"That requires that we have more businesses and growing businesses, and that we do a good job of communicating that opportunities exist here," Baumann said.

He added Green County "needs to be a place where young people want to live," which is what makes things like strong schools, good medical care and retail and restaurant options vital.

Baumann said the most successful people he knows "work hard, are good listeners, focus on the success of the overall organization and are highly trusted."

And for young professionals in Green County, he suggests they get involved in the community.

"The success of our organizations is so highly dependent on making our communities a good place to live," Baumann said.

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