Elevations Credit Union wins Baldrige Award

by Doug Storum on November 12, 2014

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — Boulder-based Elevations Credit Union has become the fourth organization in Colorado to receive the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, the nation’s highest presidential honor for performance excellence through innovation, improvement and visionary leadership.

U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker made the announcement Wednesday. Past Colorado winners of the award include Poudre Valley Hospital in Fort Collins, Monfort College of Business at the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley and CH2M Hill Inc. of Denver. In all, 105 awards have been presented to 99 organizations, including six repeat winners. Baldrige served as the U.S. secretary of commerce from 1981 until his death in 1987.

Elevations is a member-owned nonprofit credit union serving more than 106,000 people through 11 branches and 332 employees in Boulder, Broomfield, Larimer and Adams counties. It has more than $1.4 billion in assets, and reported $66 million in gross revenue and $9.5 million in net revenue in 2013.

“This is a tremendous honor for Elevations Credit Union,” said Gerry Agnes, president and chief executive of the credit union, in a prepared statement. “I am blessed to work with our passionate staff who daily demonstrate their commitment to provide solutions for a better life for our membership and community. Elevations is truly a special organization; one that I am proud to say is the best place I’ve ever worked.”

An independent board of examiners recommended this year’s recipients from a field of 22 applicants after evaluating them in the areas of leadership; strategic planning; customer focus; measurement, analysis and knowledge management; workforce focus; operations focus; and results, all part of the Baldrige criteria that applicants use to guide their operations, improve performance and achieve sustainable results.

To receive the award, an organization must have a role-model organizational management system that ensures continuous improvement in delivering products and/or services, demonstrates efficient and effective operations, and which provides a way of engaging and
responding to customers and other stakeholders. The award is not given for specific products or services.

The award is given in six categories: manufacturing, service, small business, health care, education and nonprofit, but the program is not required to have a recipient in each one. The award program is administered by the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, which is based at and managed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Boulder.

“I am thrilled to congratulate the 2014 Baldrige Award recipients who have found a proven path to success through the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence — the heart of the Baldrige Award,” Pritzker said in a prepared statement.

The 2014 Baldrige Award will be presented in April ceremony during the Quest for Excellence conference in Baltimore, Md.