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## **Chicago's Sittercity.com Honored for Innovation in Business UPS Recognizes Online Caregiver-Matching Service in Global Contest**

Realizing that parents were desperate to find reliable caregivers as she babysat through college, Genevieve Thiers founded Sittercity.com in 2001. An online database of nannies, tutors, pet sitters, elder caregivers, and house sitters in cities across the United States, Sittercity.com is a valuable resource that addresses many people's need to find a trusted caregiver.

And it's also one of the world's most innovative businesses.

UPS, the world's largest package delivery company and a global leader in supply chain services, today announced that Sittercity.com took first place in the company's third UPS Best "Out-of-the-Box" Small Business Contest, a global competition. An international panel of small business experts reviewed more than 1,000 contest entries from across the globe and awarded Thiers with the first-place prize - US\$25,000 in cash from UPS and a cash prize of US\$2,000 from contest co-sponsor IBM.

Thiers will accept her prize during the UPS Global Small Business Forum in Atlanta on Tuesday, Nov. 13.

"UPS is committed to helping small businesses grow globally - in part because UPS itself started out as a small business 100 years ago," said Kurt Kuehn, UPS senior vice president, worldwide sales and marketing. "UPS understands that small business owners are pressed for time and need to focus on running and building their core businesses, so UPS makes shipping and supply chain management easy and fast for small businesses like Sittercity.com - whether they're shipping around the corner or around the world."

Thiers worked her way through college by babysitting for more than 30 families in the Boston area. Over time, she realized how difficult it was for parents to find reliable sitters, so she launched the company in Boston in 2001 with an armful of 20,000 fliers. Thiers hand-delivered the Sittercity.com message to more than 12 major Boston-area colleges and found more than 600 eager babysitters in the first three weeks. Since then, the company has moved its headquarters to Chicago and has grown rapidly - expanding into markets across the United States.

"Sittercity.com solves the dilemma of not being able to find a sitter," Thiers said. "Parents no longer have an excuse to miss social events, work-related events, and other adult-oriented activities. They can now trust Sittercity.com to provide a reliable sitter to watch their children."

By creating online profiles, parents and sitters can search Sittercity.com for matches. Parents can post jobs, obtain references from sitters, and follow a four-step screening process to ensure that they hire a quality caregiver. Sitters and parents can request background checks, read and post reviews, as well as use Sittercity.com's interactive rate calculator to determine fair pay.

"The features on our site enable parents and sitters to have peace of mind and feel confident that they can find a good match," Thiers said. "This is my way of helping sitters and parents connect."

When Thiers first came up with the idea to launch a Web site for parents and sitters, she took it to investors and found no interest, so she had to rely on family members to fund the site and recruited a couple of friends to build it. While her friends built the site, Thiers continued to work at her day job at IBM, pursue her master's degree in opera, and - in her free time - distribute fliers to recruit babysitters for Sittercity.com. In September 2001, Thiers had only the 30 families she sat for in college on Sittercity.com.

Today, Sittercity.com serves more than 500,000 users nationwide and expects to bring in between US\$3 million and US\$5 million in revenue this year. The Sittercity.com database expanded beyond Boston in its first six months, to Cleveland and New York City. Now, the service is available in multiple U.S. cities. Also, in addition to babysitting, Sittercity.com now provides nannies, tutors, pet sitters, senior caregivers, and house sitters.

The UPS Best "Out-of-the-Box" Small Business Contest honors innovative small businesses with 2006 revenues of at least US\$250,000 but not more than US\$10 million. Eligible businesses in the United States, Canada, Mexico, China, the Philippines, and Singapore were asked to submit 500-word essays explaining why they're original and how they've been successful. The entries were judged on originality, business implementation, and business results.

Receiving recognition for second place was Knight Hollow Nursery, Inc. of Middleton, Wis., and third place went to Safe-T-Proof Disaster Preparedness, Inc. in Sylmar, Calif. In honor of its Centennial celebration this year, UPS awarded Binalot Fiesta Foods, Inc., based in the Philippines, with its Centennial prize.

UPS helps small businesses synchronize global commerce through a superior set of package delivery, supply chain, and financial services. Additionally, UPS's broad portfolio of technology solutions can help small businesses go global, go online, or simply conduct their operations more efficiently. The UPS Store offers document and shipping services at convenient locations throughout the country. Meanwhile, UPS

Capital, the financial services arm of UPS, serves small businesses with a number of innovative products and services designed to help them accelerate their payments, gain access to crucial working capital, and minimize the risks of international trade.

UPS is the world's largest package delivery company and a global leader in supply chain services, offering an extensive range of options for synchronizing the movement of goods, information and funds. Headquartered in Atlanta, Ga., UPS serves more than 200 countries and territories worldwide. UPS's stock trades on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE), and the company can be found on the Web at [www.UPS.com](http://www.UPS.com).

To read more about the contest and winners, visit [www.ups.com/outofthebox](http://www.ups.com/outofthebox).