

## THE LIST



JOHN GEORGE

## FENG LI

CEO  
ALLIANCE PHARMACEUTICALS  
MALVERN

**Years in business:** 6

**What made you start your business?**

I got the idea a long time ago. I worked in same industry as I am now. I got intensive training. I appreciate the experience I got from that company. I was working very hard at learning and thinking about starting the business. By 2006, I began doing research on how to prepare for new business.

**What did you do to survive the recession?** Alliance Pharmaceuticals was started in May 2008. We spent almost \$1 million, however, only made about \$28,000 with three key employees that year. We stuck with our initial business plan, focused on our expertise area, spent time to build up necessary functionalities and prepare for any potential business opportunities. All three employees deferred their

pay for a year to ensure the business operation.

**What has made your business successful?** We firmly adhere with our business philosophy including professional ethics, scientific excellence, regulatory compliance to win clients trust. We also have maximum business flexibility to understand our clients needs to meet and exceed their expectations.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** The regulatory compliance to ensure the data quality and integrity and hiring the right employees.

**What advice would you give someone starting their career or looking to start a business?** Have a dream, make a plan, prepare and execute it. You also must be confident enough to be persistent.

**Would your advice be any different if you were addressing a minority?** There is no difference. The principle would be the same.



NATALIE KOSTELNI

## MATTHEW ABRAHAM

OWNER  
WEST CHESTER ENVIRONMENTAL  
WEST CHESTER

**Years in Business:** 13.5

**What made you start your business?**

I always wanted to be my own boss. After working at a small firm where I learned the ropes, it seemed like a natural progression to start my own firm.

**What did you do to survive the recession?** Part of my business has to do with renovating buildings. When new construction stopped, people did renovations. Stimulus money helped as well as networking and peer groups.

**What has made your business successful?** The old formula. A lot of hard work, finding a niche, trying to be technically competent and paying a lot of attention to customers.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** My job is seasonal to a large extent so

it's feast or famine for us. The hardest part is trying to make the work as steady as possible. I have enough people to do the work and work for the people to do. Now, I've been trying to break to the next level with my business.

**What advice would you give someone starting their career or looking to start their own business?**

Entrepreneurship is the most important education and knowledge you can have. It's very different from what you learn in school. Make sure you do research and write a business plan, which is very important because it makes you think about all of the different aspects of the business before you jump into it.

**Would that advice be different if it were a minority?** Yes. I would tell them to get certified with as many agencies as possible, to get your name out there and on the lists. There are many contracts out there that are set aside for minorities and if you are on the list, your name will pop up.



## PHILIP JAURIGUE

FOUNDER, PRESIDENT AND CEO  
SABRE SYSTEMS INC.  
WARRINGTON

**Years in Business:** 25

**What did you do to survive the recession?** In this difficult economic environment, Sabre concentrated on streamlining operations, focusing our offerings, and better articulating our value proposition.

**What decisions have you made that have helped make Sabre successful?**

I believe in a collaborative work environment so surrounding myself with talented individuals who bring different insights to the table has been one of the keys to Sabre's success. In addition, placing a focus on performing rigorous market intelligence has helped Sabre stay relevant and competitive.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** The most difficult aspect of my job recently has been making tough personnel decisions in light of the economic environment.

**What advice would you give someone starting their career or looking to start their own business?** Be passionate about the business or career you choose and commit to learning something new every day.