



2010 British Columbia Aboriginal Business Awards

The recipients of the 2010 British Columbia Aboriginal Business Awards were honoured December 1 at a gala celebration hosted by the BC Achievement Foundation. Nineteen awards were presented by Premier Gordon Campbell to recipients from across the province.

"Congratulations to each of the 18 businesses honoured in the second annual awards," said Premier Campbell. "The businesses selected reflect the remarkable cross-section of enterprise and industry within British Columbia's Aboriginal business sector."

The BC Aboriginal Business Awards were launched in October 2008 to honour and celebrate business excellence. Seven award recipients, one from each category, were selected in the 2010 awards. In addition, a further group of eleven Aboriginal businesses were noted for their outstanding achievement. An independent jury panel evaluated the submissions based on the viability, sustainability and competitiveness of the business.

"The jury had an extremely difficult task selecting the recipients from the many remarkable businesses nominated in this year's submissions," said Mitchell. "The BC Achievement Foundation extends its appreciation to the jury members, Tim Low, entrepreneur, past economic development officer and currently director of citizen services, Service Canada; Chief Michael LeBourdais, Whispering Pines/Clinton Indian Band and Ruth Williams, CEO, All Nations Trust Company, for their thoughtful deliberations."

"This year's Aboriginal Business Award recipients represent the growing number of outstanding Aboriginal business leaders in British Columbia," said Barry Penner, Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation. "These role models will encourage the next generation of Aboriginal people to bring their entrepreneurial ideas to life."

The BC Aboriginal Business Awards are presented by the BC Achievement Foundation in partnership with the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, and generously supported by New Relationship Trust, BC Hydro, Teck, and Encana.

The 2010 Aboriginal Business Award recipients:

Young Female Entrepreneur of the Year

[Amy Dopson](#)

PAC10 Tutoring

Prince Rupert

Young Male Entrepreneur of the Year Award

[Robert Ellis](#)

Ellis Excavating Ltd.

Nanaimo

Outstanding Business Achievement

- Michael Salto of Salto Waterworks

Business of the Year - one to two person enterprise

Jeff Ward

Animikii Inc.
Sooke

Outstanding Business Achievement

- Jags Beanstalk
- MUG Solutions

Business of the Year - two to ten person enterprise

Little Kingdom Gas and Grocery

Vernon

Outstanding Business Achievement

- AJ Towing
- Grizzly-Man Resource Management Ltd.
- Theytus Books Ltd.

Business of the Year - ten or more person enterprise

Kekuli Café Aboriginal Foods and Catering

Kelowna

Outstanding Business Achievement

- DL Safety Consulting
- Selkin Logging Ltd and Michell Enterprises

Community-Owned Business of the Year

Coast Tsimshian Resources LP

Outstanding Business Achievement

- Quinsam Shell Service Station
- Tseshah Market

Joint Venture Business of the Year

Stuwix Resources Joint Venture

partners - Coldwater Band, Cook's Ferry Band, Lower Nicola Band, Nooaitch Band, Shackan Band, Siska Band, Upper Nicola Band, Upper Similkameen Band

Outstanding Business Achievement

- Katzie Coast Marine

British Columbia Aboriginal Business Award for Individual Achievement

Dolly (Watts) McRae

Port Alberni

British Columbia Achievement Foundation

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Citations for Aboriginal Business Awards Recipients

Young Female Entrepreneur of the Year

Amy Dopson

PAC10 Tutoring
Prince Rupert

Over the past two years Amy Dopson has developed PAC10 Tutoring in Prince Rupert into a business aimed at supporting and enriching the student experience within the education system. The services heavily emphasize Math, English and Science and offer flexible programs which work within a student's school schedule. The business provides a diverse set of options meeting the needs of each client and includes monthly group programs, private sessions and year-round tutoring services.

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Young Male Entrepreneur of the Year Award

Robert Ellis

Ellis Excavating Ltd.
Nanaimo

Ellis Excavating Limited has been operational for the past four years and a lifelong dream of this young entrepreneur. The business, operating from Nanaimo, provides excavation services to the construction industry with the majority of the work being residential subdivision development. The work includes site clearing, road building, trenching, pipe and foundation-laying.

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Business of the Year - one to two person enterprise

Jeff Ward

Animikii Inc.
Sooke

Jeff Ward founded Animikii Inc. in 2003 and continues as its sole operator. The business provides its clients with website design, web application development and web hosting expertise. Based in Sooke, Animikii has clients from throughout North America and develops relationships with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal partners.

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Business of the Year - two to ten person enterprise

Little Kingdom Gas and Grocery

Vernon

Since its inception in 1984, Little Kingdom has grown into a diverse business offering a range of retail products and services including a gas bar, convenience store, bakery, groceries and hardware. Under the vision and direction of Robert Marchand, the business serves the many travellers and communities located on the west side of the north arm of Lake Okanagan, successfully filling a market gap and becoming a mainstay of the region.

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Community-Owned Business of the Year

Coast Tsimshian Resources LP

The Coast Tsimshian Resources Limited Partnership is fully owned by Lax Kw'alaams Band. From small beginnings in 2004, the company has grown over the past five years and is now a leading employer in the Northwest. The company operates its forest licence and has a new initiative: converting wood waste into a coal-like product to be marketed as "green energy".

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Business of the Year - ten or more person enterprise

Kekuli Café Aboriginal Foods and Catering

Kelowna

Kekuli Café Aboriginal Foods & Catering is an Aboriginal food and catering business located in a retail development within the Westbank First Nation. The restaurant offers foods traditionally served by Interior First Nations and has captured a unique market niche in the highly competitive food industry. Inspired to open a café by the large demand for bannock in her original catering and concession business, Kekuli's owner Sharon Bond has transformed the product and creatively featured it throughout her menu.

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Joint Venture Business of the Year

Stuwix Resources Joint Venture

partners - Coldwater Band, Cook's Ferry Band, Lower Nicola Band, Nooaitch Band, Shackan Band, Siska Band, Upper Nicola Band, Upper Similkameen Band

Stuwix Resources was established in 2004 and is owned and operated by eight local Indian bands in the Merritt area. It is the only First Nations company in the B.C. Interior to hold a replaceable forest licence. Stuwix is responsible for the overall management of the licence, including planning, developing, marketing, timber-harvesting, road-building and silviculture. A management committee, made up of representatives from the eight bands, operates the joint venture.

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British Columbia Aboriginal Business Award for Individual Achievement

Dolly (Watts) McRae

Port Alberni

Dolly (Watts) McRae's restaurant, the Liliget Feast House on Vancouver's Davie Street, was open for 12 years. The 52-seat restaurant received a four-star rating from the New York Times for offering the best Aboriginal food in North America. McRae has also garnered her share of awards including the National Aboriginal Achievement Award in 2001 and a gold medal in the Iron Chef competition, received at the age of 69.

A strong entrepreneurial spirit has motivated McRae from the time she was a young, resourceful child until her initiative inspired her to return to university as a mature student where she studied anthropology. Later, she established her catering business, which, in turn, led to the opening of The Liliget Feast House. McRae's legacy carries on with the 2007 publication "Where People Feast: An Indigenous People's Cookbook" which she co-authored with her daughter Annie.

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