
NEWS RELEASE

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Office of the Premier
BC Achievement Foundation

2010 ABORIGINAL BUSINESS AWARDS RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED

VANCOUVER – The recipients of the second annual British Columbia Aboriginal Business Awards were announced today by Premier Gordon Campbell and Keith Mitchell, chair of the BC Achievement Foundation. The recipients will be honoured at a gala celebration on Dec. 1, 2010 in Vancouver.

“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 Aboriginal Entrepreneur of the Year:
Recipient: Amy Dopson, PAC10 Tutoring, Prince Rupert

- Young Male Aboriginal Entrepreneur of the Year:
Recipient: Robert Ellis, Ellis Excavating Ltd., Nanaimo
Outstanding Business Achievement:
 - Michael Salto, Salto Waterworks, Kamloops

- Business of the Year - one to two person enterprise:
Recipient: Jeff Ward, Animikii Inc., Sooke
Outstanding Business Achievement:
 - Jags Beanstalk, Haida Gwaii
 - MUG Solutions, Coquitlam

- Business of the Year - two to ten person enterprise:
Recipient: Little Kingdom Gas and Grocery, Vernon
Outstanding Business Achievement:
 - A.J. Towing, Chilliwack
 - Grizzly-Man Resource Management, Kamloops
 - Theytus Books, Penticton

- Business of the Year - ten or more person enterprise:
Recipient: Kekuli Café and Aboriginal Foods and Catering, Kelowna
Outstanding Business Achievement:
 - DL Safety Consulting, Burnaby
 - Selkin Logging Ltd and Michell Enterprises, Fraser Lake

- Community-Owned Business of the Year:
Recipient: Coast Tsimshian Resources L/P
Outstanding Business Achievement:
 - Quinsam Shell Station, Campbell River
 - Tseshah Market, Port Alberni

- Joint Venture Business of the Year:
Recipient: 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 (partners – Katzie First Nation and Coast Marine Services)

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A backgrounder follows.

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BACKGROUND

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BC Achievement Foundation

THE 2010 ABORIGINAL BUSINESS AWARD RECIPIENTS

Young Female Aboriginal 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.

Young Male Aboriginal Entrepreneur of the Year:

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.

Business of the Year - one to two person enterprise:

Animikki Inc., Sooke

Jeff Ward founded Animikki 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, Animikki has clients from throughout North America and develops relationships with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal partners.

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.

Business of the Year - ten or more person enterprise:

Kekuli Café and 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.

Community-Owned Business of the Year:

Coast Tsimshian Resources Limited Partnership

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”.

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.

The BC Aboriginal Awards are presented by the BC Achievement Foundation, an independent foundation established and endowed by the Province of British Columbia to celebrate community services, the arts, humanities and enterprise.

For more information and dinner ticket details, please visit: www.bcachievement.com

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