
NEWS RELEASE

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Office of the Premier
Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation
British Columbia Achievement Foundation

FIRST ABORIGINAL BUSINESS AWARDS RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED

VANCOUVER – The recipients of the inaugural 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 January 27, 2009 in Vancouver.

“Congratulations to these 21 businesses for the leadership and entrepreneurial spirit they have shown in being selected for the first-ever B.C. Aboriginal Business Awards,” said Premier Campbell. “Each one is an outstanding reflection of the contribution the province’s Aboriginal business community is making to keep our economy strong for the future.”

The BC Aboriginal Business Awards were launched in October 2008 to honour and celebrate business acumen. Eight inaugural award recipients were selected. In addition, a further group of Aboriginal businesses were noted, in each category, for their outstanding achievement.

“Our thanks to the jury who had the difficult task of selecting these inaugural award recipients from so many outstanding businesses,” said Mitchell. “The BC Achievement Foundation extends its appreciation to the jury members, Paulette Flamond of Ft. St. John, Chief Michael LeBourdais, Clinton, Chief Judith Sayers, Port Alberni and Ruth Williams, Kamloops for their thoughtful deliberations.”

“The winners of these awards come from all corners of the province,” said Michael de Jong, Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation. “They demonstrate just how strong the pool of Aboriginal business talent is. I hope that these awards will encourage the next generation of Aboriginal business people to have faith in their ideas, set up their own businesses and be well-positioned to receive one of these awards in years to come.”

The 2008 Aboriginal Business Award recipients:

- Young Female Aboriginal Entrepreneur of the Year:
Recipient: Cristy Johnson, Cristy’s Jewelry Designs, Victoria
- Young Male Aboriginal Entrepreneur of the Year:
Recipient: Jacob Beaton, CopperMoon Communications Inc., Hazelton

Outstanding Business Achievement:

- Alano Edzerza, Edzerza’s Gallery
- Dean Cloutier, Shrapnel Designs

- Business of the Year - One to Two Person Enterprise:

Recipient: Tryna Gower Photography, Dawson Creek

Outstanding Business Achievement:

- Artifaax, Vancouver;
- Bikram's Yoga College of India, North Vancouver

- Business of the Year - Two to 10 Person Enterprise:

Recipient: Chase Office Interiors, West Vancouver

Outstanding Business Achievement:

- Little Miss Chief, Westbank;
- Wind Spirit Enterprises Ltd., Powell River

- Business of the Year - 10 or More Person Enterprise:

Tie - Recipients: BC General Contracting Inc., Westbank; and Tin Wis Best Western Resort, Tofino

Outstanding Business Achievement:

- Chinook Cove Contracting Ltd., Kamloops
- Paul Paquette and Sons Contracting Ltd., Chetwynd

- Community-Owned Business of the Year:

Recipient: Metlakatla Development Corporation, Prince Rupert

Outstanding Business Achievement:

- Doig River Energy, Fort St. John
- Ivy Green Husky, Ladysmith
- Pine Acres Home, Westbank

- Joint Venture Business of the Year:

Recipient: Nicola Pacific Forest Products Ltd., Merrit (partner – Ardeu Wood Products Ltd.)

Outstanding Business Achievement:

- Referral Tracking System: Neskonlith and Adams Lake Bands (partner - DR Systems Inc.)
- Takaya Development Ltd Partnership: Burrard Indian Band (partner – Native Strategic Investments)

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. The awards are supported by B.C.'s Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation.

For more information visit www.bcachievement.com

1 backgrounder(s) attached.

Media Bridgitte Anderson
contact: Press Secretary
 Office of the Premier
 604 307-7177

Nora Newlands
Executive Director
British Columbia Achievement Foundation
604 618-6949

Maria Wilkie
Communications Director
Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and
Reconciliation
250 953-3211

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