

February 29, 2008

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 8 PM,  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2008**



## **Recipients of 2008 Alberta Business Awards of Distinction**

Excellence in Alberta's business community was celebrated tonight in Calgary as the winners of the 17<sup>th</sup> annual Alberta Business Awards of Distinction were announced at a gala banquet.

Premier Stelmach was on hand to present the Premier's Award of Distinction, which went to Company's Company Publishing Limited. Company's Coming also won the Employer of Persons with Disabilities Award of Distinction.

The Innovation in Agriculture Award of Distinction was presented to Doug Edgar Farms of Innisfail, which has developed the largest asparagus farm in Alberta.

The Employer of Youth Award of Distinction, sponsored by Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry, went to Bubbles Car Wash of Calgary, which has a focus on hiring and mentoring young people.

The following is a list of all recipients of the 15 Alberta Business Awards of Distinction:

### **Innovation in Agriculture Award of Distinction**

Sponsored by Agriculture Financial Services Corporation

- Doug Edgar Farms Ltd., Innisfail

### **Aboriginal Woman Entrepreneur Award of Distinction**

Sponsored by Alberta International, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs

- KB Jodan, Cold Lake

### **Marketing Award of Distinction**

Sponsored by Alberta Venture Magazine

- Hotrocket, Edmonton

### **Diversity Leadership Award of Distinction**

Sponsored by Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission

- Youth Emergency Shelter Society, Edmonton

**Export Award of Distinction**

Sponsored by Western Economic Diversification

- Elluminate Inc., Calgary

**Health and Safety Innovation Award of Distinction**

Sponsored by Work Safe Alberta and the Occupational Health and Safety Council

- Worldwide Matrix Inc., Grande Prairie
- Norwood Foundry Limited, Nisku

**Health and Safety Leader Award of Distinction**

Sponsored by Work Safe Alberta and the Occupational Health and Safety Council

- Albi Homes Ltd., Calgary

**Partners in Workplace Learning Award of Distinction**

Sponsored by Telus/University of Alberta

- NAIT, Edmonton

**Employer of Persons with Disabilities Award of Distinction**

Sponsored by Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry

- Company's Coming Publishing Limited, Edmonton

**Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneur Award of Distinction**

Sponsored by Syncrude Canada Ltd.

- Birch Mountain Enterprises, Fort McKay

**Eagle Feather Business Award of Distinction**

Sponsored by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

- Primco Dene Group of Companies, Cold Lake

**Aboriginal Relations – Best Practice Award of Distinction**

Sponsored by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

- Enbridge, Calgary

**Employer of Youth Award of Distinction**

Sponsored by Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry

- Bubbles Car Wash, Calgary

**Small Business Award of Distinction**

Sponsored by Chartered Accountants of Alberta

- Scott Safety Supply Services Ltd., Whitecourt

**Premier's Award of Distinction**

Sponsored by Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry

- Company's Coming Publishing Limited, Edmonton

\*All finalists from each category were automatically eligible and considered for this award.

The awards are hosted by the Alberta Chambers of Commerce in association with numerous corporate sponsors.

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NOTE: A backgrounder profiling the winning companies is attached.

For further information, please contact:

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## Recipients

### 2008 Alberta Business Awards of Distinction

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#### Innovation in Agriculture Award of Distinction

*Awarded to an organization that has demonstrated outstanding achievement in providing innovative solutions for adding value to primary agriculture products.*

**Doug Edgar Farms Ltd., Innisfail – 16 employees**

**Doug and Elna Edgar, president and secretary**

In 1986, faced with the difficulty of maintaining a viable farming operation with traditional cropping practices, Doug Edgar Farms began looking for ways to diversify its operations. The farm began by experimenting with asparagus and now has the largest asparagus field in Alberta. To increase the value of the asparagus they grow, Doug Edgar Farms built a commercial kitchen to process pickled asparagus, gourmet asparagus relish, frozen cream of asparagus soup and much more. Revenues for the farm have increased significantly in each of the last three years.

#### Aboriginal Woman Entrepreneur Award of Distinction

*Recognizes outstanding achievement by an Aboriginal woman entrepreneur who exemplifies effective leadership, innovation, and a commitment to enhancing the well being of the larger aboriginal community.*

**KB Jodan, Cold Lake – 27 employees**

**Karen Young, owner/operator**

Begun on a shoestring in 2004 by a determined individual with a firm background in the medical profession, KB Jodan is now a successful company with eight mobile medic units supplying services to companies on site. Among the services the company performs are safety training, drug and alcohol testing and emergency medical mobile services. The company has grown quickly from a single employee to 16 full-time employees (90 per cent of whom are Aboriginal) and 11 casual employees.

#### Marketing Award of Distinction

*Awarded to the organization that has best developed and implemented a successful marketing strategy that has had a significant impact on the organization.*

**Hotrocket, Edmonton – two employees**

**Ken Bautista, CEO**

Hotrocket is an award-winning interactive production company. The company's aggressive marketing plan includes key objectives of engaging new production and development partners, securing marketing and distribution partners, creating character and brand licensing opportunities, becoming more effective content producers, and competitively positioning the company through leadership. As a result of this plan, Hotrocket was one of only four companies invited to present at the KidScreen Summit Pitch It competition juried by senior executives from companies such as Disney, Cartoon Network and Nickelodeon. Hotrocket won the competition, creating several new production opportunities for the company.

### **Diversity Leadership Award of Distinction**

*Awarded to an organization that embraces diversity in its workforce, encourages respect and inclusion, eliminates discrimination and barriers, and helps create welcoming and inclusive workplaces and communities.*

#### **Youth Emergency Shelter Society, Edmonton – 50 employees**

##### **Deb Cautley, executive director**

Over the past six years the Youth Emergency Shelter Society has taken deliberate steps to make the agency more inclusive. Staffing at the society reflects diversity in age groups, work history, life experiences, and cultures. In order to successfully incorporate this diverse group, the society has undertaken initiatives such as job shadowing and annual cross-cultural training. YESS provides numerous opportunities for staff to mingle on a social basis in order to learn about and understand each other's cultural and social backgrounds.

### **Export Award of Distinction**

*Awarded to an organization that has demonstrated outstanding achievement in exporting products or services outside of Canada's borders.*

#### **Elluminate Inc., Calgary – 48 employees**

##### **Nashir Samanani, president and CEO**

Elluminate is a leading provider of live Web conferencing and eLearning solutions. Serving corporate and academic sectors, the company ensures the best user experience through superior quality Voice over Internet Protocol communications and advanced easy-to-use moderator tools. Currently, Elluminate exports to 26 countries including the United States, Australia, Brazil, Chile, China, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Singapore, South Africa, U.S.A., and the United Arab Emirates. In 2006, 89 per cent of Elluminate's revenues were generated from exports. In the year-to-date 2007 (as of September) exports accounted for 94 per cent of corporate revenues.

### **Health and Safety Innovation Award of Distinction**

*Awarded to an organization or individual that has been outstanding in developing, promoting and enhancing health and safety innovation in their sector.*

#### **Norwood Foundry Limited, Nisku – 70 employees**

##### **Robert Day, general manager**

Norwood Foundry produces a variety of custom metal castings. During the casting process carbon monoxide (CO) is produced and air quality samples taken from worker breathing zones frequently exceeded the allowable limits. Norwood Foundry developed a solution to remove the CO from the work area using a unique system of hoods to pull it through the company's ventilation system and out of the building using the natural convection created by the cooling moulds. Tests conducted during an inspection measured zero parts per million of CO in the operator breathing area, far exceeding expectations for the system.

#### **Worldwide Matrix Inc., Grande Prairie – 40 employees**

##### **Marcel Menard, president**

Overcoming what was thought to be an impossible problem to solve led Worldwide Matrix to an innovation that has reduced the chance of explosion, fire, environmental damage or injuries to workers, especially in sour gas applications. The company's Matrix Early Warning System accurately predicts pipeline blowouts before they happen giving operators time to react to the situation before it is too late. Since 2004, this innovation has had a 100-per-cent success rate with no hydrocarbons released to the atmosphere due to pipe failure.

### **Health and Safety Leader Award of Distinction**

*Awarded to an organization that leads its industry with an exemplary health and safety program, and proven injury and illness prevention track record*

**Albi Homes Ltd., Calgary – 110 employees**

**Tony Mauro, founder and chairman**

Calgary builder Albi Homes is committed to safety in the construction industry. The company works diligently to continually improve standards, policies and regulations pertaining to job site safety. Albi has a 100-per-cent commitment from all employees to take the Construction Safety Training System course, as well as many other safety-related courses and has not had any lost-time claims.

### **Partners in Workplace Learning Award of Distinction**

*Awarded to an employer committed to and successfully implementing learning or training opportunities for their employees in the workplace by working with a provincial post-secondary institution.*

**NAIT, Edmonton – 2,700 employees**

**Dr. Sam Shaw, president and CEO**

Learning is a key focus of NAIT's business plan. As a learning organization, NAIT provides development opportunities for all staff. In order to facilitate ongoing learning opportunities NAIT created a dedicated office of Organizational Development Services. The goal of the office is to empower all NAIT staff by providing training programs and staff development opportunities to assist them in attaining their personal and professional goals. Unlimited learning opportunities are provided by NAIT for all employees from entry level to senior management. As a result, the organization has been listed two-years running in the Top 35 Employers in Alberta.

### **Employer of Persons with Disabilities Award of Distinction**

*Awarded to a business demonstrating creative leading-edge practices in hiring, training, and developing employees with disabilities.*

**Company's Coming Publishing Limited, Edmonton – 85 employees**

**Jean Pare and Grant Lovig, author and president**

A Canadian institution, Company's Coming hires employees with many types and degrees of disabilities. The distribution department has 19 disabled employees – almost 65 per cent of its workforce. The company works with new hires to focus on the person's abilities and strengths, allowing the employee to develop meaningful and achievable goals to work on. Due to Company's Coming's practices on hiring, recruiting and training persons with disabilities, they have been able to achieve a 98-per-cent retention rate, a true indication of the impact they are making on people's lives.

### **Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneur Award of Distinction**

*Awarded to a young entrepreneur who best exemplifies the qualities of effective leadership, innovatively applied know-how, and excellent potential for growth, and who shows a level of social, cultural, and environmental awareness.*

**Birch Mountain Enterprises, Fort McKay – 26 employees**

**Ivan Boucher, Chris Wilson and Lee Wilson, co-owners**

Birch Mountain Enterprises was formed by three former Syncrude employees who repaired the giant hydraulic and electric shovels used in the mine. The trio decided to provide the same service to more oil sands operators. After landing a contract with the Fort McKay Group of Companies to service their heavy-duty equipment, word quickly spread in the region. In the next 30 months, they went from three to 26 employees. They now hold contracts with two major players in the oil sands industry, Syncrude and Albian Sands, as well as Deer Creek Energy.

### **Eagle Feather Award of Distinction**

*Awarded to a First Nation's-owned business that demonstrates outstanding achievement in business and has incorporated entrepreneurial and cultural concepts into its operation for long-term success.*

#### **Primco Dene Group of Companies, 139 employees**

##### **James Blackman, CEO and vice-president**

The Primco Dene Group of Companies provides a diverse range of services including: catering, janitorial, EMS, courier, security, payroll, labour, managerial consulting, and commercial services. Over the past three years, as a result of strategic planning, the company has experienced phenomenal growth in several areas including their catering business. The Primco Dene Group of Companies now manages the largest camp catering operation at the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range. The company is very active in the community supporting many local events and Aboriginal entrepreneurs.

### **Aboriginal Relations – Best Practice Award of Distinction**

*Awarded to a non-Aboriginal business that demonstrates outstanding achievement in Aboriginal relations, including economic development, employment and training, and Aboriginal community support.*

#### **Enbridge, Calgary – 5,400 employees**

##### **Patrick Daniel, president and CEO**

Respect for the land, the people and the community is always at the forefront when Enbridge works with over 40 Aboriginal communities. The company is committed to fair and equal access by Aboriginal peoples to employment opportunities that result from their operations and works to foster greater participation in Enbridge operations and projects. Enbridge is a major supporter of Aboriginal community initiatives and was a major sponsor of the Inuit/Dene Games at the 2007 Canada Winter Games.

### **Employer of Youth Award of Distinction**

*Awarded to an organization that has demonstrated outstanding achievement in hiring youth and providing them with career-oriented opportunities.*

#### **Bubbles Car Wash, Calgary – 25 employees**

##### **Andrew and Tracey Bitcon, president and treasurer**

Bubbles Car Wash, Calgary, was created as a “social enterprise” with a goal to mentor and provide employment to youth so they may pursue their chosen career paths. Bubbles targets younger employees in three categories: single mothers, refugees/immigrants and individuals with disabilities. In their first year of operations Bubbles set a goal of providing employment and mentoring to two single mothers, two refugee/immigrants, and two mentally challenged youth. The company far surpassed their goals. Today, over 80 per cent of the company's employees are youth under the age of 25.

### **Small Business Award of Distinction**

*Awarded to the small business owner who best reflects the outstanding spirit and success of the province's small business community.*

#### **Scott Safety Supply Services Ltd., Whitecourt– 43 employees**

##### **Brent Scott, president**

Scott Safety Supply Services has achieved 100-per-cent growth in each of the past three years, resulting in the company undergoing two physical expansions. This rapid growth is due to expansion of the services provided by the company to include sales of gas detection monitors, supplied breathing air, medical stand-by services with trained personnel, field ambulances, medical treatment centres, and fire safety and suppression services. The company is also developing a training centre to provide safety consulting and training services to assist other small businesses in meeting industry safety requirements.

### **Premier's Award of Distinction**

*Awarded to an Albertan firm that embodies the Alberta Advantage, exhibits overall outstanding achievement and leadership in Alberta, and demonstrates ongoing, consistent involvement in community events and organizations, both locally and/or provincially. All finalists from each category were automatically eligible and considered for this award.*

#### **Company's Coming Publishing Limited, Edmonton – 85 employees**

##### **Jean Pare and Grant Lovig, author and president**

A Canadian institution, Company's Coming hires employees with many types and degrees of disabilities. The distribution department has 19 disabled employees – almost 65 per cent of its workforce. The company works with new hires to focus on the person's abilities and strengths, allowing the employee to develop meaningful and achievable goals to work on. Due to Company's Coming's practices on hiring, recruiting and training persons with disabilities, they have been able to achieve a 98-per-cent retention rate, a true indication of the impact they are making on people's lives.