



MEDIA RELEASE

October 25, 2018

CHAMBER ANNOUNCES BUSINESS EXCELLENCE WINNERS “A Night to Remember” say Winners

Kelowna: The Kelowna Chamber of Commerce hosted over 350 guests last night at the Delta Grand Hotel & Resort, featuring finalists and announcing winners in eleven categories of endeavour. “It’s quite a process, getting to the winners’ circle,” said Carmen Sparg, President of the Chamber.” From 320 nominees, to 107 Semi-finalists, to 33 Finalists – and now – we’re so delighted to announce our 11 Winners for 2018. “

“Our independent judging panel ensured that we recognized the most outstanding talent we have in the Kelowna area of the Central Okanagan. They also made the tough choice of Business Leader of the Year, Dale Wentworth, whom we announced last week, and celebrated last night.”

And the winners are:

RISING STAR AWARD (Sponsored by Argus Properties)

Start Fresh Kitchen

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT AWARD (Sponsored by Hergott Law)

New Vintage Theatre Company

MARKETING CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR AWARD (Sponsored by Pushor Mitchell LLP)

SK Form & Finish Inc.

SOCIAL LEADERSHIP AWARD (Sponsored by Interior Savings Credit Union)

Refresh Financial

MICRO BUSINESS OF THE YEAR (Sponsored by Predator Ridge)

Hatch Interior Design Inc.

SMALL BUSINESS AWARD (Sponsored by Prospera Credit Union)

Faction Projects Inc.

MID-SIZED BUSINESS OF THE YEAR (Sponsored by BDO)

Highstreet Ventures Inc.

LARGE BUSINESS OF THE YEAR (Sponsored by Grant Thornton)

Strategic Aviation Services Ltd.

NOT-FOR-PROFIT EXCELLENCE AWARD (Sponsored by Kelowna Foundation for Hope and Social Innovation)

Kelowna Community Resources

TECHNOLOGY INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR (Sponsored by UBC Okanagan)

Vitalis Extraction Technology

YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR (Sponsored by YLW Kelowna International Airport)

Chris & Addie Pafiolis/SweetLegs Clothing Inc.

BUSINESS LEADER OF THE YEAR FOR 2018 (Sponsored by MNP LLP)

Dale Wentworth, Wentworth Music

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BACKGROUNDER

BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS
KELOWNA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Winner Information

Rising Star Award START FRESH KITCHEN

Delivering a socially-minded non-profit program, that is market-competitive is challenging. We've seen great outcomes: it's taken integrity, grit and our great community. We've benefited those needing education and support to re-build their lives and connecting all with local-grown food. Our friends at PURPPL said it best, "If you spend time with Sarah and Michael you can hear the weariness of start-up entrepreneurs, and the honesty of not-knowing the whole road ahead. But you can also feel the unbridled optimism that comes with seeing some hard-earned success. And you can see the pride that comes with seeing and feeling the social and community impact starting to grow."

Arts & Entertainment Award NEW VINTAGE THEATRE COMPANY

New Vintage Theatre Company is an innovative, charitable arts organization; member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres. Annually we hire 100 local artists: performers, musicians, designers, playwrights, teachers and technicians to run our full season of plays and workshops, talks and performances in local venues large and small, indoor and outside throughout Kelowna. We also run the pop culture festival KFX-Kelowna Fan Experience every March: an international festival of performance, film, animation and costume. Last year 11,000 people took in a New Vintage Theatre event.

Marketing Campaign of the Year Award SK FORM & FINISH

SK Form and Finish is a Large COR safety certified concrete forming and finishing company celebrating 26 years in the Okanagan Valley. We have two office buildings, with showers and change rooms for staff; cafeteria to ensure all staff get a hot breakfast, five days a week. We also have a mechanics shop for equipment servicing. Our services include forming (carpentry), concrete finishing, application of sealers and epoxy coatings, as well as concrete repair and restoration. Our workforce is highly skilled holding certifications including Red Seal Carpentry, Red Seal Cement Mason, and Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA). We're defined by our people.

Social Leadership Award

REFRESH FINANCIAL

Refresh Financial Inc. www.refreshfinancial.ca is a Canadian owned and operated fintech, based in Kelowna, BC. Since inception, the company has helped more than 65,000 clients from coast-to-coast build and re-establish positive credit history by using low-risk tools including its home grown secured credit card and cash secured savings loan offerings. With over 800 referral partner locations and a complimentary online financial intelligence training program, Refresh F.I.T., Canadians can now access tools to help them achieve and sustain long term financial success.

Micro Business of the Year

HATCH INTERIOR DESIGN INC.

The past two years have been pivotal for the growth of Hatch. In this time, we have more than doubled the size of our team and business. We have worked hard over our seven years in business to prove our ability and establish a great reputation in the Okanagan. We feel our growing portfolio of unique projects shows that hard work is paying off. We have been privileged to work with some amazing companies who, in years past, would have outsourced to larger city centres. We are proud to provide our clients with big firm services on a personal and intimate level.

Small Business of the Year

FACTION PROJECTS INC.

We founded Faction Projects with clearly defined goals and a solid plan. All our completed projects have been successful when measured against our People, Planet, Profit multiple bottom line philosophy. The building, which houses our office, is a true reflection of our core values and an example of what can be accomplished by our integrated multi-disciplinary team. When completed, it was the largest private commercial building in BC to extensively use Cross Laminated Timber (CLT). CLT is an innovative, locally manufactured, environmentally responsible building material. The building is gaining recognition and critical acclaim for its many merits.

Mid-Sized Business of the Year

Highstreet Ventures Inc.

Our business model: use a building design repeatedly, learn on each project, across the country. Our team has embraced "agile" project management, prevalent in the IT world. Our most significant undertaking is the push towards Net Zero: to be the first rental apartment builder in Canada to achieve the goal. Nearly all our employees invest their savings into what we do, investing over \$600,000 in Highstreet in 2017, receiving \$110,000 in matching funds, creating their own financial security, taking ownership in their work. Highstreeters earned a bonus in excess of \$150,000 in 2017 from their dedication and innovation. It's a great team.

Large Business of the Year

STRATEGIC AVIATION SERVICES LTD

SA is the only ground handler in Canada to achieve ISAGO certification (IATA Safety Audit for Ground Operations), an internationally recognized system for assessing operation management and control systems. We are seeking IATA ICQA/Medina quality standards for Sky Café Ltd., our catering division: the highest standard in the world. Strategic Aviation has grown from a staff of 25 in 2012 to 60 today. Across the Company we have grown from 150 employees at five bases, to over 800 in 22 bases across Canada. We are proud to be Canadian-owned and Kelowna-based and our growth is expected to continue.

Not-for-Profit Excellence Award

KELOWNA COMMUNITY RESOURCES

At KCR Community Resources our mission is to foster collaboration and resourcefulness by tailoring services to meet community, family and individual needs. As a result, we are a multi-service not-for-profit agency with four distinct service areas: Community Services; Family & Adoption Services; Immigrant Services; and Employment Services. We promote information about community, government and social services; encourage volunteerism; host learning opportunities; offer family-centered and support; help children in care; give crisis line callers (5,700 last year) support; and help people gain essential skills for the job market.

Technology Innovator of the Year

VITALIS EXTRACTION TECHNOLOGY

Vitalis Extraction Technology Inc. is a privately-owned, Kelowna-based engineering and manufacturing company, producing the highest-flowing industrial supercritical CO2 extraction system for the cannabis industry. The company's core focus on innovation and design has vaulted it to the forefront of the market. Renowned for reliability, scalability, and continuous operation, Vitalis systems are designed and manufactured in accordance with ASME and CSA Standards for Boiler, Pressure Vessel and Pressure Piping Code. With systems on three continents, Vitalis has the most deployments of industrial CO2 supercritical extractors into the cannabis industry and was voted Top Extraction Equipment at the 2017 Lift Canadian Cannabis Awards.

Young Entrepreneur of the Year

CHRIS & ADDIE PAFIOLIS/SWEETLEGS CLOTHING

As a small company, we are lean and adaptable, therefore we are able to move quickly and evolve our product offering and brand as needed. The desirable price point of SweetLegs combined with the quality and versatility of our product creates a dynamic advantage over our competitors.

BUSINESS LEADER OF THE YEAR FOR 2018

Dale Wentworth, Wentworth Music

[News Release October 16, 2018](#)