

Entrepreneur's success recognized

BY MARIO TONEGUZZI, CALGARY HERALD OCTOBER 15, 2010

A passion for construction and the ability to recognize market opportunities for a company with unique contracting expertise drove Bill Elkington to establish JV Driver in 1989.

That same year Elkington led the company to \$8 million in revenue.

Today, JV Driver, an industrial contractor with a head office in Leduc, has completed major projects in the oil and gas, petrochemical, mining and forestry products sector with values exceeding \$800 million.

And Thursday night the company's and Elkington's success story were recognized as he captured the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year 2010 Award for the Prairies region at a gala event held in Calgary.

"It's all about our team. (The award) kind of picks out one person as opposed to all the people that get you to where you really go to eventually in any business. It's not any one person. It's the entire team. That's what it means to me -- what our team of people have done to take JV Driver so far along as a really good business," said Elkington, who was in the Middle East on Thursday and could not attend the gala.

David Boomer, director of the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Awards for the Prairies region, said Elkington demonstrates a unique ability to discover new opportunities, deliver products and services in innovative ways and generate prosperity for Canadian business.

"He has overcome significant challenges in the construction industry by drawing on his strong networks and positive long-term outlook -- demonstrating that it's possible to drive growth in the face of adversity," he said.

Boomer said Elkington's people focus and ability to drive change go beyond business into the community.

The passions of Elkington's team support numerous organizations, including the Stollery Children's Hospital, the Zebra Foundation, the Heart and Stroke Foundation and ongoing cancer research.

"As commerce continues to stretch globally beyond local and national boundaries, we rely on the innovation of entrepreneurs to propel us forward with long-term, sustainable growth," said Boomer. "This year's winners have accomplished the impressive feat of growing their businesses into new markets, creating jobs and building their communities despite an uncertain economy."

Elkington also won the real estate/ construction category.

Only one Calgary entrepreneur managed to take an award Thursday night. John MacInnes, president and CEO of Print Audit, said the gala does not just honour entrepreneurs, but also those working at the company.

"It's just a great recognition for all the things that we've achieved here," said MacInnes.

MacInnes won the business-to-business products and services category.

Print Audit, founded in 1999, sells print management software enabling organizations worldwide to significantly lower the cost and environmental impact of printing and photocopying.

Other winners were:

- Business-to-consumer products and services, Betty Anne Latrace Henderson, Deer Lodge Hotels, Saskatoon
- Cleantech, Gary Michalchuk, E.I.L. Environmental Services, Edmonton
- Energy (external equity funded), Daniel Klemke, KMC Mining Corp., Edmonton
- Energy (private), Douglas Quinn, Quinn's Oilfield Supply Ltd., Red Deer
- Manufacturing, John Leder, Supreme Group Inc., Edmonton
- Professional/financial services, Tracy Graf, Troy Graf, Carfinco Income Fund, Edmonton
- Technology, Michael Legary, Securis Inc., Winnipeg

As the Prairies region's Entrepreneur Of The Year 2010, Elkington will compete with top entrepreneurs from the Pacific, Atlantic, Ontario and Quebec regions for the national honour of Canada's Entrepreneur Of The Year 2010 to be presented at a gala celebration Nov. 17 in Toronto. In June 2011, Canada's Entrepreneur Of The Year 2010 will move to the world stage to compete with 50 country recipients for the title of Ernst & Young World Entrepreneur Of The Year.

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