

Business *in Calgary*



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LEADERS
OF TOMORROW



Honouring Calgary's Visionary
Business Leaders

Calgary Chamber
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Honouring Calgary's Visionary Business Leaders



2012 Leaders of Tomorrow

Honouring Calgary's visionary business leaders

BY DEREK SANKEY

No matter what industry, Calgary entrepreneurs are a resilient bunch. They toil in the trenches every day as they build their companies and face adversity at every turn. As Business in Calgary honours the 2012 Leaders of Tomorrow, it is a chance to meet a group of successful business owners who have overcome the odds and proven how innovation is a cornerstone of any good entrepreneur.

"The overall quality of their businesses and the diversity of their businesses is the thing that impresses me the most," says Dan Doherty, president of D3 Strategies Inc. and one of the judges for the 2012 Leaders of Tomorrow, an annual award celebrating some of the most passionate and successful entrepreneurs who also have unique links back to the community.

"Every leader does it a little bit differently and I think that's important," he adds.

This year's selection of 20 Leaders of Tomorrow showcases a wide range of entrepreneurs in a variety of industries. "What was impressive to us ... was that although we think of this as an energy town, there are IT services, digital printing, restaurants – and yes, some oil and gas – but also a cross-border tax advisory service, an interior designer, a spa," says Dave Zimmer, with MNP LLP. "It's a very buoyant economy, which lends itself to a number of spinoff successes."

The evaluation criteria is simple: 50 points are awarded based on business achievement – including past performance and future potential for growth – and 10 points based on contributions to their respective industries. 40 points are awarded for the level of community involvement with charities, arts and cultural groups.

The 2012 Leaders of Tomorrow must demonstrate integrity in every aspect of their lives – at home, at work and in the community. It's a tough call for the judges.

"We laboured over it," says Zimmer. "It wasn't easy to come up with a short list and ultimately the group that was named as winners."

The award includes a gala ceremony at the end of June and the entire event is meant to help inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs in Calgary. There are a lot of unique and fun stories to tell when you meet the Leaders of Tomorrow, who have all shown how vital they are to the economic health of the city and province.

Business in Calgary salutes the 2012 Leaders of Tomorrow and encourages all Calgarians to explore their entrepreneurial instincts. Small businesses are a vital part of the economy and, as they grow, the stories these business owners can tell will intrigue, entertain and educate.

THE JUDGES



Mike Carlin



Dan Doherty



Dave Zimmer

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Leader of Tomorrow: Jerilyn Wright

Jerilyn Wright & Associates Interior Design Consultants Ltd.
Incorporated: 1984 Date leadership assumed: 1984

Before Jerilyn Wright enrolled in interior design education, she was seriously considering medical school. “I enjoy healing and helping people feel better,” she explains. “What I did was combine the two by designing health-promoting environments and (continuing) my goal of searching for ways to improve life for those who are less fortunate.”

After completing her interior design education, she founded Jerilyn Wright & Associates Interior Design Consultants Ltd. in 1984 in Calgary. Her intent was to provide a service that exceeded what most people were offering on the market. “Whether it’s a healthier work environment or designing a device or system that can enable someone to live more freely of their handicap, it is important to continue to develop, explore and improve on the way we all live,” says Wright.

Through the years, she has also been a champion of community causes through an annual scholarship program at Mount Royal University and assisting the Ability Society, which supports children with special needs. Wright has been proactive in her efforts by developing a modular, accessible kitchen and bath system, along with her work for Habitat for Humanity. “It is important to give back,” says Wright. “I feel we all have a sense of responsibility and should contribute to the society that defines our existence and enables our success.” Her efforts go beyond philanthropic and charity work. She is an influential voice for the entire design industry, speaking regularly at conferences, acting as the lead designer of the television series Open Homes and judging several competitions – all in addition to her direct links to many industry associations.



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