

Halifax Chamber of Commerce

January/February 2008

# BUSINESS VOICE



## Not the usual **SUSPECTS**

*The Halifax Business Awards honour the  
city's most innovative organizations*

# NOT THE USUAL SUSPECTS



## THE CHAMBER CELEBRATES INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT WITH THE 2008 HALIFAX BUSINESS AWARDS FINALISTS

**N**OW IN ITS EIGHTH YEAR, THE HALIFAX BUSINESS AWARDS (presented by *The Globe & Mail*), the most glamorous event on the Chamber's calendar, is happening on January 31 at the World Trade and Convention Centre.

The awards recognize the risk takers and trailblazers of Halifax's diverse business community in four categories: Business of the Year, Business Person of the Year, Small Business of the Year and New Business of the Year.

"The diversity of the nominees over the last few years has really pointed out the depth and the breadth of Halifax's business community," says Brian Rose, vice-president, membership with the Chamber, adding that he feels that the awards honour the truly innovative and unique businesses in Halifax.

The Halifax Business Award winners take home not just an award but also a sense of accomplishment and pride that encourages future excellence and growth. "It warms my heart when I see past finalists showing the pride of their win years after the awards they were involved in," Rose says.

Read on to learn about this year's finalists and the drive and determination that brought them to this point. For more information about the awards, visit [www.halifaxchamber.com](http://www.halifaxchamber.com).

Photos taken by James Ingram, Jive Photographic in Neptune Theatre's Fountain Hall on the set of *The Vertical Hour*, designed by Doug Paraschuk.

### LEFT TO RIGHT:

Julia Rivard, Owner/Creative Director, Queen Street Studios; Boris Mirtchev, Owner/Operator, Hamachi Group of Restaurants; Stephen Haynes, President, Noble Grape Urban Winery; Janet Ozon, Owner & manager, Adelaide Respite Inn; Floyd Gaetz, President & CEO, AML Communications; Brian Titus, President, Garrison Breweries; Aly Rajab, CEO, CLLC; Jay Aird, Owner/Operator, Volt Media; Lee Bragg, co-CEO, Eastlink; Holly Bond, President, Bulldog Interactive Fitness; Mike Beauchamp, Owner/Sales, Volt Media; Beth Amiro & Juel McCallum, One Life Surf School and Spa; Paul Beseant, Partner, Edwards Randall Financial Architects; Louis Leger, President & CEO, Bristol; Rick Emberley, Executive Chariman, Bristol; Paul McGuinness, Sales Director, xwave Bell Alliant; Timothy Crooks, Executive Director, Phoenix Youth Programs; Jennifer Best-White, Clearwater Seafoods Limited Partnership.

### MISSING FROM PHOTO:

Colin MacDonald, President & CEO Clearwater Seafoods Limited Partnership, Mike Benteau, President, University First Class Painters

# BUSINESS OF THE YEAR



- >> Bristol
- >> Eastlink
- >> Bulldog Interactive Fitness
- >> Clearwater Seafoods
- >> University First Class Painters (missing from photo)

## **BULLDOG INTERACTIVE FITNESS INC.**

*Holly Bond, President*

**Industry:** Youth fitness franchise

### **Recent business accomplishments:**

We now have new locations in Newfoundland, Saskatchewan and Ontario. Three franchises have also been recently sold in the U.S.

### **What leadership style do you take with your team?**

If you show your staff how much you care about them in little ways, it goes a long way. I believe in being transparent with my team. I count on their point of view.

### **How does your business benefit your community?**

We give to each and every school auction that asks. We work with the Canadian Tire Jumpstart Program across Canada and we raise money for the Right To Play organization.

### **Name one extraordinary measure your business has taken to satisfy a customer:**

We have many stories... from driving children home in snow storms to sending gift baskets to sick children. We have held private gym days for mentally challenged children as a favour to their teacher.

### **Where do you see your business in 5 years?**

I see being so successful that we donate the equipment to inner-city schools. I see speaking to schools and government and making change to the PE curriculum and getting our kids healthy.

### **Tell us about your healthy workplace:**

From the informal leadership style, the way we communicate, the way work is structured, the flexible hours, the reward systems, the decision-making style—this all contributes to our healthy workplace.

## **CLEARWATER SEAFOODS LIMITED PARTNERSHIP**

*Colin Macdonald, President & Ceo*

**Industry:** Seafood processing and harvesting

### **Recent business accomplishments:**

In 2007, Clearwater charted a course strewn by unprecedented strengthening of the Canadian dollar, the sinking of our new, state-of-the-art clam boat before it left the shipyard in Taiwan and the virtual destruction of our clam boat the *Atlantic Pursuit* by a rogue wave off the Grand Banks. Yet we were able to maintain our profitability and stick with our core strategy of "dedication to sustainable seafood excellence."

### **What leadership style do you take with your team?**

My leadership style ranges from directing to inclusive. I engage my people, encourage them to discuss and analyze their decision, ask them to think, and encourage them to act in a disciplined and accountable manner.

## **EASTLINK**

*Lee Bragg and Dan McKeen, co-CEOs*

**Industry:** Telecommunications

### **Recent business accomplishments:**

Named one of Canada's 50 Best Managed Companies in 2006. Acquired three companies in 2007 more than doubling EastLink's size and increasing our market presence to every province.

### **What leadership style do you take with your team?**

Our leaders practise what they preach. From the economical management of our fleet of corporate vehicles to daily office management or participating in corporate activities, EastLink executives behave the same way we expect our employees to.

### **How does your business benefit your community?**

As a result of EastLink's entry into the Internet and telephone market, Nova Scotians were the first in Canada to benefit from local competition in the telecommunications market. Residents enjoy lower prices and have more disposable income.

### **How would you describe your business culture?**

Entrepreneurial and results-oriented. Our business changes fast and we need employees who can make decisions and adapt quickly to changes within the organization and in our market.

### **What's one thing about your business most people don't know?**

EastLink has focused its efforts on expanding its Customer Care @ Home program. Through this initiative, EastLink provided career opportunities to people who might not otherwise be able to work because of transportation challenges, disabilities, living situations, special needs or family responsibilities.