



Gerald Vander Pyl for the Calgary Herald

Louis Stack, president and founder of Fitter International Inc., has been honoured by the Calgary Chamber of Commerce.

Injury sprouts fitness empire

Award winner began with \$350 machine

MICHELLE LANG
CALGARY HERALD

Calgary businessman Louis Stack, who helped change physiotherapy treatments around the world with a \$350 machine built in his backyard, is the city's small business owner of the year.

The Calgary Chamber of Commerce honoured Stack and his company, Fitter International Inc., at an awards ceremony Thursday evening.

Before learning he had won the award, Stack suggested his company became a finalist be-

cause it persevered through more than a decade of difficult times before achieving success.

Today, Fitter employs more than 40 people, distributes and sells its 60 fitness-related products in more than 15 countries, and has been named the 23rd fastest-growing company in Alberta.

"It has been a 17-year trudge and for 14 of those years we were the walking wounded," said Stack. "But we stuck with our program and, finally, the general masses have discovered that it makes a lot of sense."

Stack, a former member of the Canadian National Speed Skiing team, started Fitter in 1985 after he found the rehabilitation from his knee and foot surgery wasn't working well.



Winners going back to 1990

Small Business Owner of the Year

- 2002 Louis Stack, Fitter International Inc.
- 2001 Arlene Dickenson, Venture Communications
- 2000 Carlo Galasso, Perfect Fit Manufacturing Ltd.
- 1999 Clifford Thomas, Neon Contractors Ltd.
- 1998 Douglas MacRae, Blackfoot Motorsport
- 1997 Spolumbo's Fine Foods & Deli
- 1996 James Malcolm, AccuMap EnerData Corp.
- 1995 Doug Fraser, Galvanic Analytical Systems Ltd.
- 1994 Bernard Callebaut, Chocolaterie Bernard Callebaut Ltd.
- 1993 Ulrich Kuenz, Classic Bakeshoppe Ltd./Flying Plate Catering Inc.
- 1992 Sal Daklale, Byblos Bakery
- 1991 Joe Samaska, Pillar Oilfield Projects Ltd.
- 1990 E.T. Evans, QF Food Distribution Services Ltd.

Emerging Enterprise of the Year*

- 2002 Chris Jones, Entrix Sports Inc.
- 2001 Brenda Chute, Easy Visas Inc.
- 2000 Karen & Bob Brown, Kensington Riverside Inn, Stephen Hagel & Don Gryryluk, ACMEWorks Digital Film Ltd.
- 1999 Joan Bauer, Laura Leah English, Pet Planet Ltd.
- 1998 Sami and Daniel Barghshoon, Le Boulanger — The Artisan's Bread

* Category began in 1998