

Woodstock entrepreneur chosen for Leaders Program

Bugle-Observer

Fri Jun 2 2017

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A Woodstock businessman is one of 28 entrepreneurs across Atlantic Canada to be named a Wallace McCain Institute Entrepreneurial Leader. Stockford Reefer Services Inc. president and service manager Matthew Stockford made the cut for the 10th Entrepreneurial Leaders Program after a two-day process referred to as “The Choosing” at the **University of New Brunswick**.

Speaking with the Bugle-Observer following being chosen, Stockford said he was very happy to be taken into a program “attended by a lot of outstanding business people in Atlantic Canada.”

He said the program gives him the opportunity to interact with his peers and talk about problems or ideas you might be having regarding your business.

“It is all about bettering ourselves as leaders so we can expand our businesses and grow the Atlantic region,” said Stockford. “They can work as a sound board. You can talk to people. It is fully confidential. You don’t talk about people outside of that so you can open up [about] business problems, personal problems, great ideas, whatever you’ve got going on.”

He said it’s an exciting opportunity for him, as it will provide the chance to grow his business skills.

“I’m very confident in my skills for my trade,” said Stockford. “This will help me to build my confidence on my business skills, to go along with those trade skills.”

Stockford said when he was chosen into the program, he told the group there is no other way he could think of that allows you “to bring people from such varied industries together to see what issues they might be facing and help them.”

He added that significant companies have been through the program in its 10 years, with CEOs and owners benefitting from it and holding it in high regard.

“I feel pretty fortunate to have gone through the process out of [419] nominations,” said Stockford.

According to a media release issued following the choosing, the group of 28 businesspeople “has a collective economic footprint of \$63 million in revenue and 550 employees” across the Maritimes.

They were chosen from 419 nominees.

Now that they have been chosen for ELP10, they will meet for two days every month of the next year, visiting all four Atlantic provinces. At each meeting they will have the opportunity not only to interact with each other, but also with special speakers. Following the first year, alumni in the program continue meeting on a quarterly basis.

ELP is one of three intensive cohort programs conducted by the Wallace McCain Institute at **UNB**. The other programs are Second-in-Commands (2iC), and ECHO, which has a focus on multi-generational businesses. Stockford Reefer Services Inc., currently in its 20th year of operation, is a business that specializes in Transport Refrigeration Unit repair and sales. Stockford and his wife Hilary bought the business from his father in 2013, moving to a new facility at 7 Aubrie Court in Woodstock last year.

Length: 474 words