

2006 Summit Award Winners

The Entrepreneur of The Year Award is given annually to a Black-owned business or to an entrepreneur owning a small business. The Black Business Initiative defines small business as a company that has been in successful operation for at least three years and generates less than \$1-million in sales annually. The person or company must demonstrate business excellence within the Nova Scotia business community.

This year BBI is proud to present the award to Simmons Paving. Vice President Carlo Simmons is carrying on with a tradition of excellence that has been in the community for more than 30 years.

“The business was started by my father (Wilfred) and mother (Gloria) in 1974. I watched how he dealt with people, how he did the scheduling. My father was involved in the business right to the end [of his life]. I consulted him and he oversaw the business. He passed away two years ago.”

It is an understatement to say that Simmons Paving is a family owned and operated business. Brother Edward is the office manager. Brother Wilfred Junior is the job supervisor. Brother Winslow does maintenance and sister Barb acts as an advisor. There is an uncle, a nephew, three cousins and the first person you get to see or speak to when contacting the company is his niece Michelle.

“One of the great things is that we have grown so that we can take on much larger jobs. Now the driveways we are doing are on average \$7,000 and \$8,000 and we are doing much more commercial work. One of the hardest things is not being able to compete for the larger jobs, because we have to buy materials from those same suppliers that are also bidding on those jobs. I remember bidding on a job five years ago and they really liked us. If we could have come in \$10,000 to \$15,000 cheaper we would have gotten it, but we couldn't afford that. The competition is fierce. But good competition is great for everyone.”

But Simmons says there are other great things about his business. He loves the fact that he has flexible hours and that the business has been able to provide secure employment for family and community members. “It is great being able to see people realize their goals, getting nice homes and vehicles and being able to move on in life not having to worry about their next pay cheque.”

Carlo Simmons says winning this award is special because he is being recognized by the industry and most importantly by the people of his community. He says he is proud because he knows the expectations are high and feels this is quite an honour.

Carlo Simmons was born and raised in North Preston. He has been married to his wife Loretta for 15 years. Together they two lovely daughters, nine-year-old Kyla and five-year-old Karetta.

The business is currently situated at 17 Wilfred Joseph Drive, in North Preston named after his father. ☎

ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AWARD Simmons Paving



**Gloria Simmons and Family
Accepting Award**



SUMMIT SUMMARY