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OILWEEK'S

RISING STARS

The new class of Rising Stars is an eclectic mix of entrepreneurs and engineers, CEOs, and scientists

★ *Oilweek's* second induction of Rising Stars is a stellar constellation of the Canadian oil and gas industry's shining lights.

All under the age of 45, *Oilweek's* dozen Stars this year range from the president of a Montreal-based firm specializing in treating produced water to the founder and owner of a service and supply company that grew out of a tiny motorcycle repair shop in Crossfield, just north of Calgary.

In the mix are the fiery owner of a compliance services organization, the son of a national political figure, and the man charged with helping Syncrude Canada solve its tailings woes. All are deserving inductees in *Oilweek's* second class of Rising Stars.

Just like the inaugural 2008 class, this year's inductees have all made substantial contributions in their work environments. But they've also taken the bull by the horns in their own communities. Logan Day, for example, sits on the boards of both The Support Network and Kids Up Front; Tina Pant-Ducharme mentors young women just getting started in the business world through her work with Calgary Women in Energy.

It's a smaller group in 2009 than in 2008, but the selection criteria are unyielding: potential Rising Stars must be outstanding at work, and they must be making a notable contribution in the community. Our 12 Rising Stars were culled from more than 100 valid nominations, selected by a committee comprised of *Oilweek* publisher Agnes Zalewski, *Oilweek* editor Dale Lunan, and John Waiand and Caroline Baynes, partner and marketing manager, respectively, of event sponsor KPMG.

Our 2009 Rising Stars will be honoured at a reception in June at Calgary's Hotel Arts. ►

Steering several ships

After six years at Vista Projects, Richard Campbell has become adept at setting clients on the right course

Photo: Neil Koven Photography



AFTER GRADUATING from university, Richard Campbell decided to look for a job in London. Not only did he find a

fascinating job, but he was able to change the way the company that hired him operated.

The United Kingdom-based company that hired him, uSwitch.com, had recently sprung up in response to government deregulation of many home services such as water, telephone, and electricity.

Faced with companies competing for their business, British citizens had a hard time knowing how to choose one over another. Among the services offered by uSwitch.com was to calculate how much money a client could save by choosing one provider over another.

Although he may not be able to stroll to work through Hyde Park as he did when he worked in London, Richard's current job at the engineering consulting firm Vista Projects Ltd. provides him with plenty of scope for his talents.

Over the past six years, he has moved into increasingly demanding and responsible jobs. Starting out in cost control and document control scheduling, he soon moved into the position of project controls manager. Within two years, he was appointed project services manager and tasked with developing teams of managers in document control, project controls, scheduling, and estimating.

Today, Richard also holds the title of managing principal.

The 24-year-old firm provides cost analysis and project management guidance to heavy oil producers using steam assisted gravity drainage and other non-mining production methods.

Although the company

employs engineers, it distinguishes itself from its competitors by also employing chartered accountants and analysts, who add financial expertise to Vista's portfolio. In this way, Vista does its best to help its clients avoid the cost overruns that have plagued the oil-sands industry.

Until the fall of 2008, producers were trying to meet such tight production deadlines that they often hurtled ahead without taking the time to do thorough cost analyses.

"We want our analytical people to really get their hands dirty—to predict cost overruns as early as possible," says Richard. Developing solid, long-term relationships with clients helps. Knowing their clients over a period of years "allows us to speak our minds," he says. "Because we've been successful in the past our clients are willing to listen."

Providing direction to the companies he works for, whether in the form of algorithms as he did with uSwitch.com or in the form of a five-year plan of action as he is currently doing for Vista, is a theme that stands out in Richard's career.

No doubt his training first at the University of Calgary's Haskayne School of Business and then at Harvard Business School's Executive Program gave him the intellectual framework to develop a road map for Vista in the face of current economic uncertainties.

Not only has Richard lived and worked in the United States and the United Kingdom, he has also visited Nepal, India, East Africa, Argentina, and Peru. And he's carried his skills to some of those other countries as well: just prior to joining Vista, he fulfilled a six-month volunteer contract with a Canadian organization called Alternatives, and was posted to Buenos Aires where he worked with local Argentine non-governmental organizations in a variety of roles, ranging from training and technical guidance to software development and basic IT issues.

Outside the office, he's involved as a volunteer with Immigrant Services Calgary, where he coaches new immigrants in the skills needed to find a keep employment. "Having travelled a lot through developing countries, I met a lot of tremendously bright, resourceful people."

He understands the difficulties many talented newcomers to Canada have knowing how to launch a job search, especially when English is their second language, and he provides them with one-on-one coaching in job search skills. ★



FAST FACTS

Born: Oct. 24, 1976

Education: Harvard Business School, Executive Program; Haskayne School of Business

Family: Married to Lynn. They spend their free time backpacking in the summer and skiing in the winter.

