

College alumni now business big shots

By STEVE MACNAULL Oct 17
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The Okanagan College Alumni Awards handed out this week prove that graduates can excel on the local or world stage.

Brothers and Prestige Collision owners Todd and Mark Regier of Kelowna picked up the young alumni award, and 1-800-Got-Junk president Launi Skinner, originally from Summerland, was named the distinguished alumni winner.

The trophies were handed out Thursday at the awards banquet at the Okanagan Golf Club in Kelowna.

Skinner earned her Okanagan College diploma in business administration in 1985.

She started to work with Starbucks in 1993 and worked her way up to be the most senior woman in the organization as president of the coffee giant's U.S. division.

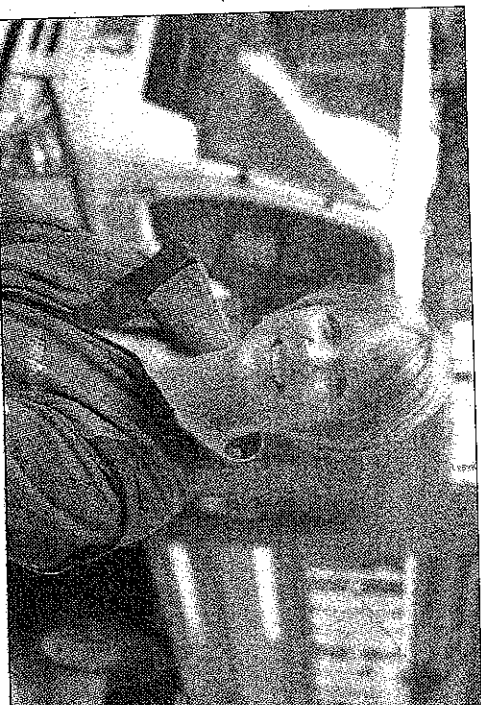
In 2007, Fortune magazine named Skinner one of its "four women to watch."

After 15 years with Starbucks, she took the job of president at 1-800-Got-Junk's Vancouver head office in 2008.

She's responsible for the growth of the junk removal company in North America and Australia.

The young alumni award the Regier brothers picked up recognizes excellence among grads under age 35.

Todd, 30, has two apprenticeships from the college — automotive collision repair (2001) and automotive painting and refinishing (2003).



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1-800-Got-Junk president Launi Skinner won the distinguished alumni award at the Okanagan College Alumni Awards this week. Right: Brothers and Prestige Collision owners Todd and Mark Regier picked up the young alumni award.

Mark, 28, graduated in 2004 with a business administration diploma.

At Prestige Collision, Todd oversees the body work and Mark the business side.

The brothers have also caught the attention of the Kelowna Business Excellence Awards, where they are finalists in the young entrepreneur of the year category.

Winners from that contest will be named at a banquet Wednesday at the Delta Grand hotel.

The \$125-a-plate alumni awards also featured a silent auction and was a fundraiser for the alumni association's student bursary.

Last year, Gorman Brothers Lumber chief forester Nick Arkle from West Kelowna was the distinguished alumni winner and the young alumni award went to Corinne Inman, then 26, of Morpheus Graphics and Printing Solutions in Penticton.

Last year, there was also a special recognition award for business administration grad Kelly Scott, who skipped the Kelowna curling team that won the 2007 world women's curling championships with computer information systems grad Jeanna Schreuder and office administration grad Renee Simons.