

## Leadership Award

Gerry Price, P.Eng., Ph.D.



Gerry Price obtained his B.Sc. and M.Sc. in mechanical engineering from the University of Manitoba in 1970 and 1972, respectively. After obtaining his Ph.D. in mechanical engineering and applied mechanics from Lehigh University, Dr. Price worked as a scientist for the Defense Research Board in Alberta.

In 1977, Gerry joined the family ventilation equipment business founded by his father. Over the next decade Gerry took over the running of the company and by the mid-1990s he had bought out the remaining shareholder interests in order to fully control the firm. He soon took a bold move and moved into the American market, which had many risk and challenges.

At the same time, Canadian business entered into a deep recession. Between 1987 and 1993 the firm lost two thirds of the Canadian non-residential construction market and for a number of years, the firm had to be creative to save money, keep the doors open, meet payroll and keep the business viable in Canada. The firm's turn around can be attributed to many factors, including its strong research and development and rolling out new products with a short lead time. Even during the most trying times, the company's commitment to customer service and principle-based values remained strong.

Today, Price owns or controls eight companies operating under the Price Group. Last year, those companies had sales of \$331 million, with 12 manufacturing sites and more than 2,200 employees.

During the Building on Strengths capital campaign at the University of Manitoba, Gerry was a tireless volunteer for the fundraising for the Engineering & Information Technology Complex. Not only did he lead the committee that dealt with the Manufacturers in Manitoba, he took a leadership role as a donor. The air distribution system in the building was provided by Price Industries. This was Gerry's corporate contribution – Gerry also made a substantial personal donation.

Another contribution is Gerry's work in helping to establish both the Partners Program in Architecture and the Friends of Engineering Program at the University of Manitoba. Again Gerry led by example, being one of the first to join both initiatives and providing both financial and administrative support so that these organizations could grow. But the best example of Gerry's leadership remains his leadership in industry. As his market was shrinking by almost 70%, Gerry led his company to a growth in sales of 15%. It is one thing to be a great leader in good times – it is a much greater achievement to be an exceptional leader in hard times.

Gerry's impact on society has been tremendous. The new EITC stands as an example of one contribution – it impacts every engineering and computer scientist that passes through the school. The Friends of Engineering Program has brought the Faculty and the profession into a much closer and mutually supportive relationship. This relationship has allowed the Faculty to become the leading design school in Canada. The success of Gerry's corporate initiatives has meant sustained growth of high value,

high technology jobs in Winnipeg – over the period of depression that is now finally passing, Gerry maintained and actually grew his company. All three of these leadership examples have helped make Manitoba a better place to live.

Gerry was made a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Engineering in 2011. This is the highest recognition available to Canadian Engineers. Gerry was presented with the Distinguished Alumni award by the University of Manitoba in 2012, a recognition of his many contributions to the University, City, Province and Country. Gerry and his wife Barb were named Outstanding Philanthropists of the Year in 2011, a recognition of their long time commitments to causes they believe in.

In recognition of his outstanding leadership and scientific knowledge applied to benefit Manitobans and the nation, the Association is pleased to present the Leadership Award to Dr. Gerry Price.