Top entrepreneurs honoured at CNA's Luminary Awards

SINGAPORE — Four of Asia's top entrepreneurs were honoured at this year's Channel NewsAsia Luminary Awards.

The awards mark the channel's drive to raise the value of enterprise in Asia, recognising companies not only for their green and innovative initiatives but also the spirit of entrepreneurship.

The Lifetime Award went to Mr Dhanin Chearavanont, chairman of Thailand's largest non-state conglomerate.

Mr Dhanin's dream was to create the "kitchen of the world" and today his dream is a reality as he runs one of the world's largest feed and poultry companies, employing over 250,000 people.

The recipient for the Future Business Luminary Award was Mr Charles Wong of Charles & Keith.

Brothers Charles and Keith opened their first 500 sq ft store in the midst of the 1996 financial crisis.

Today, the company helms brands Charles & Keith and Pedro, totalling more than 300 stores around the world.

Mr Wong said: "We really love our work. We see a lot of young people joining us — that's a big motivation for us."

Singapore developer City Development Limited (CDL) took home the Green Luminary award.

Since 2007, the company has reduced its total carbon emissions by 11 per cent and plans to double that by 2020.

CDL managing director Kwek Leng Joo said: "We started going green some 15 years ago by taking small steps at a time."

"In our case, we have certainly proven, at least to ourselves, that it is possible to be profitable and, at the same time, conserve the environment."

The recipient for the Innovation Luminary Award was Taiwanese technology firm Accton.

From its initial focus on Wireless LAN and Ethernet products, the company has expanded to become a worldwide communications solutions provider.

"If we don't invest in ourselves earlier, we will not be able to keep up with the requirements (people) need," said Accton president Samuel Chang.

Ministers, foreign dignitaries and industry players gathered for Channel NewsAsia's Luminary Awards 2012 yesterday.

The recipients of this year's awards were assessed using Asia's first systematic benchmarking tool for key corporate practices, which was developed by Channel NewsAsia, alongside Deloitte, GreenA Consultants and the Singapore Management University.

Companies in Asia had participated in an online survey that quantifies the attributes of innovation, green practices and future business potential.

An independent jury panel comprising world-renowned industry and academic players then deliberated over the analytic results to determine the recipients. RACHEL KELLY