SOUTHERN MINNESOTA INITIATIVE FOUNDATION
2005 REGIONAL RECOGNITION LUNCHEON
OCTOBER 6, 2005

Leading the Way — Celebrating Entrepreneurs

2005 Vanguard Award

About The Award

Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation's annual Vanguard Award recognizes an outstanding local leader who is positively impacting our region. This year, in keeping with our "Leading the Way – Celebrating Entrepreneurs" luncheon theme, the award honors an individual who is demonstrating a strong commitment to the legacy and spirit of entrepreneurship in southern Minnesota. The Vanguard Award Recipient receives a $1,000 grant for the organization of his/her choice.

2005 Vanguard Award Nominees

Ron Beltz, Green Isle
Clint Calvert, Austin
Bill Davis, Utica
Leigh Johnson, Rochester
Todd Olson, New Ulm
Stan Shetka, Le Center
Mark & Sheryl Tasler, Rochester
Jena Thompson, Albert Lea
Brian Tohal, New Ulm
Nancy VanderWaerdt, Albert Lea

Past Vanguard Award Recipients

2004
Lynn Spainhower, Austin

2003
Stephen Waldhoff, Albert Lea

2002
Keith Shaffer, Faribault

2001
Susan Bruss, Mankato

2000
Judy Arzdorf, Mankato

Stan Shetka
Founder & President
Shetka Works, Le Center

Stan Shetka and his company are proving that it is possible to create environmentally friendly building materials and reduce consumer waste at the same time. Using a nontoxic, no-waste process, the company's central product, called shetkaSTONE, is manufactured from 100% recycled paper, plant or cloth fiber into a range of items, including tables, counter tops, chairs, and architectural moldings.

Stan's creativity in combining the aesthetically pleasing and utilitarian started early in his career. Studying at the University of Minnesota, Stan made his first paper block to protest a particular Art History assignment. He boiled his entire textbook to a pulp, smashed it into a solid block, and legendarily received an A after explaining that it was a "different view of history – destroying history to make history."

Now a professor of Art and Design at Gustavus Adolphus College, Stan has been researching and developing his innovation since the 1980s. His company has expanded to a 27,000 square foot facility in Le Center, with plans to soon begin manufacturing his innovative products in commercial quantities. The flexibility of his process and results make this growing company unique, even in the green building industry. Far from finished, Stan and his researchers continue to look for new applications of other materials in sustainable manufacturing.