

# Leading lights shine torch for SA businesses

## ALEXANDRA ECONOMOU

ADVANCED manufacturing is considered critical to South Australia's future and Lonsdale firm REDARC is a shining example of an innovative company succeeding locally and internationally.

Last night, REDARC was named the 2014 Telstra South Australian Business of the Year.

From humble beginnings in 1997, owners Anthony and Michelle Kittel have grown the business into a research and development-driven manufacturer of patented battery charging, portable solar, electronic safety and voltage converter products.

From such a small start, and growing to now employ 95 people, REDARC products are used by myriad industries such as automotive, mining and agriculture.

Mr Kittel said the entire business model was based on innovation.

"We put technological development at the forefront of everything we do," he said.

"Our products can be fitted to anything with a battery that moves.

"Our success has come from an unrelenting focus on new product development, employing and developing highly skilled people and providing excellent technical and after sales customer support."

REDARC also won the Medium Business Award category at last night's gala event held at the Adelaide Entertainment Centre.

The Start-Up Award was presented to Clapham's Fire Cafe, which had been transformed by Zoi Kokoti and partner Stephen Lowery.

Those at the awards heard how the cafe not only served delicious food, it hosted cooking demonstrations, tapas Fridays and had started selling their goods via wholesale.

The Micro Business Award was won by Payneham-based

Virtual Ad Agency, which provided clients access to marketing, account and freelance specialists.

Clare Valley Motel took out the Small Business Award.

Owners Lee and Jan Stokes bought the motel four years ago and had renovated it before also adding a restaurant, Breezes.

Finally, Bowhill Engineering won the Regional Award for its success evolving from a rural machinery maintenance business into a fabricator of heavy and complex structural steel.

Telstra Australian Business Awards ambassador Will Irving said all winners were brilliant and inspirational.

"(Their) owners are recognised for their professionalism, innovation, leadership and creative use of technology," he said.

All state winners are eligible for the Telstra Australian Business Awards, to be announced in Melbourne on August 7.