Stuller shares the glory

Matthew G. Stuller Sr. received the 2004 International Achievement Award on Thursday but was quick to say the award belonged to the 2,500 employees of the company he founded.

Stuller was given the award Thursday at the International Center of Lafayette for his work in promoting Acadia on an international scale and for his many philanthropic activities here in this area," said Leslie Hazelton, chairwoman of the International Achievement Award panel.

The award has been presented annually since 1990 by the International Center of Lafayette and the International Trade Development Group.

By the numbers:
- The International Achievement Award was first presented in 1990. The winners have been Louis J. Milot, Zachary Richard, J.S. "B" Brown II, Warren A. Perusse and Enrique Hinojosa. This year's winner is Matthew G. Stuller Sr., chairman and CEO of Stuller Inc.
- The award criteria: The candidate must be an American citizen or a permanent resident of the United States and must have significantly enhanced Acadia's reputation and engaged in activities that have benefited or benefited to the Lafayette area.
- The luncheon recognizing Stuller will be April 22 at the City Club at River Ranch as part of Festival International de Louisiane week.

Hazelton said Stuller's development of the Stuller Foundation and Stuller Pens, both institutions to help the less fortunate, has made a difference in the community.

"His company and his activities have helped put Lafayette on the international map," Hazelton said. "Besides his business success, Matt is being recognized for his many activities here in this community to help people."

Stuller's jewelry making and distribution operation has 2,000 employees. 1,000 of them in Lafayette. The company has 15 facilities on three continents.

Stuller has offices in Israel and Thailand and has 300,000 items in its inventory.

"On any given day, we are doing business in 45 countries around the world," Stuller said. "I've received a lot of awards over the years, and I will receive this one with a smile on behalf of my employees who have made everything possible."

He also said he uses his position to promote Lafayette and Acadia to many international customers his company has.

"I like to call Lafayette the pearl of Louisiana," Stuller said. "It has the best food and the best people in the world."

Stuller said that every week his company has visitors from different countries and "I make sure that they get a chance to see this wonderful city and I like to show it off every chance I get."

Representing the Lafayette Consolidated Government, Chief Administrative Officer Dee Stanley said Stuller was courted by officials from Austin, Texas, several years ago to move his corporate headquarters, but declined. Stanley said that Stuller's contribution to the local economy and the community is not easy to calculate.

"When you take those 1,000 employees with their salaries and the multiplier effect, it comes out to tens of millions of dollars," Stanley said. "Matt Stuller and his company are very important to this community and to this region."