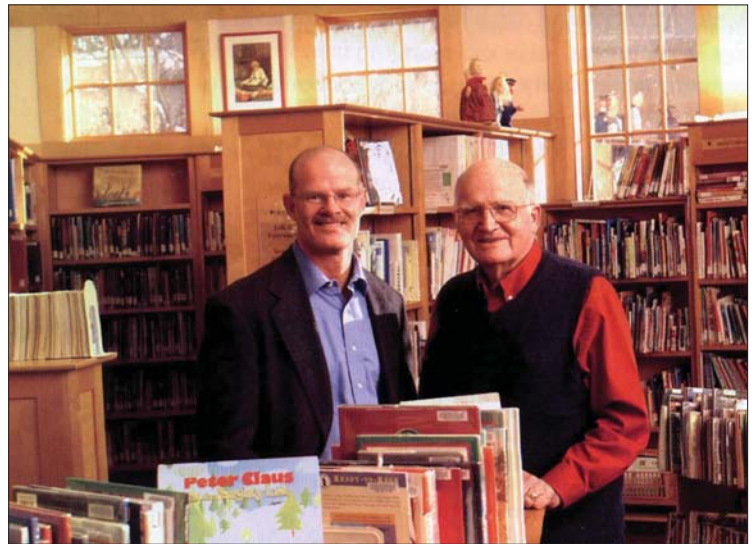


MCA Member Honors Father with the *Upsize Magazine* Lifeline Award

Last Fall, *Upsize Magazine* asked business owners to share the best business lesson they've learned and to thank the person who taught it. Judges selected from nominations seven entrants based on the impact of the lesson, its relevance to *Upsize* readers, and the quality of the gratitude expressed. Of those chosen was Lowery Smith, nominated by EDS Consultants and Construction Managers President Earl "Doc" Smith. Smith's lesson to his son was; Never quit. Both father and son have struggled with dyslexia, and the son said his father's example taught him to keep working hard no matter what. "Victory is won by those who show up," Lowery Smith says. It is because of this lesson that Earl "Doc" Smith has named his father as his lifeline.

Last Thanksgiving, he read the winning nomination he wrote about his father, Lowery J. Smith, to enter the *Upsize* Lifeline Awards. "Coming from someone with dyslexia, 'never quit' was quite a remarkable thing for a father to impart to his dyslexic son," the nomination says in part. "Born during the Depression, my father was inspired to overcome many obstacles. His firm and caring hands have guided me to search for my passion and stick by my commitments in my personal and professional life." Smith says emotions ran high. "I had a hard time reading it in front of everybody." And the result? "He gave me a big hug." Smith says when he was in school, dyslexia and how to manage it was not well understood. His father's encouragement helped him stick to his studies. "Handicaps can benefit in other ways," Smith says. "I'm a hard worker. I've always sat in the front of the classroom. I would compensate by listening hard and visualizing." Those abilities help him now at EDS, he says, which oversees design, construction and general contracting of commercial buildings. "I can help clients visualize things," he says. "We take the drawings and turn them into a Rembrandt, so the building fits the people." A civil engineer who worked for Honeywell for three years, he started EDS eight years ago. He's proud of the St. Anthony library, for which his firm won a national award. EDS's annual revenue ranges from \$200,000 to \$600,000, with the high end reached when they secure general contracting projects. Smith says that as he was growing up, many methods were tried to help him learn. Few were effective. "They had me read through glasses, one lens with red glass and one with blue glass," he says. "They even had me thinking I didn't crawl right," and in middle school asked him to practice the right way to crawl. "It was trial and error." The constant

was support from his father, a geologic engineer who works with Ag Lime Sales Inc. today. Says Smith's nomination: "We continue to move forward, in spite of competition from companies ten times our size. It's our commitment. It's our passion. It's my gift from my Dad."



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