



20TH ANNUAL

2020

WIBA

WOMEN IN BUSINESS AWARDS

NOVEMBER 19, 2020 • 7PM
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20TH ANNUAL

2020 WIBA

WOMEN IN BUSINESS AWARDS AGENDA

Welcome

Ruth Unrau, Narrator
Mishka Balsom, Emcee
Message from Julie Rorison, Chair, Women in Niagara

Young Professional Award

presented by: RBC

Welcome from Women in Business Award Founders

Myra Robertson, Niagara Dailies

Emerging Business Award

Presented by: Niagara Economic Development

Welcome from Co-Title Sponsor Canadian Tire Bank

Excellence in Hospitality & Tourism Award

Welcome from Co-Title Sponsor PenFinancial Credit Union

Science & Technology Award

presented by: DiPaola, DiPietro, Little & Co.

Cultural Arts Award

Business That Gives Back Award

presented by: Niagara Community Foundation

Entrepreneurship Award

presented by: Niagara College

Community Impact Award

Excellence in Non-Profit Award

presented by: United Way Niagara

Leadership Award

presented by: Brock University

Closing Remarks

 **Share The Night On Social Media!** 

Cheer on the finalists and post your pictures of the 2020 Women in Business Awards! Be sure to tag @GNCC_WIN on  Twitter or @womeninniagara on  Instagram and use the hashtag #WIBA2020. We're looking forward to seeing your pictures!

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2020 WIBA

WOMEN IN BUSINESS AWARDS

Ruth Unrau 🐦 @ruthunrau | NARRATOR
Owner, Ruth Unrau — Leadership Development

Ruth Unrau is a life long resident of Niagara. She is a small business and leadership development coach and works with entrepreneurs, emerging leaders and community organizations. Ruth is an active and dedicated volunteer and believes that strong communities are built by individuals who get involved and take action. Ruth is also a co-founder and past chair of the Women in Niagara council.



Mishka Balsom 🐦 @MishkaBalsom | EMCEE
CEO, Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce

Mishka Balsom is the CEO of the Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce, responsible for developing and implementing initiatives that are designed to strengthen the business climate in Niagara and support the economic prosperity of the region. Under her leadership, the GNCC launched a number of new programs and collaborative partnerships, not only within the region but throughout Ontario and New York State.



Julie Rorison 🐦 @JulieRoar | WIN CHAIR
Manager of Community Relations, Brock University

Julie is a lifelong Niagara resident, Brock University graduate, and she is proud to serve her community at the City of St. Catharines working on strategic priorities, policy, communications and government relations. Since 2014 she has led the Niagara Leadership Summit for Women, an annual event to celebrate women in leadership and inspire the next generation of young women and leaders. In 2016 Julie was a delegate at the UN Conference on the Status of Women with YWCA Canada. Julie is passionate about community development and is excited about the positive future of her hometown being led through the creative and dynamic talent of emerging leaders.





WIN

WOMEN IN NIAGARA

WIN Mission: To foster the growth and success of women in business in Niagara.

WIN Purpose: To provide strategic and tactical direction to support the Council's mission and strategic priorities. Responsibilities include identifying issues relevant to women in Niagara and providing strategic guidance to address these challenges and opportunities.

WIN Priorities:

Expand Our Collaboration

We will strengthen existing partnerships while establishing new community partnerships designed to optimize expertise and resources, and collaborate with community partners to develop and align our shared voice on issues affecting women in business in Niagara.

To Be A Business Resource And Advocate For Women

We will proactively provide professional information and resources to women to stimulate business growth and opportunities, provide valuable learning opportunities and linkages for women to connect for resource and knowledge sharing, and continue to advocate for issues that directly impact women.

Inspiring leadership

We will use our assets as a catalyst for inspiring leadership in the business women community, and celebrate the professional achievements of women.

Keep up to Date:

 @gncc_win  Facebook.com/womeninniagara  womeninniagara
 Join our LinkedIn group: linkedin.com/groups/7421732/profile
 Join our mailing list by emailing info@gncc.ca

2020 WIN Council Members:

Julie Rorison *Chair*
Nicole Regehr *Past Chair*
Grace Eldajani *Vice Chair*
Ruth Unrau *Co-Founder*
Corrina Massicotte *Staff Liaison*
Lesley Calvin
Isabella Camillo
Josie Faccini

Sheryl L Johnson
N'ora Kalb
Sheryl Matthews
Sarah Pritula
Melanie Sodka
Jaime Turner
Cheryl Vanditelli
Marcia Young

Young Professional Award

FINALISTS

Presented by:



Royal Bank

Nahida Al-Kayed

@eastway_auto

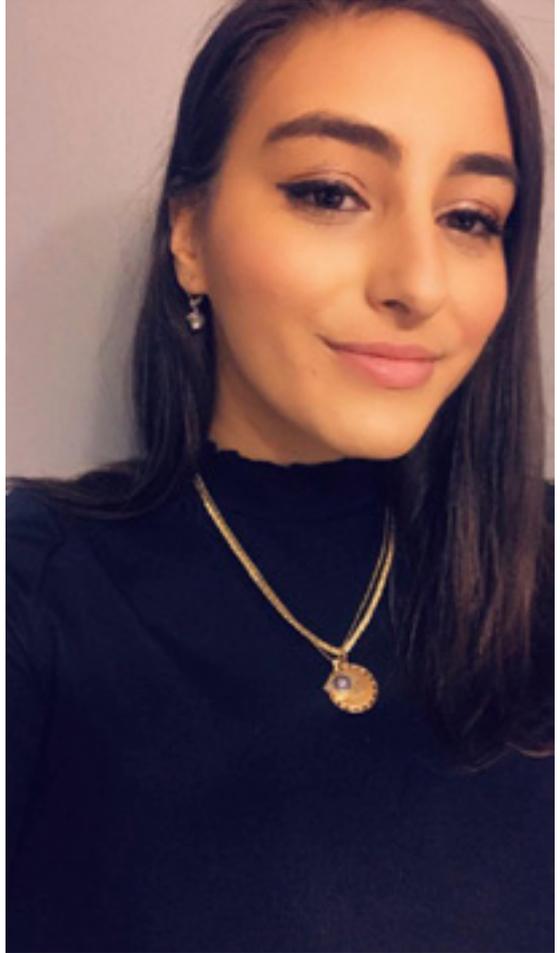
Eastway Auto Service Ltd.

Nahida Al-Kayed is a young professional in the automotive industry. She is dedicated to her line of work and very much enjoys being involved with the Niagara community and global aids for countries in need. Al-Kayed graduated from Brock University with a Bachelor of Business Administration and now works as a car sales representative for her family business, Eastway Auto.

Some notable achievements for Al-Kayed include being a two-time nominee for the St. Catharines Standard's Auto Sales Rep of the Year, increasing sales from 12 to 20 a month at her dealership, and completing a Post-Graduate Certificate in Automotive Dealership Management from the Automotive Business School of Canada.

With the diverse challenges in today's business environment, Al-Kayed believes it is important to be adaptable as a business, to provide exceptional service despite difficult circumstances. Since the pandemic, Eastway Auto has found new ways to provide service and answer queries promptly. She recognizes that communication is key in keeping customers happy and operating smoothly.

Al-Kayed plans to continue learning about the automotive industry and address the arising wants and needs of consumers. Al-Kayed knows that it is essential to provide the best service possible and stay up to date on market trends as they are ever-changing.



Young Professional Award

FINALISTS

Presented by:



Royal Bank

Rachel Dedinsky

🐦 @racheldedinsky

Giant Shoe Creative Agency

Rachel Dedinsky is a Niagara born businesswoman who respects the hustle and fast-paced lifestyle a business career brings. Dedinsky currently works as the marketing and digital media strategist at Giant Shoe Creative Agency and was previously working for Benefit Cosmetics Canada, as their digital marketing coordinator.

Dedinsky has a Bachelor of English and Post-Graduate Certificate in Public Relations, landing herself on both the Dean's and President's Honour Roll. She received the 2017 Associate Dean's Award of Excellence from Niagara College and continues to make great

accomplishments. She is the published author of two Huffington Post articles and the proud co-host of Save Her Seat, a podcast that discusses the real and raw experiences of women in business.

Some of her other notable achievements include, working as the digital media officer for Niagara College, making guest speaker appearances for both Niagara College and Giant Shoe Creative, and being an editor and contributor for various online publications.

Being a female in business, Dedinsky has faced several challenges in today's climate. She is committed to discussing and recognizing these challenges through Save Her Seat. She uses this as a platform to uplift women and gives them a safe and open environment to discuss their experiences.

She strongly believes in perpetual learning and growth, recognizing the opportunity to always reach higher. She continues on a trajectory for success, with a dedication to building foundations and being part of something meaningful.



Young Professional Award

FINALISTS

Presented by:



Royal Bank



Amanda Fletcher  @CAANiagara

Amanda Fletcher is currently the associate director of marketing for CAA Niagara. Prior to this, she worked on the marketing team at Penguin Canada. Fletcher has a Bachelor of English Literature and a Post-Graduate Certificate in Creative Book Publishing, with a specialization in marketing.

Over her eight years at CAA, Fletcher has risen from a marketing coordinator to manager and now associate director. She oversees all marketing activities for the business (membership, insurance, rewards, travel) and plays a key role in the launch of new products and services.

She has helped the organization grow from 117,000 members to nearly 140,000 and has expanded the marketing team. Twice, Fletcher has received CAA's Values Award, recognizing positive contributions to the work environment.

Fletcher has struggled with anxiety and is a firm advocate for diversity and inclusivity. She is passionate about creating safe spaces for people of all backgrounds to share ideas and grow.

She recognizes the need for adaptability in today's business climate and as a member of CAA Niagara's Strategic Planning Committee, she can contribute to and help shape the organization's short- and long-term direction.

Young Professional Award

FINALISTS

Presented by:



Royal Bank

Kayleigh Rossetto

🐦 @KayleighRossett
Brock University
Students' Union

After receiving her Bachelor of Law, Kayleigh Rossetto climbed the career ladder in Brock University Student's Union, where she now holds the title of director. Prior to this role, she began in an entry-level administrative support role, navigating her way to the top.

Although her roles have varied, she has always remained a support for the undergraduate students with a focus on improving their Brock experience. As director of governance and advocacy, she facilitates the internal governance structure which includes training the board of directors, council, and supporting student executives.

Advocacy plays a large part in her role at BUSU, Rossetto also manages the Food First program (food bank) providing support to students who face food insecurity. The final feature of her portfolio is overseeing sustainability efforts, which make for a green Brock. Currently, in the election cycle, where if successful, they will obtain funding for a Student Justice Centre – a hub for education and advocacy on campus.

With new challenges this year, Rossetto has been fortunate enough to work from home and is constantly finding ways to engage with student leaders virtually. The biggest challenge for BUSU is student wellness, as many students struggle to learn virtually.

As she continues to grow in her role at BUSU, Rossetto is committed to working towards improving the governance structure and introducing better, more robust training for student leaders on the board. Demonstrating a passion for the students of Brock University, Rossetto continues to be a large advocate for the betterment of the student community.



Young Professional Award

FINALISTS

Presented by:



Royal Bank

Rebecca Winstanley

f AutoTrimNiagara
AutoTrim & Signs/
Elements Graphic Design

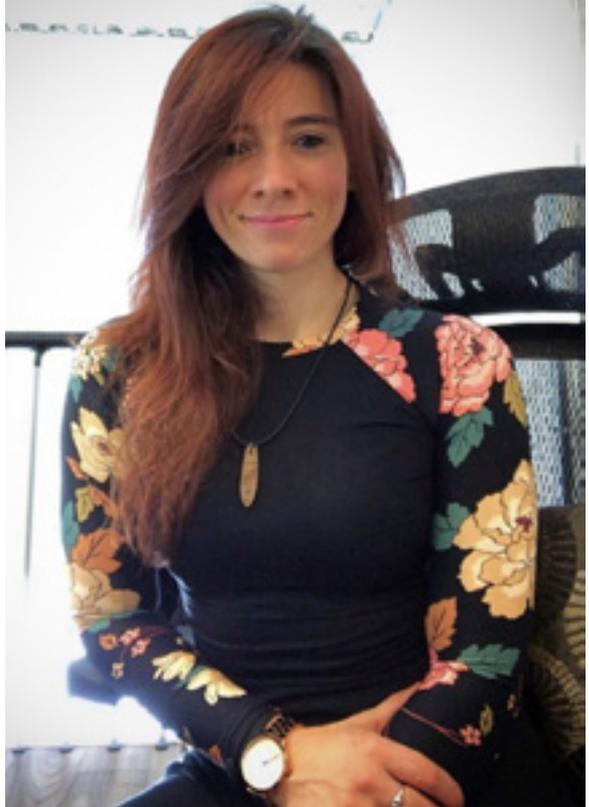
Rebecca Winstanley was hired on at AutoTrim & Signs straight out of school, as the only designer/printer/plotter operator in a male-dominated field. With time and hard work, Winstanley was eventually recognized for her craft, making her feel like a valuable asset to the team.

With constant challenges in an evolving industry, the business expanded its portfolio and opened a design firm called Elements Graphic Design, within AutoTrim. Winstanley was able to hire and train her current printer operator and second designer, feeling grateful to have passed along her passion and knowledge.

Some of her most significant achievements include doing design/print/install for Niagara, NOTL, Welland, and Grimsby response vehicles. Creating a new logo for the NOTL fire station, designing new signage for a series of wineries, and being in the top three finalists in Niagara's 2021 Canada Games medal design.

Upon the pandemic, her business has been able to easily adapt to rising obstacles. AutoTrim's PPE is a urethane material (developed in the Vietnam War), used on cars to protect from stone chips and debris.

Winstanley's vision for the future is to expand the automotive fleet, by adding electric cars for business meetings, installations, and more. She also hopes to expand into the residential sector, educating people on cost-effective measures for updating their homes.



Emerging Business Award FINALISTS

Presented by:

NIAGARA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Lesley Calvin

🐦 @LesleyCalvin

Positive Forward Motion Inc.

Lesley Calvin is a life coach, facilitator, and speaker who specializes in leadership and organizational culture. Certified in these areas, her mission is to positively transform lives through her business, Positive Forward Motion, using a focused coaching and training model.

Calvin has dedicated nearly two decades to mastering her craft, being one of the few Leadership Development Master Practitioners with the certification to administer the Energy Leadership Index (ELI) Assessment, and the Emotional Intelligence Assessment (EQi-2.0), both recognized by Forbes in their top 3 as must take assessments for professionals & leaders.

Her niche is building emotionally intelligent, high performing skilled professionals, leaders, and organizations. With her diverse educational and professional background, Calvin has led countless individuals and organizations to understand themselves deeper, build confidence, and healthy assertiveness, as well as develop a framework for stress management and emotional self-regulation in the busyness and stress of life.

Calvin's approach is rooted in positive psychology and aims to support the healthy development of the balance between self and others, personal and professional and, work and life.

She is celebrating two years in full-time business this month and has added to her portfolio through continuous improvements in accreditations. Upon the pandemic, Calvin had no choice but to rewrite her business plan and re-envision her delivery modalities online.

She continues to map her growth and accomplishments against her original stated goals and strategic 3-year plan. Going forward, Calvin has a strong vision for the future and plans to introduce two new online pillars for her business.



Emerging Business Award FINALISTS

Presented by:
NIAGARA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Dr. Daniela DiPaola

 DrDanielImpactHealth
Impact Health Niagara

Dr. DiPaola is a chiropractor and business owner of Impact Health Niagara. She spent her youth volunteering and working in chiropractic clinics where her passion for the industry grew. After college and working for a world-renowned chiropractor for several years, DiPaola used her expertise to open Impact Health Niagara, which she has owned and operated for four years.

Her primary measure of success is business from patient referrals. Her mission is to have patients feeling their best in as little visits as possible. Providing an exceptional experience and gaining business for her work has been incredibly rewarding for Dr. DiPaola.

She has received significant nominations for various Reader's Choice Awards and was also voted "Thorold's Finest Chiropractor" by patients and community members. While business was briefly halted by the pandemic, the clinic bounced back with flying colours.

The appropriate changes were made, and Impact Health Niagara was back in business, as a safe, working environment. DiPaola ensured that patients and staff were kept in the loop during this process so the business would run smoothly upon re-opening.

Dr. DiPaola is in the process of opening a new clinic, which will be three times the size of the current operation, due to growth in clientele. As the clinic continues to grow, DiPaola's vision is to provide chiropractic, massage, physiotherapy, and perhaps other services such as naturopathic medicine, in a welcoming, new space in 2021.



Emerging Business Award FINALISTS

Presented by:

NIAGARA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Atelier Collective — Taryn Herritt & Angela Osborne

@the_atelier_collective

The Atelier

The Atelier Collective Canada's leading digital platform and event series for ambitious women in business was co-founded by Angela Osborne and Taryn Herritt. The company provides top-tier brand experiences combined with a mission to support female-led, small businesses.

Osborne and Herritt identified whitespace in the women's conference market, something missing that was experiential, content-heavy, energetic, and truly inspirational. In June 2018, they held their first vineyard event, hosting just over 300 women for a sold-out event in Niagara.



Over the past two years, Atelier has quickly become Canada's leading event series. Since its inception, each live event has sold out in record-breaking time. They've been featured in numerous publications throughout Canada including Hello! Canada, FASHION Magazine, Bay Street Bull, and Kultured, to name a few.

Although the pandemic has significantly affected the events industry, Osborne and her partner knew they would have to make the shift from in-person to virtual. The co-founders used this opportunity to create a virtual event venue to bring their brand to the forefront of the event experience.

Atelier Collective's next event, Beyond 2020, is anchored in the belief that we can move from just surviving the pandemic to actually thriving, featuring impressive keynote speakers including Mindy Kaling, Glennon Doyle, Angela Duckworth, and Sarah Lewis.

With the landscape constantly changing, The Atelier Collective plans to continue to find new ways to innovate and serve the community of women in business at The Atelier Collective.

Emerging Business Award FINALISTS



Annette Smith
🐦 @BeautLip
Lip Service Beauty

Annette Smith is a passionate wellness advocate who left her previous corporate role to pursue Lip Service Beauty (LSB) full time in 2019. Due to a health scare, Smith decided to make some personal changes and adopt natural ingredients into the creation of beauty products.



Starting small on Etsy, her brand has continued to build. Smith believes that all the ingredients of your life matter, from what you consume to who and how you spend your time. Her value of ethics and integrity helped her to align a business strategy that promotes wellness.

Smith has been a guest speaker on multiple podcasts and acted as a panelist for Brock University’s women in business virtual, EnterprenHER event this past summer.

Her business has grown exponentially since its inception in 2018. With the initial intention of only selling lip products, LSB has since created a robust assortment of beauty products. LSB is positioned in 40+ retail locations all across Canada and the US.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, LSB continues to innovate and has launched several new products and flavours this year. Aside from growing their wholesale business, they have launched their customization of labels and offer private labelling to businesses who wish to partner.

With the cancellation of in-person events, LSB has shifted their focus into an online presence, surpassing last year’s events sales. The business has made notable donations to front line workers and also developed some PPE products. Smith’s vision for the future is to continue to expand, refine, and maintain success.

Excellence in Hospitality & Tourism Award

FINALISTS

Lezlie Harper

 NiagaraBoundTours
Niagara Bound Tours

Lezlie Harper started her business, Niagara Bound Tours, 16 years ago with great success. Over the years, Niagara Bound Tours has allowed Harper to share the Black history stories of Niagara as well as her family stories who came from Kentucky in 1851 to settle in Fort Erie. She's shared her stories with thousands of people from around the world and been able to travel to other destinations to see their sites and hear the stories which she can share with her visitors.



Harper sits on the Board of the Underground Railroad Consortium of New York State and is the 2018 recipient of the Hortense Simmons Advancement of Knowledge Prize presented by the Underground Railroad Free Press. This year she did a featured interview for the Grey Bruce Annual Terminus and was recently elected as Vice President of the Riverbrink Art Museum in Queenston.

Pivoting her business this past year, Harper hosted a Next Steps tour on Canada Day, a free introductory tour of her hometown of Fort Erie, bringing in 65 people. She plans to continue to offer these tours until the motorcoaches can come back and plans to work on accommodating the unique needs the winter months will bring.

Harper's vision for the future is to continue to reinvent how the stories are told and keep the tourism industry alive, even if that means going virtual.

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Excellence in Hospitality & Tourism Award

FINALISTS



Marissa Hartley @chzplzniagara
Chz Plz

Marissa Hartley is a young entrepreneur, graduating from the culinary management program at Niagara College in 2014, she quickly climbed the restaurant ladder and started her own business, Chz Plz in 2018.

Come 2020, Hartley was able to expand the business to store-front in January 2020. She is currently enrolled part-time in professional fromager at George Brown College and clearly, has a strong passion for cheese.

Hartley won the Trinity Capital Small Business grant for new businesses, which was beneficial to the expansion of Chz Plz. Over the last couple of years, she has created long-lasting partnerships with other local businesses in Niagara.

In today's climate, Hartley was able to successfully pivot her business by continuing to cater despite a smaller scale. She was also able to work with wineries and provide food to guests with ease.

Her vision for the future of Chz Plz is to run a full-service shop in Port Dalhousie and get the green light to cater larger events.

Excellence in Hospitality & Tourism Award

FINALISTS

Vittoria Wikston

🐦 @2022CanadaGames
Niagara 2022 Canada
Summer Games

Vittoria Wikston is one of Niagara's first Certified Meeting Professionals (CMP) having attained her Certified Meeting Management (CMM), she is also passionate about the events industry and has a passion for bringing people together.

With over 30 years of experience in sales, marketing, and front-line event operations, Vittoria has held the reputation as being a powerful economic driver in the hospitality, tourism, and special events industry.

During her Director tenure with Niagara Falls Tourism, event highlights would include destination project management of Rendezvous Canada 2015; Canada's largest and impactful tourism trade marketplace involving inbound travel product purchasers from 31 countries. International sporting events would include IIHF U18 Women's Hockey Tournament - 2016, and recently FIBA U18 Men's Americas Championship - 2018.

As a member of the 2021 Canada Summer Games Bid Committee, she was responsible for launching the "Niagara Are You In" campaign that contributed to the Region's successful win. Wikston's approach is governed by her responsibility to a set of core values of being collaborative and inclusive while exporting professional initiatives with integrity and transparency.

Throughout her tourism and hospitality career she's been challenged to find success in the most hostile business environments; such as 911, SARS, economic recessions, and now COVID-19. She's succeeded by taking action and being flexible, as she believes leadership arises out of crises.

Wikston's promise for the future is to continue to deliver at nothing short of an exceptional level, view the future as a transformation from the present, and to never stop, but remember to look behind you to see who's looking up at you.



Science & Technology Award

FINALISTS

Presented by:



Ericka Evans

 @phantomcompass
Phantom Compass

Ericka Evans is an award-winning producer with 20 years of experience in the television, film, and interactive digital media industries. Her career started in film and children's educational television, branching out into video games in 2006. In 2011, she became a partner in Phantom Compass, an independent video game development company, and has produced dozens of original video games and interactive digital media projects for clients, publishers, and other game developers across the world.



She sits on the board of directors for Innovate Niagara and the Program Advisory Committee at Niagara College and volunteers to mentor students at Brock University and Niagara College. Some of her notable achievements include the Gemini Award (2006), producer of award-winning video games in 2014 and 2017, Mayor's Business Hall of Fame Award (Phantom Compass, 2015), and raising millions of dollars for her organization's project funding in the last decade.

Evans has been running distributed work-from-home teams before Zoom was popular, while at Phantom Compass she has managed distributed teams of up to 25 people and is often asked to speak on the advantages of this business model. Evans is pleased to be part of the legacy of video game development as a senior developer and recognizes the responsibility to pay it forward.

Niagara has a small but growing, games and interactive media industry. Evans' goal is to make Niagara a thriving hub for the IDM industry and advocates to keep local companies connected with Brock and Niagara video game graduates. She is also a mentor for entrepreneurs to grow their own companies, helps students network, and stays vocal about promoting the region as an excellent place to set up shop wherever she goes.

Science & Technology Award FINALISTS

Presented by:



Rowe Prudente & Brandy Henderson

@revealmags | @BRRiJSolutions
Ownera Group Inc & BRRiJ Solutions Inc.

Ownera Group Inc and BRRiJ Solutions Inc were founded by Rowe Prudente and Brandy Henderson. Prudente and Henderson have both held very impressive careers prior to business ownership, having used those assets to launch two profitable corporations. With backgrounds in finance, publishing, marketing, and now a strong-hold in tech development, they have big goals for both Ownera and BRRiJ Solutions.

In just three short years of building a publishing and marketing firm from the ground up, they have also co-founded a technology-driven company that launched amidst a tumultuous time when many businesses were seeking necessary supports to survive COVID-19. From brokering thermal solutions that also offered long term benefits, to facilitating and supporting virtual remote working solutions to companies in need, the team at BRRiJ took their collective network rooted in software development and technology acquisition, turning it into a functional business model designed to help businesses in need.

Prudente and Henderson continuously innovate to ensure they can be at the forefront of market demands and trends. Working to maintain collaborative connections all across Ontario, leveraging partnerships, and key resources through economic development, innovation & incubation centres, and educational faculties such as Ryerson and Queens University.

The future is looking bright for both Ownera & BRRiJ Solutions Inc. With Ownera, they are currently embarking on trademarking an innovative software solution that is slated for market delivery in early 2021. With BRRiJ Solutions Inc, they have recently acquired partnerships with Intel which has propelled the production of facial and gesture recognition software development targeting industry-critical solutions for major retailers.



Science & Technology Award FINALISTS

Presented by:



Jill Russell  @dsbn
District School Board of
Niagara

Jill Russell is currently the curriculum consultant for technology and the Ontario youth apprenticeship program at the District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) and has been an educator with the DSBN for the last 30 years. After spending several years working as both an engineer and production supervisor for General Motors, she left the corporate world behind to pursue teaching with a desire to inspire female participation in STEM fields.



While her job involves supporting all students with technological education, there is a focus on reaching students that are from underrepresented groups. Outside of work, Russell volunteers with several organizations that work to close the STEM gender gap. Whether judging a robotics competition, running a mobile app development competition, or participating in learning a new skill, she is up for the challenge.

The pandemic has forced the DSBN to be more innovative, for instance, launching Exploring Your Future, a five-part virtual series aimed to engage female students with STEM, in collaboration with Niagara College, the Niagara Catholic District School Board and community partners such as Ontario Power Generation, female students from across the region will be able to engage with community mentors, participate in hands-on activities and gain new perspectives regarding STEM careers.

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Stephanie Thompson

f Women in STEM Experiences
STEM by Steph

Stephanie Thompson is a passionate engineer and community leader who actively pursues new and innovative ways of promoting science, technology, and learning in the Niagara area. Currently a senior manufacturing engineer, she leads engineering teams on major capital investment projects to design assembly lines and optimize the production of engines and transmissions. Thompson is the Vice-Chair of the General Motors' Women's Council, helping engage and retain women across the organization.



As a FIRST Robotics Mentor, Thompson has run FIRST Robotics teams at local schools since 2005 and leads the Niagara FIRST Lego League as tournament director. Her focus is on the empowerment of female students in leadership and technical roles, and she continues to reach out to former students in a mentoring capacity. She has been a member of the Girls in STEM Executive Advisory Council and leads teambuilding and design workshops at the Girls in FIRST Robotics Weekend.

In 2019, Thompson launched a new social enterprise called Women in STEM Experiences (WISE), a workshop series aimed at breaking down barriers for women and making STEM subject accessible to anyone. Over 300 Niagara women and youth have participated in these Experiences, which will continue to grow in 2020 under the newly branded STEM by Steph.

Some of her achievements include winning the 2020 WXN Canada's Most Powerful Women: Top 100, Skilled Trades and Industry, the 2020 Alumni Achievement medal for community service (U of Waterloo), and a series of successful workshops.

Facing significant challenges during the pandemic, Thompson was able to turn the Enterprising Women's Gala into a virtual event, yielding record-breaking results. Although she has had to put her events on hold for 2020, she is committed to creating a virtual edition of her workshops.

Cultural Arts Award

FINALISTS

Sara Palmieri  @sara_palmieri
FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre

Sara Palmieri is a dedicated and passionate arts professional, bringing nearly 20 years of arts management experience to the table. Beginning her career in Box Office at Brock University's Centre for the Arts (CFA) in 1999, she quickly climbed the ladder to CFA's sales and marketing manager.

Palmieri worked closely with the CFA team to engage people in exceptional performing arts experiences. This would range from developing innovative audience engagement initiatives, new programming avenues and relationships, reorganizing box office and customer service departments, and assisting with strategic planning as a few highlights of the role.

In 2015, she was hired as the programming and marketing manager at the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre (PAC), where she has contributed to much of the PAC's success in its first four seasons.

In her current role, she programs 75+ HOT TICKET presentations, oversees the Film House program (which screens more than 500 titles annually), and is collaboratively responsible for a \$1.6M revenue annually.

Palmieri demonstrates a deep commitment and passion towards the artistic community, co-founding In the Soil Arts Festival (2007), engaging more than 5,000 local and visiting artists, and holding the role of Board President for local theatre company Suitcase in Point for six years.

She continues to display this commitment to the arts by adapting to the continuous challenges of the times, by utilizing her resources at PAC where she can. Palmieri strives to continue to take great care in developing programming partnerships, find new ways to utilize platforms, and show understanding, empathy, and respect through the arts. the region as an excellent place to set up shop wherever she goes.



Cultural Arts Award

FINALISTS

Chelsea Wainwright

 NiagaraBallet
Niagara Ballet School

At age 15, Chelsea Wainwright became a dance teacher at her aunt's dance studio in Beamsville, where she was given full freedom to create a ballet program that didn't exist in any other studio.

She was then accepted to the Bolshoi Ballet Academy Teacher Training program where she received her teaching certificates. In 2016, she created Niagara Ballet, a small room inside of her aunt's studio, where dancers from



any studio could come for professional ballet training. Upon realizing that this type of training didn't exist on this side of Toronto, Wainwright opened up Niagara Ballet School in a small industrial facility.

As things expanded, the school was moved to a larger location and currently has three programs running: the professional division, the associate program, and the recreational program. Each level caters to different aspects of ballet.

The dancers have won several awards and scholarships to prestigious ballet schools such as Canada's National Ballet School and other schools around the world. Before the expansion of Niagara Ballet School, Wainwright had a dream of offering performance opportunities in Niagara.

The Nutcracker started in 2014 as a short rendition, performing at local nursing and retirement homes, growing bigger each year and has been performed at the Greg Frewin Theatre for the past four years as a full ballet production.

While operating and trying to grow a business during the pandemic has been taxing, the Ballet School transitioned to online classes in an effort to feel normal. Online enrolment grew and so did Wainwright's reputation for putting her students first.

As for the future, Wainwright and Niagara Ballet School are hoping to create a Boys Dance Too initiative and to offer a full-time day school offering academics.

Cultural Arts Award

FINALISTS

Elaine Wallis 🐦 @Signature_Sign
Signature Sign & Image

Elaine Wallis is a jack of many trades, first a commercial illustrator (by education), graphic and environmental sign designer (by vocation), a passionate muralist and fine artist, and a long-time volunteer.

Wallis is the principal designer at Signature Sign & Image in Niagara Falls, an award-winning company that her husband started 37 years ago. As a graphic designer, she has created countless brands for clients gaining great exposure for winning design contests such as the Winter Festival of Lights and Niagara's War of 1812 legacy.

She joined Walldogs over 20 years ago, an international organization of muralists, and has become a notable designer and project leader in many murals in Canada, the US, and even Greece.

Wallis created a historical mural for Downtown Niagara Falls and was delighted to win a Premier Design Award. A fine artist, her work was featured last spring at The Cline House Gallery in Cornwall, ON, and graces the walls of clients here and abroad.

As a long-time resident of Niagara Falls, Wallis has shown an unwavering commitment to the community and owes much of her business success to the continual support of her clients over the years.

Over the years, Wallis has demonstrated exceptional service as an artist to the art community and her clients. Her current mission is to continue to navigate new ways of working together to continue to deliver quality products safely and timely.

With Wallis now entering semi-retirement, she plans to continue to design from home and pass on the reins to her children.



Business That Gives Back Award FINALISTS

Presented by:



H2Only Inc. - Wilma Snippe

🐦 @h2only

Wilma Snippe and her husband are the proud founders of H2Only, a water purification company that delivers bottled water, stretching from Fort Erie to Burlington. Since 1994, H2Only has been committed to providing the purest water possible while still ensuring a zero-waste process.

Upon a neighbour's untimely passing in Wilma's teenage years, it occurred to her that to live a long and healthy life, she would vow to avoid all chemicals in her food and the air around her. It came to her naturally that purified water should be part of this chemical-free lifestyle, something that didn't appear affordable in the 90s - as a result, H2Only was born.

With their undying commitment to the environment, the Snippe's have turned a small venture that started out for family and friends, into a diversified business. Not only does H2Only accommodate clients near and far through their delivery service, but they are constantly educating people on the importance of clean water in long-term health and longevity.

H2Only strives to both support the community around them and to give back to those who need it most. Wilma's company is responsible for helping to fund the building of wells and water systems around the world through Hope International. For instance, one well in Cambodia takes five families out of poverty permanently. Not only does clean water change lives, but it can also save them. The clients of H2Only also give generous donations of warm clothing each year to the homeless in the community.



Business That Gives Back Award FINALISTS

Presented by:

NIAGARA
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Royal LePage NRC Realty - Amy Layton

@amylytonrealestate

Amy Layton is in the top 10% of realtors with Royal LePage in the Niagara Region, this is because of her will to succeed and promise to do so. While Layton receives positive feedback from her clients 100% of the time, she also shows this unwavering commitment when giving back to the community. From day one she decided to take a referral-based business approach, which has allowed her to set standards for both herself and her clients.

Layton is currently serving her second term on her real estate board's YPN committee and has also served on fundraising committees for Women's Place of South Niagara for the last two years.

She was the recipient of the "2018 Individual Fundraiser of the Year for Ontario for Royal LePage" and was also awarded the "Community Involvement Award for 2020" by the Niagara Association of Realtors. Layton has created a successful fundraiser for the Women's Place of South Niagara called "Lip Sync Battle Niagara" which occurred this year (virtually) for the 5th year in a row. The event has raised just over \$30,000 since its inception in 2016.

She is always finding new ways to make her business the best it can be, constantly researching current market trends and working 1:1 with her real estate-specific business coach.

Layton's approach to business combined with her community efforts has garnered her much success and a positive rapport in Niagara. She shows other women in the community that if you hold yourself accountable and always search for new ways to improve, you can exceed your goals.



Business That Gives Back Award FINALISTS

Presented by:



Alexandria Professional – Lina Kennedy

@APsugarqueen

Lina Kennedy has been a success in the beauty industry for three decades. She is the founder and president of Alexandria Professional, a now multi-million-dollar company that is recognized for professional hair removal through body sugaring.

Her business venture began as a small sugaring salon in Welland and over the years, she has developed a revolutionary hair removal empire in 32 countries and counting.

Kennedy is also the proud author of her autobiography, *The Sugar Queen*, a story of courage and determination that illustrates her road to success and the hardships along the way. She is a big supporter of charities such as Gillian's Place and Haven's House, as the subject of human sex trafficking hits close to home for Kennedy.

Kennedy utilized the COVID19 pandemic as an opportunity to create a new division of Alexandria Professional that focuses solely on PPE products such as sanitizers and all-purpose cleaners. Always looking for new ways to grow and improve her brand, she developed these products within an impressive 2-week timeframe.

This development not only helped with the local shortage of hand sanitizer but also ensured the company could remain open and rehire any employees that had been furloughed at the start of the pandemic.

Following the expansion with the new PPE division, Kennedy also began hosting weekly and monthly webinars to educate hair removal professionals on how to persevere during the pandemic.



Business That Gives Back Award FINALISTS

Presented by:



markmeldrum.com

@markbmeldrum

MarkMeldrum.com is an approved prep provider for the Chartered Financial Analyst Institution, dedicated to providing comprehensive online lecture videos for candidates looking to achieve their CFA designation.



The team is led by Dr. Mark Meldrum, a firm believer that education should be accessible to all, but for a fraction of the price of regular University programs. Meldrum wants to give young hopefuls the chance to succeed without financial hardship.

MarkMeldrum.com has participated in many programs within the last three years. As a Brock University co-op placement, computer science students are given the opportunity to actively create for the website, allowing for experience and growth.

The business has also participated in Christmas adopt-a-family, through both Gillian's place and Community Care, fulfilling the wish lists of families at Christmas time. They have also provided materials such as backpacks, school computers for Gillian's Place, and food for Hospice Niagara annual Christmas dinner.

While MarkMeldrum.com qualified for the Federal wage subsidy due to COVID-19, not needing the money directly, the company not only donated the funds received but matched the amount to spread the wealth to organizations that needed the assistance. Gillian's place received \$30,000 and Community Care and the Lincoln Humane Society both received \$15,000 each.

The hope is the publicity from the donations would not only spread awareness of these charities' need for assistance but inspire other businesses to do the same.

On top of his generous donations, the company also adopted a living wage base for all employees, identifying their individual family needs.

Entrepreneurship Award

FINALISTS

Presented by:
 **Niagara
College
Canada**

Crystal D’Cunha

@crstld

The INSIDE View Inc

Crystal D’Cunha is The INSIDE View’s Chief Experience Officer, a respected leader in the customer experience industry, an award-winning customer experience design professional, international keynote speaker, and entrepreneur.

She worked her way up to be a Certified Leadership Coach (CLC) and a Certified Professional Speaker (CPS), a designation held by less than 12% of professional speakers. Organizations hire D’Cunha because of her commitment to customer experience excellence, as she leads leaders to implement the 7 foundational steps to CX mastery.



D’Cunha contributes to her community by serving on several boards and she has received numerous awards in sales, including the 40 Under Forty Business Award. She’s led sales teams to achieve the Avid Rating Award for CX; her team was recognized as being among the top 10 % of builders focused on CX nationwide.

Over the last eight months, The INSIDE View has been able to fully automate its courses, programs, and product line up. Offering virtual team building, online and in-person certification courses, customer journey mapping boot camps, and more.

During this time, D’Cunha has made some incredible accomplishments such as, creating 3 CX boot camps, launching a global affiliate group, hosted a series of virtual webinars, networking, and team-building events and the list goes on.

The vision of D’Cunha and The INSIDE View is to inspire and ignite leaders, excite employees, and delight customers to achieve record-breaking success. The INSIDE View will continue to follow a hands-on approach to suit the needs of different businesses and play a role in organizational transformation.

Entrepreneurship Award

FINALISTS

Presented by:
 **Niagara
College
Canada**

Andrea McGee

@soulfire_poweryoga/
Soul Fire Power Yoga

Andrea McGee is the owner of Soul Fire Power Yoga and has been teaching yoga since 2005. While the yoga studio industry is competitive in Niagara, McGee is committed to keeping the community engaged and ensure that Soul Fire Power Yoga remains relevant.

McGee has developed and implemented a teacher mentorship program, started a teacher training program, and offers complimentary trauma-sensitive yoga classes for First Responders called Healing Heroes.



When the pandemic struck, McGee was forced to alter course over a weekend and offer virtual classes to be the constant for students while everything else was unknown. Although this was challenging, she was able to provide support to teachers and students and push through it together.

Once the studio reopened in July 2020, they continued to offer in-person and virtual classes simultaneously to suit individual needs. The future development of Soul Fire Power Yoga is driven by a set of core values which include community, acceptance, connection, integrity, and empowerment.

McGee understands that as a yoga community, it is a responsibility to continue to offer diverse programs and further develop community offerings to elevate and empower others. Soul Fire Power Yoga promises to continue to offer a series of new virtual and in-person opportunities, with a strong vision for the future.

Entrepreneurship Award

FINALISTS

Presented by:
nc Niagara
College
Canada

Jessica Silvestri

@bellabuddhabeads
Bella Buddha Beads

Jessica Silvestri is the jewelry designer and owner of Bella Buddha Beads which for the last six years has been a local name in the Niagara region and now available in more than 65+ stores worldwide. This lifestyle brand curates one-of-a-kind accessories, from clothing to jewelry, made exclusively for that stylish trendsetter.

Recognizing the ever-challenging job market, Silvestri made a few career shifts before opening the business on a whim. Using creativity, passion, and hard work she knew she could build a brand that was able to empower women and demonstrate that with passion, grit, and hustle you can make your dream come true.

Bella Buddha Beads has come a long way in the last six years, receiving its second WIBA nomination, the business has also been nominated and won several Reader's Choice Awards. Landing in many different stores worldwide, the furthest being Switzerland, Silvestri collaborates with fellow entrepreneurs near and far.

Although times have been uncertain, it has been a year of unprecedented growth for Bella Buddha Beads. Silvestri believes that if her business can survive a climate such as this, it can only go up from here. Her business has grown its product lines, increased inventory, and improved social media marketing.

Part of the plan going forward is to move into a larger studio and launch a mobile shopping experience, that will host safe and intimate shopping parties for guests in the same social bubble.



Entrepreneurship Award

FINALISTS

Presented by:
nc Niagara
College
Canada

Jordin Wiggins

🐦 @jordinwiggins
Health Over All

Jordan Wiggins is an entrepreneur, women's sexual health disruptor, author, and a naturopathic doctor at Health Over All, the clinic she owns and operates. She is also the founder of The Pleasure Collective, a coaching community, and sexual health and wellness re-education program for women. Her mission is to revolutionize the way we deliver, educate, and talk about health, wellness, and sexual health for women.



Her book, *The Pink Canary* explores the hidden secret to optimal women's wellness along with the research to support it and real-life actions you can start right now to welcome pleasure back into your life. Wiggins is an experienced keynote speaker and podcast guest and has been featured in magazines like *Cosmopolitan*.

She opened Health Over All as a new doctor with a vision to offer better healthcare to women in Niagara. Over the last six years with great success, thousands of women have been through her doors and left feeling better.

This past year has been Wiggins' toughest year as a business owner; however, Health Over All has developed and implemented a new model of health care that will help to suit the schedules of her clientele.

Wiggins' overall mission is to bring better healthcare to women, with fewer interruptions and more time to listen. Her new model of healthcare will bring real and long-lasting health improvements that will go on to prevent disease, reduce reliance on prescriptions, and improve the quality of life for women everywhere.

Community Impact Award

FINALISTS

Jess Boulay

@jess_boulay

Giant Shoe Creative Agency

Jess Boulay is a project manager at Giant Shoe Creative Agency, a full-service marketing agency located in downtown St. Catharines. She is also the coordinator for The Shoebox Project, a chapter of the not-for-profit charity that focuses on helping women in need.

Boulay realizes that for the community to thrive, there should be a continuous will for development, open communication, and supporting one another's ventures. She began her

career in international product development and quickly climbed the ladder to run the design and marketing teams for the entire company.

Her passion for giving back to the community began when she volunteered with the company to assist internal charity aspects. This led her to start her own business and provide marketing services to local Niagara businesses. Boulay volunteered her marketing services to The Shoebox Project and connected with CEO of Giant Shoe Creative, Brad Moore, eventually joining as a business partner.

With Boulay's help, The Shoebox Project was able to exceed the goal and previous year's numbers by more than 40%, with over \$50,000 of donation gifts given to women in local shelters and outreach programs.

Despite the diverse challenges of today's business environment, Boulay was able to make significant leaps both in the community and in her role at Giant Shoe Creative. She continues to navigate through the pandemic by making shifts from traditional to virtual.

Boulay is aware that not-for-profits need to support one another through these unpredictable times, by adapting, sharing, and recognizing each other's successes.



Community Impact Award

FINALISTS

Lori Gill 🐦 @lorigillattch
Attachment and Trauma Treatment
Centre for Healing (ATTCH) Niagara

A former psychology professor, Lori Gill is the founder and clinical director at the Attachment and Trauma Treatment Centre for Healing (ATTCH) Niagara. As a Registered Psychotherapist and Certified Trauma Specialist, Gill provides consultation and supervision services to therapists worldwide and wellness therapy for professionals, first responders, and medical professionals to prevent compassion fatigue.

Recognizing the need for free and low cost trauma-specific therapy, Gill opened ATTCH Niagara in 2013. The need for this specific therapy continues to grow, especially during this time of increased stress and isolation.

As well, the opening of ATTCH revealed an additional need: training for therapists and organizations. Gill created the Integrative Trauma and Attachment Treatment Model (ITATM)®, which is now used locally and internationally with great success. Each year, Gill trains thousands of professionals in the ITATM model. Graduate students also frequently participate in a placement at ATTCH. These students are intensively trained and build a competency that they will take with them into their future careers

Throughout the pandemic, Gill has been volunteering with the Interpersonal Violence Working Group to find, create, and disseminate psychological resources to assist those people who are in danger of experiencing and or perpetrating physical, sexual and/or psychological abuse during the pandemic.

Gill was also honoured with an invitation to join the Complex Trauma Treatment Affiliates program, an independent network of senior complex trauma therapists and clinical supervisors. Achieving an Award of Excellence in 2014 for her contributions to the trauma field, she is frequently called upon as an expert witness in the areas of trauma, attachment, and reconciliation therapy.



Community Impact Award

FINALISTS

Holly Mundula

🐦 @HollyMundula
Meridian Credit Union
Business Banking

Holly Mundula has worked in banking for 16 years, a role in which she has consistently exceeded the expectations of her clients and colleagues. Mundula has two sons, aged 15 and 12, and four rescue pets in total.

She contributes to various organizations, currently serving as VP on the St. Catharines Club board, President of the Education Foundation of Niagara, Director of the Links for Greener Learning Board, a founding member of the Wise Girls Committee,

Wise Guys, Hospice Niagara Golf Committee and volunteers with Gillian's Place.

Mundula says her success is driven by the success of those around her, her end goal is clear both in business and in life, to meet and exceed the expectations of those people. Starting as a teller in the banking business, she built and grew two banking branches, created two successive roles in the growth of business banking deposits, and won a quarterly achievement award for excellence.

Her notable impact on the community does not go unnoticed, Mundula also helps to better the business community through initiatives such as the GNCC, Niagara Wine Festivals, Niagara River Lions, and more.

Due to the pandemic and changing markets, Mundula has taken many steps to adapt the way they are doing business at Meridian. Thanks to a new approach, she was quickly able to form a path that would increase margins for the business while protecting the interests of members.

Mundula has demonstrated that she continues to go above and beyond for her family, business, and the Niagara community.



Community Impact Award

FINALISTS

Patrizia Trapasso

@ patrizia.trapasso
Locomotive Marketing Inc.

Patrizia Trapasso is an entrepreneur and real estate investor, as well as the co-founder of Locomotive Marketing Inc. She has been recognized for several business industry awards such as PROFIT magazine's 'Canada's Fastest-Growing Company - PROFIT 200 list', Chatelaine's W100 Top Canadian Female Entrepreneur, and Niagara's 40 Under Forty Business Award.

Trapasso's philanthropic causes include United Way (co-chair) and Project Share. She has pulled

together her business network to source and sponsor United Way's Backpacks for Kids program, donating thousands of calculators to help kids succeed. The Trapasso's have also sponsored more than 400 care packages for the United Way 'After School Matters' participants and have created and launched a fundraising campaign for various United Way Chapters during the pandemic.

Understanding the adversities in today's business environment, Trapasso knows that entrepreneurs should be prepared to face oncoming challenges, be willing to adapt, and make a point to stand out. For Trapasso, there is no time like the present to look inward and implement big changes.

Trapasso has taken the time to adapt her business approach to a 'work from home' environment, investing the necessary tools and systems to keep her staff engaged, connected, and productive.

She and her family are very committed to living out a mission to give back to the community in any way they are capable of. Trapasso values accountability and believes that now is a time for reflection and awareness. From her success in business to her success in philanthropy, she has made an undeniable impact on the community.

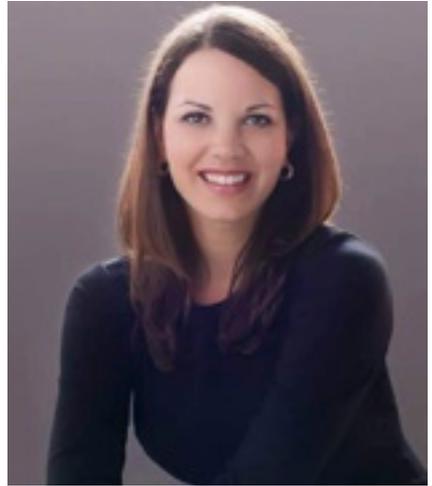


Excellence in Non-Profit FINALISTS



Sarah Pritula
🐦 @SarahPritula
Community Crew

At the age of 10, Sarah Pritula knew her purpose in life was to serve others and to run her own business, and being the director of Community Crew, allows her to do just that. Her professional background in non-profit and sales has led her to be prepared for her current role, where she is helping build a non-profit organization from the ground up. Community Crew provides nutritious lunches and hope throughout the school year to children who need it most.



Revenue goals have increased by 34% over the last three years and their program has been implemented from two to 14 schools throughout Niagara. They have also increased awareness of the program by working with major donors, like TD Bank, and pairing with other charities in the region.

Outside of work, Pritula also volunteers for several committees and councils, some of which are non-profit. In a previous role at a large registered charity, her office was rated as number one in Ontario, exceeding annual targets and increasing revenue exceptionally.

Pritula and her colleagues spend time learning how to become better leaders in the community, to their volunteers and stakeholders. The pandemic has been a perfect example of the diverse challenges a non-profit like Community Crew is facing.

Since their program operates to provide food to children in schools, they had to re-design their entire program/delivery model when schools shut down. The team created a website form where families could sign up or refer families to support.

Pritula and Community Crew work with other suppliers and organizations and fortunately were able to pivot their approach to meet the family's needs. Their upcoming goal is to launch the program into 20 additional schools and make it available multiple days a week. Long term, Pritula hopes to see the program develop nationwide.

Excellence in Non-Profit FINALISTS



Jennifer Gauthier

@WomensPlaceSN
Women's Place of
South Niagara Inc.

Following her graduation from Brock University, Jennifer Gauthier managed to find employment as a manager in the social service sector, working to become a leader in the field of violence against women. Currently, she is the executive director of Women's Place of South Niagara Inc., overseeing the operation of two facilities, she is a passionate advocate for the rights of women and children.

Gauthier is an active member of the Niagara community, participating on the Niagara Recycling board of directors, acting as vice-chair of the Niagara Poverty Reduction Network, finance-chair for the Coalition to end Violence Against Women, and was a recipient of the 40 Under Forty Business Award in 2019.



Throughout her career at Women's Place of South Niagara, she has implemented harm reduction services, implemented person-centered services, removed all rules and barriers from the shelter, resulting in increased use of their space and more successful shelter stays.

The most significant challenge for Gauthier has been the pandemic and the impact it's had on the shelter's clients. When the government announced closure, she knew the main priority was to keep the doors open for women and children to seek safety. As the demand for services skyrocketed, Women's Place accessed hotels and launched text support lines.

Unfortunately, Women's Place lost three of their signature fundraising events, creating further challenges for the shelter. Currently, the shelter is undergoing a \$4.6M renovation to increase bed capacity. Gauthier's vision for the future remains, to advocate and work proactively to end violence through community education and expansion of services.

Excellence in Non-Profit FINALISTS



Carol Nagy
🐦 @HospiceNiagara
Hospice Niagara

Carol Nagy, the executive director of Hospice Niagara, has been working in non-profits for over 33 years, 23 of which were in senior leadership roles. She has held various roles in the field of child welfare and even found herself managing the training and development department of the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies.



Nagy is a member of the Quest board of directors and is a past chair of the Niagara Workforce Planning Board. She is a member of Rotary Club St. Catharines

and a passionate group in Wainfleet who advocates for responsible development and growth in our rural communities. Finally, she is an active member representing Hospice Niagara and community sector organizations on the Niagara Ontario Health Team- Équipe Santé.

Each year, Hospice Niagara commits to an annual quality improvement plan that builds upon the success and learning of past years. The Transition Planning Program from 2019-2020 yielded successful results. Some of the successes include an increase in the number of people accessing hospice beds, no lost days of care, no crisis-state for patients and families, and improved communication that left 100% of patients/families feeling they were involved in decision making, with a 98% overall satisfaction rate.

Nagy and her team at Hospice Niagara meet the challenges of today's climate in three ways, changing the healthcare environment, diversity and inclusion (expansion of services), and the pandemic response – developing new protocols, policies, and training programs.

Nagy's vision for the future at Hospice Niagara is articulated in the strategic plan: Transforming Pathways. This plan is set to ensure new ways of authentic partnering, full engagement, and a complete understanding of the quality of life.

Excellence in Non-Profit FINALISTS



Anna Bozza

🐦 @FACSNiagara

Family and Children's Services Niagara

After obtaining her Master of Social Work at the University of Toronto, Anna Bozza began her career in child welfare at the Toronto Children's Aid Society in 1989 and returned to Niagara in 1992 to take her first position as a front-line social worker with Family and Children's Services Niagara (FACS). She currently works as executive director for FACS Niagara, a title she has held since 2016 and the first woman to hold the title at FACS.



FACS is a large multi-service organization providing a wide variety of services to the community, including reporting the abuse or neglect of children under 18, providing care for children, and counselling and support services.

The mission of FACS is to protect, support, and strengthen the lives of children, youth, adults, and families, and their vision is for a community where they can achieve their full potential in a safe, supportive environment. Since the field of child welfare is challenging and unique, Bozza and her team are always looking to build relationships with community partners to develop new programming to meet the service needs of the families and the children that they serve.

FACS' partnership with Youth Resources Niagara has resulted in a greater number of youth being able to continue to reside and receive services in support in the region, previously these children had to go as far as Ottawa to receive such services.

Like all other organizations, the pandemic has heavily impacted FACS' service to the community. Through adjustment and a modified fashion, they have still been able to foster support and redeploy in different ways, such as providing laptops to youth for virtual learning and specialized tech to foster parents.

Going forward, Bozza and FACS promise to continue to work with the community and its partners to strive to improve and enhance child welfare services for the Niagara community.

Leadership Award

FINALISTS

Presented by:

Brock
University

Amanda Etherington

🐦 @niagarahealth
Niagara Health

A proud Niagara resident, Amanda Etherington was born and raised to give back to the community, something she's been doing as long as she can remember. An actively engaged student growing up, Etherington took on a successful career supporting others in post-secondary, adult & community education and has now found herself in health care.



She sees her success in many forms, but most importantly in the team members, she has worked with along the way. She has made great strides in project leadership/management in both the corporate and public sectors. Some notable projects for Etherington have been mentoring as a Brock co-op supervisor (2018), guiding a project team that has seen a \$1M incremental annual profit project for Rich Products (Tim Hortons), and facilitating the transition of changing leadership at DSBN in adult community & education.

Etherington believes change is critical to success in any environment, particularly business. She believes that being a leader is not always formal or mandated, but can also be identified through who people rely on, trust, and asking questions. She strives to be a leader in every sense of her life, as she strives to help people see their why, the positive change, and the bigger picture.

Her time spent at work and in the community has provided Etherington with a primary purpose – to uplift and motivate those around her, at all levels. Etherington's continued desire to be a leader and facilitate organizational, individual, and personal success is a cause worth celebrating.

Leadership Award

FINALISTS

Presented by:



Ashleigh Myers  @AshleighRMyers
Bell Media

Ashleigh Myers moved to the Niagara region in 2003, to join the teams at 105.7 EZ Rock, 97.7 HTZ-FM, and NewsTalk 610 CKTB. An enthusiastic marketing & business development specialist, she's spent 20 years within the media industry helping businesses and organizations develop, manage, and implement strategic and tactical marketing and growth strategies.



Working for Bell Media, Myers works with businesses and organizations every day to assist them with individually tailored growth and development strategies. She also sits on several steering committees and consults with not-for-profit organizations. She consistently has one of the highest business retention numbers within Bell Media and prides herself on establishing meaningful connections and cultivating long-term business relationships.

A now Niagara enthusiast, Myers was able to combine her love for the region with the conception of the NewsTalk 610 CKTB Business Trip; a feature showcasing local businesses and highlighting Niagara's diverse economic climate.

Myers was the recipient of the first-ever Bell Media Presidents' Award in 2015 for outstanding performance, leadership, and significant contribution to revenue growth and generation. She also received a Bell Media Excellence Award in 2017 for outstanding achievements, passion, and commitment to excellence.

During the pandemic, Myers was able to provide stability and leadership within her organization and the business community, by conceptualizing the development of a "Shop Local, Support Local" on-air campaign across Niagara and Hamilton. She also worked in collaboration with several municipalities to develop strategically targeted COVID-19 campaigns to advise residents and visitors on proper public health and personal safety protocols.

Myers believes that true leadership is rooted in a desire to understand people, to hear, and recognize them for their unique abilities. She is constantly pushing herself outside of her comfort zone, to contribute to a better future.

Leadership Award

FINALISTS

Presented by:

Brock
University

Marianne Tykolis Casey
🐦 @GardenGallerySV
Stevensville Garden Gallery

Marianne Tykolis Casey and her family are the proud owners of Stevensville Garden Gallery in Stevensville, a business that attracts guests from all over Southern Ontario and the USA. They are strategically partnered in the same location with Safari Niagara and Stevensville Lawn Service as one of the largest employers in the community.

Casey's role within the corporation is director, controller, accountant, and operations leader. Her family-run business is the backbone of the Niagara economy and she hopes to continue this success story. Though success hasn't always come easy, Casey believes the support of the community and commitment of her team has propelled the business.



Strong believers in giving back to the community, the Casey's are supporters of many local charities throughout the region, including United Way and Rotary.

The family took a chance on the small town of Stevensville and their operation now includes one of Niagara's largest nurseries offering a large selection of beautiful annuals, perennials, outdoor and indoor plants. Stevensville Garden Gallery was a recent finalist in the Niagara Business Achievement Awards and are proud to be included in such a wonderful list of other successful Niagara businesses.

Through the pandemic, Casey and her business have taken extreme steps to ensure the safety of their staff and customers at all levels. The team at Stevensville Garden Gallery has developed a strong vision and set of core values. With a guest-first mentality, Stevensville Garden Gallery continues to be an employer of choice, through recognition, appreciation, and learning opportunities.

Through the pandemic, Casey and her business have taken extreme steps to ensure the safety of their staff and customers at all levels. The team at Stevensville Garden Gallery has developed a strong vision and set of core values. With a guest-first mentality, Stevensville Garden Gallery continues to be an employer of choice, through recognition, appreciation, and learning opportunities.

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