

Nominations now underway for 2017 Business Excellence Awards



By Brock Weir

If you know a business or business owner that has gone the extra mile, done something new and creative, or helped fill a special niche in the local business community, now is your chance to sing their praises.

Nominations are now open for the 2017 Business Excellence Awards, hosted by the Aurora Chamber of Commerce.

Revived after several years' hiatus, organizers are starting from scratch developing a new awards process, which will culminate in a special awards gala this November.

Categories include Business Excellence, which recognises overall achievement, Community Involvement, focusing on businesses with a "strong commitment to giving back" through participating in numerous organizations and events; recognizing notable achievements a business has made in global markets; New Business Venture for newer businesses demonstrating hard work, entrepreneurial initiative and success; Non-Profits, to recognize the contributions non-profit organizations make to the community; and Trailblazer for businesses that have demonstrated "innovation and creativity within their industry."

"It has been the right time (to revive the awards) for a while, but we really needed to make sure we didn't delay this any longer," says Sandra Watson of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce. "We have been talking about bringing this back for a couple of years now. There have been some changes in staff and manpower has been short, but we didn't want to delay it any longer" and we also felt the Canada 150 celebrations would be another good reason to celebrate business in Aurora."

With the awards having been on hiatus for so long, however, the Chamber is now making a push to re-engage the community with the awards process. It is a nomination process that is open to everyone, not just members of the Aurora Chamber and, in many ways, they are starting with a "clean slate."

"We wanted to start with a clean slate of awards and come up with something new and different," says Ms. Watson. "I think we need to really show our Aurora businesses some love. From our side, it has been lacking for the last couple of years and we want to bring that back and really recognize and showcase the great businesses we have in this community. These awards are a huge recognition for (new businesses) because it really reinforces what they are doing and reach for the same award next year. For long-standing business, it proves that that they are doing something right" and it is bragging rights. You can't deny the bragging rights!"

Nominations will be accepted now through May 19 at 5 p.m. The Chamber encourages the community to pay close attention to the nomination criteria and if there are any questions to reach out to them. They might have some suggestions on where businesses might best fit. Once nominations close, they will be handed over to a judging committee for review and to take things to the next level.

For more information, including nomination forms, visit www.aurorachamber.on.ca/business-excellence-awards, or contact the Chamber itself at 905-727-7262.