

## Sam Saberi, owner of Tina's Grill, remembered as community leader



Restaurateur and philanthropist Sam Saberi, owner of popular Tina's Grill, has died.

His passing on the morning of April 21 was confirmed by his family. He was 41.

Saberi was well-known throughout Aurora for his passion for giving back to the community he called home. His "big heart" for those in need was a common theme for those paying their respects, including those who began leaving floral tributes outside the restaurant on Tuesday evening.

His work as a community builder was recognized by the Town of Aurora in 2022 when Tina's Grill not only received the Good Business Award but with Saberi himself being honoured as Aurora's Citizen of the Year.

At the time, he was hailed as a volunteer with an "unwavering" commitment to the community, both in serving up a delicious menu, but in turning his restaurant over as a drop-off location for toy donations during the holiday season, stepping up to help raise funds for countless causes, and even helping provide meals to the community in a number of ways, including an initiative inviting patrons to pre-pay for meals which could then be claimed by those who needed them "when they needed them."

Presenting the Citizen of the Year honour in Council Chambers in May of 2022, Mayor Tom Mrakas recognized Saberi's "compassion, commitment, and unwavering love for Aurora, our business community, and residents."

"His upbeat personality and continuous efforts to improve the lives of others have made a positive impact on our community," said Mayor Mrakas. "Sam has a multitude of strong supporters who say that he always sees the good in others and he embodies the spirit of kindness in our Town. Thank you, Sam, for generously giving your time to Aurora and making our community a better place to live in. You are a dedicated business owner running a successful business, Tina's Grill that we all truly love."

"By staying positive and setting a good example for your peers, you inspire your customers, our local residents, businesses and your friends to give back to our community and to do better."

On Tuesday evening, Mayor Mrakas said Saberi's passing was "heartbreaking news."

"Make no mistake, we have lost someone truly special," he said. "Sam cared deeply about this Town and the people in it. He gave

his time, his energy, and his heart to making Aurora a better place for everyone. His legacy will live on in the lives he touched and the community he helped build. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family, friends, and all those who had the privilege of knowing him during this incredibly difficult time.?

The story will be updated.

By Brock WeirEditorLocal Journalism Initiative Reporter

