



Muskoka Founders Circle
www.muskokafounderscircle.com
c/o Gravenhurst Rotary Club
P.O. Box 888
Gravenhurst P1P 1V2

MEDIA RELEASE

2019 Founders Choice Awards Finalists Announced

Celebrating Entrepreneurship in Muskoka

Muskoka Founders Circle, a group of Muskoka business leaders dedicated to economic development in Muskoka, is pleased to announce the five finalists for the 2019 Founders Choice Awards. A total of \$20,000 in prize money is given to two Muskoka-based entrepreneurs with the most promising start-up businesses.

Click [here](#) to see the elevator pitch videos for the 5 finalists.

The 5 finalists are:

- Ali Gamble, The Gamble Family Farm, Port Sydney
- Katherine Homuth, Sheertex Sheer Knit Apparel, Bracebridge
- Melinda Zytaruk, Toonetree Passive Homes, Baysville
- Kristi MacDonald, Beebagz Plastic-Free Bags, Huntsville
- AnnMarie Boehm-Tapley, Muskoka Honey Bee Products, Dwight

The finalists were chosen from a group of over thirty entrants to the competition. The top ten qualifiers presented their expanded business plans which were judged by a panel of Founders to determine the five finalists.

“Once again this year we were pleasantly surprised by both the quantity and quality of the contest entrants”, said Rick Dalmazzi, Executive Chair of Muskoka Founders Circle. “Our group is excited by the opportunity to help these inspiring individuals who are pursuing their passion.”

The Gamble Family Farm produces organic eggs and vegetables that are available across the province.

Sheertex Sheer Knit Apparel is a relentlessly inventive transparent apparel company redefining wearable knit technology.

Tooketree Passive Homes builds pre-fabricated, energy-efficient, sustainable homes and wall systems that meet the highest health and environmental standards.

Beebagz Plastic-Free Bags is out to rid the world of environmentally unfriendly plastic bags. Its food-safe cotton baggies are coated with beeswax, tree resin and jojoba oil.

Muskoka Honey Bee Products is the only producer of honey wine and mead products in central and northern Ontario.

The presentation of the 2019 Muskoka Founders Choice Awards will take place on April 11th, 2019 at the Impact Awards gala dinner event, where the winners will be revealed and presented with their cheques. The event will also host the Parry Sound Muskoka Community Network (PMCN) Innovation Awards. The dinner gala is open to the public and will be held at the JW Marriott The Rosseau resort in Minett starting at 6:00 p.m.

Tickets to the “red carpet” dinner and awards gala can be purchased for \$75 at any Scotiabank branch in Muskoka. Scotiabank is a sponsor of the event and will provide matching funds to support Founders Circle and PMCN. Tickets can also be purchased online for \$100 at www.pmcn.ca.

The Impact Awards dinner gala will feature: a red carpet to showcase contest finalists; a cocktails & hors d'oeuvres reception; a multi-course gourmet meal; Oscars-style video vignettes of all contest finalists; and live award presentations to the winners.

“Entrepreneurism and innovation are alive and well in Muskoka”, said Stuart Morley, Executive Director, Muskoka Community Network. “We’re proud of the Impact Awards and honoured to be recognizing the extraordinary talent and determination demonstrated by all the finalists”.

About Muskoka Founders Circle

Muskoka Founders Circle is a project of the Rotary Club of Gravenhurst and supported by the Rotary Clubs of Bracebridge and Bracebridge/Muskoka Lakes, as well as the Town of Gravenhurst and many Muskoka-based businesses, associations and business professionals. The goal of Founders Circle is to promote a positive working relationship between government, not-for-profits and businesses toward a common goal of making Muskoka a great place to do business.

About Parry Sound Muskoka Community Network

Parry Sound Muskoka Community Network’s (PMCN) mission is to create economic value by building information and communication technology (ICT) capacity through community partnerships. Its vision is a network of innovative communities focused on job creation and economic development in the broadband economy.