

Dufferin Board of Trade celebrates local businesses at annual Business Excellence Awards Gala

The Dufferin Board of Trade (DBOT) proudly hosted its annual Business Excellence Awards Gala on May 29, at the Best Western Plus Inn & Suites in Orangeville.

This long-standing tradition celebrates the strength and resilience of the Dufferin business community.

This year's event embraced the theme "Proudly Canadian, Proudly Dufferin", with red and white décor and a wonderful display of Canadian patriotism from our attendees. The 2025 Gala honoured 73 outstanding nominees across seven award categories.

The evening began with a cocktail reception and DBOT's 2025 Annual General Meeting, along with a red carpet-style photo opportunity for attending nominees.

"We would like to thank our Drink Sponsor, Stephanie Adams Designs, for providing complimentary drink tickets for all guests," reads a press release from DBOT.

During the AGM, DBOT re-elected Doug Harkness as chair, Sandy Brown as vice-chair, Rob Koekkoek as treasurer, and the Board of Directors: Brandi Neil, Sarah Sawchyn, Bill McCutcheon, Paul Janssen, Gail Little, Jason McKittrick, Sherry-Anne Bedminster, Miranda O'Connor and Lisa Thompson.

The Awards Ceremony was hosted by Miranda O'Connor, DBOT Board Director and CEO of Art of Storytelling. We were also honoured to welcome Shelly Anwyll from the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, who shared thoughtful remarks with our guests.

During the ceremony, award sponsors introduced the nominees in each category. Each category featured three exceptional finalists, showcasing the talent and diversity of our local business community. To meet our finalists, engaging videos were displayed before presenting the award to the winner. In our effort to celebrate being proudly Canadian and proudly Dufferin, this year's trophies are custom-designed, hand-crafted works of art by local artist Tony Fenech of Fenech Designs.

2025 Business Excellence Award Winners:

"Business of the Year" GEON Performance Solutions (Sponsored by: RLB)

"Small Business of the Year" The Dufferin Group (Sponsored by: Wightman)

"New Business of the Year" The Nest Boutique Suites (Sponsored by: Shelburne Golf & Country Club)

"Businessperson of the Year" Carly Ferris (Sponsored by: Town of Orangeville)

"Nonprofit of the Year" Pine River Institute (Sponsored by: Carters Law Firm)

"Local Impact Award" Brighter Future Homes (Sponsored by: Georgian Career & Employment Community Services)

"Chairman's Award" Gerry Holden (Sponsored by: JDC Custom Homes / Janssen Design)

"This incredible evening would not have been possible without the support of our sponsors, volunteer committee, and the Dufferin business community. DBOT extends heartfelt congratulations to all of our nominees, finalists, and award winners for the incredible impact they make across our county," reads DBOT's press release.