** MEDIA RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Cambridge Chamber hands out 2024 Community Awards**

CAMBRIDGE, Ont. - The important work and achievements in the local not-for-profit sector and the individuals that play a key role in it were recognized Thursday, Nov. 14, at the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce’s 2024 Cambridge & North Dumfries Community Awards.

Nearly 300 community leaders and supporters attended the Hamilton Family Theatre to celebrate the positive influence these groups and individuals have had during the past year.

“The dedication and commitment of these organizations and the people who work and volunteer for them in making our community a better place deserves to be celebrated,” said Cambridge Chamber of Commerce President & CEO Greg Durocher. “The Chamber is very honoured to have the opportunity to acknowledge their contributions.”

Ten awards, including one for lifetime achievement, were presented in a variety of categories recognizing the valuable work undertaken by the volunteers and staff representing nearly 40 various organizations in terms of not only overall impact, but leadership, as well as collaboration.

An independent group of judges were given the tough task to select recipients from among dozens of nominations, apart from the Community Impact People’s Choice Award which was selected by Chamber Members.

Among the winners this year was Grand River Pride, which took home the Best Event of the Year Award for its outstanding efforts in organizing this year’s Cambridge Pride Week which saw several thousand people attend 17 events over the course of a week. Also, the Community Impact People’s Choice Award was presented to Hashtag Hope to recognize its contributions at a grassroots level of spreading a community-wide message of hope and helping those struggling with mental health issues. And finally, the Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Helen Jowett, a business owner and former long-time Region of Waterloo Councillor representing Cambridge, to recognize the significant contributions she has made, and continues to make, to various community organizations.

The awards ceremony is one of the Chamber’s most popular events and has honoured the contributions and achievements of these community builders since 2012.

For more on our community awards, visit <https://bit.ly/3CIKv7U>.

*The 2024 award recipients include:*

***Community Collaboration***

**Business & Education Partnership of Waterloo Region**

***Community Leadership***

**Charlene Hofbauer** – Executive Director, Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin

***Arts and Culture Award***

**Galt Jazz**

***Best Event of the Year Award***

**Grand River Pride -** Cambridge Pride Week

***Community Impact People’s Choice Award***

**Hashtag Hope**

***Board Member Award***

**Nicola Melchers – Past Board Chair, Cambridge Memorial Hospital**

***Volunteer of the Year***

**Scott Wahl** – Shelter Movers Southwestern Ontario

***Organization of the Year - Under 10 Employees***

**Cambridge Memorial Hospital Foundation**

***Organization of the Year- 11 and Over Employees***

**Langs**

***Lifetime Achievement Award***

**Helen Jowett,** business owner and former Region of Waterloo Councillor representing Cambridge

**Photo Caption:** The recipients of the 2024 Cambridge and North Dumfries Community Awards pose with their awards, a framed print supplied by Krajewski Gallery and Picture Framing, Thursday night at Hamilton Family Theatre.

***FEDORA MEDIA PHOTO***

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## ***The Cambridge Chamber of Commerce is committed to the enhancement of economic prosperity and the quality of life in Cambridge. A non-partisan organization funded solely by memberships, the Chamber works hard to address concerns of business, provide access to information resources, and represent members at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels of government. With more than 1,800 member firms, the Chamber's strength is clearly in its hardworking volunteers and committees addressing issues affecting local business and providing practical solutions.***

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