

Local businesses honoured for effort with OABEs

by John Bkila
Oakville Beaver Staff

An iconic brand with a devoted following and two brothers who had a vision for clean water projects in Africa were among the stars at Thursday's 19th annual Oakville Awards for Business Excellence (OABE), which salutes the contributions of local businesses to Oakville.

"We're absolutely delighted to see the level of engagement from the community," said John Sawyer, president of the Oakville Chamber of Commerce (OCC) — this year's event boasted record attendance with more than 550 guests.

The gala was held at the Oakville Conference Centre and emceed by Oakville resident and The Weather Network personality Chris Mei.

Co-hosted by the chamber in partnership with the Rotary Club of Oakville West (RCOW), it's a fundraiser in support of RCOW youth programs, particularly its Rotary Education Awards, which provides graduating high school students with bursaries and scholarships to further their post-secondary education.

Proceeds from ticket sales, a silent auction and raffle are expected to direct approximately \$57,000 to RCOW, said Sawyer, noting, last year \$52,000 was raised.

"From its (OABE) inception 19 years ago to now, in excess of \$600,000 has been raised to support our Rotary Club's youth initiatives," said Susan Sheppard, RCOW president, noting the service club is fortunate to partner with the



The 19th annual Oakville Awards for Business Excellence (OABE), held Thursday, recognized models of excellence and community service by local businesses. From left, (front row) Judge Kerry Colborne, Cheryl Singleton (Courage Distributing Inc.), Melissa Richardson (Totem Bags), Darlene Gustin (Bronte Natural Health Care), Susan Sheppard, Rotary Club of Oakville West president, (second row) Doug Eglinton (Euro-Line Appliances Inc.), Mike Chapelle (Personal Service Coffee Corp.), John Wannamaker and Donna Corrigan (Boston Pizza Dorval Drive), (in back) David Clanachan (Tim Hortons), Todd Courage (Courage Distributing Inc.), Glen Colling (Eastside Auto Service), Terry Missana (Xerox). | photo by Inger MacKenzie - special to the Beaver

Oakville chamber.

Meanwhile, Kelly Colborne, chair of the OABE judging panel, said this year's competition was tough for local businesses.

Tim Hortons was honoured with the Business Icon of the Year, an award that recognizes a prominent Oakville business, which is highly regarded in the community.

Unlike other awards, which are judged and chosen by a panel, the OABE committee selects the icon award recipient.

Tim Hortons was recognized for its contribution to the community and in honour of its 50th anniversary — officially May 17.

Launched in Hamilton in 1964, Tim Hortons has its corporate head office in Oakville, and the business has grown to approximately 3,500 locations in Canada, 800 in the U.S. and several dozen in the Middle East.

"It's hard to imagine a more iconic Canadian brand than Tim Hortons and we are so proud they call Oakville home... Its brand strength, reputation, its profile, the quality of jobs it brings to our community has helped put Oakville on the map and has forever linked Oakville to what it means to be Canadian," Sawyer said as he presented the award.

David Clanachan, the chief operating officer for Tim Hortons, said the award win in connection with the company's 50th anniversary was "the glaze on the doughnut."

"We are truly blessed as a company by the relationship we have with all the guests and the communities across Canada... and the fact we're able to establish our business in the town of Oakville," he said. "(We're) honoured to accept this award and look forward to many more years calling Oakville our home."

The following are this year's winners of the judged categories:

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