



Regional Chamber Awards *Celebration*

On July 22, the Chamber celebrated the annual Regional Chamber Awards at Latitude 41° on the Mystic River. The 2020 Regional Chamber Awards criteria included traditional measures of excellence and added resilience, adaptation and community spirit in a year of unprecedented challenges. The Chamber also recognized the 2019 winners, who were unable to gather in person, and our Essential Worker Heroes winners. Enjoying one of the best summer nights this season, winners, members, community leaders, and supporters delighted in delicious bites from Coastal Gourmet and played lawn games, accompanied by jazz favorites from Mama Train.

Thank you to our sponsors



BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Charter Oak Federal Credit Union

Despite the challenges faced by the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 was a year of strength and stability for Charter Oak, allowing them to meet members' financial needs and ensure the credit union's continued financial success. Charter Oak showed significant growth in assets, deposits, members equity and membership. During the pandemic, Charter Oak set a new record for annual community giving of over \$549,000. Charter Oak helped businesses obtain PPP funds, maintained active business lending, kept employees and members safe, and continued their digital transformation with the launch of their new website and next generation of digital banking.

charteroak.org



NEW BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Sea Services North America

Sea Services North America is a unique marine services provider for offshore asset management that creates diverse job opportunities for local fishing boats. Powered by a collective of experienced and knowledgeable fishermen with a deep understanding of the shared marine environment, Sea Services provides consulting on fishing and fisheries mitigation, monitoring services, and scouting vessels for offshore projects, including the emerging U.S. offshore wind industry. Sea Services uses a proprietary navigation and monitoring system to ensure marine obstacles, hazards, and changes are recorded and reported in real time.

ss-na.com



SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Cardinal Honda

A small business with a big heart, Cardinal Honda serves their guests and our community with kindness, integrity, and respect. The family-owned business gives generously to the community and a long list of local non profits. A "Top Place to Work," Cardinal Honda's growing staff of over 70 employees is encouraged to pay it forward with acts of kindness and provide a five star experience to all their guests. Enviromenally minded, they have also earned the Green Dealer Award.

cardinalhonda.com



INDUSTRY INNOVATOR

ThayerMahan

ThayerMahan is a world leader in undersea sensing, precision imagery and maritime autonomy. Beginning in 2016 with two employees, ThayerMahan has grown to employ a diverse group of over 60 military veterans, young engineers, developers and technicians to meet the needs of both military and industry customers. Poised to play an important role in the burgeoning offshore wind industry, ThayerMahan will apply much of the same technology used perfecting its work in maritime domain awareness and seabed survey to support its offshore wind clients.

thayermahan.com



NONPROFIT OF THE YEAR

Backus Hospital (Hartford Healthcare)

Hartford HealthCare (HHC) had its first COVID patient admitted on March 13, 2020. It was a moment the entire health system had been waiting for, including Backus Hospital in Norwich. Across the state, HHC's 33,000 colleagues rose to the call, none more so than staff at Backus. Learning new safety protocols, comforting COVID patients who were isolated from their families, holding an iPad so loved ones could say goodbye via FaceTime - staff went above and beyond. Their efforts were rewarded when Danny Donovan, the first COVID-19 patient well enough to transition home, was released in April 2020 (see photo).

backushospital.org



NONPROFIT OF THE YEAR

Lawrence + Memorial Hospital (Yale New Haven Health)

Lawrence + Memorial Hospital takes its role as a proactive player in the ongoing promotion of health and wellness to heart, offering an array of community programs, services and opportunities that engage people in the journey toward healthier living. L+M Hospital considers it a privilege to serve the community. Service was especially displayed in the midst of the pandemic when L+M Hospital quickly adapted community programs to remote platforms, opened COVID-19 testing sites and vaccination clinics, all while providing the greatest of care and access to the most advanced clinical treatments and expert physicians.

lmhospital.org



BEST PLACE TO WORK

Liberty Bank

A 'Top Workplace' by the Hartford Courant every year since 2012, Liberty Bank maintains a longstanding commitment to superior personal service and unparalleled community involvement. Throughout this difficult year, Liberty Bank demonstrated care and concern for employees and customers. Constant communication and care packages kept employees connected. Employees were supported with safety measures, stipends, time off, and flexibility to meet family obligations. Employees were able to focus on their important work in the community, such as serving customers, processing PPP loans to support businesses, recognizing essential workers, and donating to those in need.

liberty-bank.com



COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION LEADER

The Whaler's Inn

The Whaler's Inn has been a site of hospitality and commerce in Downtown Mystic for over 125 years. The Whaler's Inn demonstrates in its thoughtful renovations and high standards of service an ongoing commitment to exceeding the expectations of today's visitor while honoring its own history and unique nautical location on the Mystic River. The Shipwright's Daughter is a welcome addition to Mystic's thriving culinary community. The Whaler's Inn encourages community engagement and leadership development for their staff, making them compelling members of the business community.

whalersinnmystic.com



YOUNG PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR

Molly Bruno

Molly Bruno is a Realtor®, an ambassador, an advocate, and a community inspiration. A Realtor® with eXp Realty, she advanced her industry with innovation and collaboration during the pandemic. She was selected as Eastern CT Association of Realtors YPN of the Year for 2020 and sits on the Board of Directors. In the past two years, she was instrumental in the establishment of the Women's Council of Realtors of Eastern CT network, focused on creating new leaders in the community and giving back. She has led fundraising efforts that benefited organizations including Reliance Health, Madonna Place, Safe Futures, Girls on the Run, and St. Vincent de Paul Place. As an advocate for small business and local entrepreneurs, she created Hello Home, a retail space for empowering local crafters and artisans.

mollybrunorealestate.com



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Maria Miranda, Miranda Creative

33 years ago, Maria made the decision to create a different type of advertising agency. That vision became Miranda Creative — a brand management firm, now with 25 team members and clients nationwide. That inner vision guided Maria to support our community through the pandemic — hosting webinars, writing articles, and inspiring businesses to "pivot" under shifting marketing conditions. She went on to create two campaigns with other community-minded entrepreneurs, securing tablets for isolated seniors and boosting morale with the "Let's Go 860" messaging. Maria also reconceptualized the Chamber Foundation's annual Holiday Gala into "Every Month is a Holiday" — a video series that secured over \$60,000 in sponsors.

mirandacreative.com

2019 REGIONAL CHAMBER AWARD WINNERS

Business of the Year
Pfizer

Small Business of the Year
Dunklee Cooling and Heating, Inc

Industry Innovator
Mohegan Sun

Community Revitalization Leader
A.R. Building Company

Nonprofit of the Year
Public Library of New London

Best Place to Work
Chelsea Groton Bank

Volunteer of the Year
Gail Weber

Young Professional of the Year
Matthew Spring

Tourism Leader of the Year
Bill Fergusson

Board of Directors Special Award
Jack Malone

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