

Local businesses, organizations honored at Utica Chamber's Business of the Year Awards



Jennifer Earl, center, owner of Bagg's Square Brewing Company, holds the Catalyst Rising Business Award presented to her and her team at the Greater Utica Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year awards ceremony at Hart's Hill Inn on Thursday, Dec. 8.

(SENTINEL PHOTO BY JOHN CLIFFORD)

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The Greater Utica Chamber of Commerce honored 15 local businesses and organizations as finalists for the 2022 Business of the Year Awards. Since 1988, local businesses and organizations who are members with the Greater Utica Chamber of Commerce have been nominated for the annual awards ceremony.

On Thursday, Dec. 8, the awards ceremony was held at Hart Hill Inn in Whitesboro, where the nominated businesses and organizations gathered with the Chamber to celebrate their accomplishments and anticipate who among the nominees will be chosen to win.

“We get a lot of questions asked how are the winners chosen ... staying power, response to challenges in the area, products or services, innovation and growth within the industry, so that’s one of our key things we look at,” said Kari Puleo, executive director for the Greater Utica Chamber of Commerce. “We also look at the commitment to the region, the longevity, community involvement, public service and business leadership within your organization. The last piece of the puzzle is your involvement in the Greater Utica Chamber of Commerce.”

Businesses and organizations that were selected as finalists were sorted into five categories of for-profit and nonprofit businesses with over or under 50 employees, as well as a category for Catalyst Rising Business, selecting a new business that has opened in the Greater Utica area in the last five years. Among the 15 finalists, five were selected as winners from their respective categories.

Nonprofit Business with 50 Employees or Fewer:

- Abraham House
- Griffiss Institute (**Winner**)
- UMN For The Arts

Nonprofit Business with Over 50 Employees:

- Catholic Charities of Oneida/Madison Counties
 - Central New York Health Home Network
 - Hospice & Palliative Care (**Winner**)
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For-Profit Business with 50 Employees or Fewer:

- DBJ Wealth Management (**Winner**)
- DiGiorgio Law Firm
- Sentinel Media Company

For-Profit Business with Over 50 Employees:

- The Fountainhead Group (**Winner**)
- Indium Corporation
- Mastrovito Hyundai

Catalyst Rising Business:

- Bagg's Square Brewing Company (**Winner**)
- Blue Truck Wine & Liquor
- Lafa Mediterranean by Zeina's

Bradley Waters, president and publisher for Sentinel Media Company, was one of the 15 businesses and organizations recognized by the Chamber, nominated for their commitment to sustaining and expanding local journalism.

“To be nominated in our first year of expansion points to the positivity of what we’re doing,” Waters said. “It shows that we can all be one community between Rome and Utica. It also shows that there’s a need in the area. If we can fulfill any of those points and continue on investing in local journalism, local independent journalism on top of that, it’s a huge need for all communities and we hope to be the provider of that.”
