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Chamber Awards Gala set for June 20th

In the Chamber of Commerce world, recognition plays a huge part in how the business community moves forward. It's also how it builds incentives for outstanding performance.

For many years, the Blair County Chamber of Commerce has made a high priority of honoring businesses and individuals in a variety of important categories. That practice will continue in 2024 as the Chamber has scheduled a major event on June 20th at the Blair County Convention Center.

The Awards Gala is an upscale combination of the recognition portion of the Chamber's Annual Meeting and the Business Hall of Fame luncheon. Putting those events together and adding a social component will make for an enjoyable evening, predicts Altoona-Blair County Development Corporation CEO Steve McKnight.

"We've looked at a number of ways to pay tribute to exceptional performance by businesses while also acknowledging how important it is that we take some time to relax and have some fun," he pointed out. "We feel that this Gala will accomplish both."

The event begins with a red carpet champagne reception followed by banquet stations, an award ceremony and concluding with live music and dancing, featuring a live band.

The award ceremony pays tribute to three businesses and six individuals. All expressed gratitude for being selected.

"We were absolutely thrilled and deeply honored to receive the news," admitted Michael DelGrosso, Chief Sales & Marketing

Officer at DelGrosso Foods. DelGrosso's will receive the **Business of the Year Award**. "It's a testament to the dedication of so many people over the past 77 years, especially our current team, who rose to the occasion to ensure that our recent expansion was a success."

The **Small Business of the Year Award** goes to Bedford Candies. "This means so much to us because, as a small business in today's economy, it's tough to stand out, create brand recognition and stay relevant to customers," according to Danae Weyant, who is the company's Marketing Coordinator. "For us, this award serves as a reminder of why we do what we do."

Roaring Spring Community Library is the third business recipient. The library will receive the **Non-Profit Spotlight** which recognizes a not-for-profit organization that has demonstrated resilience, creation and delivery of impactful programs.

"This type of recognition is all about the hard work and dedication of our staff, volunteers and community supporters," disclosed Michelle McIntyre, the library's director. "It's incredibly gratifying to see our efforts acknowledged in such a meaningful way."

From the individual award side, the sentiments were much the same.

"I am so humbled and grateful for this type of recognition," said Debbi Prosser, who will receive the coveted **ATHENA Award**. "Looking at the past recipients, I really don't feel worthy."

Carter Cerully will receive the **Donna D. Gority**

2024 Award Recipients

ATHENA

Debbi Prosser

Business of the Year

DelGrosso Foods, Inc.

Donna D. Gority Servant Leadership

Carter Cerully

Extra Mile

Cory Gehret

George

C. David Kimmel

Joseph P. Rosenhamer Chamber Spirit

Kara Bennett

Judith A. Rossi Educator of the Year

Joe Logan

Non-Profit Spotlight

Roaring Spring Community Library

Small Business of the Year

Bedford Candies

Servant Leadership Award. "When I first got involved in the community, Donna Gority was one of the first people I'd recognize at events," he noted. "This award is very special because it speaks to the qualities that I aspire to." David Kimmel will be the



Kara Bennett and Carter Cerully will be among those honored at the Chamber Awards Gala. The two are also Chamber Ambassadors.



Bedford Candies will receive the Small Business of the Year Award at the Gala. Here, Mallory Dolansky (left) and Maddy Kowalski display some of the company's products.

honoree for the **George Award**, which honors volunteerism in the community. "I'm aware that this is one of the Chamber's special and unique awards." Kimmel pointed out. "I was completely surprised and very humbled."

So, too, was Joe Logan, a

longtime teacher and coach at Central High School who will receive the **Judith A. Rossi Educator of the Year**. "I could never have envisioned receiving an honor like this one," he stated. "It validates that I'm doing something right."

Kara Bennett and Cory

Gehret, active in so many Chamber activities, will receive the **Chamber Spirit Award** and the **Chamber Extra Mile Award** respectively. "I'm very passionate about what the Chamber represents," Bennett emphasized. "I'm proud to be a member!"

Chamber committees to partner on an event at NatureWorks Park



NatureWorks Park in Hollidaysburg is Blair County's first environmental specific outdoor education and recreation area.

The Chamber's Committee of Young Professionals and Sustainable Blair County Committee will partner on an event to be held on June 6th from 5:30 to 7:30 at NatureWorks Park in Hollidaysburg.

Chelsey Weyant, Stormwater Coordinator and Lisa Haas, Conservation Education Specialist will be educating attendees on the features of NatureWorks Park, programs of the Blair

County Conservation District and their newest volunteer opportunities. There will also be a "picnic in the pavilion." NatureWorks Park, located at 108 Bedford Street in Hollidaysburg, is a unique space open from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., seven days a week. It offers a variety of activities and events for visitors of all ages.

"It's great when Chamber committees can work together to promote something bene-

ficial to the business community," remarked Jennifer Fleck, Director of Chamber Operations. "We're also grateful to the Blair County Conservation District for hosting the event and providing some of the picnic items."

Cost to attend is \$15/person. Berry Solutions Group is the event sponsor. To register, call the Chamber at (814) 943-8151 or online at www.blairchamber.com.

WE-LEaD instructional clinic to help produce better golfers

The Blair County Chamber's WE-LEaD Committee will hold an instructional Golf Clinic on June 5th from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Blair County Golf & Driving Range in Hollidaysburg. The cost to attend is \$25 for Chamber members and \$35 for non-members.

Enjoy a fun evening on the driving range to prac-

tice your hole-in-one shot or to simply learn the basics. John Madey and his staff will be on-hand to provide instruction. You can bring your own clubs or clubs will be provided for you. The event will include light hors d'oeuvres and the opportunity to BYOB.

"This is the third time we've held this type of

event during the past three years," explained WE-LEaD chair Sara Fiore Gunnett. "Each time it gets more popular."

To register, visit the Chamber website at www.blairchamber.com or call (814) 943-8151. The sponsor of the Golf Clinic is Value Drug Company.

Golf Classic a huge success!



Chuck Meyers, a member of the Altoona Mirror team, putts for birdie at the UPMC/Chamber Golf Classic. Looking-on (from left) are teammates Pete Berzonsky, Caleb Mosel and Mike Boytym.

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