

For immediate release

It's time to shine for three local businesses that won this year's FirstOntario 1Awards competition

Winners claimed \$150,000 in cash and professional in-kind services

Hamilton ON, May 16, 2019– AmandaSteene Cosmetics, Dolled Up Desserts and QReserve walked away winners at the 8th annual Hamilton/Halton 1Awards on Thursday. All three were awarded professional in-kind services to help their businesses get to the next level and QReserve also walked away with a cash prize of \$25,000.

“The superb quality of local businesses in our communities comes as no surprise. We are very aware of the talented and dedicated entrepreneurs who work so hard to be successful at what they do and in what they bring to their communities,” said Lloyd Smith, Interim CEO at FirstOntario Credit Union. “We’ve been fortunate to collaborate with great partners who feel the same way we do – that these businesses need to be recognized for their many contributions.”

This year’s winners competed in a group of 10 finalists who presented their current business state and their ideas about future growth. After careful deliberation, the judges chose three winners and assigned the prizes based on the needs of the business.

AmandaSteene Cosmetics customizes makeup for its clients both at their Burlington storefront and online. Hamilton’s Dolled Up Desserts showcases the goodness in gluten free and vegan treats while QReserve, also based out of Hamilton, provides software platforms that help people access tools and resources.

In its eighth year, the 1Awards competition is an important way that FirstOntario encourages local business development. Since the program’s inception, FirstOntario and its 1Awards partners have invested more than \$1.3 million into Hamilton, Halton and Niagara’s small business landscape. This year’s partners include the Hamilton Spectator, Agro Zaffiro LLP, KPMG, Mohawk College, 900 CHML and PLAY.

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[About FirstOntario Credit Union](#)

FirstOntario has been serving Members in the Golden Horseshoe, Niagara Region and Southwestern regions of Ontario since 1939. Our credit union now has over 126,000 Members and more than \$5.4 billion in assets under management. Everyone is welcome to be part of FirstOntario for financial services including daily transactions, mortgages, lines of credit, loans and investments. FirstOntario profits are invested into the communities we serve through support for entrepreneurs, competitive rates and charitable pursuits including our award winning student nutrition program. Learn more about us today at FirstOntario.com.

[The1Awards](#)

The goal of the 1Awards is to help local businesses get to the next level by recognizing and rewarding ideas for growth and community-focused plans. This is the eighth annual 1Awards business competition in Hamilton and Halton. Due to its growing success, the program expanded to Niagara in a separate competition and is currently celebrating its fourth year. Established businesses must demonstrate measurable growth such as workplace expansion, innovation and economic impact in their local communities to be eligible for cash and specialized in-kind services provided by 1Awards partners. Hamilton partners include The Hamilton Spectator, Agro Zaffiro LLP, KPMG, Mohawk College, 900 CHML and PLAY.

[AmandaSteene Cosmetics](#)

AmandaSteene Custom Cosmetics is a Burlington-based independent beauty brand. Celebrating individuality and embracing diversity, we create perfectly personalized custom cosmetics, made from high quality, cruelty free, responsibly sourced ingredients. Through both online and in-store experiences, our clients create uniquely formulated lipstick, gloss, foundation, powder and skincare. We embrace individuality, giving our clients' control of their beauty identity in an experiential fun and friendly way, at a price that is affordable and universally attainable. We believe that good business is founded on making things that are good for our bodies, our communities and the environment, and we actively support local community initiatives that reflect our core values of diversity, inclusion and equality.

[Dolled Up Desserts](#)

Dolled Up Desserts is Hamilton's award winning gluten free and vegan bakery and baking mix production company. Founded in 2016, Dolled Up Desserts innovates delicious treats to improve the quality and accessibility of allergen free baked goods for all people, whether they are made at home or bought ready to eat. Their treats are an advocacy tool, reducing the stigma of allergen and cruelty free desserts as unappetizing and difficult to prepare. Dolled Up Desserts serves the community with retail and wholesale sales nationwide, and is in the midst of constructing its new allergen free production facility and store in Downtown Hamilton.

[QReserve](#)

QReserve provides software platforms that help people access tools and resources with the power of global market-networks – the intersection of marketplaces, social networks, and workflow automation. QReserve's powerful management tools help to organize people and resources with intelligent reservation and tracking software to automate decision and operational processes. Our global market-network platforms connect people to resources to help them efficiently access and utilize equipment, facilities, and expertise. QReserve is creating a new frontier of "open resources" and building the backbone infrastructure to power these incredibly valuable market-networks.