

*For immediate release*

## **FirstOntario 1Awards celebrates 10 years with four local businesses splitting close to \$200,000 in prizes**

*Support for small business through the 1Awards started a decade ago*

**Hamilton ON, May 25, 2022** – The 2022 FirstOntario 1Awards winners include a donut maker, a yoga prop creator, a soy candle architect and a support services programmer. These four female-led businesses shared almost \$200,000 in cash and in-kind professional services as part of the tenth anniversary of the awards.

Hamilton’s Darling Donuts, Love My Mat Yoga, Wax and Fire Co. and Port Colborne’s Anchors Away Support Services came out on top of this year’s competition after 11 entrepreneurs pitched their passion and plans for 1Awards prizes. The announcement wraps up a decade of small business support and also marks a return to in-person events following a virtual 1Awards version in 2021.

“We congratulate both the winners and the finalists, for another great year of competition – there are so many unique businesses in our regions working hard to succeed,” said Joanne Battaglia, Vice President, Marketing, Communications and Community Partnerships. “The 1Awards competition is providing real value to our local businesses a decade later because of the ongoing commitment of our community partners who continue to offer their time, their services and their expertise.”

Partners – who added additional prizes following this year’s pitches – include Agro Zaffiro LLP, Giant Shoe, KPMG, Mohawk College, PLAY, The Hamilton Spectator and Weever. Additional supporters include The Thornton Group, Global Payments and The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce.

The awards program is an important way FirstOntario supports local business development. Through the competition over the past 10 years, FirstOntario and 1Awards partners have invested \$1.8 million into Hamilton, Halton, Brant and Niagara’s small business landscape.

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**About FirstOntario Credit Union**

FirstOntario is a full service cooperative financial institution, serving members for more than 80 years throughout the Golden Horseshoe, Niagara Region and Southwestern regions of Ontario. With \$5.8 billion in assets under management, FirstOntario is one of Canada’s largest credit unions. 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](http://FirstOntario.com).