

Media Contact:

Ronda Berns

802.229.2259

rberns@vtchamber.com

For Immediate Release

Vermont Chamber Announces Annual Hospitality Awards

Chef, Restaurateur, Innkeeper, and Tourism Partner of the Year

Berlin, VT (March 14, 2019) – The Vermont Chamber of Commerce will honor all the Hospitality Award Winners at the 36th Annual Vermont Tourism Summit on April 4th, 2019 at the Doubletree by Hilton, Burlington.

“These awards celebrate our hospitality and tourism industry’s vast contributions to the economy and acknowledge these award winners as stand-out achievers within Vermont,” said Ronda Berns, Vice President of Tourism for the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, who will be presenting the awards. “These are the individuals who exemplify the Vermont brand,” she added.

The 2019 Vermont Chamber Chef of the Year is Chef-Owner Sarah Natvig of The Black Krim Tavern in Randolph. This award recognizes an individual with a proven history of supporting Vermont’s agricultural economy using local food and products.

Sarah’s passion for cooking and using foods from the local region is reflected in her creative seasonal menus that change weekly. She has created the perfect farm-to-table restaurant, sourcing foods and products from surrounding farms as well as her very own farm, the Pebble Brook, in Braintree that she co-owns with her husband. Sarah is a graduate of the New England Culinary Institute.

The 2019 Vermont Chamber Restaurateur of the Year is Brian and Karen Zecchinelli of the Wayside Restaurant, Bakery & Creamery in Montpelier. This award honors restaurateurs who continue to demonstrate excellence in restaurant operations and management.

Karen and Brian’s commitment to their staff, buying locally produced foods, the environment, community service and serving their valued customers has been unwavering at this iconic restaurant for over 20 years. Harriet and the late Eugene Galfettii entrusted their daughter and son-in-law to follow in their footsteps. Brian and Karen have carried it forward, now reaching 101 years, keeping the family traditions at The Wayside alive and well.

The 2019 Vermont Chamber Borden E. Avery Innkeeper of the Year is Peter MacLaren of the West Hill House B&B in Warren. This award is designed specifically for individuals who continue to demonstrate excellence in the operation and management of a Vermont bed & breakfast, inn, hotel or resort, and a commitment to the growth of the local community.

Being named Trip Advisor’s #1 B&B in the Mad River Valley, and in the top 10 for all of Vermont, is an incredible accomplishment and indicator of just how great of a property this inn is and the customer service it provides to their guests. Peter’s commitment to the local community is evident

through his membership and board positions with the Mad River Valley Chamber and as an active participant with several other membership organizations to help grow Vermont and to lobby for pro-tourism legislation throughout the state.

The 2019 Vermont Chamber Tourism Partner of the Year is Paula Maynard of Hildene, The Lincoln Family Home. This award is for an individual who is a leader in supporting and promoting the hospitality industry in Vermont.

Vermont is strong because of the dedication of people like Paula. She has excelled in her multiple roles at Hildene, serving as the Group Tour Director, Press Director and Volunteer Coordinator. Her personal touch, and warm welcome to all that visit, benefits everyone throughout the state and beyond. She is a true ambassador for Vermont. She is a member of the Vermont Attractions Association board and serves on the Vermont Travel and Recreation Council, plus is dedicated to the regional branding initiative of the current Shires of Vermont DMO and The Shires Byway since its beginning.

About the Vermont Chamber of Commerce

The largest statewide, private, not-for-profit business organization, the **Vermont Chamber of Commerce** represents every sector of the state's business community. Its mission is to create an economic climate conducive to business growth and the preservation of the Vermont quality of life.

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Ronda Berns
Vice President of Tourism
Vermont Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 37, Montpelier, VT 05601
802.229.2259 direct
rberns@vtchamber.com