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## **2024 K-W Oktoberfest Rogers Women of the Year Awards Nominees Announced**

- **Record-setting number of nominations**

**April 15, 2024 – KITCHENER, ON** – [Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest](#) is pleased to announce that with 123 nominations, another record has been broken for the [Rogers Women of the Year](#) awards. The annual ceremony will take place on the evening of Thursday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Since 1975, K-W Oktoberfest has proudly provided a platform to honour extraordinary women in Waterloo Region. “Another year with a record-setting number of nominees goes to show that our community is bursting with exceptional female leaders and is a testament to the tireless work of our Women of the Year committee,” shares Tracy Van Kalsbeek, Executive Director. “Identifying, celebrating and increasing visibility of women’s achievements helps build equality – which is what this event is all about.”

Members of the community are invited to attend and recognize the 123 nominees. Individual tickets and group “celebration” tables are available online at [www.womenoftheyear.ca](http://www.womenoftheyear.ca). Silent auction proceeds will support the [Oktoberfest Cares](#) initiative which provides funding for charitable partners and supports Festival initiatives that enrich our community and keep admission costs low or free.

### **2024 Award Categories and Nominees:**

**Arts & Culture** recognizes women for enriching the culture of our community through the creation or promotion of the arts on a volunteer or professional basis. **SPONSOR:** [SCOTIABANK](#)

Erin Bow	Raechele Lovell	Sassy (Elizabeth) Ray (Priestley)
Roshan James	Sue Nally	Stephanie Scott
Susan Koswan	Peggy Plet	Bingye (Belinda) Zhang

**Community Service** recognizes women for generously volunteering their time to programs and services that make our community a better place. **SPONSOR:** [ROGERS TV](#)

Lova Nyemb Bassong	Cheryl Gordijk	Laurie Lafleur
Uzma Bhutto	Marion Thomson Howell	Suhaila Salah
Charlotte Ferguson	Jane Hu	Jocelyn Schaefer
Joan Fisk	Lee Ann Hundt	Jenny Spiers
Taposhi Ganguli	Taveena Kum	Tracy Valko

**Entrepreneur – Under 40 Years Old and 40+ Years Old** (two award categories) recognizes women for initiating and/or administering an enterprise or business.

### **Under 40 SPONSOR:** [PILLER’S](#)

Oluwaseyi Adaghe	Chloe Hamilton	Katarina Penrith
Shelby Behling	Shay Herold	Rebecca Prime
Rebekah Churchyard	Dr. Harkiran Mallhi	Hilary Sisolak
Afra Fatima	Ren Navarro	Jessica Smith
Kristy Guthrie	Emily Peat	

**40+ SPONSOR: [MIRANDA O'SULLIVAN, CHESTNUT PARK WEST](#)**

Dima Aldera	Ajoa Mintah	Erica Shelley
Maria Kyveris	Leslie Morris	Cindy Ward
Juanita Metzger	Destiny Moser	

**Group Achievement** recognizes achievements by a group of women that impact and/or improve our community or society. **SPONSOR: [FOX FINANCIAL PLANNING](#)**

Canadian Arab Women's Association	Muslim Women of Cambridge	Supporting Inclusion through Intergenerational Partnerships
Dog Friendly KW	Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region	Together For Perinatal Mental Health
Jill of all Trades	She Is Your Neighbour	Women in Communications & Technology Mentoring Circles
#LiveFitBabe Training	She Shares Women's Giving Circle	YWCA Cambridge Leadership Team
Mamas For Mamas	Stella Co.	

**Health & Wellness** recognizes women for promoting and helping others achieve and promote mental, physical or spiritual well-being in their careers or community involvement. **SPONSOR: [GREATER K-W CHAMBER](#)**

Bronwyn Addico	Anita Krawiec	Shawwna Siddall
Amy Ballantyne	Lisa Lankowski	Morgan Story
Deidre Hatton	Sumiko Lui	Merle Vojdani
Neha Juwale	Tanya Sablic	

**Lifetime Achievement** recognizes women for being role models, mentors and/or advocates for positive and social change throughout their lifetime. **SPONSOR: [SCHLEGEL VILLAGES](#)**

Kirsty Bradley-McMurtrie	Martha George	Wendy Stahley
Stephanie Brasseur	Linda Mark	Merle Vojdani
Joan Fisk	Janice McVey	
Kimberly Fowler	Nancy Priest	

**Professional – Under 40 Years Old and 40+ Years Old** (two award categories) recognizes women for dedicating themselves to the pursuit of excellence in their chosen careers.

**Under 40 SPONSOR: [BERESKIN & PARR](#)**

Nasreen Nasreen	Ashley Schuitema	Suzana Vuković
Anjie Persaud		

**40+ SPONSOR: [HOME HARDWARE](#)**

Allison Bourke	Karen Gallant	Dr. Norah McRae
Kirsty Bradley-McMurtrie	Michelle Grimes	Janice McVey
Nicole Brown Faulknor	Jean M. Howitt	Oluseun Olayinka
Nenone Donaldson	Christie Johnson	Nancy Priest
Melissa Durrell	Suzanne Kearns	Wendy Stahley
Helen Fishburn	Young-Shin Lee	Aimee Wagner
Kimberly Fowler	Linda Mark	

**Skilled Trades** (New in 2024!) recognizes women for exceptional contributions to the advancement and empowerment of women in the trades sector. **SPONSOR:** [GRAND VALLEY CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION](#)

Aimie Botelho	Jessica Gemmell	Jennifer Green
Stefanie Bruinsma	Martha George	Laura Potje
Brandi Ferenc	Shannon Gerrys	Emily Pyke

**Science, Technology, Engineering & Math** recognizes women for outstanding advancement to the field of STEM. **SPONSOR:** [ENBRIDGE](#)

Vanda Boyd	Linda Li	Nancy Nelson
Stephanie Brasseur	Avvey Peters	Ellyn Winters-Robinson
Martha Breithaupt	Elaheh Sanoubari	
Amanda Helka	Savannah Sloat	

**Young Adult (14 to 23)** recognizes women for leading by example and being a role model to their peers. **SPONSORS:** [CITY NEWS 570](#), [COUNTRY 106.7](#) AND [CHYM 96.7](#)

Soveigh Brasseur	Jordan Prentice	Madison Schuetze
Eunkyo Lee	Aalaa Rehman	Zoe Talbot
Kat Mueller	Rebecca Schuetze	Katelyn Wu

Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest Rogers Women of the Year is for all women. As in the past, nominations and nominees are inclusive of all women, non-binary, transgender, two-spirited, women of all classes, races, sexualities, ableness and identities.

We are grateful for our 2024 award category sponsors including décor partner [Harp & Fin](#). The Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest Rogers Women of the Year Awards are proudly supported by [Rogers](#), [Rogers TV](#), [CHYM 96.7](#), [Country 106.7](#), [CityNews 570](#) and [Sherwood Events](#). Many thanks to our returning hosts for the evening, Robin & PJ from Country 106.7.

Photo enclosed: 2023 Women of the Year Awards at Bingemans.

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### **About [Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest](#)**

The first Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest was celebrated in 1969 at Concordia Club in Kitchener, organized by a group of dedicated founders. The keg was tapped and history was made. Since then, Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest has developed its own traditions, becoming one of the largest Bavarian Festivals outside of Germany. Tens of thousands of visitors celebrate annually in our Festhallen, at local restaurants and by attending one of our many family and cultural events. More than just biergartens, Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest is committed to supporting the cultural, economic and social vitality of Waterloo Region, bringing millions of dollars in economic benefit to the Region each year. Oktoberfest Cares provides funding for charitable partners and supports Festival initiatives that enrich our community such as the Onkel Hans Food Drive and keep admission costs low or free for favourites including the Women of the Year celebration and family-friendly events like KIDtoberfest, Thanksgiving Day Parade and Christkinderfest. For more information visit [www.oktoberfest.ca](http://www.oktoberfest.ca).

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