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**THE BAKERSFIELD CHAMBER ANNOUNCES AWARD RECIPIENTS OF THE
2022 BEAUTIFUL BAKERSFIELD AWARDS**

Bakersfield, Calif. (Saturday, June 25, 2022) – On Saturday night, the [Beautiful Bakersfield Awards](#), presented by [Valley Strong Credit Union](#), recognized the efforts of 94 individuals, businesses and organizations that helped build a better Bakersfield in 2021. More than 750 community members attended the 32nd annual event hosted by the Greater Bakersfield Chamber at Mechanics Bank Theater & Convention Center. Here’s a recap highlighting the positive and uplifting stories of each award recipient.

A Better Bakersfield - Sponsored by [Adventist Health Bakersfield](#)
An annual event or project that enhances the quality of life in the community.

Give Big Kern - In 2021, Give Big Kern raised more than \$800,000, reflecting a 13 percent increase from the year before. This day of giving is an opportunity for all of Kern County to come together as one community, raising dollars and volunteer hours for local nonprofits through online crowdfunding and pledges. This collaboration helps organizations raise unrestricted resources while growing visibility, capacity and sustainability.

Architecture & Design - Sponsored by [Bolthouse Properties, LLC](#)
The completion of a brand new interior and/or exterior building design integrating the environment with space and materials.

The ROC Café & Bakery - This full-service restaurant is operated by the students of the Culinary Arts program at Kern High School District’s Regional Occupational Center. During the school year, students rotate through training in its state-of-the-art kitchen, bakery and front of house. This modern café is open to the public for breakfast and lunch, giving students the chance to develop their culinary and hospitality skills in a real-world setting.

Architect & Interior Design: Sim PBK
Builder: Klassen Corporation

Renovation & Tenant Improvement - Sponsored by [Providence Strategic Consulting, Inc.](#)
The completion of a renovated design that upgrades an existing structure and/or incorporates the use of landscaping to enhance the aesthetic value of the property.

Lino’s Venue - Located in the heart of Downtown Bakersfield, Lino’s Venue has quickly become a popular location to host a range of celebrations, parties and meetings. The owners opened their doors to continue their passion of serving others by supporting local nonprofits and community fundraisers. This centrally located spot has been renovated into a beautiful venue that comes equipped with a stage, tables and chairs, a bar, and a private room that serves as a glam or bridal suite. This venue has helped to elevate the area and contribute to the downtown’s revitalization.

Arts & Culture - Sponsored by [Moneywise Wealth Management](#)

Efforts by a group or individual to improve and/or enhance the arts and culture within our community.

DAT Krew Academy - Last year, DAT Krew Academy, which stands for Dance, Art & Talent, opened the first and only performing arts academy on the southeast side of Bakersfield. This underserved area now has a safe and fun environment for at-risk youth. DAT Krew Academy also provided health and wellness classes and partnered with ShePower Leadership Academy to impact kids across Kern County.

Education - Sponsored by [Aera Energy LLC](#)

Efforts by an educator, project, or school/college that promotes or benefits education in our city at all levels.

Angel Cottrell - The Kern High School District's ROC & CTEC Entrepreneurship Resource Centers launched last spring and has served more than 250 local middle and high school students in entrepreneurship education programs. As the Program Manager, Angel developed and taught students how to foster an entrepreneurial mindset, conduct market research, evaluate, validate and pitch a business idea. This program connects youth to the vibrant entrepreneurial community and business ecosystem fostering growth of a skilled workforce and job creators, who are competent, creative and innovative.

Health - Sponsored by [Heart Vascular and Leg Center](#)

An individual, group or organization impacting healthy living – above and beyond their normal scope of activities – through education, prevention or medical services.

Houchin Community Blood Bank - Throughout the past year, Houchin Community Blood Bank and 40,000 residents have donated blood, platelets or plasma. With the continued support of the community, potentially 120,000 lives were saved. Last year, Houchin also joined six other blood banks around the nation to launch the Blood Emergency Response Corporation. This program was created to provide extra units on a rotating schedule to ensure a reserve of blood is available for emergency needs. As of today, more than 30 blood banks are involved.

Humanitarian Group - Sponsored by [Chevron](#)

A group whose personal volunteer efforts have made a significant impact in the community.

Bakersfield Angels - Believes in the power of collaboration and that we are better together. They partnered with more than 50 local businesses, nonprofits and churches to create impact and change in our foster care community. In 2021, Bakersfield Angels empowered more than 200 volunteers to help foster youth set goals, learn life skills, secure jobs and housing. They also raised more than \$500,000 from Give Big Kern and their inaugural fundraiser to help support the foster youth in our community.

Humanitarian Individual - Sponsored by [Dignity Health Bakersfield Mercy & Memorial Hospitals](#)

An individual whose personal volunteer efforts have made a significant impact in the community.

Debbie Ormonde - Since 2008, Debbie has been serving the community as President and Founder of Be Finally Free. She believes that education is the only way to truly make a difference in the lives of those who are struggling with addiction, abuse, neglect and poverty. If people don't know anything different, how can they choose to do something different? That question fuels the work that Debbie does, including teaching classes she developed at The Mission at Kern County, CityServe's Educational Collaborative and Lerdo Detention Facility.

Next Gen - Sponsored by [Kern County Superintendent of Schools](#)

An individual or group in grades K-12 that, through personal involvement and endeavors, has answered the challenge of good citizenship.

Alexander Fan - This recent high school graduate founded the Holocaust Education Youth Project and hosted survivor talks for students in five Bakersfield high schools. Alex is also the youth spokesperson for the Dolores Huerta Foundation where he wrote op-eds and advocated at school board meetings for

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education reform. Alex led after-school programs on drug-use prevention for local migrant youth and made an award-winning film about Bakersfield's food insecurity. He will attend Harvard University this fall.

Young Professional - Sponsored by [Stria](#)

An individual, age 18-40, whose efforts truly impact and enhance the quality of life in the community.

Yury Alicia Galvez - As a former foster youth, Yury is paying it forward to other youth and families experiencing hardships. Working as the lead foster/homeless education liaison at KCSOS, Yury's insightful perspective has created training content and assistance to more than 500 Bakersfield educators, service providers and community members on topics ranging from foster care and youth homelessness. She serves on the Bakersfield Youth Homeless Collaborative and distributed care packages to victims of sexual trafficking and homelessness.

Business Person of the Year - Sponsored by [Tejon Ranch Company](#)

A local business owner/manager whose efforts truly impact and enhance the quality of life in the community.

DeAnna Lewis - As the local owner of five Wingstop franchises and a Fatburger restaurant, DeAnna believes in giving back to the city that has supported her businesses through the years. In 2021, she donated more than \$10,000 in scholarships to high school graduating seniors, held an annual turkey giveaway that provided more than 300 meals and donated funds for a Christmas drive. She is also the founder of Boss Sisters Connect, a mentor program that tutors and teaches classes on entrepreneurship and business success.

Large Business/Corporation of the Year - Sponsored by [Tri Counties Bank](#)

The recognition of a large business or corporation (26 employees or more) whose volunteer hours and/or financial donations have made a meaningful difference.

Stria - In addition to donating time, money and resources to a plethora of nonprofits and community-based organizations such as Bakersfield Angels and Boys Scouts of America, Stria has created hundreds of good paying jobs. The key to Stria's past, present and future is collaboration, which is why they partner with KHSD, KCSOS and CSUB to source talent. Stria's role is to listen to customers and the community to create the jobs and solutions that can propel us all forward together.

Nonprofit of the Year - Sponsored by [Kern Community Foundation](#)

Efforts of a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that impacts the community.

Community Action Partnership of Kern - With more than 900 employees and 17 programs, CAPK seeks to address the underlying causes of poverty, alleviate its effects and promote self-sufficiency in the communities they serve. Their goal is to give individuals and families access to a network of services that will create the economic support they need to overcome their challenges and build a better life. Last year, the CAPK Food Bank distributed 23 million pounds of food and made more than 100,000 referrals to safety net services offered by CAPK and hundreds of other providers.

Small Business of the Year - [Bank of America](#)

A small business (25 employees or less) whose contributions and/or products and services instill community pride.

Telehealthdocs Medical Group - For more than a decade, Telehealthdocs has provided specialized virtual medical care to residents throughout Kern County. Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, they quickly adapted their services to meet this challenging public health crisis. They partnered with Kern Family Health Care to acquire a mobile telehealth clinic vehicle. The team at Telehealthdocs also volunteers with many of the community's charitable events and activities.

Harvey L. Hall Lifetime Achievement - Sponsored by [Hall Ambulance Service, Inc.](#)

A local long-time community leader, age 55 and over, who has made a lasting impact on Bakersfield and its residents.

Ellen Eggert - Has used her first-hand experience as a four-time suicide loss survivor and attempt survivor to become one of Kern's biggest advocates for suicide prevention and education. Ellen currently leads Kern Behavioral Health & Recovery Services Crisis Hotline and Survivor Outreach Team and runs several support groups and trainings countywide. She also founded Save a Life Today, a local nonprofit dedicated to reducing Kern's rate of suicide and raising awareness.

Chairman's Award

This award is chosen from among all nominee submissions and given to the nominee that is recognized for overall excellence.

Mission Community Services Corporation (MCSC) Kern Women's Business Center - Last year, Kern Women's Business Center served more than 600 clients by providing training and free consulting services. They helped secure more than \$1.8 million in EIDL, PPP and other grants for small business owners by assisting with the loan application process, uploading documents and creating business financials. These efforts were accomplished by boots on the ground, door-to-door outreach, community events and Zoom webinars. The Women's Business Center also collaborated with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in the first-ever Black Farmer and Latino Farmer Conference that went global.

Would you like to nominate a person, business or organization for the 2023 Beautiful Bakersfield Awards? Visit www.beautiful.bakochamber.com today and take a few minutes to submit a nomination to honor someone who makes our community a better place to live. Nominations must be for work completed in 2022 to be eligible for consideration. No more than two nominations per individual, business or organization will be considered. The 2023 nomination deadline is Friday, February 3, 2023.

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ABOUT THE GREATER BAKERSFIELD CHAMBER

The Greater Bakersfield Chamber is the region's leading business membership, networking and advocacy organization, representing the interests of more than 1,100 members and more than 70,000 local jobs. Focused on creating a thriving local economy and improving the quality of life for every resident of Greater Bakersfield; the organization promotes economic vitality, facilitates networking and business development opportunities, and advocates for public policies that support quality jobs and inclusive growth. The Chamber guides Bakersfield toward a better and brighter future. Founded in 1920, the Chamber is driven by the belief that our community thrives when business succeeds.

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