

FACT SHEET

2026 Beautiful Bakersfield Awards



WHAT ARE THE BEAUTIFUL BAKERSFIELD AWARDS?

The Beautiful Bakersfield Awards Gala is organized by the Greater Bakersfield Chamber. This event constitutes an awards program featuring a reception and dinner. Each year, the program highlights individual and community accomplishments from the preceding calendar year.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE ANNUAL AWARDS EVENT?

The primary goal of this program is to recognize and honor individuals, places, businesses, and groups that have contributed to the advancement of a Better Bakersfield. By participating as sponsors, businesses in the community engage in a program that actively promotes and fosters a positive quality of life.

WHEN DID THE AWARDS PROGRAM START?

Mary K. Shell initiated the first awards program in the mid-1980s, albeit on a smaller scale compared to today's Beautiful Bakersfield Awards. In 1990, when the Chamber assumed control, it evolved into a reception and dinner banquet.

HOW MANY CATEGORY AWARDS?

The awards are distributed across 17 categories (refer to the list of categories and criteria). Community members propose nominees, and the Beautiful Bakersfield

Committee reviews and finalizes placements. After approving nominations, the committee collaborates with nominees to gather additional information, which is then submitted to judges.

HOW DOES JUDGING WORK?

Judges, who are entirely independent of the committee, assess categories. Before being assigned to a specific category, judges must declare that they have no conflict of interest. The outcome of judging is unknown to both judges and committee members until the announcement at the event, ensuring a fair process.

ARE ALL NOMINEES RECOGNIZED?

All approved nominees receive recognition at the awards gala. Award recipients in each category are unveiled for the first time during the "Oscars of Bakersfield" awards gala on **Saturday, June 13, 2026**, at Dignity Health Arena, Theater & Convention Center.