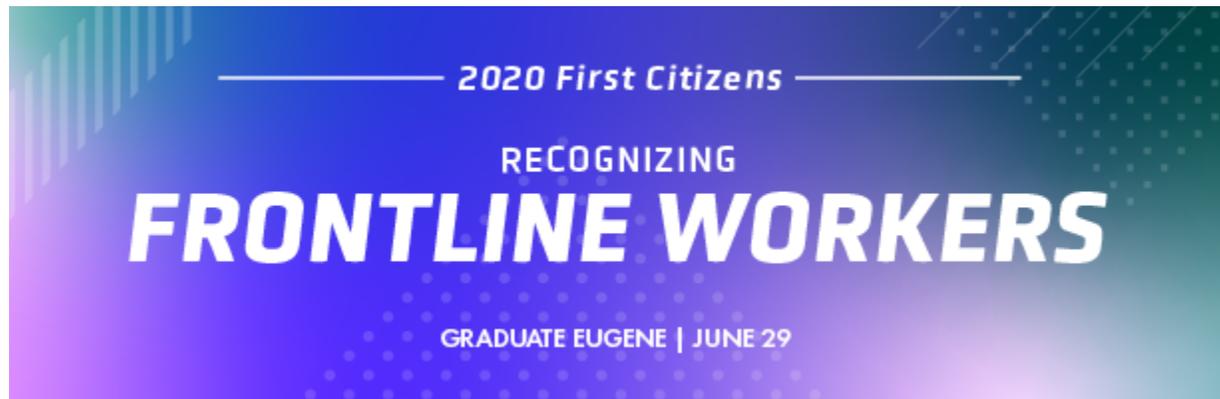


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Community Heroes to be Honored by Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce

Frontline workers & First Responders are the 2020 First Citizen

Eugene, Ore. (June 15, 2021)—For the first time since World War II, the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce has chosen a group of people rather than an individual to be honored as its First Citizen. In recognition of the extraordinary service the community’s first responders and other essential workers have performed during the pandemic, the 2020 Eugene First Citizen award will be bestowed upon Frontline Workers at the chamber’s Celebration of Business event on June 29th, 2021.

Chosen by previous First Citizens, the award recognizes people who have made extraordinary contributions to community welfare and betterment. “Our group of past First Citizens could think of no more deserving recipient than the people who have worked tirelessly on the front lines throughout the pandemic,” said Brittany Quick-Warner, Eugene Chamber CEO.

In the 1940’s, the chamber recognized the military veterans and those who gave their lives during World War II. The award dates back to 1955 and since then dozens of community leaders have been recognized for their business, civic and charitable contributions. The 2019 recipient was Sid Voorhees, a local business person who is best known for donating countless hours to raising millions of dollars as an auctioneer for various charity events.

“We have amazing community leaders who deserve to be honored and who will be honored in the future,” said Quick-Warner. “But this year, when the group of First Citizens met to make their selection, it just became clear that in this extraordinary time the real winners are the people who showed up for work every day to care for the sick, provide essential services and keep our economy going. To them we owe a huge debt of gratitude, and it is our honor to name them the 2020 First Citizens.”

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The Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce will also be launching a new membership model at the event. "One thing that the pandemic made clear was how valuable a chamber of commerce

is to a business community. As rules were quickly changing and new resources became available, the Eugene Chamber staff made every effort to reach its members with important and timely information; they also came to realize there were many more local establishments that also needed to know these things but were beyond their reach," said Cale Bruckner, Eugene Chamber Board Chair and President of Concentric Sky.

Their new membership option opens up membership to all businesses that serve people in the Eugene area. There will be a basic no-cost option so that the paywall is removed allowing all entities to be Chamber members and get the basic services of information, support, and a directory listing. If you are interested in learning more about this, you are encouraged to attend either in person or via the virtual ticket option.

The Celebration of Business is normally held in January but was deferred to June in hopes of having an in-person event. Typically, more than 700 people turn out for what is the chamber's biggest event of the year, though attendance will be limited this year due to the pandemic. At the celebration, the chamber also names the Future First Citizen, a high school senior chosen by the previous First Citizen winners from among the city's six high schools (Eugene 4J, Bethel and Marist). This year, in another pandemic pivot, rather than selecting one student, the chamber will honor all six students nominated by their high schools with a \$1,000 scholarship.

About the Eugene Chamber

The Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce is a catalytic leader in creating a vibrant and diverse economy that drives economic opportunity and well-being in our region. The Chamber works with partners in business, government, and non-profit sectors to create an environment that improves the economic prosperity of our region. For more information, call 541-484-1314 or visit www.eugenechamber.com.