

UREPORT

Damerla celebrates Jewels of Mississauga East-Cooksville Awards

MN May 4, 2017

Small businesses are a vital part of a community and make important contributions to the economy. MPP Dipika Damerla organized her first Jewels of Mississauga East-Cooksville Awards ceremony on April 26 to recognize and honour small business excellence in the riding. The event was held at the Sheridan College's Hazel McCallion campus with special guest Jeff Leal, Ontario's minister responsible for small business.

The call for nominations for the awards went out in January and 48 nominations were received. Out of them six were selected on a rigorous criteria based on innovation, time in business, community service and customer. An independent panel of four judges selected the awardees.

The awardees and their categories are as follows:

- 1) Fred's Bar and Grill, Best Restaurant
- 2) Jaswoj

- Bakery & Deli, Best Food Service
- 3) Obelisk Variety Store, Best Retail Business
- 4) Valu Ventures, Best New Business
- 5) Fireworks Super Store, Best Cultural Business
- 6) Women, Best Community Impact

In his keynote address, Minister Leal said that the provincial government has recently created the Ministry of Small Business as this sector is a vital component of Ontario's economy.

MPP Damerla spoke about her own experiences as a small-business owner in the past and the challenges of being one. She congratulated the nominees and awardees on their achievement.

David Wojcik, CEO of the Mississauga Board of Trade, served as the MC. Dr. Janet Morrison, provost/vice-president academic of Sheridan College, and Prof. Paul Sarkissian, one of the judges

and a professor at Sheridan's Pilon School of Business, also spoke at the ceremony.

The panel of judges included Solange Barcena (corporate relations, Mississauga Board of Trade), Kay Matthews (executive director, Ontario BIA Association), Fazle Naqvi (president, Rotary Club) and Paul Sarkissian (professor, Sheridan's Pilon School of Business).

Local artist Deep Ganguly presented a musical performance on flute.

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