

Sudbury's environmental champions named

By Keith Dempsey, For The Sudbury Star
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Richard Eberhardt, Program Director for Green Economy North, presents Adam Eusepi of Morin Industrial Coatings Ltd with the new member of the year award in Sudbury, Ont. on Thursday April 12, 2018. Green Economy North celebrated environmental leaders at their second annual Evening of Recognition. Gino Donato/Sudbury Star/Postmedia Network

For the second year in a row, Green Economy North celebrated environmental leaders at its second annual Evening of Recognition.

The event took place at the Holiday Inn on Thursday.

"It's been an incredible year," said Richard Eberhardt, program director for Green Economy North. "We doubled our membership, and have started expanding into new sectors and project areas. There's no doubt that the green business movement is catching on in Sudbury, and we're thrilled to be on the crest of that wave."

Earlier this spring, Green Economy North called on the community to nominate local environmental champions.

"An environmental champion doesn't necessarily have to be from an environmental organization," said Scott Florence, managing director of reThink Green. "We wanted to know who was going above and beyond their daily roles and responsibilities to create a more sustainable workplace. We were so impressed with the nominations again this year, it was a difficult decision."

The winners of the 2018 Environmental Champion Awards are Greg Cantin of Cantin Insurance Services LTD, The Co-operators, Max Burt of Burt Country Farm Meats, and Hiawatha Osawamick of Hiawatha's Catering.

"We only have one Earth," said Osawamick, the 2018 Environmental Champion. "Taking action for the environment and sustainability can help reduce our harmful shock on the climate, and ultimately protect the land we live on. I want limit damage to the lifestyles of future generations to come. To have healthy communities, we need clean water, air, natural resources, and a nontoxic environment."

Awards were also presented to select Green Economy North members.

Most Engaged Green Team was presented to Hiamedia, a graphic design and print shop located in Whitefish.

"Our team is pretty super excited," said Hiamedia owner Skye Little. "They work every day diligently on making their efforts to be a little greener and keeping our carbon footprint down."

Little said those efforts consist of trying to deliver products to clients not only in a timely manner, but also efficiently and in a way that their carbon footprint is down when doing deliveries. Hiamedia also recycles more than 85 per cent of its waste.

"With this being our 22nd year in business, I started to notice early on that we were producing waste," Little said. "One of the first Rs (three R's in recycling) is reduce. We're trying to reduce our waste, reuse and recycle. We're trying to make an effort to do that."

New Member of the Year was presented to Morin Industrial Coatings Ltd. This family-owned business has been building on its existing commitment to reduce waste by undertaking a number of efficiency projects over the past year.

In particular, Morin has switched out its facility's lights to LEDs, and has undertaken an impressive project to reduce and reuse its sandblasting medium, significantly reducing the amount of material that would otherwise end up in landfill.

"We're trying to save the planet by having less of a footprint because we're in a fairly dirty business," said Adam Eusepi, general manager at Morin Industrial. "And at the same time we're trying to reduce energy costs because it's good for the bottom line, but as well as for the environment."

Sustainable Organization of the Year was awarded to the United Church Sudbury Presbytery Pilot Project.

"Sustainable Organization of the Year is Green Economy North's Best in Show," said Eberhardt. "It goes to an organization that has worked to reduce its carbon footprint through planning, operational improvements, capital investments and staff engagement."

Despite small budgets and limited staff, the United Churches have undertaken a variety of energy-saving initiatives, including upgrading insulation, installing "smart" programmable thermostats, and educating congregation members on the small changes that have big impact.

The second Green Economy North annual report was also released on Thursday, which showcases the achievements of the 40-plus members, and the highlights of 2017. It is available at www.greeneconomynorth.ca.

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