

# Lakes PROUD

## SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR AWARD

### Award Application Guidelines

The Brainerd Lakes Chamber of Commerce will recognize a small business that personifies the spirit of entrepreneurship, pride, and success that forms the backbone of our local economy. The Lakes Proud Small Business of the Year Award will honor a Brainerd Lakes Chamber business that employs up to 20 team members. Applicants should possess the following attributes:

#### LEADERSHIP

- Manages change or adversity to achieve exceptional business growth
- Maintains outstanding customer service, sound management and ethical business practices
- Provides industry leadership with its products and services

#### INNOVATION

- Demonstrates a willingness to take risks
- Introduces creative products or services to the marketplace
- Strives to adapt and improve based on competition and market trends

#### EMPLOYEE INVESTMENT

- Generates outstanding results through employee engagement and teamwork
- Invests in employees through training, benefits and advancement opportunities
- Maintains a dynamic culture that attracts and retains a high-quality workforce

#### COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Provides community leadership that benefits the Brainerd Lakes Area
- Offers generous support and volunteerism to community organizations
- Advances economic growth by supporting other local businesses

### Award Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the Lakes Proud Small Business of the Year Award, businesses must have fewer than 20 employees, be a Chamber member in good standing, and be physically located in the Brainerd Lakes Area. Potential applicants are encouraged to verify eligibility with the Chamber before completing the award application.

Ineligible entities generally include individual leaders or employees; charities and community organizations; schools and colleges; government units or agencies; religious organizations, associations, and any other entity not deemed by the Chamber Board of Directors to fit the broadly accepted definition of a business.

### Application & Judging Process

Businesses that meet the award eligibility criteria are encouraged to apply directly. Brief nominations are also accepted, which prompts Chamber staff to contact the nominee and encourage them to submit the full application.

Applications are due by 4:30 p.m. on May 31, 2022, addressing the items on the form that follows. Appointed by the Chamber's Board of Directors and led by the Business Awards Chair, an independent panel of judges will score applicants and make the final award selection. All applications are confidential. If not chosen to receive the Lakes Proud Small Business of the Year Award, applicants are encouraged to update information and resubmit the following year.

### The award recipient will be contacted by mid-July and will receive the following:

- Recognition before, during, and after the Chamber's Celebration of Excellence on November 17, 2022
- Complimentary event tickets for a reserved table of eight
- A high-quality keepsake award presented by the award sponsor, Cub Foods

Questions? Contact Sue Galligan.

✉ [Sue@BrainerdLakesChamber.com](mailto:Sue@BrainerdLakesChamber.com)

📞 (218) 822-7119



# APPLICATION

2022 LAKES PROUD SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR AWARD

**NAME OF ORGANIZATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Please answer each of the following questions, to the best of your knowledge.*

Describe this business including its mission/vision, what basic products or services it offers, a brief history of the organization, and any other information to help others learn about what makes it unique. **(300 words or less)**

**Describe how the business meets each of the award criteria listed below. Whenever possible, please provide specific examples.**

**1) Leadership (200 words or less)**

- Manages change or adversity to achieve exceptional business growth
- Maintains outstanding customer service, sound management and ethical business practices
- Provides industry leadership with its products and services

**2) Innovation (200 words or less)**

- Demonstrates a willingness to take risks
- Introduces creative products or services to the marketplace
- Strives to adapt and improve based on competition and market trends

**3) Employee Investment (200 words or less)**

- Generates outstanding results through employee engagement and teamwork
- Invests in employees through training, benefits and advancement opportunities
- Maintains a dynamic culture that attracts and retains a high-quality workforce

**4) Community Service (200 words or less)**

- Provides community leadership that benefits the Brainerd Lakes Area
- Offers generous support and volunteerism to community organizations
- Advances economic growth by supporting other local businesses

Why do you think this business deserves to be recognized with the Lakes Proud Small Business of the Year Award? **(100 words or less)**

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Person Submitting Application: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Contact Person @ Organization (if different than above): \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### SUBMITTING APPLICATION

Please mail or email completed form to Sue Galligan:  
224 West Washington Street, Brainerd, MN 56401  
[Sue@BrainerdLakesChamber.com](mailto:Sue@BrainerdLakesChamber.com)




**ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 4:30 PM ON MAY 31, 2022**

Please do NOT submit any other materials such as brochures, photos, financials, etc.

Questions? Contact Sue Galligan.

 [Sue@BrainerdLakesChamber.com](mailto:Sue@BrainerdLakesChamber.com)

 (218) 822-7119

