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PRESS RELEASE

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Waitomo takes out top spot at Waikato Business Awards

Fuel company Waitomo Group has been named the supreme winner at this year's Waikato Business Awards, supported by Fosters.

The company was named the supreme winner at a sold-out gala dinner at Claudelands tonight celebrating the strength of the Waikato business community. It also won the Business Growth & Strategy Award and the Sustainability Award. It was also a finalist in the Innovation, Marketing, and People & Culture categories.

Waitomo Group began in Te Kuiti in 1947 and is 100 per cent Kiwi, family-owned and operated. Now based in Hamilton, it operates more than 95 fuel stops stretching from Paihia to Invercargill.

Judges said Waitomo Group is a trailblazer in the fuel industry, disrupting the market with bold strategies and groundbreaking innovation.

“Their visionary leadership team drives explosive growth through smart investments, while their game-changing app has turned refuelling into a rewarding experience for over 235,000 loyal customers.

“Beyond innovation, Waitomo’s deep-rooted values shine through their people-first culture, offering unique staff incentives, learning opportunities, and a true family feel. On the sustainability front, Waitomo is leading the charge toward a greener future, pioneering initiatives like New Zealand’s first nationwide hydrogen refuelling network. With a passion for progress and an unstoppable drive, Waitomo Group is poised to shape the future of New Zealand’s fuel industry and beyond.”

Head judge Dr Heather Connolly said there were a record number of entries this year – 88, up from 76 last year.

“That’s a great illustration of just how much value entrants get from being part of the judging process.

“The calibre of entrants was excellent and it’s always encouraging to see businesses enter for the first time.”

This year’s sold-out gala dinner was moved to a larger space and was the biggest Business Awards dinner yet.

“We were at capacity in the space we previously held the event at Claudelands so this year we were thrilled to be holding it in the Globox Arena where we hosted more than 740 people,” Chamber events and marketing manager Rebecca Aston said.

Chamber CEO Don Good said it was heartening to see a raft of SMEs in this year’s line-up of finalists and taking out category awards.

“The increased number of entries and the impressive diversity of participants demonstrates the flourishing entrepreneurial spirit within our region.”

Engineering and manufacturing firm Longveld’s Pam Roa was named CEO of the Year while Sentinel Homes’ head of delivery Ashley Mason was named Emerging Leader of the Year.

Good said it was clear to see that the region is thriving.

“Business has been doing it tough recently but it’s heartening to see just how resilient Waikato businesses are. The Waikato is an economic powerhouse and our contribution across a diverse range of sectors is contributing to New Zealand Inc’s wider economy.”

A full list of the award winners are as follows:

Business Growth & Strategy Award (sponsored by Deloitte): **Waitomo Group**

CEO of the Year Award (sponsored by The University of Waikato): **Pam Roa, Longveld**

Community Contribution Award (sponsored by Montana Foods & Events): **Hamilton Multicultural Services Trust**

Emerging Leader of the Year Award (sponsored by 2degrees): **Ashley Mason, Sentinel Homes**

For Purpose Award (sponsored by Trust Waikato): **Wild Bamboo**

Innovation Award (sponsored by Company-X): **Waikato Milking Systems**

Marketing Award (sponsored by Kiwibank): **Gallagher Animal Management**

Small Business of the Year Award (sponsored by Sleepyhead): **Brainchild**

People & Culture Award (sponsored by Hamilton Airport): **Longveld**

Service Excellence Award (sponsored by Union Square): **Whites Powersports**

Sustainability (sponsored by Wintec): **Waitomo Group**

Supreme winner (sponsored by Fosters): **Waitomo Group**

Ends

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