

2019 Downtown Impact Award Winners announced

2019 North Dakota Downtown Impact Awards

Downtown Event: Best of the West Ribfest (Watford City)

Downtown Atmosphere: Helping Hettinger Day (Hettinger)

Downtown Champion: Debbie Richter (Williston)

Downtown Leadership: Kate Herzog (Bismarck)



The North Dakota Downtown Conference recognized its inaugural Downtown Impact Award winners during its Awards Luncheon on Thursday August 29, 2019 in Williston. The awards recognized organizations and individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the downtown districts in their communities.

The awards were presented to individuals and organizations in four categories: Downtown Event, Downtown Atmosphere, Downtown Champion and Downtown Leadership. The Downtown Event and Atmosphere awards were divided into two categories based on population; over 10,000 and under 10,000. No awards were given in the over 10,000 categories this year.

The winner of the Downtown Event award was the Best of the West Ribfest in Watford City. The award recognizes successful events that occur in downtown districts. The Best of the West Ribfest has been going for nearly two decades. The event has

attracted up to 10,000 people each year for food vendors, live entertainment and the rib competition.

The winner of the Downtown Atmosphere award was Helping Hettinger Day. The award honors a project that has improved the ambiance and quality of life in a downtown district. Helping Hettinger Day attracted more than 100 volunteers who built sidewalk benches, painted crosswalks, picked up trash and much more.

The winner of the Downtown Champion Award was Debbie Richter of Williston. The award recognizes a volunteer who is a valuable resource to their downtown district. Richter was honored for helping found the Williston Dntowners Association and its signature events like Summer Nights on Main and Crazy Days as well as playing an essential role in the group's marketing.

The winner of the Downtown Leadership award was Kate Herzog of Bismarck. The award honors an individual in a leadership role that has made a positive impact on their downtown district. Herzog is the Chief Operating Officer of the Bismarck Dntowners Association and President of the Downtown Bismarck Community Foundation. She spearheaded the effort to create North Dakota Dntowns and hosted the first five North Dakota Downtown Conferences.

The award winners were honored during the Awards Luncheon at the North Dakota Downtown Conference in Williston. Nearly 100 people from across North Dakota attended the conference. Attendees heard from four keynote speakers, attended two breakout sessions, networked at dining and social events and toured Downtown Williston.