

# Hamden Regional Chamber of Commerce Chamber Choice Awards Nomination Criteria

The 2026 Chamber Choice Awards will be held on **November 12** at Cascade in Hamden. For 29 years, the Hamden Regional Chamber has celebrated the achievements of outstanding businesses, leaders, and community members who make a lasting impact on the Hamden Region. Chamber Members are invited to nominate individuals and/or businesses for the award categories listed below.

**The deadline for nominations is Friday, September 4**

Please review the selection criteria and nominate an exceptional business or individual deserving of recognition. **Please note: Educator and Business Student of the Year are selected by the Hamden Board of Education.**

**General Criteria:** All nominees (with the exception of Community Leader Award) must be active Chamber Members for at least one year and demonstrate excellence in their field, leadership within the business community, and a commitment to strengthening the Hamden Region.

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## *Business of the Year*

- ☆ In business at least 5 years
- ☆ Demonstrates sustained growth, innovation and business excellence.
- ☆ Develops strong community partnerships and encourages volunteerism among its employees.
- ☆ Invests in employees and workplace culture.
- ☆ Over 15 employees.

## *Women-Owned Business of the Year*

- ☆ In business at least 2 years.
- ☆ Community involvement.
- ☆ Demonstrates business excellence and leadership.
- ☆ Committed to mentoring, workforce development or advancing women in business.
- ☆ Nominees must be at least 51% women-owned.

## *Business and/or Community Advocate*

- ☆ Has enhanced the Hamden Region through resources, support, guidance, and/or advocacy.
- ☆ Demonstrates leadership in promoting and fostering a strong business community.
- ☆ Builds meaningful partnerships and collaborations that create a positive and lasting impact on the Hamden region.
- ☆ Is recognized as a trusted and respected community leader.
- ☆ Demonstrates a sustained commitment to improving the quality of life and economic vitality of the region.

## *Chamber Excellence & Leadership Award*

- ☆ Active Chamber Member for at least one year.
- ☆ Demonstrates exceptional leadership and volunteerism.
- ☆ Supports Chamber initiatives beyond attendance.
- ☆ Helps strengthen member engagement and Chamber growth.

## *Community Collaboration Award*

- ☆ Partnership is between two active Chamber member organizations.
- ☆ Demonstrates an exceptional collaborative effort that advances a shared goal or initiatives of the greater Hamden region.
- ☆ Demonstrates leadership, innovation and a commitment to building a stronger, more connected community.
- ☆ Serves as an outstanding example of how Chamber member partnerships can inspire collaboration and create lasting community impact.

## *Small Business of the Year*

- ☆ In business at least 3 years
- ☆ Develops strong community partnerships and encourages volunteerism to its employees.
- ☆ Innovative approach to serving customers.
- ☆ Invests in employees and workplace culture.
- ☆ Under 15 employees.

## *Community Leader Award*

- ☆ Demonstrates outstanding civic leadership.
- ☆ Has made lasting contributions to the Hamden Region.
- ☆ Inspires others through volunteerism and service
- ☆ Has devoted years of service to the community's best interest.

## *Minority-Owned Business of the Year*

- ☆ In business at least 2 years.
- ☆ Develops strong community partnerships.
- ☆ At least 51% owned from an underrepresented population.
- ☆ Demonstrates business excellence
- ☆ Community engagement
- ☆ Supports diversity and inclusion through leadership, hiring or community initiatives.

## *Non Profit of the Year*

- ☆ Established 501(c)(3)
- ☆ Demonstrates measurable community impact.
- ☆ Strong governance and organizational leadership.
- ☆ Innovative programming and partnerships..
- ☆ Dedicated to supporting philanthropic initiatives and improves the lives of those served.

## *Sustainability & Environmental Leadership Award*

- ☆ Demonstrates environmental stewardship through sustainable practices, policies or initiatives.
- ☆ Implements innovative approaches that reduce environmental impact and promote responsible business operations.
- ☆ Educates employees, customers, or the community about sustainability efforts and environmental awareness.
- ☆ Serves as a leader and example for other businesses in advancing a more sustainable Hamden region.

# 2026 Chamber Choice Awards

## Nomination Form



### Award Category: (Please select one)

- |                                                           |                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business of the Year             | <input type="checkbox"/> Small Business of the Year                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Women-Owned Business of the Year | <input type="checkbox"/> Business and/or Community Advocate              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit of the Year           | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Leader Award                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chamber Leadership Award         | <input type="checkbox"/> Minority-Owned Business of the Year             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Collaboration Award    | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainability & Environmental Leadership Award |

### Business or individual to be nominated:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominating Individual: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Using the detailed criteria on the reverse side, please explain why you feel your nominee should be selected.

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Return Form to:

Awards Committee | Hamden Regional Chamber of Commerce | 3074 Whitney Avenue, Bldg. 1, Hamden, CT 06518