NZ CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE **NorthChamber**

Aspirations for excellence

Paulette Scrooby
NorthChamber Community Engagement Manager

NorthChamber Community Engagement Manager Paulette Scrooby introduces a new series highlighting local business success stories. "Who doesn't love a home grown, local business done good story, especially these days? NorthChamber are looking forward to sharing their series of Good News - Great Business stories over the next few months as we highlight our 2021 Northland Business Excellence Awards winners and share insights into their business journey and their success. When I talk with our winners and entrants I am thrilled at how often they say the Business Awards entry and judging process has been a valuable part of their success formula. They often relate how working on their entry has validated their business, highlighted their why, and given them impetus for the way forward! These are exactly the things we want to hear because it underpins the real value of the entire Awards process, including the tough judging criteria. Our goal is to support organisations to grow their capability and build resilience and business excellence in our region. We hope those in businesses get value from hearing these local stories and are inspired to also give the Awards a go. A series of free Business Awards Coaching Clinics kicks off on April 28th 2022. You can also meet some of the winners at our upcoming events in April and May including our Northland Business Excellence Awards 2022 Launch and special Business After 5 Celebrating local supporters and stakeholders." www.northchamber.co.nz

Good News – Great Business

Giving everything a try – Developers Institute

Being voted Best Emerging Business in Northland sure took the team at the Developers Institute by surprise when the winners of the 2021 NorthChamber Northland Business Excellence Awards were announced.

Head of Marketing Isabelle Bierwirth says the win was a surprise given there are so many outstanding and growing businesses in Northland.

"It feels good to be recognised by the business community in Whangarei for the work the team is doing at the Developers Institute," says Izzy.

"The best part of the achievement is that the team at DI are recognised for the years of hard work to build the company and help the learners to achieve their goals to become successful Software Developers. We are always very focussed on the problems we are trying to solve, I think it's good to take a step back and have others objectively look at us and give us feedback," says CEO George Norris.

The judges were impressed with the Developers Institute for breaking new ground and in a short time, establishing broad and highly functional business relationships and connections throughout the region and beyond.

"Clearly the foundations have been completely laid for a very successful enterprise in the coming year," the judging panel added.

George says it was a proud moment for his team.

"To me success is all about giving everything a try because if you think too much about it you will never be ready," he says.

"This is the first time we have entered the NorthChamber Northland Business Excellence Awards and we gave a number of categories a go including Digital, Creative and Environmental as well as the Northland Inc. Innovate Award which we won and the Wynn Fraser - Best Emerging Business category which we also ended up winning. The entry process has been so useful and the work we have done for it has been able to be used for other applications and entries with tweaks obviously, so the time and energy has not been wasted," says George.

"We were very appreciative of the judge's feedback during their visit, as well as the final feedback shared with us after receiving the awards. We are constantly looking at ways we can improve our business and our culture, so the awards process has contributed to our learning and has given the staff a significant boost in morale." Allan Gray, Managing Director of Wynn Fraser Paints and sponsor of the Emerging Business category was delighted to present the award and congratulate the DI team. "It is very encouraging to see the variety and scope of the young businesses coming through these Awards. As a strong advocate of supporting local business I believe this award is essential to recognise the energy, effort and commitment of our up and coming business leaders."

He urges other emerging businesses to challenge themselves and use the Awards as a health check on their business concept and systems - and grow their capability.

While the past couple of years have been challenging for the Developers Institute, the time has allowed the company to innovate, grow and adapt.

■ Northland Business Excellence Awards - Wynn Fraser Emerging Business category winners Ruth Green-Cole and George Norris of the Developers Institute being congratulated by sponsor Allan Gray and Joan Lascuna from Wynn Fraser Paints

As to the rest of 2022, George says the company is cautious but optimistic.

"We are still facing challenges such as many other businesses and the impact of the pandemic has still not fully been dealt with," he says.

George believes it is important to continue to focus on the uniqueness of the business.

"Where we are different is that we meet the demand of the industry where there is a skill shortage, while also meeting the needs of the learners as we prepare for a remote work environment."

In her role as Head of Marketing for DI Izzy's advice to other businesses is, "it's great exposure and a fantastic opportunity for networking, taking a look at the business, getting external feedback and making the most of the connections. I would strongly encourage businesses to enter the 2022 Awards."

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