

Keen contest for Champion Canterbury business awards

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Last year's Champion Canterbury Business Awards supreme winner, small business, was Ryan Sanders of Haka Tours.

The Champion Canterbury Business Awards 2015 have attracted a record 196 entries, 21 per cent more than the last record year of 2012.

Last night 48 businesses were named finalists in the prestigious business awards that showcase the region's business talent, innovation and diversity.

The announcements were made at a special function hosted by accountancy firm PwC.

In their 13th year, the awards are run by a subsidiary of the Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce and judged by a panel of about 30 people from the business community.

Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce chief executive Peter Townsend, also chairman of Champion Canterbury Limited, said while the record number was pleasing the high quality of entries was an even better indicator of how the business community was performing at present.

Although local businesses were influenced by the \$100 million a week spend on the rebuild, the regional and local economies remained strong in their own right despite the downturn in dairy.

The entries showed many examples of businesses which had grown exponentially since the earthquakes and their success was underpinned by careful planning and strategic thinking.

They were in for the long game and looking at how they would position their businesses in five to 10 years.

Townsend said more entries in the retail and hospitality and in infrastructure and trades was also pleasing, and a sign of those sectors' strength.

Leanne Watson, a director of Champion Canterbury, said the most successful companies were adapting to changing economic conditions and the importance of collaboration and strategic alliances continued to be prevalent in this year's finalists.

Finalists in the Champion Producer/Manufacturer are Heartland Potato Chips, Pure Sports Nutrition, Solar Bright, ARANZ Medical, HydroWorks, and Oceania Dairy.

In the Champion Infrastructure category, finalists are Mr Box, Rock Control, Ultimate Broadband, Farrell Group, Central Plains Water and Connectics.

In Champion Professional Services, finalists are BVT Engineering, RedSeed, Stickmen Media, Publica, Computer Concepts, Holmes Solution and Orbit World Travel.

In Champion Tourism, finalists are Akaroa Dolphins, Canterbury Guiding Co, Snap Rentals, Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools, Orana Wildlife Park, and Welcome Aboard.

Finalists in Champion Retail and Hospitality are Bolt of Cloth, Bundle Boutique, Paint 'n' Sip Studio, Traiteur of Merivale, Addington Raceway and Events Centre, Black Betty and High Country Salmon.

Champion Global Operator finalists are Modlar, Pacific Simulators 2010, Redesign Group, ARANZ Geo, Christchurch Engine Centre and Jade Software Corporation.

Champion Charity finalists are Camp Quality Christchurch, Family Help Trust, Inspire Foundation, Canterbury Youth Development Programme, Kilmarnock Enterprises, Ronald McDonald House South Island and SPCA Canterbury.

CDC Innovation award finalists are Johnson & Couzins 2000, Fibre-gen and Solar Bright. The ACC Workplace Safety Award finalists are Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools, Kilmarnock Enterprises and Men at Work.

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