



CANADIAN • CROATIAN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

presents

BEA ²⁰²² *gala*

Friday, May 13, 2022

Award Recipients

MNP

CIBC 

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Celebrating leaders in the business community

At CIBC, our purpose is to help make our clients' and communities' ambitions a reality.

That's why we're proud to sponsor the Canadian-Croatian Chamber of Commerce's 18th Annual Business Excellence Awards Gala that recognizes leadership, innovation, and excellence.

Large Business
of the Year Award

This award will be presented to an outstanding Croatian-Canadian business with more than 25 employees.

Small Business
of the Year Award

This award will be presented to an outstanding Croatian-Canadian business with 25 employees or less.

Executive
of the Year Award

This award will be presented to a Croatian-Canadian individual exemplifying extraordinary achievement in executive management and leadership within a major corporation.

Entrepreneur
of the Year Award

This award will be presented to a Croatian-Canadian entrepreneur who has achieved business success through vision, innovation, creativity, and risk-taking.

Professional
of the Year Award

This award will be presented to a Croatian-Canadian professional out of the following fields: accounting, architecture, chiroprody, chiropractic, consulting, dentistry, denturists, education, engineering, financial planning, law, medicine, optometry, osteopathy, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry, psychology, real estate, and veterinary medicine.

Community
Achievement Award

This award will be presented to an individual whose selfless dedication, contribution or philanthropy has positively impacted the Croatian-Canadian community.

Nomination Criteria

- Leadership and entrepreneurship
- Product/service/market innovation
- Any unique business achievements
- Sales and/or employment growth and technological advancement
- Excellence in community relations/promotion
- Customer service and reliability
- High standards of employee relations



“Zlatni ketač”
by Tatjana Hutinec

The “Zlatni ketač” (The Golden Wheel) painting is inspired by the old fashion custom and craft of spinning the wool, as well as the folklore ornaments from traditional clothes, woven textiles and lace used in handcrafted folk garments in the region of Hrvatsko Zagorje and Zagreb where Tatjana was raised.

“Folklore ornaments are our ancestral messages capturing the essence of their cultural values and identity, preserving them for generations to come”, says Tatjana. “The golden wheel as a folklore ornament also represents the Sun and the cycle of life”, she reminds us of an old song from Zagorje, which always brings a smile:

“Srebrna zipka zlatni ketač,
vu njoj se zibal Jankec bez gač.
Dil dil dil dil dil dil dil”

Featured Artist **Tatjana Hutinec**



Tatjana Hutinec was born in Germany, but grew up and studied in Zagreb, Croatia.

She apprenticed with Ana Hutinec, a well-known Croatian sculptor and painter who served as a role model to Tatjana and a mentor in her work. Tatjana graduated from the School of Applied Arts (Skola Primijenjenih Umjetnosti) and after, interested in fashion illustration and textile art, studied Clothing and Textile Design, at the University of Technology.

Since 1990, displaced due to the Homeland War in Croatia, Tatjana has been living and working in Toronto.

Tatjana is a painter, sculptor and wearable art designer, and exhibits and organizes solo and group exhibitions. She engages with communities, creates and coordinates artistic initiatives, as well as works on projects for film and theatre.

Public art commissions include sculptures for Luminato at Harbourfront and paintings for the City of Toronto's Street Art program.

Tatjana's work has been featured on TV (CBC, OMNI), in newspaper editorials (Toronto Star, Vecernji list-Zagreb) and books (Contemporary Ceramics in Croatia).

For more information and to enjoy her work, please visit:
www.tatjanahutinec.com

Tatjana Hutinec | 647 465-3040 | artist@tatjanahutinec.com



As Above so Below Art Exhibit - Artist Statement

Titled "As Above So Below", this exhibition of paintings by Tatjana Hutinec is inspired by the expression which references that what goes on above - in Heaven, the mind - affects and influences what is below- the Earth. emotions, body. "I think that paintings of clouds are just what the world needs right now", says Hutinec, "My work speaks to the emotions, inviting viewers to re-examine familiar perceptions and beliefs with fresh eyes".

Hutinec observes what emerges from her exploration of the dynamics between nature, culture and ego and depicts it as water in its various forms above and below, around and within, a metaphorical expression for the need to shift perspective outside of one's microcosm and achieve deeper awareness of ourselves and how those dynamics affect us.

The artwork is displayed and available for purchase at the Gala Event on May 13, 2022, where you can also meet and talk to the artist.

A portion of the art sales will be donated to the Croatian Canadian Scholarship Fund to support the scholars and youth of the Croatian Canadian community.



Rock Star Real Estate Inc.



Tom Karadza and Nick Karadza were buying rental properties around McMaster University in Hamilton and couldn't find anyone to help them find the data they needed to make educated decisions about buying local investment property. They decided to quit their jobs in the software industry to start Rock Star Real Estate. What began as two brothers from Mississauga working out of a closet with zero clients, has turned into a team of over 60 people, working with thousands of clients, who have now purchased billions of dollars in income property all across Ontario. They have authored three books, host a growing podcast featuring local and international guests and run an educational membership program with over 1000 clients and 22 different instructor lead classes. The entire purpose of Rock Star Real Estate is to help people buy and build assets that will allow them to live life on their own terms.



CLL Metal Products Ltd.



CLL Metal Products Ltd. was established in 1994 by founder and President Tony Halovanic. CLL is a sheet metal fabrication company and is instrumental in the construction industry.

Tony Halovanic understands the importance of process and perfection in the sheet metal manufacturing environment. As a certified machinist and previously a plant manager at one of North America's leading sheet metal manufacturers, Tony brings decades of experience to every project, his staff bring precision and quality workmanship to every piece.

CLL delivers quality whatever the quantity and specialize in custom products, prototype work, as well as long run manufacturing. Providing custom sheet metal products and services to the Industrial and Construction Industries.

Tony believed in a vision 28 years ago and has executed that into a successful business with projects including the Pan Am Athletes Village; U of T Athletic Building, University of Waterloo-New Science Building, aluminum panels for Montreal Stadium and several condos in the GTA.

Born in Novigrad na Dobri, Tony is very active in the Canadian-Croatian community and is always giving back to the community in Canada and in Croatia.



CLL Metal Products Ltd.

Nick Močan



Nick is considered a leader in his field with 20 years of civil and water resources engineering experience. Since joining C.F. Crozier in 2005, Nick has been a key figure in helping to grow the company from its humble beginnings of three employees to an organization of now over 250 professionals located in four offices across Ontario.

He earned both his Bachelor and Master of Science in Engineering at the University of Guelph, with a focus on water resources management. In 2013, he was the recipient of The School of Engineering's Mid-Career Award and in 2014 delivered the keynote address at the University's Annual Symposium for graduate engineers. His business experience and expertise in water resource management has also earned him a committee seat on the Town of Milton's Economic Development Advisory Committee. He is often called upon as an expert witness for Ontario's Local Planning Appeal Tribunal and the Toronto Local Appeal Board in matters related to land development projects, more specifically stormwater and floodplain management, as well as municipal servicing.

In 2020, Nick was appointed as Crozier's president. As President, he works closely with his senior management team to advance initiatives including business development, day-to-day operations, marketing and recruitment among other key responsibilities, and continues to enhance the company's participation within the communities it serves. Among the many initiatives he and his team have established for employee growth and retention, Nick helped spearhead a program to help employees with the purchase of their first home by means of a \$20,000 allowance – an initiative that garnered a tremendous amount of press and certainly put Crozier at the forefront of engineering recruitment.

In addition to Nick's leadership at Crozier, he is currently leading research projects with some of Canada's top universities including Wilfrid Laurier University and Western University to improve the future of stormwater management. The partnership with Wilfrid Laurier University led to Nick's appointment as Community Fellow of the Laurier Institute for Water Science (LIWS) in 2021.

Nick takes great pride in his Croatian heritage and has been a strong supporter of the Canadian-Croatian Chamber of Commerce for many years.

John Laslavić



John Laslavić was born on January 06, 1968 in Toronto, Canada to Croatian immigrants. His mom is from the Varazdin area and his dad from Karlovac area. He grew up in Toronto and was involved in the Croatian community, playing soccer, attending Croatian school and going to Sunday picnics with his family.

He has been married to Suzi Vuksevic for 28 years, and they share three daughters: Tesa, Emma and Lea. They built a home near the Zadar area and spend every summer there.

John is a huge soccer fan and supports the Varazdin soccer club. He has been their main sponsor for the last 3.5 years, and has his company's logo, Upchain, on their jersey. He was also a sponsor of the Croatian National Team, with his company's logo appearing on the player's uniforms at several international games.

John volunteers his time advising and mentoring other start-ups in Toronto to achieve the same kind of results and success that he's had. Most recently, he's been organizing tractor-trailers to deliver food and supplies to Ukraine due to the conflict, working with his contacts here in Canada and Croatia via Podravka.

John majored in mechanical engineering and minored in computer science at Ryerson university. Throughout his 30+ years in the industry, John has helped some of the largest companies in the world, including Boeing, BMW, Fiat, GM, Husky, Pratt and Whitney, Procter and Gamble, Walt Disney Imagineering and the US Department of Defense to name a few.

Early on in his career John received multiple patents in manufacturing, injection molding, nuclear and contaminant detection industries.

Most recently, John was the founder, CEO, and chief architect of Upchain, a cloud based engineering and manufacturing collaboration software platform. He grew the company to over 140 employees with offices in Toronto and multiple offices in Croatia, with over 100 customers in all regions of the world. As of June 1, 2021, Upchain was acquired by the global firm Autodesk. His revolutionary software platform is now being used as the data and process management platform for Autodesk which has over 100 million users worldwide. John is currently a senior director at Autodesk for Cloud Strategy as well as starting new ventures in Real Estate development (Lav i Vuk Developments) and as an early stage venture capital fund and incubator (Bura Capital).

Dr. Renata Frankovich



It was the summer of 1965. A small, shy 5 ½ year old Renata arrived at Toronto's Pearson Airport with her mother and sister. They were met by her father and welcomed by a small gathering (by Croatian standards) of "close" friends and family to start their life in Canada, finally united as a family after her being apart for almost 5 years. Her father had an upstairs apartment located in Hamilton rented to him by a Croatian family. Her life in Canada began with support from many Croatian family and friends, which felt like a community within itself, anchored by Holy Cross Church.

Renata attended Bishop Ryan High School in Hamilton and academically graduated second in her class. She then went to the University of Waterloo where she graduated in 1982 with a Bachelor of Mathematics. Although Renata had a "good job" by her parents standards, working in software development, she was not fulfilled and could not see herself in that sector for her entire career. After 6 years, she decided it was time for a career change.

Dr. Frankovich graduated from Western University with a Doctor of Medicine in 1994. After medical school she completed Family Medicine training at Western, where she was the Chief Resident of her program.

She continued with further specialized training in sports medicine in the US, working with Division 1 athletes at Ball State University, and completing a Primary Care Sports Medicine Fellowship at Ball Memorial Hospital/Central Indiana Sports Medicine in Muncie, Indiana. At that time, it was one of the top ranked American fellowship training programs and the first to be accredited by The American College of Family Physicians.

Dr. Frankovich has been actively involved in the sport medicine community in a number of leadership roles. She was a board member of the Ontario Medical Association Sport Medicine Section for 13 years, serving as Chair from 2006-2007. She was also on the board of the Canadian Academy of Sport and Exercise Medicine (CASEM) for 8 years and served as President from 2012-2013. She chaired the Canadian Concussion Collaborative in 2013.

Dr. Frankovich has been the CASEM representative on the Exercise is Medicine Canada Advisory from 2012-2017.

Dr. Frankovich is involved in medical education and is an Assistant Professor at the University of Ottawa, Department of Family Medicine. She teaches medical students, residents and fellows in her office. She frequently is asked to speak on sport medicine subjects and has presented at major national and international conferences. She has published a number of research articles and contributed chapters to three text books.

Dr. Frankovich was part of the core Canadian medical team at the 2004, 2008, 2010 and 2014 Olympic Games. She was Assistant Chief Medical Officer for the 2007 Pan Am Games and the Chief Doctor for Canadian Team at the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver/Whistler. She has been to two World University Games – one as Chief Medical Officer in Korea in 2003 and one as a member of the core medical team in Beijing China in 2001. She has been Chief Medical Officer for a number of events including the 2001 Brier Men's National Curling Championship, 2006 and 2014 National Figure Skating Championships, 2006 Ontario Summer Games, and 2008 Junior National Figure Skating Championships. Dr. Frankovich has been involved with University of Ottawa Gee Gees teams since 1999.

In recognition of her contributions to her field, Dr Frankovich has been awarded the 2007 Sport Medicine Community Physician of the Year by the Canadian Academy of Sport and Exercise Medicine.

Dr Frankovich is also a small business owner. She along with her husband, whose full-time job is a pilot with Air Canada, own a multi-disciplinary sport and exercise medicine clinic in Ottawa. Her clinic is a respected clinic providing exemplary service both for patients but it is also a place for mentorship for learners at all levels from high school students to medical residents to other doctors.

Mark Vuksan



Mark Vuksan has been an active member of the Hamilton Croatian community his entire life, with the last 20 years spent serving the community tirelessly as President overseeing one of the largest transformations of a Croatian community ever. Through his vision and leadership, the club has grown from focusing exclusively on soccer to one of the strongest Croatian community centers in the diaspora. In his early days, Mark organized other committed volunteers and members of the community by coordinating fundraisers to help save the soccer club which at the time was on the verge of bankruptcy and in desperate need of repairs and resurgence of a younger generation to become engaged and help propel Hamilton Croatia into the next, very exciting, phase of its journey in Canada. Years of continued fundraising efforts helped put Hamilton Croatia on solid footing. In 2008, Mark led the

successful merger of the Hamilton Croatia Soccer Club with the Croatian Centre in Stoney Creek to form the Croatian Sports & Community Centre of Hamilton. Mark was elected the new organizations first and only president to date.

The new location for the Hamilton Croatian community sits at 166 Green Mountain Road East in Stoney Creek, and under Mark's leadership, has been transformed into a premier Croatian diaspora location which has hosted many dignitaries. The most notable of which were the Prime Minister of Canada and President of Croatia a few years ago. Today the club features a variety of sports and activities for people of all ages to enjoy. Activities range from soccer, bocce, cycling, Brazilian jui jitsu, hosting a venue for our folklore groups to practice or just a casual place to meet with friends for a drink. In addition, the facility features a large banquet hall that is rented out every weekend for weddings, stags and bridal showers that helps drive revenue and support the sustainability of the organization. The Croatian Sports & Community centre has become a destination for all Canadian Croatians and friends of the Croatian community.

Mark is always involved in projects at the Community Centre and continues to look for ways to improve the facility. From installing turf fields with new change rooms, to building a state-of-the-art bocce facility to building the largest patio in Hamilton, Mark never ceases to rest as he finds ways to improve the community. Mark is a true leader and has led this organization by example as he can always be found at the park helping with tasks ranging from cleaning up the park to the next major venture that is in store for Hamilton Croatia.

Audrey Hrkac Grubešić



Audrey (Jadranka) Hrkac Grubešić, known to many as "Teta Aud", is the paradigm of selfless dedication to her family and community. One could say it's one and the same as there are no boundaries to her generosity when it comes to both.

As a young child, Audrey watched her family contribute to the community and become involved with many Croatian organizations, the dearest to her heart being the founding of what is known to most as "Centar", and the building of a community at the Croatian Franciscan Centre and the Croatian Catholic church, Our Lady Queen of Peace, in Norval, Ontario.

Since her early days, Audrey was an active participant in folklore and the Croatian language school, as well as being an active member in her parish. She prides herself on being crowned the first Miss Norval during her teenage years. Her involvement didn't diminish as she matured but rather grew immensely.

To list all of Audrey's contributions and engagement over the years would be lengthy, however, some of the highlights include: engaging and being involved in countless demonstrations promoting awareness of Croatia and the struggle of its people before and after its independence; serving as the President of the Croatian Democratic Union Canada (Youth Corps) ("Mladež HDZ Kanada) in the early 1990s; volunteering in Croatia during the Homeland War as a member of the Foreign Press Bureau; assisting in the creation of the Croatian International Youth Corps of Canada (a kibbutz style program that brought Croatian youth from the diaspora to Croatia to work on special reconstruction projects in Croatia, which then became the Croatian Task Force and now the Eco-Heritage Task Force of the Croatian Heritage Foundation in Zagreb); assisting in spearheading the fundraising efforts for the renovation of the original hall, the pool, and most recently the basketball and "mali nogomet" complex at Norval; acting as a member of the parish council for a number of mandates as well as serving as a member of the Croatia Norval Soccer Club council for many years; engaging in fundraising activities such as the Walk for Sick Kids that raised some \$85,000; and most recently organizing a fundraising initiative to assist the family of the late Branko Prusina, a husband and father of four who was a pillar in our community and gave tirelessly of himself at Norval from the church to the park grounds and in particular to Croatia Norval Soccer Club and the many kids who passed through their soccer program.

Audrey is a proud Croatian-Canadian daughter, sister, wife, mother of three boys and friend to all.

Her generosity and contribution to the Croatian community at large have been outstanding and we look forward to Audrey's next endeavours as she continues to be an active member of our community.

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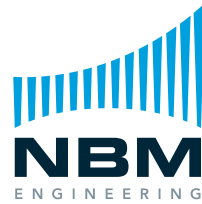
BEA 2022
gala



**Robert
Herjavec**



Stikeman Elliott



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