

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, reference, and editorial consideration.
October 10, 2024 – McMinnville, Oregon

**MCMINNVILLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCES
2024 MCMINNOVATION AWARDS WINNERS**

McMinnville, OR—October 10, 2024—Last week, the McMinnville Economic Development Partnership (MEDP) held its Annual McMinnovation Awards at The Bindery. The event honored people and businesses that have helped McMinnville grow and innovate. Special tributes were given to **Harold Washington** and **Ron Noble** for their outstanding leadership and community work.

The event started with the introduction of the **MEDP Board of Directors—John Dietz, Heather Richards, Teresa Smith, Mike Morris, and Deven Paolo**—along with staff members **Heather Hadley Blank** and **Patty Herzog**. “Since 2007, the MEDP Board has honored leaders who drive innovation and support our business community in creating jobs. Today, we continue that tradition by recognizing those making a lasting impact on our community,” Herzog said.

The **Kelly McDonald Business Leader of the Year** award went to **Harold Washington**, owner of **Washington Roofing**. Harold was recognized for his decades of leadership in business and his generous contributions to the community. His company has been a key part of McMinnville’s economy since 1986. Harold has also helped **Habitat for Humanity**, **MV Advancements**, [McMinnville Industrial Promotions](#), and other local organizations. “Harold embodies the spirit of humble service and community leadership,” said Deven Paolo, who presented the award.

Ron Noble received the **Distinguished Service for Economic Vitality** award for his role in securing [American Rescue Plan Act \(ARPA\)](#) funds to help McMinnville recover from COVID-19. His work helped local businesses through small business loans and workforce training. “Ron’s leadership has been key to strengthening McMinnville’s economy,” said Heather Richards. She also mentioned Noble’s role in supporting the [McMinnville Navigation Center](#), “His leadership in securing funding for critical initiatives, has provided invaluable resources to our community. The center, designed to offer essential services to individuals experiencing homelessness, is just one example of how Ron’s dedication is helping address both immediate needs and long-term economic challenges. His commitment to making McMinnville a more inclusive and supportive community is truly commendable.”

Other award highlights included:

- **McMinnville Maker of the Year** was awarded to [EMPWR Nutrition](#) for creating over 200 new jobs with the 85k sf expansion of their McMinnville facility and new line additions.
- **Workforce Partnership of the Year** went to [Willamette Valley Medical Center](#) for their innovative internship program.

- **Innovator of the Year** was awarded to **Jeb and Ossie Bladine** of the [News-Register](#) for their new approach to running a community newspaper.
- **Start-up of the Year** was awarded to [Phenix Solutions](#) for its groundbreaking Ultra 2XL aircraft, selection in the first cohort of the UAS – CiE, and advancing from development to commercial operations.
- The first **Launch McMinnville Award** went to **Helen Anderson**, founder of [HelloCare](#), for her rapid business growth from winner of the 2020 LAUNCH Mid-Valley Start Up Bootcamp winner to a successful senior services business with over 100 employees in the region.

The celebration of McMinnvators extended to other award recognitions including:

- [Northwest UAV \(NWUAV\)](#), a leader in engineering the future of unmanned power systems, for being one of the top eight products in Oregon Business and Industry’s 2024 “Coolest Things Made in Oregon” contest.
- [Blue Raeven Pies](#) for being named SEDCOR Small Business of the Year awarded on September 19, 2024.
- [Mac Market](#) owners Diana Riggs and Todd Severson on their 5th Anniversary. Mac Market was awarded the MEDP Start-up of the Year in 2019.

Awards for the event were designed by students from **McMinnville High School’s Fabrication and Engineering Program**, adding a local touch to the celebration. The centerpieces featured products from local businesses as part of the **McMinnville Made** initiative, showcasing items from [Alchemist Jam](#), [Blue Raeven Pie Company](#), [Free Wild She](#), [Heater Allen Brewing](#), [Pure Light Botanical Beauty](#), [Remy Wines](#), [Rising Together Wines](#), [Vadnay Chocolate](#), and [Visit McMinnville](#).

The event also included a review of [MEDP’s Annual Report](#), highlighting economic achievements like new business developments and workforce programs. The full report is available on MEDP’s website.

Herzog closed the event by saying, “We are incredibly proud of the leaders and businesses that are driving McMinnville forward. Together, we are building a stronger, more vibrant community.”

2024 MEDP [Annual Report](#)

2024 MEDP McMinnovation Awards ([Flickr Album](#))

2024 City of McMinnville [Proclamation](#): October = McMinnville MADE Manufacturing Month

About MEDP: *MEDP was created in 2006 by McMinnville Industrial Promotions, McMinnville Water & Light, the City of McMinnville, and the McMinnville Chamber of Commerce to support traded sector business and industry. We are a public/private entity supported by our [Investor Circle](#). To learn more about the McMinnville Economic Development Partnership, visit: www.McMinnvilleBusiness.com or call 503.474.6814*