

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, reference, and editorial consideration.  
October 15, 2025 – McMinnville, Oregon

**McMinnville Economic Development Partnership  
Honors Local Innovators at 2025 McMinnovation Awards**

**McMinnville, OR – October 15, 2025** – The McMinnville Economic Development Partnership (MEDP) hosted its annual *McMinnovation Awards* at Linfield University, recognizing companies and individuals whose leadership, creativity, and collaboration drive McMinnville’s economic vitality.

Since 2007, the McMinnovation Awards have celebrated excellence across industries, highlighting the people and businesses that make McMinnville a hub for innovation and entrepreneurship. This year’s event brought together over 90 community leaders, business owners, and educators to celebrate achievements that strengthen the region’s economy.

“Our community’s success is built on innovation, collaboration, and a shared commitment to McMinnville’s future,” said **Patty Herzog, Executive Director of MEDP**. “Each honoree reflects the energy and ingenuity that continue to make this an exceptional place to live and work.”

**2025 McMinnovation Award Recipients**

**McMinnville Maker of the Year:** [Precision Analytical](#)

Recognized for transforming hormone health testing through its groundbreaking DUTCH Test, Precision Analytical led by Founder and President, [Mark Newman](#), has grown from a local startup to a global bioscience leader employing more than 130 people in McMinnville.

**Innovator of the Year:** [Ether Form](#)

Led by **Chris Barnes**, Ether Form continues to advance engineering, aerospace design, and high-performance manufacturing. The company’s commitment to workforce development and research innovation is helping position McMinnville at the forefront of technology in Oregon.

**Start-up of the Year:** [Pure Light Botanical Beauty](#)

Founded by [Caitlin Grey](#), Pure Light creates natural, plant-based skincare and beauty products. In just two years, the company has become a model for sustainable, creative entrepreneurship in McMinnville.

**Workforce Partnership of the Year:** [Dr. Lauren Berg](#), [McMinnville School District](#)

Honored for her leadership in developing hands-on career pathways that connect students with real-world experience in skilled trades, hospitality, and emerging industries.

**Board of Directors Partner of the Year:** [Anja Taylor](#), [Kinesis](#)

Recognized for her leadership in strengthening McMinnville’s business community and for

spearheading the inaugural *Sprout Summit*, a collaborative effort uniting nonprofits, businesses, and government to promote innovation and a circular economy.

**Kelly McDonald Business Leader of the Year:** [Carson Benner](#), [Cellar Ridge Construction](#), Honored for his commitment to workforce development, public service, and community engagement. Benner's leadership in construction and civic initiatives reflects the values of collaboration and investment that define McMinnville's business community.

**Distinguished Service – Economic Vitality Award: Ed Gormley**

Recognized for decades of leadership and civic service, including 24 years as Mayor of McMinnville and his tenure as a McMinnville Water & Light Commissioner. Gormley's dedication has helped shape the city's growth and stability for generations.

**Special Recognitions**

MEDP also honored Board of Directors Members **Teresa Smith**, **Deven Paolo**, and staff, **Heather Hadley Blank** for their years of dedicated service and lasting contributions to McMinnville's business and workforce ecosystem.

"As MEDP approaches its 20th anniversary in 2026, we continue to build on the foundation of collaboration that makes McMinnville's economy strong," said Herzog. "The success of these honorees reflects the power of partnership and the entrepreneurial spirit that defines our community."

For more information:

[2025 MEDP Annual Report and McMinnovation Awards](#)

**About MEDP:**

The [McMinnville Economic Development Partnership](#) (MEDP) is dedicated to advancing economic vitality in McMinnville and Yamhill County by supporting businesses, fostering innovation, and driving workforce development. MEDP works with community partners to create a thriving business environment, helping to attract, retain, and expand businesses in the region.

###