



## PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Rodeo, Snowmobile Club and Arts Advocate Honored at Annual Dinner

LAKE GEORGE, NY — The Painted Pony Championship Rodeo and South Warren Snowmobile Club were each awarded the 2018 STAR Awards from the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce & CVB.

Each year the Chamber honors organizations or individuals that help grow the tourism economy, which is vital for supporting jobs and offsetting the tax burden of residents. STAR stands for "Supporting Tourism Around the Region."

The awards were given at the Chamber's Annual Dinner on Thursday, October 25, 2018 at The Boathouse Restaurant. Approximately 90 people attended the dinner, which included an annual report highlighting the Chamber's activities for the year. In the past fiscal year (2017-18), the Chamber has assisted approximately 65,700 visitors at its information centers in addition to other visitor services.

**Painted Pony Championship Rodeo**, located in Lake Luzerne, is one of the oldest weekly rodeos in the United States. Their summer rodeo season brings competitors from all over the United States and Canada to compete in our area. With covered stands, they provide a rain or shine attraction for tourists and locals alike. Shawn and Shana Graham purchased the rodeo in 2001, rebuilt the Longhorn Saloon and have been growing the business ever since as they build on its rich history.

**The South Warren Snowmobile Club (SWSC)** was formed in 1997 when Warren County turned over the duties of maintaining the snowmobile trail system in Southern Warren County. Approximately 25 volunteers help maintain the trails by brushing, repairing bridges, fixing washouts, installing signage, and grooming the almost 100 miles of trails that connect Lake George, Lake Luzerne, Queensbury, and Washington County together. The SWSC has a fleet of full-size trail groomers and the groomer operators spend about 6 hours every night flattening the bumps to provide snowmobilers an incredible and safe riding experience. The club has approximately 700 members and 60% of them are from out of town from as far away as NJ, CT, Mass, PA, and Long Island, NY. They groom directly to some area businesses, which include Best Western, Holiday Inn, Hampton Inn, Wingate, and Super 8 among others. This provides snowmobilers direct access to the trail system which is a feature many riders look for when deciding where to travel. The club also has been putting up new signs this year that help people from out of town navigate the trails better.



## Sapphire Award

The Sapphire Award was established in 2017 at the Chamber's 65<sup>th</sup> Sapphire Anniversary Gala to honor a "gem" in the community.

This year **Jacquiline Touba, Ph.D.** of Glens Falls was honored with the Sapphire Award for her work in promoting and growing the cultural tourism offerings in our region. After studying and working around the world, Touba returned to the U.S. and settled in Glens Falls. She founded the International Arts and Culture Association and created the International Youth Art Exchange between American and international children. This led to the establishment of the World Awareness Children's Museum in 1995 where she remained as executive director, guiding the Museum through a capital campaign to buy and renovate a permanent location for the Museum. She retired in 2013 as Director of the World Awareness Children's Museum and immediately was asked to be the Project Scholar for the NEA project, Cultural Connections, Muslim Journeys at Crandall Public Library.

She then helped to establish the Arts District of Glens Falls working with the major arts and cultural organizations to encourage collaboration and joint marketing. In 2014, she became the president of the North Country Arts Board of Directors, and has had multiple exhibitions of her pen and ink drawings and photographs in their galleries. For the last 20 years she has also designed jewelry using semi-precious stones and silver components collected on her journeys. She now has a studio in The Shirt Factory in Glens Falls where she started a study of international dance and created four coloring books from her pen and ink drawings. The last endeavor has been to enhance her drawings doing watercolor batiks of a selection of dancers. She will have an exhibition in December at the Saratoga Visitor's Center.

The Lake George Steamboat Company and Sagamore Resort received the STAR Awards in 2017. Local veteran Denny Galloway was awarded the Sapphire Award in 2017.

## About the Chamber & CVB

The mission of Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce & CVB, Inc. is to be the leading driver of tourism to the Lake George region year-round while fostering a vibrant business community. Programs include the Adirondack Craft Beverage Trail and Lake George Chamber Women in Business. Founded in 1952, the LGRCC is a member-driven, not-for-profit 501 C (6) corporation. The Chamber, celebrating its 66th year, comprises more than 440 members in various sectors of the business community. With a regional mindset, membership spans six counties in New York. The Chamber staffs the Visitor Center on the corner of Beach Road and Canada Street in the village of Lake George and the Taste NY section of the Adirondacks Welcome Center on the Northway between Exits 17 and 18 in addition to the Chamber office that accommodates personal visitor inquiries. For updates, connect with the Chamber on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/VisitLakeGeorge/> Twitter @VisitLakeGeorge and Instagram @lakegeorgechamber.