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SPOTLIGHTING ONTARIO SMALL BUSINESS #DIFFERENCEMAKERS

Chamber Network Report Highlights Ontario Small and Medium-Sized Businesses Adapting During COVID-19

Chatham-Kent, June 22, 2020 – Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have been at the center of the economic crisis caused by COVID-19. Faced with reduced revenue, poor liquidity, disrupted supply chains, and a host of unprecedented challenges, many small businesses have used this as an opportunity to pivot their business model and grow. The Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce and Ontario Chamber of Commerce’s (OCC) latest policy brief, [*Small Business, Big Impact: How SMEs are Pivoting During COVID-19*](#), highlights a range of Ontario’s SMEs that have successfully adapted during this difficult time.

“Small businesses have significant representation in our membership and are the backbone of the Chatham-Kent economy and key to thriving communities,” says Gail Hundt, President & CEO “Ontario is home to almost 430,000 SMEs, employing 88 percent of the workforce. These small businesses create jobs, drive innovation, and generate wealth for communities in Chatham-Kent and across Ontario.

Throughout the pandemic the Ontario Chamber Network has been highlighting #DifferenceMakers, businesses who are successfully pivoting their operations and finding creative ways of supporting their communities.

“Given the important role SMEs play, it is critical for organizations like the OCC to help shine a light on how smaller firms are showing resilience, despite the odds. Equally important is ensuring that policies and programs are developed with urgency for the SMEs in sectors and regions that have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, an issue explored in depth in RBC’s latest report, *Small Business, Big Pivot*,” states Rocco Rossi, President and CEO of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce.

The OCC’s latest policy brief highlights 28 SMEs from the Chamber’s network that have adapted their operations and displayed tremendous leadership. Some quickly retooled their operations to manufacture essential products while others modified existing products or services to continue serving clients and remain resilient. Throughout the economic crisis, other SMEs featured in this brief found creative ways to support frontline workers in their communities.

“The SMEs profiled in this brief are true difference makers. Many of these companies recognized the shifting business environment and new economic trends, such as digital delivery, and took immediate steps to fill a gap, leverage technology, or develop critical partnerships during this challenging period. Together, they demonstrate the nimbleness, ingenuity, and generosity of Ontario’s SMEs,” explains report author, Catrina Kronfli, Senior Policy Analyst.

Small Business, Big Impact is the third in a series of COVID-19 [policy briefs](#) to be released in the coming months, providing insights on the impact the pandemic is having on the business community.

[Read the report.](#)

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About Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce The Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce locally represents approximately 350 businesses and is a long standing member of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce.

About Ontario Chamber of Commerce

For more than a century, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) has been the independent, non-partisan, indispensable partner of Ontario business. The OCC's mission is to support economic growth in Ontario by defending business priorities at Queen's Park on behalf of its network's diverse 60,000 members.

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