Saranac Lake, NY -- Adirondack Health and Trudeau Institute are this year’s recipients of the Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year Award. The award was presented to Sylvia Getman, President and CEO of Adirondack Health, and Dr. Atsuo Kuki, President and Director of Trudeau Institute, during a virtual event hosted by the Chamber to discuss their ongoing collaboration during the Covid-19 pandemic. Each year, the Chamber’s Board of Directors nominates a member business or organization to recognize their extraordinary achievement and positive impact to the Saranac Lake Area community.

This year, board members decided to recognize both Adirondack Health and Trudeau Institute for working together to help expand Covid-19 testing. Testing capacity was limited across the North Country due to a shortage of an important ingredient of the testing process: viral transport media. Trudeau Institute helped manufacture the necessary scarce component and Adirondack Health conducted the testing. To date, 5,200 test specimens have utilized Trudeau Institute viral transport media.

“The way these organizations interacted, solved a problem, and provided a positive impact to the Saranac Lake Area, is exactly the type of extraordinary achievement the Chamber seeks to recognize,” said Chamber President Joe Shoemaker. “Without widespread testing, our area would not have had the available data to move through the different phases of reopening. We are extremely grateful and proud of all their work.”

The recognition also highlights how the two organizations worked with each other to provide decontaminated personal protective equipment to hospital staff. As a result, 90% of face masks used at Adirondack Medical Center were sterilized by Trudeau Institute and then safely reused in patient care settings - up to 20 times. This provided an opportunity for Adirondack Health to dedicate resources where they were the most useful and provide available masks to local law enforcement and first responders.

“We (Adirondack Health and Trudeau Institute) decided that uncertain times calls for steady response,” said Dr. Atsuo Kuki. “We wanted to take immediate action to care for those on the front lines who provide us all with healthcare.”
Executive Director of the Chamber, Patrick Murphy, stressed that this recognition is bigger than just the two organizations, "This recognition goes beyond just the organization level and is meant to highlight the extraordinary efforts of the employees who are working day in and day out to keep us safe. We are proud to call them colleagues and neighbors. We are proud to have them in our community."

The virtual event included the award announcement, presentations from Adirondack Health CEO Sylvia Getman and Trudeau Institute Dr. Atsuo Kuki describing the details of their efforts, and a question and answer session regarding a number of current event topics. Interested individuals may view a recording of the presentation here.

Every year during its annual dinner, the Chamber recognizes various individuals for citizenship, business leadership, volunteerism, and entrepreneurship. Unfortunately, due to public health precautions the annual dinner was cancelled. The Chamber decided to continue with its recognitions, replacing the annual dinner with a series of virtual conversations and presentations.

**About Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce**

The Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce is the community’s leading advocate for business and economic development. Its mission is to act as a catalyst for business and community development by providing services and representation for its membership and to generate economic development through promotional and marketing strategies. The chamber provides business-building initiatives that focus on the critical priorities of the Saranac Lake community.