

Jill Zappitelli, CHRL

President of H2R Business Solutions

Nominated for KW Oktoberfest Woman Of The Year 2021

NOMINATION PACKAGE



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SALES AND MARKETING

KW Oktoberfest Woman Of The Year 2021 – Entrepreneur Category

March, 2021

Nomination

Prepared & Nominated by April-Dawn Blackwell, MBA, Associate Dean, Pathways Humber College on behalf of Jill Zappitelli, CHRL, President, H2R Business Solutions Inc.

Q1. Provide a brief personal description and/or some unique qualities of your nominee(s) in regards to why they are being nominated for Women of the Year.

Jill Zappitelli is a leader who is paving the way for other entrepreneurs to focus on their business and thrive. With her business partner, Jill took the leap to start a Human Resources (HR) company with just herself and just one employee almost 5 years ago. Today, her entrepreneurial business employs over 12 people and is the entrusted HR partner for many local businesses. Her expertise, deep entrepreneurial spirit, desire to mentor young women HR professionals, and employ women who need job flexibility for aging parents and/or young families plays a role in our Region's success and a desirable place to live and work.

Q2. How has your nominee(s) demonstrated commitment within the nominated category?

Jill is a courageous female entrepreneur. Her commitment to her profession as a Human Resource professional led to the opportunity to realize hers and so many other's aspirations for entrepreneurship. Effective Human Resources (HR) is a pillar for all businesses and organizations, of any size. Yet, so many new entrepreneurs of small to medium size companies and organizations cannot afford to employ highly skilled and experienced HR expertise full-time as they start and scale their venture. Jill had already been a practicing HR professional for over 15 years with large and small employers when she identified this business gap.

Jill instinctively knew entrepreneurs would need and benefit from expert HR help to navigate other facets of their business. She had the knowledge and expertise to offer HR solutions to organizations at various stages of their business' life cycle. Plus, what better way to understand the complexities of entrepreneurship than to become one yourself, and predicate your entrepreneurial success on other entrepreneurs' success!

Jill is thriving as a women entrepreneur. Jill started her business as many young entrepreneurs do, after consultations with friends and business owners. She was thoughtful about her young family of two growing sons with deep ties in the sports community and as a single mom. She

made the courageous leap and started her business, H2R Solutions in 2016. Her expert branding clearly signals her business focuses on Human Resources. Plus, the expert marketing she established confirms they are the go-to HR resource for everything from Hiring to Retiring. Just another exemplary business tactic fellow entrepreneurs continue to appreciate.

Jill's personal and professional understanding as an entrepreneur, commitment to other entrepreneurs/businesses and her children as well as her employees showcases her commitment to being and supporting entrepreneurs in an exemplary way for the Region's other wo(men) entrepreneurs.

Q3. List any awards, certifications, other recognition or pertinent information given to your nominee(s) that would support the nomination for Women of the Year.

During the nomination process I spoke with clients, employees, her sons and fellow professionals. Everyone wanted to be a part of Jill's nomination. Recognition in the local newspaper, Letters of Support from clients, entrepreneurs, business leaders, and partners in the community are included for consideration.

Jill's employees were quick to support. "She is always ready to support a fellow colleague, employee, acquaintance, or friend. Whether that be someone looking for a new position, changing careers, professional expertise, or just an ear to listen. She engages, motivates, inspires, and leads by example...Challenges in our day-to-day work are embraced as learning opportunities and [are] met with Jill's praise and gratitude. She helps each of us reach our goals and is also open to learning from us." H2R Team Statement.

Jill's sons are active teenage boys and commented, "Mom gets us to practice and would watch our games before all this [pandemic] happened. Mom cares." Carter Zappitelli. Being an entrepreneur is a family endeavour and Jill makes it work.

David Annable, President, MVP Sales and Marketing Inc. adds, "Our Company has worked with H2R and Jill Zappitelli for about 2 years. She helps us navigate through our ever changing HR needs. Over this time we have gotten to know and realize just how special and professional Jill is as a leader in her field. She continuously listens and helps us execute our plans and she is an absolute delight to deal with. Attentive, respectful, caring are just a few words to describe this work ethic that top entrepreneurs like her possess. I would not hesitate to recommend Jill to any other company to assist with their HR needs nor would I have any reservation in nominating her for KW Woman of the Year. Jill is a superstar."

Q4. How has the nominee(s) made an important contribution or lasting impact in the Waterloo Region community, either through volunteer work or professionally?

Giving back to the community is important to Jill. She volunteered as a Director for many years for HRPA at the local Board level and is a long standing member of the Grand Valley Chapter. She is often mentoring young HR professionals. Jill has recently joined the Board of FACS Waterloo Region.

Additionally, she co-host's an annual HR event - free to the community (over 350 attendees in 2020) related to HR and mental health awareness. As 2020's event was virtual, Jill and her co-hosts donated to Family and Children's Services (FACS) in lieu of venue costs.

"Jill is an incredible business leader in our community who brings a level of professionalism, dedication, and heart to all the projects she commits to. In asking Jill to join our board, I knew that we would have this energy to support the important work that our foundation supports. Jill's efforts have not only helped to raise awareness of our work, but she has proven herself a natural leader on our board." Amichai Tsarfati, CPA, CA, Vice Chair, FACS Foundation Board.

"Jill has understood our unique business needs for over 8 years. We have seen changes in our industry during this time and as a fellow entrepreneur, she is committed to understand how to support our employees, managers and leadership needs. She has deep expertise in her field and has expanded the range of HR services as we need them. We trust Jill and her team with our confidential HR business matters and, at Re/Max we work closely with thousands of members of the Kitchener-Waterloo Region Community, and we need a partner in our business to make sure the business we do serves the greater good of our community. Jill is that trusted HR business partner. She has proved herself invaluable and is a genuine asset." Kay Hoshonian, Broker/Manager, Re/Max Twin City Brokerage

Q5. Was the nominee's contribution through work (paid position) or volunteering (unpaid)? Explain.

Jill volunteers her time freely. In speaking with fellow entrepreneurs for the nomination, they commented they don't feel 'on the clock' with Jill. She spends countless time listening to family stories.

"I have known Jill...going back to my Blackberry days and now supporting her and her business. She is always looking for the positive, supporting the local community while raising children on her own. Despite all she has on the go, she is always willing to chip in, support, provide help and assistance to whomever might need it." Bruce Fraser, H2R Consultant and former Blackberry leader.

Q6. How does the nominee's involvement inspire those around her/them? What qualities make the nominee someone to admire?

Jill is quoted as a superstar, role model and exemplary entrepreneur, and someone people consistently want to work with and for – she attracts talent based on her employer brand in the community.

She inspires others with her leadership in areas that others admire her leadership in such as coaching her clients on Mental Health and Work-life Balance, which is a direct and indirect benefit to the community. Recently, she lead by example, all her staff were trained on Mental Health First Aid training for themselves and for client services during the Global Health Pandemic which is a very stressful time personally and professionally for many.

Additional quotes include:

“Jill is an incredibly hardworking professional! Working long hours to meet the needs of clients and being available to her employees, problem-solving difficult employee relations issues, and sharing her years of experience in HR are just some of the leadership qualities Jill exemplifies.” Ashley McKinnon, Senior HR Consultant @ H2R

“...Jill is resilient, open, welcoming, she will persevere despite the obstacles presented to her. She is entrepreneurial by nature and inspires others through her thoughts, words and actions where people can look at her and say, I want to be like her. Long story short, she provides many women a view to how things can be vs wondering if they might be.” Bruce Fraser, H2R employee

“I consider myself fortunate to have this badass leader in my life, and I’m sure I speak for all of us when I say it’s both a pleasure and an honour to work alongside Jill.” Michelle Bilodeau, Senior HR Consultant @ H2R

“Jill is an incredible businesswoman who has worked tirelessly in the Human Resources field and has always given generously of her time to her clients and her team. Jill has taught me that giving up should never be an option, to take challenges and learn from them, and to understand that failure is necessary to see success.” Amy Balatoni, HR Consultant @ H2R

Jill is someone admired for her acumen in HR and business, her employees are happy, well qualified professionals businesses can trust. Her business is built on referrals. She is known for professionalism and care that ensures the job gets done, and done well. Clients, fellow entrepreneurs attribute portions of their success to her or her team because they can stay focused on their external facing business needs.

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DRIVEN TO SUCCEED:

Meet the Zappitelli Family



IN THIS ISSUE

- HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS
- RECIPE: AUTUMN APPLE PEAR CAKE
- HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS



Best Version Media 

Cover photo by Erin Watt Photography

**Publisher
Wanted!**

See page 8



DRIVEN TO SUCCEED:

Meet the Zappitelli Family

By Harry Endrulat | Photos by Erin Watt Photography

As a teenager growing up in Kitchener, Jill Zappitelli was highly independent and driven to succeed at whatever she put her mind to. At 17, her parents decided to move to Atlanta, Georgia, but Jill had other plans.

“While I knew it would be hard to be separated from my family, I wanted to attend Conestoga College for its Business Administration Management program,” recalls Jill. “All my close friends were here too, so I made the decision to stay in Kitchener and live on my own.”

To pay for tuition, rent and living expenses, Jill had to take on a full-time job—while attending school and finding time to study.

“I wasn’t going to fail,” says Jill. “While some people may think it was a scary time, I was so focused and relished the independence.”

After three years, Jill graduated from Conestoga College with a Business Administration Management Diploma. She then completed her courses and obtained her Human Resources certificate before receiving her Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) and Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL) designations.



Photos by the Zappitelli family





Photos by the Zappitelli family



When it came time to start her career, she landed her first job in human resources at The Mutual Group/Clarica/Sunlife. After 10 years there, she moved to BlackBerry (RIM) and then a not-for-profit in Guelph. Eventually, she started doing human resources outsourcing at a local recruitment agency before coming to a life-changing decision.

"Many clients, friends and colleagues encouraged me to start my own human resources consulting business," explains Jill. "I finally had the kick in the butt that I needed. That's when I started my own HR firm in Waterloo: H2R Business Solutions. Not long after, I purchased an existing small human resources firm that had just one employee and merged the two together. Five years later, I now have a fantastic team of 12!"

Jill's success should probably come as no surprise, especially considering her hard work ethic. But she also gives credit to her wonderful employees. "They are my second family," says Jill. "I have the best team ever and am so proud of what we accomplish and the outstanding service we provide to our clients. We work primarily with local small- to medium-sized businesses that don't have an HR department but need help. We become an extension of their leadership team and handle all things HR."

While Waterloo is home to Jill's business, it's also the place where she set down roots with her family. "Initially, I was drawn to Eastbridge because it was a new developing area," notes Jill. "There were great parks and amazing trails all around RIM Park. There were so many other families and the neighbourhood was amazing. With my young family and work close by, it was the perfect fit."

As the children got older, Jill moved to a more mature neighbourhood in Eastbridge. While the new home may have turned off most buyers with its overuse of purple—including the front door, garage door, kitchen and bathrooms—Jill saw potential. "With three bedrooms and two separate living rooms, it was perfect for me and my sons, Carter and Austin," says Jill. "Paint can fix a lot and the neighbours were friendly and welcoming and the community was very family-oriented. There were summer garage sales, Halloween parties, and Summer Family Fun Days with food, bouncy castles, slides and more!"

For Carter and Austin, Eastbridge has proven a great place to grow up. Today, Carter is in grade 10 and flourishing in high school. He plays AA hockey for the Waterloo Wolves. While Carter is the quieter of the two boys, he's a great help to his mother and always takes the initiative to cut the lawn, shovel the snow and clean up around the house—usually in the wake of his younger brother Austin. More outgoing but just as family-oriented, Austin also played hockey growing up. However, he recently switched to basketball and has really taken off in his new sport.



The last member of the Zappitelli household is Rylee, a 9-year-old English bulldog-pug mix. “Rylee is our very spoiled dog—but she is the best ever!” says Jill. “She definitely is one of the family. While she will go for walks, she much prefers curling up in bed and chilling with us at home.”

While the family definitely enjoys time at home, they are also very fond of travelling. They have taken multiple vacations to Cuba, the Dominican and Atlanta, Georgia, to visit Jill’s parents. One of their favourite vacations was to Los Cabos, Mexico. It was there they went whale-watching and saw humpback whales breaching in the blue waters. They also spent a great deal of time at the beach, swimming and snorkelling.

For the Zappitelli family, the future certainly seems bright. The boys are thriving at school and in sports. Jill’s business H2R continues to receive raves from clients for its superlative service.

A self-made success, Jill is proof that hard work definitely pays off. For those of us who know her, Jill is truly an inspiration who brings out the best in everyone. And we’re fortunate to have her in our lives.



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March 9, 2021

KW Oktoberfest Women of the Year
Committee

P.A. Neena Gupta
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Dear Committee Members:

Re: Jill Zappitelli, H2R, Entrepreneur of the Year

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of support for the nomination of Jill Zappitelli in the Category of Entrepreneur of the Year. I met Jill when she was one of the excellent HR Consultants with Grand River Personnel. I was surprised when she left to become a self-employed HR consultant in late 2015. She approached the building of her company with thoughtfulness and dedication.

Jill has grown her company rapidly. She started as a self-employed professional and now owns and operates a thriving HR consulting business that handles everything from hiring to retirement (hence H2R). Her company handles some of the most complex and delicate HR issues, including allegations of harassment and bullying, the enforcement of COVID-19 protocols and difficult terminations. She has attracted some of the best HR professionals in the area to H2R, which is a testament to her leadership skills.

Jill and I have collaborated in good times and bad times. Hot Topics in HR, an extremely popular ½ day HR seminar open to anyone in the HR industry, attracts HR professionals across Southwestern Ontario. Jill's gentle persistence, organizational skills, good humour and high energy ensures that things get done. This was extremely noticeable in 2020, when Chris Perkins (co-sponsor) and I were less than enthusiastic about transferring the session to an online Zoom format. Our 2020 Hot Topics in HR attracted over 350 zoom attendees to rave reviews.

Jill and her team have a superb reputation in Waterloo-Wellington. Her team supports some of the most dynamic and fast-growing tech companies in our region. Most growth companies cannot afford a full-time HR team and Jill's company fills that important gap.

Jill is a worthy recipient of KW Oktoberfest Woman of the Year – 2021.

Warmest Regards,
Gowling WLG (Canada) LLP

Digitally signed by P.A. Neena Gupta
LSO 30224T March 3, 2021 at 10:48 pm
P.A. Neena Gupta

PANG:/png/jc



March 11, 2021

RE: K-W Oktoberfest Rogers Women of the Year Award

To Whom It May Be Of Interest:

It is my distinct honour and a very special pleasure to submit Jill Zappitelli as a nominee for this distinguished award.

Jill demonstrates class (a universal definition is attached) in the operation of her well-known company, H2R Business Solutions Inc. Jill uses tireless effort as her compass to guide and serve her client base as well as all her staff who participate with her daily. Her vast knowledge in her field of expertise is extensive. As an entrepreneur, she is forever researching and upgrading her knowledge base daily, weekly, monthly, yearly.

We were introduced some four or so years ago and had an instant connection as to how our introduction could benefit both of our corporations and also share the lighter side of life in the process. The business environment today has put us all in very likely the most demanding time we have seen in modern history, and Jill navigates this with great skill. Jill is a tireless, positive leader in practical and considerate advice to all with whom she interacts.

We have been serving our community for over 50 years and submit Jill as a candidate for this great honour and prestigious award for 2021 with our highest endorsement.

Sincerely,

Robb Brohman
Conestogo Electric Inc.

What is Class?

Class never runs scarred. It is sure-footed and confident in the knowledge that you can meet life head on and handle whatever comes along.

Jacob had it. Esau didn't. Symbolically, we can look to Jacob's wrestling match with the angel. Those who have class wrestled with their own personal angel and won a victory that marks them thereafter.

Class never makes excuses. It takes its lumps and learns from past mistakes.

Class is considerate of others. It knows that good manners are nothing more than a series of small sacrifices.

Class bespeaks an aristocracy that has nothing to do with ancestors or money. The most affluent blueblood can be totally without class while the descendant of a Welsh miner may ooze class from every pore.

Class never tries to build itself up by tearing others down. Class is already up and need not strive to look better by making others look worse.

Class can "walk with kings and keep its virtue and talk with crowds and keep the common touch." Everyone is comfortable with the person who has class because he is comfortable with himself.

If you have class you don't need much of anything else. If you don't have it, no matter what else you have, it doesn't make much difference.

March 13th, 2021

[Reply to: pamela.krauss@mrkfirm.com](mailto:pamela.krauss@mrkfirm.com)

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Oktoberfest
Women of the Year 2021

To Whom it may Concern:

**RE: JILL ZAPPITELLI
ROGERS WOMEN OF THE YEAR 2021
ENTREPRENEUR CATEGORY**

I am ecstatic to prepare this letter to support the nomination of my professional colleague and friend, Jill Zappitelli, for the KW Women of the Year Entrepreneur Award.


I met Jill when she was employed as a Human Resources Generalist in or around 2009. I was impressed with her tenacity and get it done approach to everything put in front of her. Jill embodies passion, exceptional organizational skills, resourcefulness, and strong determination to succeed. After a few years of knowing Jill I was convinced she start her own HR Consulting business in the Waterloo Region as she had the natural ability to lead and I could see a growing market for such services in our community. I was pleased when she informed me she was starting up a HR consulting business named H2R Business Solutions.

As an employment lawyer I have a deep respect for good HR Professionals; they need to have solid interpersonal and analytical skills to effectively solve difficult situations in today's workplaces. I have also appreciate that good HR practices are necessary for a modern business to thrive but many of the businesses in our community are not large enough to employ full time HR professionals. Jill's entrepreneurship in HR betters our community as it allows local small businesses to access necessary HR advice to ensure their work force thrives and difficult workplace issues are properly addressed.

I often refer my employer clients to Jill for HR audits, resolution of HR compliance issues and recruitment. My partnership, Morrison Reist Krauss LLP, has also had the pleasure of being a client of HR Business Solutions. Jill is a natural entrepreneur and I cannot think of someone I know more deserving of recognition for her success in her efforts to better equip our community's businesses for success.

Yours truly,

MORRISON REIST KRAUSS LLP

Per: 
Pamela Krauss

March 12, 2021

To the Nomination Committee re KW Woman of the Year

I have the pleasure of being one of many to nominate Jill Zappitelli as our Woman of the Year. I had the honour of first meeting Jill as a fellow Board Member with HRP. She was the first to welcome me to the Board and went out of her way to ensure I had what I needed to feel engaged and empowered. That was just the beginning. I got to observe her perseverance, her hard work and her energy to pull off events to serve the community members. She puts my work ethic to shame!

The greatest joy I have had is watching Jill grow her ever evolving, scaling HR consulting business H2R Business Solutions. She genuinely loves helping our local businesses grow. She genuinely loves offering jobs to HR consultants and empowering them. The best part? This past year! When the pandemic hit, she rallied her team, her colleagues, her partners and ensured that the KW business community had up to date COVID information to run their businesses. She became our go to person for reliable and up to date data. Her compassion and leadership was second to none.

Knowing Jill has been an honour. She inspires me and many others with her focus, perseverance and her big heart. I can think of no one better to win Woman of the year 2021 than Jill Zappitelli.

JLauer

Jackie Lauer
President
Jackie Lauer, Consulting and Coaching



March 12th, 2021

KW Oktoberfest Women of the Year

REGARDING: JILL ZAPPITELLI
ENTREPRENEUR NOMINATION

Hello,

Being an extra-independent woman (aka single mother) of two boys who are now young teenagers, it's admirable how Jill took the huge risk to start a human resources (HR) business five years ago. She could have stayed in the secure and safe corporate world, but instead she ventured out to bring more to her vocation.

Today that HR business is thriving through her dedication, business knowledge and respect in the community. In addition to family and business responsibilities Jill always makes time for friends to feel cared for and probably not enough time for herself.

Jill works tirelessly to ensure her clients concerns are met. Wearing all hats to manage her business and people in her life.

With an HR business, the clients' needs are often emotional and time sensitive. Jill strives to support and advise during tenuous situations to provide her clients with peace of mind. I often hear from clients how they are heard and helped by Jill and her team.

Jill has been able to guide her team and her clients to assist many small and medium size local businesses, in areas they would otherwise spend needless time and resources on their own, being confused and misguided. This helps our business owners in being as effective and informed as possible. Our local entrepreneurs need the ability to spend time on their businesses while knowing their key component, the people in their businesses, are well cared for and supported.

During the past year, the fear factor and unknown of COVID-19 had a huge impact on everyone and everyone's work environment. Jill quickly led and adapted her team to bring current and vital information on how businesses and people could and needed to work. The intensity of change and support required was unprecedented. Research, understanding and communication had never been so critical, to bring stability in such uncertain times. Mental health understanding and support has also been a key piece to the work Jill has brought forward to so many. Having mental health speakers included in her business Zoom meetings for

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owners and their staff has provided understanding and compassion during a time everyone was and is dealing with differently.

It's difficult to put into words how Jill impacts and inspires those she works with. Some things have to be experienced to be fully understood. She respects and admires her team and clients. She is intrigued and compassionate to the situations people are going through in their workplace. That respect flows through to client's and their employees as she always listens with a caring ear and speaks with honesty and fairness. Jill cares by carrying many people's concerns and dealing with them in a professional and respectful way.

Having been a close friend of Jill's for the past fifteen years and her business partner for the last five years I can fully understand why Jill has been nominated for KW Oktoberfest Women Entrepreneur of the Year.

When we started our business, I shared with Jill:

1) I believe in what our business is doing.

and

2) I believe in Jill.

After 5 years I'm happy to share that both are still true and then some...

As a business owner and client of H2R, I can say firsthand that there is a critical need in our community for the service Jill is providing. However, not just anyone would have been able to make a successful business of it. She is a true entrepreneur.

Thank you for taking the time to acknowledge the special people in our lives and community ☺

Warm Regards,

Melanie Shantz
Broker of Record

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Good morning April-Dawn,

Please see my comments regarding my support for Jill below:

'Jill Zappitelli is an incredible business leader in our community who brings a level of professionalism, dedication, and heart to all the projects she commits to. In asking Jill to join our board, I knew that we would have this energy to support the important work that our foundation supports. Jill's efforts have not only helped to raise awareness of our work, but she has proven herself a natural leader on our board.'

Amichai Tsarfati, Vice Chair FACS Foundation Board

Amichai Tsarfati, CPA,CA



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Nomination for KW Oktoberfest Woman of the Year 2021

Our company has worked with H2R and more specifically Jill Zapateli for about 2 years now as she helps us navigate through our ever changing HR needs.

Over this time we have gotten to know and realize just how special and professional Jill is as a leader in her field. She continuously listens and helps us execute our plans and she is an absolute delight to deal with. Attentive, respectful, caring are just a few words to describe this work ethic that top entrepreneurs like her possess.

I would not hesitate to recommend Jill to any other company to assist with their HR needs nor would I have any reservation in nominating her for KW Oktobefest Woman of the Year.

Jill is a superstar.

Sincerely
David Annable
President
MVP Sales and Marketing Inc.



March 11th, 2021

Dear: To Whom It May Concern,

I am truly pleased to support the nomination of Jill Zappitelli for the K-W Oktoberfest Rogers Women of the Year Award.

As an established and successful entrepreneur in the Region for over 25 years, I have worked with many businesses and entrepreneurs. I know first-hand the skills, challenges and opportunities entrepreneurship brings, and how rewarding it can be, for those who make it. And, Jill's entrepreneurial venture is thriving. She has grown from a one woman enterprise to a team of over 10 Human Resource professionals. This type of success can be rare, especially in a time of constant and unprecedented change.

Entrepreneurs must possess a unique combination of expertise in their chosen business, a drive and passion to succeed and most importantly a deep commitment to their community and clients. Jill and I have worked together professionally for many years, and more recently in a shared partnership between Grand River Personnel, Gowling WLG and H2R Business Solutions to provide an annual complementary HR Hot Topics event for the local business community. It is through this collaborative initiative that Jill offers her time, energy and insights to give back to members of our professional community. We have a shared belief that supporting our business, not-for-profits and community through various Human Resources services, we will have a stronger, and more resilient economy.

Jill exemplifies a commitment to others success, her team and clients. It is with admiration that I support her nomination for the esteemed K-W Oktoberfest Rogers Women of the Year 2021.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Perkins", with a large, loopy flourish extending from the end.

Chris Perkins C.P.C
President
Grand River Personnel Limited