



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release**

#### **Sarah Bennetto O'Brien from The Handpie Company named Winner of PEIBWA's 2022 Sensational Summer PitchFest**

**Thursday, July 27, 2022 - Charlottetown, PE** --- The **PEI Business Women's Association (PEIBWA)** is pleased to announce that Sarah Bennetto O'Brien, owner of The Handpie Company located in Albany, PEI is the winner of the 2022 Sensational Summer PitchFest Competition launched in May. This program – the first of its kind in PEI – was a competitive pitch competition for women entrepreneurs from across PEI seeking to grow and expand their operations.

Judges – Cathy Bennett, Founding Manager & Partner, Sandpiper Ventures; Martie Murphy, Co-Owner, D.P. Murphy; Cathy Rose, Owner-Operator, Rose Dental Lab/Seaspray PEI Vacation Rentals & PEI Business Advisory Services; and Margaret Magner, CEO, PEIBWA - determined that O'Brien's project had the most potential for success and would benefit from the \$15,000 cash prize. The Handpie Company is in the process of scaling up its operations and capacity with an ambitious expansion of facility space from 2,400 to 11,000 square feet this fall.

PEIBWA CEO, Margaret Magner was impressed by the quality of all the competition applicants. "The 15 original applicants have been connected with PEIBWA in so many ways: as PEIBWA members; graduates of our accelerator and incubator cohorts; participants in our training sessions and networking events; and recipients of past funding. It was a difficult choice to identify the six finalists, and even more challenging to select the winner. PEIBWA is proud to have participated in empowering them all and supporting the development of their businesses."

The six finalists are located across the Island: Simonne Cormier, Au Naturel Solutions Inc., Eastern Kings; Josee Gallant-Gordon, Elm Grove Centre, Elmsdale; Sarah Bennetto O'Brien, The Handpie Company, Albany; Debbie Brady, Oyster Art, Tyne Valley; Sol Paddle Tavern, Jenna Shinn & Neally Currie, Charlottetown; and Rachael Sonola, Sonola Sweets, Charlottetown.

The pitch competition event was held in Charlottetown at the Beaconsfield's Carriage House on Wednesday, July 27<sup>th</sup>. All six finalists had the chance to pitch their business and ideas, followed by a garden reception where the winner of PEIBWA's Sensational Summer PitchFest 2022 was announced.

Funding for PEIBWA's Sensational Summer PitchFest 2022 was provided by the Interministerial Women's Secretariat, as well as the Atlantic Canadian Women in Growth Project through ACOA. For more information about **PEIBWA's Sensational Summer PitchFest 2022**, visit [www.peibwa.org](http://www.peibwa.org) or check us out on social media at @PEIBWA.

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**About PEIBWA**

The PEI Business Women's Association (PEIBWA) is a member-based not-for-profit organization with a mandate to educate, empower and inspire PEI women to succeed in their business endeavours. Incorporated in 1993, it is the only women's business association with an Island-wide mandate in the province and has a membership of 600 women entrepreneurs and business professionals. PEIBWA provides advisory services, training, opportunities for development, and connections with other women in business. [www.peibwa.org](http://www.peibwa.org)