

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Kelly Arnott, VR Pro - 2016 Tourism Ambassador Award winner

BURLINGTON, April 10, 2017 - The winner of this year's Tourism Ambassador Award was announced by [Tourism Burlington](http://www.tourismburlington.com) at last Thursday night's Burlington Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards Gala.

Tourism Burlington is proud to announce that the winner of the 2016 Tourism Ambassador Award is Kelly Arnott of VR Pro. This award recognizes an individual, organization or business that has made an outstanding contribution over a sustained period of time to the promotion of Burlington as a tourism destination.

Kelly Arnott has worked tirelessly to promote Burlington and have it recognized as a "running community". Her running events draw large numbers of out of town visitors who stay and play while in Burlington. Since 1994, Kelly has hosted over a dozen events a year, bringing thousands of visitors into the city.

In just one year (2015-16) the 8 races hosted in Burlington by VR Pro had over 9,700 registered runners and of those 83% were from out of town. These stats are reflective of previous attendance, which shows the impact of these events on tourism in Burlington and the economic impact it brings to the city.

VR Pro's pride and joy, the Chilly Half Marathon, is the first long distance race of the spring running season, and a staple race for Ontarian runners. The event brings in over \$1million dollars to Burlington every year, partnering with over a dozen local businesses. Celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2016, the Chilly Half pulled record numbers, drawing 3,500 participants, including destination runners from northern Ontario, Quebec, and even some northern states.

On top of this, Kelly's events have also had profound charitable implications, bettering the lives of the disadvantaged of our community. Since VR Pro's formation, Kelly and co-founder Mark have raised over \$3,000,000 in donations. These funds enrich our community and forever change the lives of the recipients.

The Tourism Burlington Awards are sponsored by Burlington Hotel Association. Tourism Burlington is the destination management organization for Burlington and operates a Visitor Centre that is open 7 days a week at 414 Locust Street just minutes from our beautiful waterfront. Contact www.tourismburlington.com for more information or call 905-634-5594.

For more information, contact:

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