

**FOR RELEASE:
Monday, June 22nd 2020**

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New LGBTQ+ Organization Launching in Kitchener-Waterloo

Kitchener, Ontario - Pride Certified is a new organization that will serve Ontario in providing education and identification of businesses who are committed to providing LGBTQ+ safe services. Through our educational Pride Certification program, businesses will learn how to create a standard of inclusivity in both their services and with their internal teams. Businesses who are committed to creating inclusive and safe spaces will have an opportunity to showcase their commitment to equality through the Pride Certified identification.

Founded by local LGBTQ+ members.

Pride Certified was founded by LGBTQ+ member Dani Bazely and her partner Ella Matteucci, when they acknowledged a need to create more accessible services for the LGBTQ+ community.

“While many organizations have been dedicated to creating diverse and inclusive practices, there was no way for LGBTQ+ people to know who those businesses are. Plus, it is important to set a standard to ensure everyone stays informed and we can continue to create more businesses that excel in serving the LGBTQ+ community. Whether you are a realtor, a restaurant or a car dealership, serving your customers in an equal and non-discriminatory way is pertinent to creating a more inclusive community.”

Dani states. The need for an organization like this has been a long time coming and will help this entire province elevate their level of equality.

The brand will be launched at 8:00am on Monday, June 22nd, in the midst of Pride Month.

Dani says, “We were hoping to launch earlier, but COVID-19 has had other plans. Being a volunteer organization, we have had to move at the pace of available time that we can, and COVID-19 made the last three months really challenging for everyone.” Pride Certified is now accepting applications and preparing to onboard businesses. While this is a very difficult time for society and businesses, it has never been more critical for businesses to have adequate programming in place to ensure they are providing an environment where diversity will thrive. The time is now more critical than ever for companies to ensure diversity education is in place. This is a very difficult time for society and businesses, but it is also a pivotal time to be investing into diversity programs.

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We are looking for volunteers and board members to join our team!

We are currently looking for incredible volunteers and potential board members to join our team. We are hoping to bring on individuals who are passionate about creating equality in our community and want to help grow Pride Certified. We are also now accepting applications for businesses who want to become Pride Certified. We are opening up for “Founding Members” who will be the first 50 businesses to join Pride Certified and show the initial dedication and onboarding to a more inclusive community and business services.

Mission: To lead and develop a standard of inclusivity, diversity and equality that businesses need to maintain to be a Pride Certified business. To educate businesses and services on how to have diverse and inclusive business practices and foster a culture centered around sexual orientation equality and gender equality for their employees and their customers. To create an identifiable way to locate businesses that are committed to providing inclusive LGBTQ+ services for the community.

Vision: To identify businesses that are committed to educating themselves on creating inclusive and diverse spaces for the LGBTQ+ community.



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