

*For immediate release*

## **It's time to shine for three local businesses that won this year's FirstOntario Niagara 1Awards competition**

*Winners claimed \$100,000 in cash and professional in-kind services*

**Niagara Region ON, June 20, 2019**– Clowes & Co, Moyaa Shea Products and Pippa and Peach walked away winners at the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Niagara 1Awards on Wednesday. All three shared \$80,000 in professional in-kind services and Clowes & Co and Moyaa also took home a piece of the \$20,000 cash prize to help their businesses get to the next level.

“The 1Awards is a great way for FirstOntario, as a credit union to connect with local businesses that continue to prosper in our communities,” said Lloyd Smith, Interim CEO at FirstOntario Credit Union. “There are similar competitions for start-ups out there, but there’s not as much opportunity for businesses already established and in need of support. This is where we come in with our community partners.”

This year’s winners competed in a group of eight finalists who presented their current business state and their ideas about future growth. After careful deliberation, the judges chose three winners and assigned the prizes based on the needs of the business.

A fusion of the Clowes family heritage, Clowes & Co is made up of three specialty food-based businesses in Ello Gov’na, Mason and The Grove. Moyaa Shea Products produces premium organic, Grade A, shea butter and shea products and Pippa and Peach offers up a unique clothing line inspired by the creator’s two young daughters.

In its fourth year in Niagara (eight in Hamilton), the 1Awards competition is an important way that FirstOntario encourages local business development. Since the program’s inception, FirstOntario and its 1Awards partners have invested more than \$1.3 million into Hamilton, Halton and Niagara’s small business landscape. This year’s Niagara partners include Brock University, Form & Affect, Giant Shoe Creative, KPMG, Lancaster, Brooks & Welch LLP, Niagara College and the Niagara Dailies.

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### **About FirstOntario Credit Union**

FirstOntario has been serving Members in the Golden Horseshoe, Niagara Region and Southwestern regions of Ontario since 1939. Our credit union now has over 126,000 Members and more than \$5.4 billion in assets under management. Everyone is welcome to be part of FirstOntario for financial services including daily transactions, mortgages, lines of credit, loans and investments. FirstOntario profits are invested into the communities we serve through support for entrepreneurs, competitive rates and charitable pursuits including our award winning student nutrition program. Learn more about us today at [FirstOntario.com](http://FirstOntario.com).

### **The1Awards**

The goal of the 1Awards is to help local businesses get to the next level by recognizing and rewarding ideas for growth and community-focused plans. This is the eighth annual 1Awards business competition in Hamilton and Halton. Due to its growing success, the program expanded to Niagara in a separate competition and is currently celebrating its fourth year. Established businesses must demonstrate measurable growth such as workplace expansion, innovation and economic impact in their local communities to be eligible for cash and specialized in-kind services provided by 1Awards partners.

### **Clowes & Co**

Clowes & Co is like a family tree. Its roots are made up of three companies; Ello Gov'na - Niagara's British food truck, a fusion of the Clowes family heritage and now Canadian citizenship. Mason - The restaurant at The Silversmith Brewing Company, represents a movement of collaborative business. The Grove - an independent grocery in Niagara on-the-Lake supporting local farms and Ontario processors. These three businesses, under the silent name Clowes & Co, are able to support one another growing a strong tree whose branches represent collaborative business practices, conscientious sourcing and above all being a fair and honest employer.

### **Moyaa Shea Products Limited**

Moyaa is committed to producing Premium Organic, Grade A, Shea Butter and Shea products. These all natural products help people with skin issues, from simple dryness to painful eczema. Using the framework of Fair Trade, Moyaa strives to transform the lives of people in Uganda by ending the cycle of dependency for farmers and their families. Moyaa is now in 7 Niagara retail outlets and 15 other stores across Ontario. Through the Giving Tuesday Campaign, Moyaa supports Niagara youth in crisis by partnering with RAFT. Moyaa sponsors education through their social impact program to help girls attend school. Debbie vanGrieken personally travels to Uganda to ensure the integrity of her business.

### **Pippa and Peach**

Pippa and Peach is a clothing company born out of a love of all things monochromatic and versatile. Creator and designer Bronwyn Campbell sought to create unique and transitional basics for her two daughters. The clothing line for children and women has grown to incorporate principles of wellness and sustainability in each garment sold. What started as a simple hobby, Pippa and Peach has become best known for its collection of wardrobe basics, colourable clothing and rompers that act as the new "little black dress". Pippa and Peach take the guess work out of putting together an outfit and creating a base garment that can transition from work to play, and day to night.