

- News
- Opinion/Editorial
- Arts & Entertainment Sports
- Food & Fashion
- Home & Garden
- Kids & Families
- Classifieds
- Business Directory
- TC Event Planner
- About Us



Florist wins award for accessibility

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By [Karolyn Coorsh](#)

A local florist shop has earned accolades from Toronto's business improvement associations for providing space for people in wheelchairs to browse through its 800-sq.-ft. boutique.

Bayview Blossoms, located on Yonge St. near Lawrence Ave., was one of seven small businesses in Ontario to receive the Ontario Mainstreet Accessibility Award in December.

With support from the community and social services ministry, the award recognizes outstanding efforts made by small businesses and communities in Ontario to reduce barriers for people with disabilities.



Ni No Wong, owner of Bayview Blossoms on Yonge St., one of seven small businesses to be recognized by the province for reducing barriers for people with disabilities.

Ni No Wong, owner of Bayview Blossoms, said she is honoured to receive the award but added it was always her intention to provide proper access — even if it meant displaying less product — when she opened the shop four years ago.

“A lot of flower shops jam (their floor space) with plants; you can hardly walk in there,” said Wong. “We really made the effort to make it accessible.”

Not only are the aisles wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs, walkers and strollers, but the store features a traditional dining table with floral displays that are within reach so people in wheelchairs can handle the product or peruse a floral selection guide.

Wong has worked as a florist for the past 12 years, starting the business in her home (The store is named after her Bayview Ave. and Finch Ave. East neighbourhood.)

Prior to becoming a florist she worked as a systems manager for the YMCA's children's services department.

She credits her work at the YMCA for making her more sensitive to the



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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

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needs of people with disabilities.

“I think my mind was trained to be more inclusive and more responsible,” she said.

Wong is not unfamiliar with winning awards. Her inventory of flowers, which includes a wide array of roses, lilies, snapdragons and chrysanthemums, once earned her second place in a Flower Canada Gold Cup competition.

Wong is often called upon to create arrangements for weddings, corporate parties and conventions, and says she is well known in Toronto’s floral scene. In addition to flowers, Bayview Blossoms carries an assortment of hand creams, home décor and candles.

The Ontario Mainstreet Accessibility Award is an incentive to encourage the implementation of Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act legislation.

The provincial government act was created last year to ensure all public spaces in Ontario become fully accessible in the next 20 years.

Bayview Blossoms is located at 3372 Yonge St. Call 416-481-8877.



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