

Department of Health and Human Services Honored with 2015 Community Leadership Award

Written by Darcel Walker

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The Gaston County Department of Health and Human Services has been selected by Gaston Together as the recipient of the 2015 Community Leadership Award.

“Gaston Together is proud to honor the Department of Health and Human Services for its long-standing commitment to improving community health and social services in Gaston County,” said Charlie Pearson, selection committee chairman. “It would be hard to find an individual in Gaston County who has not benefited from their services, either directly or in service to a friend or family member.”

The award will be presented at 6 p.m. March 31 at the Gaston Country Club. WBTV News anchor Maureen O’Boyle will emcee the event. The 2015 Gold Event Sponsors are Duke Energy; PSNC Energy; and Bridgestone Americas Trust Fund.

The Community Leadership Award is presented annually to an organization whose work has made a significant impact in improving the quality of life in Gaston County. It recognizes the ideals reflected in Gaston Together’s mission of collaboration and creative problem-solving. Past winners include Operation Playground, the Community Foundation Run, the Mount Holly Community Development Foundation, Gaston Family Health Services and Gaston College. Last year’s winner was Holy Angels.

Each year, the winner of the award receives a sculpture commissioned by Gaston Together. This sculpture is the “Circle of Caring,” an original piece of artwork designed by renowned artist Dr. Graham Weathers.

Gaston Together will also honor the finalist of its third-grade “Proudest Kid in Gaston County” Essay Contest, as well as announce the 2015 county-wide winner. This contest is open to all third-graders in the county in both public and private schools, and is sponsored by the Gaston County Education Foundation.

The essays are written by the students following their “Pride in Gaston” Traveling Tour field trip, which takes place in the fall of the school year. This year’s tour included visits to Holy Angels in Belmont, Discover You! in Mount Holly, the Gaston County Courthouse in Gastonia, and Gaston College in Dallas. The trip was developed by Gaston County as a community pride building program for young students. It was designed in partnership with Gaston County Schools to coincide with the third-grade study of community. The corporate sponsor of the 2104 tour was CaroMont Health. Program partners were Charlotte Paint Company, Tindol Ford Subaru, PSNC Energy, Carolina Trust Bank, Watson Insurance and Alliance Bank and Trust.

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