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RECYCLERS OF THE YEAR: MECKLENBURG COUNTY RECOGNIZES ORGANIZATIONS FOR WASTE-CUTTING PROGRAMS

Charlotte, N.C. – A wide variety of businesses and organizations, and three schools, were recognized Thursday for their efforts in recycling and waste reduction. The annual Business Recognition Awards ceremony was hosted by Mecklenburg County Solid Waste and Recycling to recognize organizations for their commitment to recycling and innovative approaches to waste disposal and waste reduction.

More than 100 companies are enrolled in the Business Recognition Program. Members must make a three-year commitment to practice waste reduction, carry out at least one recycling activity and purchase at least one recycled product. The group also has 14 mentor firms that commit to recruiting new companies and to helping other businesses start new programs. Information about the Business Recognition Program is available at www.wipeoutwaste.com or by calling 704-336-3777.

Sharon Towers: Debut Award
Sharon Towers, The Presbyterian Home at Charlotte Inc., is a nonprofit continuing care retirement community. Accommodations range from independent living studio apartments, terrace apartments and cottages to assisted living and health care. About 350 residents live at Sharon Towers, supported by a staff of 157 full-time and 40 part-time employees.

In 2007, a group of residents and team members convened to explore environmental awareness and stewardship. This led to the creation of the “Green Group,” a committee made up of interested residents and team members from departments such as housekeeping, dining, nursing, and facilities services.

Charlotte Convention Center: Most Integrated Program Award
The Charlotte Convention Center has been recycling cardboard and paper since the facility opened in 1995. Last year, 16.4 tons of cardboard were recycled. In 2007, glass, plastic, aluminum and steel recycling began. In 2008, 9.3 tons of commingled beverage containers were recycled, as well as 55,000 square feet of ceiling tile – in addition to all fluorescent, compact and HID lamps, ballasts and capacitors. The Convention Center is one of the few Charlotte public buildings with easy public access to recycling receptacles, and it strives to purchase recycled-content supplies and be more energy efficient.
Bank of America: Outstanding Environmental Leadership Award
Bank of America has taken a leadership role in addressing climate change by aligning business capabilities through a $20 billion, 10-year environmental initiative, which was announced in March 2007.

B of A strives to address climate change by championing sustainable business practices in four key areas: lending, investing, products and services, and operations. This initiative continues to be successful, and the bank has put more than $4 billion toward the goal as of the end of 2008.

UNCC: Outstanding Waste Reduction & Recycling Employee/Customer Education Program Award
With its 1,000-acre campus, and a student body of 24,000 and more than 3,000 faculty and staff, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte is the fourth-largest of the 16 institutions within the UNC system. The OWRR operates the program with a heavy emphasis on outreach, education and staff visibility. For the academic year 2007-2008, it had a diversion rate of 33 percent and recycled more than 800 tons of materials.

Recycling Advocate of the Year Award: Dot Munson
Dot Munson, a recycling technician in UNC-Charlotte’s Office of Waste Reduction & Recycling, received this award because of her involvement with local community recycling endeavors and her unwavering commitment and effect on the campus waste reduction and recycling program.

School Recycling Awards
Lake Wylie Elementary School
Since 2004, LWES Student Council members have been collecting the paper from the blue bins in each classroom biweekly and taking it to a paper/cardboard Dumpster. In 2006, the LWES Green Team began in Ms. Estabrooks’ third-grade classroom. At that time, Green Team members started to collect cans and bottles from each classroom, and Ms. Estabrooks transported the bags of recyclables to a Mecklenburg County Drop-off Center. In 2007, the school joined the official pilot project for recycling cans and bottles, and has been active in the program ever since. Along with this program expansion, the Green Team grew to 90 active members to include third, fourth and fifth grades.

Providence High School
Providence High School has been actively promoting and recycling paper and cardboard for more than six years, thanks to the leadership of the Occupational Course of Study students. The OCS students are responsible for emptying each classroom bin twice weekly, and the whole school participates by recycling all paper products. The recycling program helps the OCS students earn hours toward their diplomas.

The Jay M. Robinson Middle School Recycling Program
The Jay M. Robinson Middle School recycling program has been in place for four years and is run primarily by the Autism Education program. The students ensure that every classroom and office area has a recycling bin. On “recycling days,” announcements are made on television to remind all teachers to place their receptacles outside of their classrooms for pickup.

Construction/Demolition Awards

Green Commercial Construction Project Award
*Environmental Services Facility: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities/Gantt Huberman Architects*
The Environmental Services Facility was designed to consolidate four separate laboratories and environmental management office into one environmentally friendly facility. It has earned Gold LEED certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.

Green Demolition Project Award
*UNCC Site Cleanup*
A two-acre site in Mecklenburg County became an outdoor storage space for three trailers, storage pods, an oil tank, furniture, old transformers, lumber and other items. The UNCC team reclaimed the space and recycled or reused 90 percent of the waste materials.

Green Renovation Project Award
*Myers & Chapman*
Myers & Chapman created a new office space from green, sustainable materials and energy-efficient systems. It realized a 40 percent savings in utility costs and cut their water use in half. It reused most of the furniture from the old office and diverted 85 percent (about 35 tons) of construction waste to be recycled.

Keeping or Making a Building Green: Operations and Maintenance Award
*Bissell Property Services’ Irby Building*
The Irby Building is at a 535-acre master-planned Charlotte office community with more than 3 million square feet of Class A office space, and was designed, engineered and constructed according to LEED Core and Shell certification standards. It is currently registered for LEED Gold certification.

Enabling Green Practices Infrastructure Award
*The Linda Construction Company*
The Linda Construction Company actively participates in and promotes sustainable building practices and has long been a leader in the recycling and reuse of demolition materials. It continues to develop new markets for materials in order to expand its recycling efforts.
Leadership in Green Building Award
Cheryl Walker, FAIA, LEED AP
As a sustainable design coordinator for Gantt Huberman Architects, Cheryl Walker has advanced the firm’s values of ecological responsibility and has illustrated sustainable benefits through demonstration projects and case studies.

Keep Mecklenburg Beautiful Recognition Awards
Darlene Heater, Center City Partners
Darlene Heater’s continued commitment to KMB and involvement in environmental issues are highlighted by the success of Central Piedmont Community College’s Earth Day last month, and efforts for ongoing pilot programs for recycling at Speed Street and Taste of Charlotte.

Mark Barbee
Mark Barbee was recognized for his outstanding contributions to helping to report litterbugs in the Swat-a-Litterbug Program.

Lauren Steele, Coca Cola
Lauren Steele was recognized for his ongoing commitment and support for recycling and single-stream recycling in Mecklenburg County.

Brenda Ewadinger
Brenda Ewadinger was recognized for her commitment to the Keep Mecklenburg Beautiful board and its continuing efforts.

Also recognized:
- UNC-Charlotte's Construction/Demolition Waste Management Program, for the implementation of a construction/demolition recycling program for new campus construction projects.
- The Linda Construction Co., for its continued commitment to and expansion of its recycling program for construction/demolition waste, including an internal reuse program.
- Habitat for Humanity ReStore, for its contribution to landfill reduction of construction/demolition materials through a resale operation for building materials and an expanded deconstruction program.
- D.H. Griffin Wrecking Co., for its continued commitment and leadership in waste reduction and recycling of demolition debris.
- Mecklenburg County recognized members of its Keep Mecklenburg Beautiful Board of Directors. It also recognized members of Homeless Helping Homeless, a group of currently and formerly homeless individuals. The group decided to challenge stereotypes of homeless individuals and clean up the property of the Urban Ministry Center. Its effort expanded to Tryon Street and the surrounding area.

PLANT: Piedmont Landscape and Naturescape Training recognized Vulcan Materials Company (Clear Creek Quarry location) and Wedgewood Baptist Church for their efforts in sustainable environmental stewardship by implementing components of the PLANT program.

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