

*In appreciation for
Community Leadership
this award is presented to*

*Monroe Community Coalition,
for service to education and this community*

"It takes a village to raise a child" is much more than a saying to members of the Monroe Community Coalition formed in July 2013. As a grassroots volunteer organization with a mix of caring people and agencies, they focus on the barriers alcohol and drug abuse create to keep young people from being successful. After two years indications are already being seen that perceptions are changing. Youth are 20% more likely today than in 2012 to believe there WILL be consequences for underage alcohol use and results have doubled of those reporting their families do not condone kids drinking. Thank you Monroe Community Coalition!

Presented April 23, 2015



Community Awards Night

Chamber awards honor businesses, volunteers

By: Chris Hendrickson | May 4, 2015 | Monroe News News | 659 Views



An annual event meant to celebrate the Monroe business community and honor local philanthropists, the Monroe Chamber of Commerce Community Awards Ceremony was a night of celebration and reflection.

The event, which took place at 6 p.m. on Thursday, April 23, in the Monroe High School Performing Arts Center, recognized and honored numerous businesses and volunteers. The event was emceed by Fred Meyer Manager and Monroe Chamber of Commerce Board Member Jay Jones, who presented seven of the chamber's nine awards. Monroe Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Una Wirkebau provided highlights, presenting one award and honoring the chamber's board of directors.

The evening was commemorated by local photographer Nikki Boyer.

In addition to the nine awards presented by the chamber, numerous businesses, nonprofits and faith-based organizations participated in the event, honoring those that have made an impact.

Awards

The Community Improvement award is given to an individual or organization for making a contribution to the Monroe community. This year's award was given to Sherwin Williams (317 Butler Ave.), for donating products to use during the Carnation steam-stack beautification project last fall.

"It was our privilege to be able to have our products on it," said Branch Manager Jacob Nelson. "I just want to say thank you to everybody that's come into our stores, and we appreciate you as customers."

The Outstanding Customer Service award was given to Galaxy Theatre (1 Galaxy Way), for the theater's many contributions to the community. Throughout 2014, it hosted fundraising events for causes like the Oso landslide and Pasado's Safe Haven animal sanctuary, and helped support the Monroe Fire Department during the Big Climb for Leukemia event.

"I want to give all the credit to my employees, my staff, who work hard everyday to give all of you the best customer service experience they can," said Galaxy Theater Manager Shannon Boyovich. "I'm just really excited to take this back to them to show them how much they're appreciated by all of you."

Take the Next Step (TTNS, 202 S. Sams St.) is a faith-based nonprofit agency that serves homeless and low-

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income individuals by operating a drop-in center, life skills classes, community dinners, programs for teen moms and a cold weather shelter. Community Outreach Specialist Sarah Lunstrum presented awards to volunteers Rocky Gorham and Kiana Cooley. Cooley received the Amazing Youth award for helping to serve dinners and for raising \$2,000 for the cold weather shelter.

Lunstrum also honored the Monroe Rotary Club for donations of both time and money.

"The Rotary has been amazing and gracious to us for years," Lunstrum said. "You guys have really done a lot for us."

Jones presented the chamber's Community Caring Award, which went to Monroe School District Superintendent Ken Hoover and his wife, Kim.

"We hope the Hoovers will understand that this is a complete understatement, and we can never present enough of our appreciation for how you took this community in almost a decade ago," Jones said. "From the Lion's Club to the Rotary, the Monroe Arts Council and the Chamber, it would take this entire ceremony to recognize all your efforts."

The Monroe Rotary Club presented Paul Harris Fellow recognition awards to Hoover and Everett Community College East County Campus Director Rob Prosch. Rotary Club President Greg Starup presented the award, which is given to members for making a substantial contribution.

The Monroe School District recognized the Monroe Community Coalition for its efforts in substance-use prevention. The coalition is a grassroots, nonprofit volunteer organization dedicated to improving the health and wellness of the Monroe community by reducing underage drinking and substance use.

The chamber presented Fred Meyer with the Business Excellence award, which is given to a local business for promoting community enhancement through volunteerism and service work. In addition to the special needs pumpkin patch that was coordinated last October, Fred Meyer employees volunteered at numerous events, including the Easter egg hunt, Monroe's National Night Out and Monroe High School's Run for the Arts.

Sam Wirsching, owner of Sam's Cats and Dogs, Naturally, presented an award on behalf of the Monroe Public Schools Foundation, a nonprofit organization that works to provide grants for teachers and students. The award was given to Monroe resident Dana Brash for coordinating and facilitating the Frank Wagner Elementary School Robot Club.

"I'm really humbled," Brash said. "I had an idea to put a club together and I found some stuff online about this, and then I got a whole lot of people to help me."

Dorothy Stima from the Monroe Gospel Women's Mission recognized Cal Long, 87, and Gene Olson, 90, for their support and volunteerism at the women's mission. In its 10th year of operation, the mission provides safe shelter for homeless women in east Snohomish County.

"Every year, we have about 100 women who come through the mission, so we're coming up on having helped 1,000 women," Stima said.

The chamber awarded Citycenter Marketing Solutions CEO Dan Evans with the New Business of the Year award. Evans' company recently launched a new Monroe smartphone app, designed to provide users with up-to-the-minute information about Monroe's businesses, parks, schools, churches and events.

Carlina Morris of State Farm Insurance was presented with the Entrepreneurial Spirit award, which is given to an individual or organization that has shown initiative by providing aid to other local businesses.

Kim Hoover presented Monroe resident Eric Flickinger with an award on behalf of the Monroe Arts Council, for all his efforts to keep the Wagner Performing Arts Center running smoothly. From vacuuming to climbing up in the rafters, Kim said that Flickinger's assistance has been invaluable.

Monroe Lions Club member Ken Hoover honored two members as Lions Club Volunteers of the Year: Keith Ridel and Ken Berger. Both Ridel and Berger were recognized for extensive volunteerism, community service and contributions to the club. Berger, who was passionate about flying, died in a plane crash last year.

A member of the Monroe Lions Club for about four or five years, Berger impacted the club in a positive way, Hoover explained. Berger's wife, Debbie, also became a member, after receiving assurance that she wouldn't be the only woman in the club.

"That's why Kim is now the president," Ken said.

"Ken was just kind of a renaissance man – he was able to do everything. He was a wonderful contributor to the club; he donated lots of his time and energy and some of his business resources," he continued. "When he died suddenly, we all were shocked because he was bigger than life and it was going to be hard to fill his shoes."

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 7, 2015 6:30 pm

Republicans of the 44th Legislative District

May 7, 2015 7:00 pm

Sky Valley National Day of Prayer Service

May 8, 2015 12:00 pm

Behind the Badge Law Enforcement Medal of Honor and Memorial Ceremony

May 12, 2015 7:00 pm

Monroe City Council

MAGAZINES



The chamber gave three Volunteer of the Year awards to local citizens who help support the chamber. Accountant Deborah Larsen, IT expert Matt Stroud and Steve and Robin Martin of Mar Team Photography were all honored.

Housing Hope, a nonprofit organization dedicated to ending homelessness, honored Chef Adam Hoffman. Housing Hope Philanthropy Manager Alex Lark and East County Board President Chris Gray presented Hoffman with a ceremonial cleaver, fashioned to resemble the cleaver in the logo for his restaurant, Adam's Northwest Bistro & Brewery.

"In addition to preparing and serving wonderful food, cooked from local sources, Adam is one of the biggest givers in this community," Gray said. "The east county board is proud to honor Chef Adam Hoffman, for his concern and support for our communities most vulnerable citizens."

"I cook, it's what I know," Hoffman said. "I'm just a simple cook, but it's amazing what my art form can give back to the community."

Chamber Treasurer Meghan Manning presented the chamber's President's Award, which was given to Adrian Taylor of Ben Franklin Craft and Frame Shop. Taylor opened Ben Franklin 40 years ago this June.

"I want to say that we have been here now 40 years, enriching the lives through creativity," Taylor said. "Thank you all for supporting us."

Everett Community College East County Campus Director Rob Prosch recognized Monroe resident Shane Johnson as Student of the Year, and honored East County Campus Advisory Board Member Ken Hoover for his help and guidance.

"He knew exactly what I needed to do as a new director of a branch campus, to get involved with this community and get to know this community very quickly," Prosch said. "Everything I am today as a branch campus director, I owe to Ken Hoover."

Alexandra Clark from Sky Performing Arts recognized Lory Tossey, and East County Senior Center Program Coordinator Jacob McGee recognized Dan Blum for his exceptional volunteerism at the center.

Mayor Geoffrey Thomas and Monroe Police Chief Tim Quenzer honored Officer Jon Richardson with a Certificate of Achievement for his 30-year career with the Monroe Police Department.

"Thirty years in law enforcement is somewhat unusual, let alone 30 years with the same agency," Quenzer said. "It's a great accomplishment, congratulations."

Meghan Manning was honored as the Chamber Member of the Year.

"It has been an honor to be part of this organization, and I look forward to continuing to serve – hopefully in a little bit lesser capacity in the near future," Manning said. "But it has been wonderful and I look forward to the future progress that we get to make."

The ceremony ended with some final words by Mayor Thomas.

"This community is absolutely great," he said. "The more time I spend in city hall and outside of city hall, the more I learn things that I didn't know about our community. We have a highly intricate community with lots of community involvement – it's something that I really love about Monroe. The chamber of commerce has done a great job this year."

For more information about the Monroe Chamber of Commerce, visit choosemonroe.com.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Chris Hendrickson

Chris Hendrickson is Chief Reporter for the Monroe Monitor and Valley News.