

Governor's Honor Awards Press Release Attachment

The recipients of the 2020 Governor's Honor Awards are:

Champion of Change: Advocates, promotes, and institutes a change that aligns with the agency's vision and motivates employees towards elevating organizational performance.

Alana Tucker, Virginia Department of Social Services

Normal job expectations are to maintain and incrementally improve existing services and performance. As director of program operations in the Division of Child Support Enforcement in Richmond, Ms. Tucker's commitment to customer service, and her exceptional drive toward continuous process improvement, would not allow her to operate as though the norm was enough. For nearly a dozen of normal processes and activities within the agency, Ms. Tucker led the implementation of rapid innovations. Rather than approach the changes as temporary responses, she has been a visionary of truly transformational service delivery.

Courageous Leader: Demonstrates the courage to make bold moves that transform their workplace by improving the efficiency of state government services.

Dr. Denise Toney, Virginia Department of General Services

Under Dr. Toney's leadership as director, the Department of General Services Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services in Richmond provided extensive and far-reaching support for the Commonwealth's COVID-19 response. DCLS activities supported the in-house testing of approximately 78,000 samples, materials for the collection of an additional 800,000 samples, and distribution of over \$1 million in materials to support point-of-care COVID-19 testing for an additional 30,000 patients. Dr. Toney led efforts to distribute testing resources to high-need communities, helped launch a critical public/private partnership to enhance public health testing capabilities beyond the current pandemic, and served as a subject matter expert in various capacities.

Innovative Spirit: Demonstrates a spirit of innovation by creating something new, improving existing technology or process, or adapting a tried and true idea to a new context.

HRBT Seabird Nesting Colony Project, Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources/Virginia Department of Transportation

The achievements of this group in saving the migratory seabird colony at the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel truly corresponded perfectly with the Department of Wildlife Resources' transition to its new name, and carried out the result directed by the Governor. Relocating a colony of this size had never been attempted before, in such a short time span, and there were serious doubts it could be accomplished before the birds began returning in the spring. Yet, this group at Henrico headquarters, in partnership with the Virginia Department of Transportation, was able to complete the task on the timeframe initially established. The seabird colony was successfully relocated to Rip Raps Island and this critical nesting area was preserved. With the difficult conditions and onset of COVID-19, no one would have faulted the agency for not accomplishing this monumental task but this group made success the only option.

Administration Excellence: Positively impacts efficiencies and alignment, transforming the culture of the Commonwealth of Virginia, significantly reducing overhead costs, implementing strategic process improvement, and/or the furtherance of the Governor's plan of building a stronger Virginia and its related objectives.

Continuity of Operations-Administrative Team, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

In March of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic was reaching Virginia, and the Governor enacted Executive Orders to control the spread of the deadly virus. Although many facilities had to be quickly closed down and workers sent home to telework where possible, the Department of Conservation and Recreation that manages the Virginia State Parks and Natural Area Preserves maintained safe, non-contact outdoor recreational activities that citizens could still enjoy, and in record numbers. The administrative team in Richmond worked quickly and creatively to ensure employee and customer safety during a time of many unknowns and increased visitation. This included rapid and constant public communications and internal employee communications, procurement of PPE supplies, signage, and sanitation equipment during acute supply disruption and competition. The team also quickly deployed human resource tools for employee self-monitoring and tracking public health emergency leave, and careful risk management employee safety training and guidance.

Personal and Professional Excellence: Exceptional level of accomplishment in furthering the mission of the Commonwealth of Virginia in such program areas as scientific research, economic analysis, or any other mission-related activity of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Deborah Bundy-Carpenter, Virginia Department of Health

As a public health nurse senior manager in Staunton, Mrs. Bundy-Carpenter has worked successfully to establish multidisciplinary public health teams that protect and improve health within Virginia communities. She promotes the practice of public health by leveraging the knowledge, skills and abilities of multiple disciplines within the health department, and is able to operationalize these teams efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of the community. Through mentoring, promoting continuous education, quality improvement and teamwork, she has established an organizational structure that not only supports ongoing population health needs, but also is able to support the response to a global pandemic. The foundation that she has established for public health nursing has proved successful for the district and has served as a model to be replicated within the agency.

Support Service: Exceptional level of accomplishment in providing administrative support, whose dedication and contributions enhance administrative excellence.

Earl Taylor, Virginia Department of Health

An Office Services Specialist in Richmond, Mr. Taylor is one of the unsung heroes of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to completing his daily administrative duties, he volunteered to assist Crater Health District with COVID-19 testing in multiple locations. Mr. Taylor has demonstrated an exceptional level of service to the Crater community through his dedication to ensuring that testing sites are appropriately set up and traffic is efficiently routed through the testing stations. Mr. Taylor is the first person to arrive at testing sites three days a week and is the last person to leave the sites. He gives up his weekends to assist with Saturday clinics and performs all duties outside in blistering heat and in rainy inclement weather. Assisting with

COVID-19 testing of symptomatic individuals in areas of need can be a daunting task, but Mr. Taylor volunteers weekly to leave the comforts and isolation of his personal, air-conditioned office to ensure that Crater residents have access to sanitized, stocked testing stations and are efficiently moved through the testing site.

Diversity, Inclusion, and Outreach: Exceptional commitment to the value of diversity, inclusion, and outreach, demonstrating significant progress in the workforce demographics of an agency and enhancing access to Commonwealth of Virginia services for the communities we serve.

The Health Equity Leadership Taskforce & Health Equity Work Group, Virginia Department of Emergency Management, Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity, and Virginia Department of Health

The Equity Leadership Taskforce (ELT) and the Health Equity Work Group (HEWG) represent a new and first of its kind approach in national and Virginia history for prioritizing equity in every facet of the current emergency response effort. The ELT and the HEWG have demonstrated success in leading and enhancing diversity and inclusion efforts, actively promoting and enhancing the diversity and inclusion goals of the Commonwealth, and effecting positive change. The contributions serve to benefit the entire Commonwealth workforce, by improving access to the Commonwealth's emergency response programs for historically underserved communities amid the COVID-19 pandemic. A partnership among the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity, and Virginia Department of Health, the ELT and HEWG reflect the highest levels of outstanding work that significantly contributes to the advancement of the Commonwealth's strategic goals, mission objectives, and overall administrative excellence.

Creative Customer Service: Exceptional level of accomplishment and innovation in serving their customers in the execution of the mission of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Joe Griffitts, Virginia Tech

The innovative, creative, and outstanding customer service that Joe Griffitts, Director of Hokie Passport Services, provides to Virginia Tech and the Commonwealth is a remarkable example for us all. He does not simply meet the expectations; he consistently surpasses expectations to deliver tremendous results for Virginia Tech. He has spearheaded technological innovation and automated processes to serve students more efficiently. His out-of-the-box thinking has allowed the university to safely deliver outstanding orientation and ID card services for students despite the COVID-19 global pandemic. He actively creates positive change for inclusion, diversity, and civic engagement with his employees and those he serves. Joe thinks ahead and anticipates challenges, and he consistently overcomes them through strong leadership, a collaborative spirit, and an adaptable approach to problem-solving.

Heroism: Voluntarily risks their life in the line of duty. This category also recognizes employees who demonstrate exceptional heroism by exhibiting outstanding judgment or courage in an emergency or displaying meritorious action to prevent injury, loss of life, or preventing damage to or loss of property in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Nursing Leadership, Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, Falls Church

Nursing Leadership is demonstrated daily at Northern Virginia Mental Health Institute (NVMHI), but the COVID-19 pandemic presented more challenges than ever. Infection Control Nurse Andrea Tipton and her team of seven nurses stood out as shining stars by showing consistent leadership, optimism, teamwork and risk mitigation. They not only excelled in the execution of their roles, but they each went above and beyond to ensure the safety of all within the hospital. They volunteered to staff the employee screening stations at the beginning of each shift, were instrumental in operationalizing quarantine and isolation protocols, procured and distributed PPE, and calmed staff fears daily. NVMHI is extremely proud to have this group as part of the team.

Public Service: Making outstanding contributions by participating in or implementing community and public service projects that have made a beneficial and sustainable effect on the quality of community life for citizens in the Commonwealth.

Maryellen Suzie Gilley, Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources

Serving as the Statewide Project WILD Coordinator in Richmond, Ms. Gilley assists learners of all ages in developing awareness, knowledge and commitment resulting in responsible behavior, informed decisions, and constructive actions concerning wildlife and the environment. In addition, Virginia's Project WILD program provides educators with materials that supports Virginia's Standards of Learning. Besides her work with Project WILD, Ms. Gilley is a lifelong member and volunteer for the Girl Scouts Commonwealth Council, truly exemplifying the values and dedication of Virginia's talented state workforce. One of the greatest honors she has received was The Thomas Jefferson Medal for Outstanding Contributions to Natural Science in 2012. The award honors individuals and corporations for outstanding contributions to natural science and natural science education. Suzie has also worked with the Virginia Natural School Recognition Program, applying for schools across Virginia to be recognized for their stewardship and environmental efforts, and serves on the Education Workgroup of the Chesapeake Bay Program.

Pandemic Response: Exceptional level of accomplishment in furthering the mission of the Commonwealth of Virginia during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recover, Redesign and Restart Group, Virginia Department of Education

In the spring of 2020, Dr. James Lane, State Superintendent for Public Instruction, established the Virginia Return to Learn Taskforce to develop a comprehensive guidance document for use by division leaders to create strong reopening plans for the 2020-2021 school year amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The state and local collaboration covered every facet of school operations, finances, instruction, health and mental health, and provided divisions with practical considerations and recommendations. The RRR Initiative was a direct fulfillment of Virginia's shared mission to advance equitable and innovative learning. It reflects countless hours and the deep expertise of a wide variety of Virginia Department of Education staff who went above and beyond their typical scope of work on an expedited timeline to meet the pressing needs of local school division leaders, administrators and teachers. The initiative provides a strong foundation to support student health, wellness and academic success in the 2020-2021 school year.