

For Immediate Release

UPSTATE FOREVER NAMES ANNUAL AWARD WINNERS

November 26, 2003

Upstate Forever is pleased to announce the following winners of its Annual Awards for 2003:

Public Servant of the Year—Governor Mark Sanford.

Governor Sanford received the award for his exemplary leadership on conservation and quality of life issues this year. Shortly after his election, he appointed a "Quality of Life Task Force," a broad-based group of citizens with nearly every viewpoint represented. The Task Force issued a report that provides an inspiring blueprint for the future growth and development of South Carolina.

In his 2003 "State of the State" address, Governor Sanford was the first Governor in the history of South Carolina to use the "S word" (sprawl). He strongly praised the South Carolina Conservation Bank Act, which passed the legislature last year and will be funded this July. No doubt his words have discouraged efforts by some legislators to defer funding the program.

Governor Sanford also urged the General Assembly to rescind the minimum acreage requirement for new schools. Earlier this year he signed into a law bill that accomplishes exactly that. These and other actions by the Governor are clear examples that protecting our environment is not a partisan issue - it is vital to all South Carolinians.

***Innovator of the Year—Furman University and
Craig, Gaulden & Davis, Inc.***

This award was given jointly to Furman University and Craig, Gaulden & Davis, Inc. for their work on Herman N. Hipp Hall on the Furman campus. Hipp Hall is the first building in South Carolina to be certified under the U. S. Green Building Council's "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design" (LEED) program. LEED buildings must meet a number of design and construction criteria related to site-planning, water and energy efficiency, indoor air quality, and use of environmentally sensitive materials. While these technologies may cost more than their traditional counterparts, they more than pay for themselves through reduced energy bills. Furman reports that Hipp Hall uses about one-third less energy than a comparable building on campus that lacks the green features.

The Council assigns qualifying buildings one of four levels—basic, silver, gold and platinum—based on the number of criteria that they meet. Hipp Hall is one of only two buildings in the Southeast to receive the Gold rating.

The award was given to Furman for believing in the technology and authorizing the project and to Craig, Gaulden & Davis, Inc., an architectural firm in Greenville, for designing the building.

Volunteer of the Year—Virginia White.

Upstate Forever member Virginia White received the “Volunteer of the Year” Award for her tireless efforts on behalf of the organization. Virginia, a retired pathologist, has truly “done it all” for Upstate Forever over the last five years—from stuffing envelopes and organizing files to writing articles, hosting dinners and representing the organization at different events. Virginia is the ultimate volunteer—dedicated, reliable and always cheerful.

The awards were presented at Upstate Forever’s Annual Meeting at Walnut Grove Plantation on November 8. Upstate Forever Board Chairman Carlton Owen said, “This is one of the highlights of the Annual Meeting where we take a few moments to recognize and thank some special people for their extraordinary work. We could not have a finer group of award winners.”

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