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COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF THE NORTHEAST AND THE UNITED FAITH COALITION HOST “STARS OF THE NORTHEAST LIGHT OUR PATH”
Spring Gala Awards Banquet recognizes individual and agency “best practices” and raises funds to help kids stay in school and prepare for life



Communities In Schools of North Carolina Donya Perry, NC House Representatives Michael Wray (27th District), CISNE Program Coordinator Rosetta Smith, Gates County Cooperative Extension Shevon Riddick, CISNE Executive Director Diana Mitchell and Senator Ed Jones (4th District – NC Senate) following CISNE’s Spring Gala.

RICH SQUARE, N.C – Communities In Schools of the Northeast and the United Faith Coalition held their first annual Gala awards banquet Saturday, April 28 at Nebo Family Life Center in Murfreesboro to raise money to help keep kids in school.

Communities In Schools of the Northeast (CISNE) is a three-year old non-profit organization that works collaboratively with schools, agencies and organizations to connect community resources and affect a greater future for area youth. The organization covers 16 counties including Beaufort, Bertie, Camden,

Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrell, Warren and Washington. Developed as a result of collaboration between Communities In Schools, Roanoke Economic Development, Inc. and the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, CISNE works to ensure young people remain in school, learn needed skills and prepare for post secondary education and careers.

The event featured former educator and respected roll model Dr. Dudley E. Flood of Raleigh as the keynote speaker with Wendell Hall as acting MC and boasted appearances from Senator Ed Jones (4th District – NC Senate) and NC House Representatives Michael Wray (27th District) and Annie W. Mobley (5th District). Also joining the celebration were corporate platinum sponsors Dominion North Carolina Power and Roanoke Electric Cooperative. State and county agencies, local government and school officials and non-profit and community outreach groups were also present.

“This celebration is a wonderful opportunity to thank our partners, businesses, educators, and volunteers for all they bring to our youth and the community,” said CISNE Executive Director Diana Mitchell. “This just shows what happens when we collaborate and turn a vision into an outpouring of the community so that our students can continue to flourish.”

Incidentally, the Gala served as a dual celebration. The event correlated with the third anniversary of the United Faith Coalition, an alliance of Northampton County churches dedicated to the spiritual, educational, and well being of our families, individuals and communities.

Winners of the CISNE Gala Awards were as follows:

Organizational Awards

- **Children, Youth and Families Award** – presented to Weldon City Schools Parent Advisory Committee for its demonstrated extraordinary commitment to meeting specific, measurable needs in the lives of families and children.
- **Health & Wellness Community Outreach Award** – presented to Gates County 4-H TRY-IT Health Rocks/Obesity Prevention Team for targeting the prevention of diseases most prevalent in the region and demonstrated impact of its effort to make the community healthier.
- **Faith-based Award** – presented to the United Faith Coalition for its strategic community outreach to help improve children, youth and families.
- **Business & Industry Award of Philanthropy** – presented to The Roanoke Center for its proven record of partnering with community organizations to improve the quality of life of the community.

Individual Awards

- **Young Bright Star Award** (Ages 12-18) – presented to Shante Burke of Gates County for being proactive in addressing children, youth and family issues through advocacy and community service or CISNE counties.
- **Shining Star Award** (Ages 19-59) – presented to Curtis Newkirk of Bertie County for providing outstanding commitment to making a difference in the lives of children, youth, and families in the community and demonstrated impact of the service provided, reaching across the county.
- **Silver Star Award** (Ages 60 and up) – presented to Earlie C. Brooks of Halifax County, who has proven to provide outstanding commitment to making a difference in the lives of children, youth and families in the community and demonstrated impact of the service provided, reaching across the county.

“Our attendees have worked incredibly hard and deserve an evening of recognition and celebration,” said Mitchell. “I thank all of our youth, sponsors, volunteers, and silent auction donors for helping to make the GALA a tremendous success.”