



City of Alexandria, VA

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News Release

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Salute to Women Award Winners Announced

More than 250 people attended the Alexandria Commission for Women's 29th annual Salute to Women Awards Banquet on March 30 to honor seventeen outstanding women nominated by fellow residents for their valuable contributions to the Alexandria community. The event is held with support from the Alexandria Office on Women each year during Women's History Month.

Presiding over the banquet, Commission for Women Chair Mary Catherine Gibbs warmly welcomed all award nominees. Nine nominees were announced as award winners and recognized by Vice Mayor Redella S. "Del" Pepper, State Senator Patsy Ticer, Virginia Delegate Charniele Herring, former Virginia Delegate Marian Van Landingham, and former City Manager Vola Lawson. This year, Alexandria's Poet Laureate Mary McElveen read a poem she wrote for the occasion, honoring accomplishments and strengths of all Alexandria women. Banquet attendees were also treated to an inspirational vocal performance by Alexandria City Employee Choir Member Jacqueline Jones.

The 2009 Salute to Women Award winners are:

- Marguerite Payez Lifetime Achievement Award – *State Senator Patsy Ticer*
- Women's Health and Safety Advocate Award – *Frances Hicks*
- Youth Community Services Award – *Dr. Diane Reese*
- Leadership in Business & Career Development Award – *Marcia Call*
- Marian Van Landingham Legislation and Public Policy Award – *Karen Gautney*
- Rising Star Award – *Alicia Hughes*
- Making a Difference Award – *Alice Merrill and Linda Odell*
- Vola Lawson Award – *Audrey Davis*

For the fourth year, the banquet was a fundraiser organized by members of the Commission for Women. This year's proceeds, expected to be about \$15,000, are being donated to support programs of the Office on Women, including domestic and sexual violence services. While the Office on Women is a City agency, it also relies upon funding from grants and private donations. Major banquet sponsors included the Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria; Virginia Paving Company; Alexandria Democratic Mayoral and City Council Candidates, Clotilda "Tillie" Cassidy; Commonwealth Republican Women's Club; Conklyn's Florist; Fiske & Harvey, PLLC; Friends of Alicia Hughes; Helen Olivia Flowers; Congressman Jim Moran; Rich, Rosenthal, Manitta, Dzubin & Kroeger, LLP; Royce Flowers; and Jen Walker, McEneaney and Associates, Inc.

This year, the Commission embarked on a new fundraiser for the Alexandria Battered Women's Shelter. Each table at the Banquet had two plastic piggy banks, and by the end of the evening, over \$700 had been collected. These proceeds will benefit residents of the shelter with important necessities, such as car repairs, transportation expenses, and household supplies.

For more information on the Salute to Women Awards or the services of the Alexandria Office on Women, visit www.alexandriava.gov/women or call Angela Johnson at 703.746.5030.