

NEFLRIC

Highlights

Monthly Report of the Northeast Florida Regional Council

December 2016

Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Awards

At the 2016 Northeast Florida Elected Officials Luncheon and Regional Leadership Awards for Excellence, the Northeast Florida Regional Council thanked elected officials for their service, and recognized the best projects and the brightest leaders in the Region. Awards were given for Regional Excellence in a broad range of areas that will help define the future of Northeast Florida. This is the fourteenth year that the Regional Council has recognized the special people, programs, and communities in Northeast Florida that are making a difference.



The Regional Awards recognition program is anchored by the overall **Regional Leadership Award**, given to a leader who exemplifies service to community and commitment to regionalism. This year's recipient of the Northeast Florida Regional Council Regional Leadership Award is **Mr. David Dinkins**.

During his more than 30 years as a county agriculture agent, Mr. Dinkins has provided educational support in subjects ranging from basic farm production, to marketing, to agriculture awareness and youth development. He has provided leadership in the development of regionally relevant research and demonstration projects and has been a voice for agriculture at many levels of policy development. In large part due to his efforts, agricultural interests were included in the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, recognizing the industry as vitally important to ensuring regional resiliency.



The **Regional Award for Excellence in Affordable Housing** was won by **Putnam County's Kay Larkin Apartments**. Kay Larkin is a project that works. For the last 16 years, it has provided 60 low-income apartments to citizens of Putnam County. It nurtures the property and the residents, yet integrates so well into the larger community, you would never know it is affordable housing. The award was accepted on behalf of **A & S Affordable Management, Inc.**, by Erika Walker and Roy Campbell.

From left to right: NEFRC Board President Roxanne Horvath, Erika Walker and Roy Campbell of A & S Affordable Management, Inc.



The **Regional Award for Excellence in Culture, Historic Preservation or Adaptive Reuse** recognizes reusing an old site, structure, or building for a purpose that may not be what it was designed for, but that adds to the rich mosaic that is Northeast Florida. The winner was the **Baker County Historical Society**, which has taken the old Baker County Jail building, restored it, and now uses it to keep the local history of the community alive.

From left to right: NEFRC Board President Roxanne Horvath, David Richardson and Timothy Whelan of the Baker County Historical Society



The **Regional Award for Excellence in Economic Development and Tourism** focuses on stimulating the regional economy. The winner of this award is the **JaxUSA Partnership/City of Jacksonville Amazon "Project Rex"**. On July 27, 2016, the internet company Amazon, aka "Project Rex," announced plans to open a 2.4 million square-foot, multi-level fulfillment center in Jacksonville, Florida., committing to create more than 1,500 full-time jobs. The announcement marked the single largest jobs announcement in Jacksonville history. Accepting on behalf of the City of Jacksonville was OED Director Kirk Wendland, and the Honorable Aaron Bowman accepted on behalf of JaxUSA Partnership.

From left to right: Kirk Wendland of the Jacksonville Office of Economic Development, NEFRC Board President Roxanne Horvath, and the Honorable Aaron Bowman from JaxUSA Partnership

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The **Regional Award for Excellence in Education** is given to recognize the activities of individuals, entities, organizations or projects that contribute to the quality of education in Northeast Florida. It was won by the **City of Palm Coast C.H.I.R.P (Children Helping In Resource Protection)** This program raises money through recycling. It then uses the money to fund field trips. It has funded 4,500 students so far. Children on those field trips get to enjoy fun hands-on learning experiences which inspire their ambitions and curiosity for their environment.

From left to right: NEFRC Board President Roxanne Horvath, Carol Mini and Peter Roussell from the City of Palm Coast

The **Regional Award for Excellence in Environmental Stewardship** is given to recognize individuals, organizations, or specific projects with a primary focus on long-term protection, conservation and enhancement of the region's natural resources and leadership in promoting and awareness. There were two winners in this category.



Nassau County's Amelia Island Sea Turtle Watch, Inc. project has been providing sea turtle conservation activities such as beach surveys, nest verification, monitoring and excavation since 1985.

From Left to Right: NEFRC Board President Roxanne Horvath, Mary Duffy, Pat Kreger, Sherri Hair and the Honorable Len Kreger



The **National Park Service Centennial Celebration at Timucuan Preserve** was also recognized. The National Park Service created a two-year program of events, special programming and facility improvements to connect with and create the next generation of visitors, supporters and advocates of the Timucuan Preserve.

From left to right: NEFRC Board President Roxanne Horvath, Emily Palmer, Shauna Allen, Cicely Pontiflet and Chris Hughes of the National Park Service



The **Regional Award for Excellence in Planning and Growth Management** recognizes a focus on meeting very real planning and growth management needs. The award was won this year by the **St. Johns County Integrated Water Resource Plan**. The plan provides a road map to implement both short and long-term water supply solutions through 2040, ensuring sustainability for future generations.

From left to right: NEFRC Board President Roxanne Horvath and St. Johns County Utility Director Bill Young



The **Regional Award for Excellence in Public Safety** is all about improving the safety of the public. The winner was **City of Fernandina Beach Ocean Rescue**. This year they recruited, trained, and deployed 49 lifeguards to monitor 12 miles of Atlantic Ocean beaches on Amelia Island. This last season their efforts resulted in 71 rescues and 0 drownings for more than 207,000 visitors to the beach.

From left to right: NEFRC Board President Roxanne Horvath and Fernandina Beach Fire Chief Ty Silcox



The **Regional Award for Excellence in Transportation** honors a project with a primary focus on improving the quality of transportation. It was won by **North Florida Clean Fuels Coalition**. On April 22, the North Florida Clean Fuels Coalition was formally designated as a Clean Cities Coalition by the US Department of Energy. This is a huge honor and puts our region in a leadership role in energy efficiency. Wanda Forrest of the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization accepted the award on behalf of the Coalition.

From left to right: NEFRC Board President Roxanne Horvath and Wanda Forrest

The **Regional Quality of Life Award** seeks to recognize entities, organizations or projects that contribute to the livability and quality of life in Northeast Florida. This year, there were two winners in this category.



One winning recipient is the **City of St. Augustine's Dr. Robert B. Hayling Freedom Park**, an innovative reuse of a former landfill into a community asset and gathering place.

From Left to Right: Todd Grant, St. Augustine Deputy Public Works Director, NEFRC Board President Roxanne Horvath, Compassionate St. Augustine Executive Director Caren Goldman and City Manager John Regan.



Heath in Motion also won in this category. It is a truly regional partnership made up of UF Health, Wolfson Children's Hospital, Baptist Health, Brooks Rehabilitation, Mayo Clinic, St. Vincent's HealthCare & MOSH.

From left to right: Health in Motion Representatives Lynn Sherman (Baptist Health), Tracie Loftis (St. Vincent's HealthCare), Melanie Patz (Baptist Health), NEFRC Board President Roxanne Horvath, Ann Marie Knight (Mayo Clinic), Paula Bides (St. Vincent's Healthcare)