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Outstanding Volunteers Honored at 30th Annual Harford's Most Beautiful People Awards

BEL AIR, Md., (Oct. 10, 2016) - Heartwarming stories of human kindness filled the air at the 30th Annual Harford's Most Beautiful People Awards hosted by County Executive Barry Glassman and the Harford County Department of Community Services on October 8 at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene. The awards celebrate outstanding volunteers nominated by community members and include special recognitions for winners of the annual Ripple Effect Award and the Shining Light Award. This year's ceremony was emceed by WJZ-TV's Kristy Breslin and drew more than 220 attendees to honor 28 nominees.

Henderson "Mitch" Mitchell was the recipient of the Ripple Effect Award, so-named because of the ripples that spread from a single pebble dropped in a pond, just as a single volunteer benefits the broader community. Chosen for his remarkable commitment to Harford County youth, Mitch has been a tutor, mentor, and role model for more than 20 years. He works as a mathematician at Aberdeen Proving Ground and has volunteered as a tutor at the Maryland Freestate Challenge Academy, the Windsor Valley Community Center, Boys and Girls Clubs of Harford County, Edgewood Unit, and the Bel Air branch of Harford County Public Library. Mitch has been a friend and advisor to African American males at Edgewood High School through the Male Mentor program. The program teaches young men how to carry themselves, how to avoid getting into trouble, and the importance of their appearance. Each year, Mitch takes young men from the program on a college field trip. Several of these young men are now college graduates working as engineers and in other capacities at Aberdeen Proving Ground.

The Shining Light Award was created last year by County Executive Glassman to recognize individuals who shine a light of awareness on serious issues facing Harford County. Often the issues have deep, personal significance for those involved, yet these individuals courageously fight stigmas and advocate for positive change by discussing topics that some would rather push into the shadows. This year there were five recipients of the Shining Light Award. Denise Hanna, Marvin Huntley, and Wendy Messner and her family were honored for their determination to shine a light on addiction. Russ and Kim Hurd were recognized for raising awareness about the dangers of distracted driving.

The other Harford's Most Beautiful People nominees celebrated at this year's ceremony were: Paige Boyle, Barbara Bryant, Scott Businsky, Frances Dorman, Jake Ehrbaker, Taylor Feiss, Elizabeth "Beth" Fleming, Constance "Connie" Greene, Nia Hammett, Jan Headen, Virginia "Boots" Heidenreich, Lori Hejl, Donald Lynch Jr., Lois McClain, Betty Jean Nelson, Dr. Kate Ong, Bruce Portell, Debbie Ropiski, Nancy Smith, R. Donald Thomas, John Walters, and Anna Yanney.

This year's generous sponsors were Jones Junction, Harford Mutual Insurance Company, Aberdeen Proving Ground Federal Credit Union, The Aegis, Richardson's Flowers and Gifts, Pairings Bistro, Wegmans, Broom's Bloom Dairy, Party Party, the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene, and Eileen Frado, photographer.

Attendees at the ceremony included elected officials, nominators, the nominees, and representatives of the organizations that they have touched. All were treated to entertainment from The John Carroll High School Jazz Ensemble, the North Harford Harmonics, and the Upper Chesapeake Chorus of the Sweet Adelines International. Harford Cable Network was on hand to record the one-hour ceremony; the video is available on-demand, and can be purchased online. The ceremony will also be broadcast on Fridays in October at 7:00 p.m. Please visit www.harfordcable.org for more information.



Pictured from left: Claudia Sconion, nominator; Henderson "Mitch" Mitchell, Harford's Most Beautiful Person Ripple Effect Award winner; County Executive Barry Glassman; Kira Sconion.



Pictured from left: County Executive Barry Glassman; Shining Light Award recipients Kim Hurd, Russ Hurd, Marvin Huntley, Wendy Messner and Denise Hanna; Director of Harford County Community Services Amber Shrodes.

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