



NEWS RELEASE

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VCIC Announces Recipients of 53rd Annual Richmond Humanitarian Awards

*2015 Richmond Humanitarian Awards Dinner Presented by the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities
October 29, 2015 – Hilton Hotel & Spa/Short Pump.*

(Richmond, VA) - The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2015 Humanitarian Awards Dinner. This 53rd presentation of the awards by the Richmond Chapter of VCIC will be held on Thursday, October 29, 2015, at the Hilton Hotel & Spa in Short Pump. The awards celebration honors individuals and organizations for making significant humanitarian contributions to the Richmond region and beyond.

The 2015 Richmond Humanitarian Awards Recipients

James R. and Margaret P. Spencer The Judges Spencer are receiving the prestigious Distinguished Virginian Award, presented by VCIC to individuals whose influence and legacy reaches across the Commonwealth. Judge James R. Spencer became the first African-American Chief Judge in the 215-year history of the Court in 2004, and Judge Margaret P. Spencer (retired) was the first female Circuit Court Judge in central Virginia. They are very prominent members of the community and work with organizations such as the U.S. Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Administration, Virginia Board of Corrections, the American Judicature Society, the Federal Judges Association, and many more.

John V. Moeser

Dr. Moeser has dedicated 44 years of his life to working as a university professor. He currently serves as Senior Fellow at the University of Richmond's Bonner Center for Civic Engagement after a distinguished career at Virginia Commonwealth University in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning. John has been heavily involved with local and state government through serving on task forces and commissions related to urban policy, revisions to the City Charter, City Council redistricting, and, most recently, Richmond's anti-poverty initiative.

Thomas A. Silvestri

Mr. Silvestri is currently President and Publisher of Richmond Times-Dispatch and Vice President of the Richmond Group BH Media Group. He has worked with the news media for more than 35 years. Tom is known for the Richmond Times-Dispatch's engagement initiative called the Public Square, which has been hailed by the community for demonstrating civil public conversations on important topics. His past board service includes the Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce, Leadership Metro Richmond, and Richmond Memorial Health Foundation, among others.

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Thelma Bland Watson - Dr. Watson has served as Executive Director of Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging, since 2002. As a Gerontologist and Public Administrator, Thelma works to see a world where people know how to find and use resources in order to cope with health issues as they age successfully. Her current and former board service includes the Alzheimer's Association of Greater Richmond, Bon Secours Community Hospital, the Capital Area Workforce Investment Board, the Central Virginia Health Planning Agency, and the Virginia Health Quality Center.

Jewish Family Services Jewish Family Services is the oldest, continuously operating social services agency in Richmond. For 167 years, since its inception as the Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association, the organization has given people the tools they need to heal, grow and thrive, regardless of income, age, religion, or race. Whether finding families for orphans displaced by the Civil War, working with Jewish refugees in the aftermath of World War II, or counseling runaway youth and Veterans in the 1970's, JFS has always addressed immediate needs while setting the stage for a brighter future.

Fifty-three years ago, the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities - then called the National Conference of Christians and Jews - began a tradition in Richmond, "to honor the work of our friends, neighbors, and family members who gave to others the same rights, respect and dignity that they sought for themselves." Today, VCIC works with schools, businesses, and communities to achieve success through inclusion. The 80-year-old organization delivers programs to educators and students in the region through the Connections Institute, Prejudice Awareness Summit, Diversity Dialogue Day, and Educational Equity Initiative. VCIC also provides professional development for many local businesses and nonprofit organizations, leveraging diversity and inclusion to achieve success.

The 2015 VCIC Humanitarian Awards Dinner is being sponsored by several local organizations. Humanitarian-level sponsors include Altria Group, Bon Secours Richmond Health System, and Wells Fargo.

For more information about the organization or about reservations for the Awards Dinner on October 29th, go to www.inclusiveva.org.

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