



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APRIL 14, 2025

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VCIC ANNOUNCES RECIPIENTS OF 57TH ANNUAL LYNCHBURG HUMANITARIAN AWARDS

(Lynchburg, VA) - The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities (VCIC) is pleased to announce the recipients of the 57th annual Lynchburg Humanitarian Awards. The awards honor individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to the promotion of respect and understanding among people of diverse racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds in the Lynchburg community. The 2025 awards will be presented by the Lynchburg Chapter of VCIC at the annual dinner on Thursday, May 22, 2025, at the University of Lynchburg.

2025 Lynchburg Humanitarian Award Recipients

Chris M. Boswell is a principal partner at Barracks Financial Group and has been a community leader in Lynchburg since 2000. His volunteer work began early, mentoring children with disabilities and participating in mission trips. Chris became involved with Boys and Girls Club of Greater Lynchburg in 2006, serving as Board Chair and on various committees. He played a key role in raising funds to build a gymnasium, increasing the club's capacity. Chris also led the local Virginia Military Institute Alumni chapter and is the Board President of the Downtown Lynchburg Association. He co-founded Mustaches 4 Kids Lynchburg, an organization where participants grow mustaches for 30 days to raise funds for local children's charities. Since its inception, M4K Lynchburg has raised over \$3.6 million benefiting local children's organizations. Chris has received many awards, including the Mayor's Award for Service.

Dr. James E. Coleman, Jr. is the founder and senior pastor of Providence Transformation Church International in Lynchburg. He serves as President of The Baptist General Convention of Virginia and Dean at Virginia University of Lynchburg (VUL). James is a board member of Virginia Union University, the Farr Foundation, Rush Homes, Truist Bank, and Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy. His community service includes past roles on the Lynchburg City School Board, YMCA of Central Virginia Board, and Lynchburg City Planning Commission. James has received numerous awards, including the Lynchburg NAACP Humanitarian Award. He has spoken at prestigious venues like the Pentagon and the National D-Day Memorial. James is also a Bishop in Kingdom Builders Global Fellowship. He has also served as Chaplain for the Lynchburg Sheriff's Department and National Associate Chaplain for Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.

Rev. Dr. Carl B. Hutcherson, Jr. has been a pillar of the Lynchburg community for decades. He graduated from Hampton Institute, Duke University, and Virginia University of Lynchburg. He became very active with the civil rights movement during his college years, participating in various sit-ins as well as a school lockdown. He has taught in local schools, mentoring students. Carl served as Lynchburg's mayor for six years. He is active in Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, the NAACP, and the Good Gang program. Carl has mentored faith leaders and authored "Intentional Evangelism." He has pastored several congregations, including Bedford County Circuit of the United Methodist Church, Trinity United Methodist Church, Immanuel Christian Church, and First Baptist Church of South Lynchburg, and he remains a sought-after guest minister. Carl continues to impact the community as a civil rights leader and mentor.

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Priscilla M. Liggon has dedicated over 25 years to the Amherst County School Board, previously serving as Chair position. She has been the clinical coordinator of the Radiologic Technology program at Central Virginia Community College since 1989. Priscilla's community service includes roles on the Lynchburg Community Action Group (LYNCAG) Board, the Laurel Board, Johnson Health Center, Area Community Health Centers, and the Coalition for HIV Awareness & Prevention of Central Virginia. She has received several awards, including the Virginia Society of Radiologic Technologists Lifetime Achievement Award, the VA School Board Association Advocate for Education Award, and the NAACP award in Amherst County. Priscilla graduated from Amherst County High, Central Virginia Community College, and Old Dominion University. She is registered and certified by the state of Virginia and the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists.

2025 Lynchburg Distinguished Merit Award Recipient

Camp Kum-Ba-Yah Nature Center (CKBY) was founded in 1950 to preserve natural spaces for children amidst Lynchburg's suburban growth. Visionary founder Bev Cosby and others created a haven for children to explore and learn. In the 1960s, CKBY expanded to include inner-city children, promoting inclusion. In 1961, it became Lynchburg's first racially integrated swimming pool. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. visited in 1962, dining at CKBY before his "American Dream" speech. CKBY became a nonprofit organization in 1983, now serving over 600 campers annually with year-round nature education. The 47-acre center includes campsites, pools, and outdoor classrooms. CKBY is committed to child development, environmental stewardship, and community engagement. Approximately 40% of campers receive scholarships, ensuring inclusivity. CKBY is a proud member of the Association of Nature Center Administrators and the American Camp Association.

Fifty-seven years ago, the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities - then called the National Conference of Christians and Jews - began a tradition in Central Virginia, "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 90-year-old organization delivers programs to high school students in the region through Diversity Dialogue Day and Project Inclusion. VCIC also provides professional development for many local educators, businesses, and nonprofit organizations, leveraging inclusion to achieve success.

The 2025 VCIC Humanitarian Awards Dinner's honorary chair is Owen C. Cardwell, Jr. The event's Humanitarian Sponsor is Centra, and Benefactor Sponsors are BWX Technologies, Inc., Dodson Pest Control, Richard & Robin Loving, and Leslie and Kimball Payne (at time of release).

For more information about the organization or the Awards Dinner, visit www.inclusiveVA.org.

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