

2013
Virginia Juvenile Justice Association
Meritorious Award in the Area of Community Service
KATHERINE FARMER

This year's recipient in the area of Community Service is a career public servant of more than 25 years and consummate professional. She is described as a "caretaker", a "joiner", a "do-er" and a "giver". It is just part of her nature to help others, whether those others are work colleagues, neighbors, family members, friends, court-involved children or strangers. She mostly gives with her service – which includes volunteer service to both individuals and groups. In addition to her employment in the juvenile justice field and her responsibilities as a MOM, our recipient has helped raise funds for and volunteered countless hours through the years in support of multiple service and professional organizations.

Our recipient is a natural born leader who has served in multiple leadership roles including serving as a volunteer for the Virginia Juvenile Justice Association (VJJA). She served for years as the Chair of VJJA's Capital District. Under her leadership as the Chair of the Capital District Chapter the District held their largest professional development event to date – a gathering of more than 200 professionals across more than a dozen professional disciplines including the judiciary, prosecution, indigent defense, probation, corrections, detention, and more. The district also held an annual crab feast and multiple community service projects. In addition to serving as District Chair, Katherine also served as VJJA's Director of Logistics for the Fall Institute for many years. In that role, she volunteered countless hours planning all facets of the fall conference. She arranged for nationally recognized speakers, contracted for hotel conference facilities, recruited exhibitors, led committees, maintained the registration database and more.

In addition to her long history of volunteerism with VJJA, our recipient also has an extensive history of volunteerism with the schools. As a mom she always made time to volunteer at the schools her sons attended. That volunteerism included work with the PTA, parent support group, little league sports, ROTC, sports boosters, and special event chaperoning. She also served as a "team mom" for her children's soccer and baseball teams. While neither of her children attended Henrico High School, while serving as a Probation Officer in that locality, she led school supply drives, volunteered to work at sporting events, and chaperoned dances.

Now as the proud Mom of two young men serving in the armed services, our recipient has turned her attention to volunteerism in support of active duty service men and women and veterans. Through her participation in the group Proud Marine Parents she assembles care packages to send to service men and women serving in Afghanistan. She also sends birthday cards to military members through the gratitude club of the group "Until Every Troop Comes Home" and she has cooked and served lunches to wounded warriors and family at McQuire Veteran's Administration Hospital through the group Honor and Respect. Finally, she used her baking skills with her advocacy efforts when she baked a birthday cake for a local marine recruiting station to celebrate the Marine Corps Birthday.

As if all of that volunteerism is not enough, our recipient is currently serving on her workplace's Combined Virginia Campaign (CVC) and helped plan fundraising activities throughout the year

including plant sales, bake sales and raffles. She recently baked Halloween themed baked goods she donated to the cause. She has also participated in canned food drives and the Thanksgiving basket programs at Henrico CSU.

Our recipient has worked in government for more than 25 years. She has worked for the Department of Correctional Education and the Department of Juvenile Justice, at Beaumont Juvenile Correctional Center, at Oak Ridge Juvenile Correctional Center, at the Richmond Court Service Unit, at the Henrico Court Service Unit and at the DJJ Central Office. She has worked as a Probation Officer, a School-Based Probation Officer, and a Community Programs Specialist. Colleagues describe working with our recipient as a real joy. One colleague provided these remarks, "There is no better person to have on one's team. She is a hard worker and is always willing to do her share of the work and more. She constantly volunteers to help others. Her philosophy on juvenile justice is said to be to apply the "is it good enough for my own child" rule to decision-making and programming. For this reason and more, while working as a Probation Officer she was a favorite of parents. She values the importance family engagement and has consistently worked with families in a respectful and non-judging manner. "

Given all of her community involvement and accomplishments, one might mis-assume that our recipient has minimal family responsibilities, but they would be assuming incorrectly. When not traveling the state working in juvenile justice, working part-time teaching cake decorating, volunteering with VJJA and volunteering with multiple service agencies, our recipient is a daughter, a sister, and a devoted mother. She's raised twin boys, Martin, a member of the United States Marine Corp stationed in Afghanistan and Jonathan a member of the United States Army stationed in Georgia. Our recipient is a graduate of Douglas S. Freeman High School, Meredith College, and Mary Washington College.