



Governor's Awards Celebrate Outstanding Service

Agency of the Year

Georgia Forestry Commission



Executive Director Robert Farris accepts the award for Agency of the Year on behalf of the Georgia Forestry Commission. Faced with mounting budget concerns, GFC became a model for customer service by consistently implementing improvements to agency operations and efficiencies over the past year using innovative and strategic methods.

Leader of the Year

Col. Bill Hitchens



Described as a leader who really "walks the talk," Col. Bill Hitchens daily demonstrates the values he instills in agency employees and makes a point to involve himself personally in the needs of his employees. Some have even spotted him in civilian clothes changing a tire for a stranded motorist.

On September 28, Governor Perdue honored 16 state employees and teams at his Third Annual Governor's Customer Service Awards. The recipients were recognized for the extraordinary customer service they provided this year.

The winners were selected from **575** nominations from **43** agencies. "It is such a tremendous honor to support and recognize the customer service achievements of our state employees," said Joe Doyle, director of the Governor's Office of Customer Service. "Each year we see how Governor Perdue's vision to be the most customer-focused state in the nation is becoming a reality."

To read the full list of winners and to learn more about their outstanding accomplishments, please visit <http://team.georgia.gov/service>.

Champion of the Year

Cathy Smith



Turning a temporary assignment into a permanent one, Cathy Smith has led the Georgia Dept. of Corrections in a full range of customer service initiatives including training, recognition, surveys, contact center improvement and process improvement.

Governor's Customer Service Award Winners

Individual Service

- Marilyn D. Ferguson, Dept. of Veterans Services
- Gene H. Sharpe, Georgia Forestry Commission
- Pamela Shepherd, DHS Office of Child Support Services
- Clyde Smith, Dept. of Juvenile Justice

Employee of the Year

- Richard Cobb, Dept. of Corrections

Team Excellence

- Business Development and Training Team, Dept. of Community Affairs
- District 8-2 Office of All Hazards Preparedness, Dept. of Community Health
- Hudson Office of Child Support Services, Dept. of Human Services
- Region XI DFCS, Dept. of Human Services

Team of the Year

- Ft. Stewart Youth Challenge Academy

Champion of the Year

- Cathy Smith, Dept. of Corrections

Leadership

- Col. Bill Hitchens, Commissioner, Georgia Dept. of Public Safety

Contact Center Excellence

- 1.800.georgia

Process Improvement

- State Board of Workers' Compensation

Most Improved Customer Service Organization

- Bright From The Start: Dept. of Early Care and Learning

Agency of the Year

- Georgia Forestry Commission



Rep. Jimmy Pruett

"The experience of serving on the selection committee for the Annual Awards has changed the way I look at state jobs. I learned how important state employees are and how much they care about this state."

Customer Service Award Winners

Individual Excellence in Customer Service

Awarded to those individuals who have demonstrated outstanding service to the citizens of Georgia over the past year.

Marilyn D. Ferguson



Pamela Shepherd



Employee of the Year

Richard Cobb



Richard Cobb is dedicated to improving the lives of offenders. His caring service helped numerous offenders complete their GED and technology classes while achieving a 92.2% graduation rate, the highest among pre-release centers.

Team of the Year

Ft. Stewart Youth Challenge Academy



With a "we can make it happen" attitude and an understanding of giving back to society and to the state, the team at Ft. Stewart Youth Challenge Academy has positively influenced the lives of more than 6,000 graduates, showing them the importance of being good citizens through service to others.

Clyde Smith



Gene H. Sharpe



Outstanding Process Improvement

By creating an automated integrated claims system, the State Board of Workers' Compensation serves an average of 1,050 users per day with vastly simplified paperwork for attorneys, insurance companies, claimants and judges.

Pictured: Judge Carolyn Hall

Contact Center Excellence

Only Georgia offers one number to connect to any state service. 1.800.georgia not only handled more than half a million calls last year, but also supported other state agencies by directly handling their "overflow" calls.

Most Improved Customer Service Organization

Bright From The Start succeeded in making customer service faster, friendlier and easier as a key strategy in fulfilling its mission and vision to improve quality of early care and learning for all children in Georgia.

Pictured: Comm. Holly Robinson

State Board of Workers' Compensation



Bright From The Start



Team Excellence in Customer Service

Awarded to those teams who have demonstrated outstanding service to the customers of the state of Georgia over the past year.

Houston Office of Child Support Services, DHS



Region XI DFCS, DHS

Business Development and Training Team, DCA



Distrcit 8-2 Office of All Hazards Preparedness, DCH



Governor's Office of Customer Service

Sonny Perdue, Governor • Joe Doyle, Director

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