

United Way honors 2 nonprofit directors



Megan Lovett/The Daily Progress

Pat Smith of the Offender Aid and Restoration/Jefferson Area Community Corrections agency was honored for her “excellence in nonprofit leadership.”

By Bryan McKenzie

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United Way officials on Wednesday honored the directors of two local nonprofit agencies and one agency’s board of directors for leadership, excellence and outstanding achievement.

Theresa Tapscott, of the Albemarle Housing Improvement Program, and Pat Smith, of the Offender Aid and Restoration/Jefferson Area Community Corrections agency, were honored for “excellence in nonprofit leadership.” The OAR/JACC board of directors also was honored for “management, leadership and governance excellence in a nonprofit.” Two committees within the United Way chose the award recipients. The charity organization presented the awards at a ceremony and dinner Wednesday night at Farmington Country Club.

“There were a lot of good candidates nominated, but the committees decided these were the standouts,” said Kim Connolly, spokeswoman for the United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area. “Everyone nominated has had impact on the lives of people in our community, as have the agencies.”

Tapscott has led the Albemarle Housing Improvement Program for 29 years. Under her tutelage, the program has grown from an annual budget of \$658,000 to \$2.37 million. It has expanded from focusing primarily on home repairs to comprehensive home renovations, certified lead-abatement services and emergency repairs for very low-income households.

Smith has led OAR/JACC for 27 years. Under her leadership, the organization morphed from a small mentoring agency for about 100 local inmates to a cornerstone of criminal justice systems across Central Virginia. The programs serve nearly 5,000 people. The OAR/JACC board supervises five programs addressing probation, pretrial services, re-entry into society, drug courts and restorative justice. The board is representative of the agency's workers and clients, and includes volunteer mentors, ex-offenders, criminal justice professionals, business professionals and other community members.

Last year, United Way officials honored Gordon Walker, of the Jefferson Area Board for Aging, and directors of the Charlottesville Free Clinic. A special "inspiration" award was given to the directors of the Building Goodness Foundation.

While programs and services are often heralded, Connolly said, the awards are designed to honor those who do the work behind the scenes.

"People who are making things happen, the executive directors and the board of directors, get little credit for even the most successful programs," she said. "In the nonprofit world, especially, people do these things because they have a passion and are cause-driven and committed. We wanted to give them public recognition for what they do."