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EDA and Chamber Announce 2016 Business Excellence : Business Appreciation Award Recipients

June 13, 2016, Front Royal, Virginia: The Economic Development Authority and the Chamber of Commerce announced today the winners of the *2016 Business Excellence : Business Appreciation Awards*.

The winner of a \$500.00 cash award is Katie Tewell of Fork'd - a new food truck business. The money will go toward a convection smoker for her business. An award of \$750.00 is made to Hope Satyanithben of Ben's Family Cuisine who will use the money to add cook top burners for her restaurant business. The largest award,

\$1,000.00 is made to Maria Dutton of Passages Travel who will use the money to upgrade Passages' computer system.

"This is a wonderful program," said Niki Foster, president of the Chamber of Commerce. "We are giving back to our business community -- and, what a perfect time to do so - during the State's Business Appreciation Month."

Business Appreciation month is celebrated every year in Virginia with state-issued proclamations, breakfasts, luncheons and dinner events designed to thank the business community for all it does to better life in Virginia. In recent years, the Front Royal-Warren County EDA decided to celebrate by holding a "Business Excellence" contest and awarding cash prizes to local businesses.

This is the sixth year the awards have been presented and over the years, cash totaling \$11,550.00 has been granted to eighteen deserving small businesses licensed in Front Royal or Warren County. They include: Loving Arms, Main Street Daily Grind, Linking You Designs, The Apple House, Royal Broadcasting, Liberty Tax, The Kiln Doctor, Culligan, Bearfoot Enterprises, L'il Rugratz, J's Gourmet, Weathervane Graphics, Joe's Steakhouse and Backroom Brewery. The award money has been used for everything from software, to remote broadcasting equipment, to new instructional programs, to a fork lift, to landscaping and new ovens.

"We are happy to take the money we would have spent on a luncheon event and give it directly to businesses that have a need," said Patty Wines, chairwoman of the EDA. "The businesses chosen have demonstrated excellence in business practices and in community service. These were not easy selections to make, and we would like to congratulate all of the recipients."

The parameters for applying for the awards are: must be licensed in Front Royal or Warren County and must have no more than 500 employees. Applications generally open in May, are accessible through EDA and Chamber web sites and wrap up on the first of June. A panel comprised of EDA staff and board members and Chamber president judged the applications. Awards were based upon detailed need and use, demonstrated community service and comprehensive business excellence practices.

“We look forward to continuing the award program,” said Jennifer McDonald, executive director of the EDA. “We are getting very positive feedback, it seems a great way to celebrate our business community and we encourage every small business in Front Royal or Warren County to participate next year. We would like to thank Rappahannock Electric Cooperative for being a sustaining sponsor of this remarkable program.”

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