

For Release, Friday, August 16, 2019

August 16, 2018, Meredith Leahy, President of Tennessee Recycling Coalition, delivered an address at the Annual Recycler of the Year reception presented by Tennessee Recycling Coalition (TRC). Each year TRC honors the most dedicated and successful individuals and organizations working to advance recycling in our State. The reception is a highlight of two days of learning and networking organized by the Tennessee Recycling Coalition that was held at the Park Vista in Gatlinburg, TN.

Green Certification Program, Montgomery County – 2019 Government Recycler of the Year

The Green Certification Program was established in 2010 by Hemlock Semiconductors as a way to promote environmental stewardship within Montgomery County. The Program founders understood that organizations in Montgomery County wanted to expand recycling and resource conservation but lacked the expertise to know where to begin. By going through the Green Certification Program, organizations learn best practices from local environmental leaders, develop an environmental plan and receive guidance as they make upgrades, additions, and retrofits. The Program encourages organizations to continue expanding their sustainable practices while also acting as mentors to others. This is a benefit not only to their local community but also to the entire state of Tennessee. The Program has been a great success for Montgomery County.

Random Acts of Flowers – 2019 Non-Profit Recycler of the Year

Random Acts of Flowers strives to make Knoxville a greener and more sustainable community by doing its part in recycling and repurposing flowers and repurposing the floral waste by creating compost and donating the compost to local landscaping companies. Random Acts of Flowers supports and works hard to further Knoxville's efforts to be a local, regional and national sustainability leader. The Knoxville facility has been the example and template that other facilities in Chicago, Indianapolis, and Tampa Bay replicate and use. All of the facilities share information and knowledge on how they can further environmentally sensitive efforts to make Random Acts of Flowers as environmentally responsible as possible.

Clayton Homes – 2019 Business Recycler of the Year

Clayton Home Building Group, Clayton Savannah's parent company, has made significant commitments to sustainability across all operations and home building facilities across the state, especially at its Clayton Savannah location. In 2018, Clayton Savannah diverted 2,793 tons of waste from landfills through recycling efforts and green building practices, accounting for nearly 30 percent of Clayton's eight home building facilities' landfill diversion in Tennessee. The facility has also achieved 19 percent reductions of volatile organic compounds emissions, which are potentially harmful air pollutants. Also, the entire facility has gone through a lighting retrofit, converting all lights to LED. Clayton Savannah is going beyond adopting sustainability measures in its facility; it also passes those environmental and economic savings on to its customers by making homes more energy-efficient. Clayton Built® homes are energy smart and come standard with LED lights, an ecobee brand smart thermostat, and low-emissivity windows.

Lipscomb Academy Lower School – 2019 K-12 Education Recycler of the Year

Lipscomb Academy Lower School (LALS) is a place well-known for its environmental efforts, with recycling being the backbone of the program. For the past 15+years, LALS has participated in teaching others about recycling and how the improper disposal of waste can negatively affect the land, water, and air that make up our natural environment. Students recycle daily, participating in PepsiCo, Waste Management, and NEED programs. Classrooms have recycle bins and multi-stream bins are in common areas. The cafeteria has 'shadow box bins' that depict what students should do with the items left on their tray after lunch. Large recycle bins are in campus parking areas, including newspaper, multi-stream, and plastic/aluminum containers. Sustainability is taught intentionally to every LALS student. Hands-on labs, experts from the community and service-learning are used to enhance the environmental science curriculum. While all students are involved in recycling, each class has a particular emphasis on their science standard and works toward an environmental service goal.

Tennessee Tech University – 2019 Higher Education Recycler of the Year

Over the course of the last few years, Tennessee Tech University has increased its sustainability profile on campus, in the community and among its peers within the higher education environment. In 2018, the Tennessee Tech Office of Sustainability made an intentional effort to focus on outreach and engagement with students and the local community within Cookeville, Tennessee. To that end, several partnerships were developed and multiple projects were undertaken as a part of the comprehensive campaign to promote environmental responsibility and sustainability-related actions with impact, with particular emphasis on the benefits of horticulture, agriculture, and arboriculture. The results of the actions taken include the environmental benefits of hundreds of trees planted through the aesthetic benefit, but also carries the benefit of the carbon reduction and positive impact to the decrease in runoff into our stormwater system. The economic benefit of the plantings includes the energy saved by tree-shading and windbreak, a safer and more sociable campus, and increased property values.

Furniture Connection – 2019 Video Recycler of the Year

Red Knight Distributors in Clarksville is not only tasked with retail furniture but with the responsibility of recycling cardboard, paper, plastic, and Styrofoam. With Styrofoam taking up 25-35% of landfill space across the country, Red Knight Distributors is saving 300,000 sq. ft of landfill space with their process of densifying Styrofoam. In 2018 Red Knight enlisted the help of Austin Peay State University students to help put a video together of all the recycling efforts being done. The video was shown at the Clarksville-Montgomery County Green Certification Banquet, the workshop in 2019 for the green businesses in Montgomery County, and is also shown to each new employee that starts with the company.

UCOR - 2019 Innovator of the Year

Since its inception in 2011, UCOR, an AECOM-led partnership with Jacobs, has integrated the principles of sound environmental stewardship throughout its mission to help clean up the East Tennessee Technology Park and other parts of the Oak Ridge Reservation for the U.S. Department of Energy. Good stewardship in concert with aggressive remedial actions has paid off for both the environment and

taxpayers, making this project worthy of consideration for the 2019 Tennessee Recycling Coalition, Recycling Innovator Award. In addition to traditional recycling programs for cans, plastic, paper, and cardboard, UCOR employs a holistic approach to waste management. Initially, materials without continuing beneficial use are evaluated for potential recycle, reuse, or repurpose. If the waste must be disposed of, the evaluation continues. This process is intended to minimize disposal costs and maximize the amount of cleanup performed. UCOR is donating its monetary award to The Michael Dunn Center.

Tom Leonard – 2019 Tom Hattle Memorial Award

In 1999, Tom Leonard and his family moved from Greeneville to Sevierville to become the General Manager of Sevier Solid Waste Inc. In his new role, it was his responsibility to operate the composting plant and cardboard recycling in a community of 93,570 people that sees 12 million visitors annually. Throughout the years, Tom has expanded the recycling throughout Sevier County with his goal to become a zero-waste facility. He has created recycling drop off collection locations, expanded the compost facility to process a higher capacity of materials, and most recently a never-been-done-before system to pull recyclables out of the waste stream to collect 100% of the recyclables discarded in our waste. While in Greeneville, Tom sat on the Board of Directors for Keep Greene Beautiful for three years. Shortly after his move to Sevier County, Tom's vision to create a Keep TN Beautiful affiliate in Sevier County was realized as he was able to consolidate and reduce operating expenses of Sevier Solid Waste(owned by the three cities and County)to fund the new affiliate—Keep Sevier Beautiful(KSB).In2002, through Tom's hard work and determination, KSB became an affiliate with a strong Board of Directors whom he recruited. This enabled an outreach on recycling to the community on a scale that had never been done before. Through Tom's leadership and dedication, at year-end, Sevier County will be at recycling rates rivaling those of California cities.