

Alston-Wilkes Society Annual Awards Luncheon

The Alston-Wilkes Society held its annual meeting and awards luncheon on Thursday, November 17, 2016 at Seawell's Restaurant in Columbia. Every year the Alston-Wilkes Society takes the opportunity to recognize and thank the law enforcement and correctional community for their efforts in serving the public.

The Alston-Wilkes Society is a multistate non-profit that was organized in Columbia in 1962 by Methodist minister the Reverend Eli Alston-Wilkes. The original mission was to provide rehabilitative services to adults released from correctional facilities in South Carolina. Through the years it has expanded its focus to involve at-risk youth, homeless veterans, other homeless persons, and the families of these groups.

Among the different Criminal Justice awards presented during the luncheon was the Olin Sanders Correctional Officer of the Year Award given to the Officer of the Year at the South Carolina Department of Corrections. This year's winner was Sgt. Michelle Oakman-Tucker of Trenton Correctional Institution.



Sgt. Tucker

Sgt. Tucker began her career with SCDC in 2006 at Broad River Correctional Institution. She moved to Trenton CI in 2009. She has also been a valued member of the Sitcon Intervention Team since 2010. She recently had the experience of “talking down” an inmate who was threatening to hang himself in the RHU at Broad River CI. She conversed with the inmate for more than hour before he finally took a noose from his neck and went to the door to be handcuffed. Her dedication and consistency in her job, according to her Captain, has gained her the respect of her co-workers and inmates.

While Sgt. Tucker was unable to accept the award at the Alston-Wilkes luncheon due to a prior obligation, SCDC Director Bryan Stirling presented the Sanders Award to her and it was received on her behalf by Trenton CI Associate Warden Evonne Willingham.



AW Willingham

Director Stirling

Other award winners during the day were as follows:

The James W. Sparks Youth Worker of the Year, S.C. Department of Juvenile Justice....Michael S. Cancassi;

The William C. Nau Federal Probation Officer of the Year, U.S. Federal ProbationJake N. Bookard, III;

The Mark Hart Probation & Parole Agent of the Year, SC Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services....Hunter S. Shaw;

The SC Law Enforcement Trooper of the Year, SC Department of Public Safety....Trooper Gabriel M. Colbert;

SCLEOA Law Enforcement Officer of the Year, SC Law Enforcement Officers' Association.... Sgt. John McCord

Our Congratulations to all the winners and thanks to the Alston-Wilkes Society!

