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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHAMBER STAR AND AMBASSADOR OF THE YEAR AWARDED AT CHAMBER LUNCHEON Volunteer Chairs also Recognized

SHAWNEE, Kan. December, 2011 – Volunteers play a key role in completing the work at the Shawnee Chamber of Commerce, so it's fitting they be the focus at the December Volunteer Appreciation luncheon held Wednesday, December 14. In addition to recognizing committee chairs, the Chamber also announced the recipients of the Chamber Star Award and Ambassador of the Year.

“The Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon honors the many dedicated volunteers the Chamber has been so fortunate to have share their time and energy to support the Chamber,” says Linda Leeper, President | CEO, Shawnee Chamber of Commerce. “Their hard work and devotion makes a significant impact in our ability to provide such excellent programs and services.”

The Chamber is pleased to announce **Paul Ridgway, American Family Insurance**, as the 2011 Chamber Star Awardee. The Chamber Star Award, established in 2007, recognizes a Chamber volunteer that shines with extraordinary measures of service and commitment to the Shawnee Chamber of Commerce. Ridgway has been involved in the Chamber and community for many years, including serving on the Board of Directors, Past Chairman of the Board, Ambassadors, Annual Dinner Committee, Golf Committee and Total Resource Campaign.



Jack Wagner, Chairman of the Board, Shawnee Chamber; Paul Ridgway, American Family Insurance; and Linda Leeper, President | CEO, Shawnee Chamber

“Paul proves time and again that he truly loves Shawnee,” said Mary Taylor, Sr. Vice President, Shawnee Chamber of Commerce. “With his business located in Shawnee, he works hard to make the community a better place to do business and is an excellent advocate for the Chamber.”



Jack Wagner, Chairman of the Board, Shawnee Chamber; Jean Nelson, Porter Funeral Homes and Crematory; and Linda Leeper, President | CEO, Shawnee Chamber

The Ambassador of the Year for 2011 is **Jean Nelson, Porter Funeral Homes and Crematory**. Nelson has been very active in all aspects of the Chamber and community for many years. She is a graduate of Shawnee Tomorrow leadership program and has served on numerous committees, including the Ambassadors, Shawnee Tomorrow Leadership Steering, Annual Dinner and Auction. She is also involved in many City events such as Beauty and the Best, Christmas Around Town, Scarecrow Festival, Shawnee Rotary Club, United Way and Wonderscope Children's Museum.

“We couldn't do our job without our many volunteers and Jean has always gone above and beyond to step up and lend a hand,” said Taylor. “Her spirit and positive energy are contagious, and we are fortunate that Jean is so giving of her time.”

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While we appreciate all of the volunteers for their commitment, special thanks goes to the committee chairs and division chairs!

Committee Chairs:

Ambassador's - Chris Gorup, Shawnee Mission Ford

Annual Dinner - Chris Gorup, Shawnee Mission Ford - Chair and Jody Adams, JRA Baskets - Co-Chair

Business Expo - JonAnn Cavanaugh, M&I, a part of BMO Financial Group - Chair

Golf Tournament - John Wills, State Farm Insurance

Governmental Affairs - Justin Nichols, Lathrop & Gage, L.L.P.

Shawnee Tomorrow Leadership - MeLissa Trujillo, CoreFirst Bank & Trust - Chair & Danielle Browning, KCP&L - Co-Chair

Total Resource Campaign - Donna Zimmerman, Special Olympics Kansas

Division Chairs:

SEDC Chair – Pat Daniels, The Land Source

CVB Chair – Clifton Alexander, REACTOR

Nearly 100 attendees were on hand for the Volunteer Appreciation luncheon, which was 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, December 15 at Shawnee Town Hall.

About the Chamber:

Established in 1946, the Shawnee Chamber of Commerce is a membership organization that works to preserve the best possible business climate and quality of life for Shawnee. With over 650 business members, the Shawnee Chamber Corporation (501C6) includes two divisions: the Economic Development Council, and the Convention and Visitor's Bureau. For more information, contact us at 913.631.6545 or visit our website at www.goodstartshere.com.

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