



children's **ADVOCACY** center  
of Hamilton County, Inc.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Children's Advocacy Center of Hamilton County  
Honors Volunteers Award Winners**

**CHATTANOOGA, TN** — The Children's Advocacy Center of Hamilton County (CACHC) announced several volunteer awards at its annual Volunteer and Donor Appreciation Luncheon on July 21, 2011. The luncheon was held at The United Way Building and was part of the 20 Year Anniversary Celebration of the agency. This year's award recipients included: Detective Brian Ashburn as recipient of the Child Protective Investigative Team Member of the Year, Jay Helton as the Curtis L. Collier Volunteer of the Year, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee as the Janet Lynn Ricks McConnell Corporate Volunteer of the Year, Mark Godsey and Gerald Brown as recipients of the Presidential Award, and Adera Causey as the recipient of the prestigious Emeline W. Haney Award. A special presentation in memory of former Executive Director Jennifer Mitchell was also made to her son to honor her service from 2005 to 2009.

Hamilton County District Attorney, Bill Cox, presented the Child Protective Investigative Team (CPIT) Member of the Year award to Detective Brian Ashburn. Selected by his peers, Detective Ashburn, received an overwhelming majority of votes for his dedication to child abuse investigations and his commitment to professionalism. Accepting the award on his behalf was his daughter, Alisha Ashburn.

Jay Helton, owner of JDH Company, Inc. was named Curtis L. Collier Individual Volunteer of the Year because of his generous donation of time and commitment to the CACHC since joining the agency Board of Directors in 2007. Helton currently chairs the agency Building & Grounds committee, and he has put in numerous hours personally completing minor repairs and bidding out work for more major projects. He has also chaired a subcommittee for more than a year which is evaluating options for the Center's possible relocation. JDH Company, Inc. has been a generous corporate sponsor of the CACHC for more than 10 years. Anna Scire of JDH Company accepted the award on behalf of Helton. The award is named for Judge Curtis L. Collier, a dedicated and loyal volunteer to the agency for nearly two decades.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee was recognized as the first recipient of the Janet Lynn Ricks McConnell Corporate Volunteer of the Year. An annual award, the Corporate Volunteer of the Year was named this year in memory of the late Janet Lynn Ricks McConnell. An employee of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee, McConnell was a board member of the CACHC from 2005 to 2011. During her term of service she served as the Public Relations Committee Chair for two years and as Co-chair of the Fish & Chips event

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committee for four years. The award was named in her memory to honor her passion for helping children and the importance of corporate stewardship in the community.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee was selected to receive this award because of their long-term financial commitment to the agency and their support of its mission through encouraging their employees to volunteer. A corporate sponsor of the agency since 1999, the company's Brand Strategy and Marketing Communications department, where McConnell served as Director, has provided design and print service for numerous CACHC events and publications for several years. The company also has three employees currently serving on the CACHC board of directors, and several other employees who devote their time to assisting the agency in areas of technology, fundraising, public relations, and other initiatives.

Board President Leslie Ray chose to honor Mark Godsey and Gerald Brown as recipients of the annual Presidential Award. Godsey is president of Gold Bond, Inc., and president of the Chattanooga Power Boat Club. Brown is president of North Georgia Heating & Air, Inc. Both were instrumental in planning and coordinating the 2011 Chattanooga Fun Run Power Boat event benefiting the CACHC. Their commitment to the mission of the CACHC was evident in the more than \$13,000 raised by the event and sponsorship of other fundraising events.

Finally, the Emeline W. Haney Award, the agency's most prestigious award which was established in 1997 to honor its namesake Emmy Haney, a founder of the agency, was awarded to CACHC board member, Adera Causey, for her supreme service to the CACHC since 2007. Causey has chaired the Fish & Chips committee for four years and served as the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee chair during 2011. Causey was chosen for her relentless commitment to the CACHC and embodying the passionate spirit of Emeline Haney through "speaking up for those who cannot speak up for themselves."

Outgoing Board Chair Leslie Ray was recognized for completing her term as Chair and five years to the agency. CACHC Board Members, Kelly Coffelt and Allison Mills, were recognized for completing their terms of service. Other volunteers given recognition for their contributions included Mary Bennett, Sarah Stafford, Shannon Shaver, Andy Jacobs, and Kirsten Turner.

The afternoon also included a tribute to the late Jennifer Mitchell, Executive Director of the agency from 2004 - 2009. Her son, Dustin Mitchell, performed an original song, "Fly," from his first album, *No Stones Unturned*. Mitchell wrote and composed the song to honor his mother, and the agency unveiled a framed photo with the song lyrics which will be hung in the lobby of the Center. The luncheon served as a celebration of a successful year of providing on-site services to 430 children and benefiting from over 1,600 hours of volunteer service. The CACHC has served 7,824 children on-site since opening its doors 20 years ago in 1991.

#### **About Children's Advocacy Center of Hamilton County**

The Children's Advocacy Center of Hamilton County, Inc. was established as a private, non-profit agency in 1991. The Center's mission is to serve children who are alleged victims of sexual or severe physical abuse through prevention, education and intervention. The Center provides evaluation and treatment for abused children and their non-offending families by providing: forensic interviews, extended assessments, counseling, preparation for courtroom trial, medical examinations, prevention education, support groups and coordination of the various public agencies involved with a child's case. In 1995, the Children's Advocacy Center of Hamilton County, Inc. became a full member of the National Children's Alliance. It now stands as one of over 700 nationwide providing similar services for abused children. Last fiscal year, the Center served over 400 children and made abuse prevention presentations to 9,321 individuals. For more information on the Children's Advocacy Center of Hamilton County, visit [www.cachc.org](http://www.cachc.org).

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