

Twenty-Fourth Annual

Virginia Hart
Special Recognition Award



May 23, 2007

1:00 PM

Senate Parlor
State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin

About Virginia Hart (1914–2007)

Virginia Hart, Wisconsin's first woman cabinet member, served as Secretary of the Department of Regulation and Licensing, chairperson of the Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations, and as chairperson of the Labor and Industry Review Commission.

Upon Virginia Hart's retirement from state service in 1983, friends and colleagues established a fund so that each year a woman in Wisconsin state service could be recognized for exemplary performance and contribution to the citizens of the state. On March 24, 2007, Virginia Hart passed away at the age of 92.

With the generous help of contributors the fund has grown and will continue to support awards for many more years. Contributors this year include Jo Ann Lampman, Helen Bruner, Tad Pinkerton, Ellen O'Brien Saunders, David Saunders, Philip Jones, Harald Jordahl Jr., Ed & Winnie Durkin, William Kraus, Anthony S. Earl, Neill De Clercq, David Nack, C.H. Blanchard, and June Weisberger Blanchard.

The recognition award is administered by the Office of State Employment Relations.

About the Award

The award's emphasis is on recognizing "unsung heroines" in state service, thus providing encouragement and recognition to all women in state government. The award seeks to recognize women who share the following qualities: esteem from peers; acceptance of responsibility beyond the limits of the nominee's job description; sustained, extraordinary achievement of assigned tasks; performance recognition from clients; community service; self-improvement; and overcoming handicaps to performance.

Past Award Recipients

1 st Award	Ellen Vogel
2 nd Award	Ruth Louise-Hine
3 rd Award	Mabel Smith-Reed
4 th Award	Ruthe Badger
5 th Award	Jean Kioski
6 th Award	Daisy Cubias
7 th Award	Evie Duesterbeck
8 th Award	Vicki Bennington
9 th Award	Mary Ellen Franson
10 th Award	Debra Schwab
11 th Award	Annette Weissbach
12 th Award	Loriann Wunder
13 th Award	Jeanne Meyer
14 th Award	Celeste Hoze and Amy Rivers
15 th Award	Delores Ducklow
16 th Award	Sandee Pease
17 th Award	Lady Campbell
18 th Award	Harriet Schoenebeck
19 th Award	Janice Cummings and Kristine Martineau
20 th Award	Karen Morgan
21 st Award	Roxanne Nelezen Chronert
22 nd Award	Joan Sanzen
23 rd Award	Gena L. Jarr

Award Committee

Eileen Mershart
Ed Kehl
Tom Alt

Nominees for 2007

Joyce Abrego
Denise Bethe
Jennifer Bias
Jane Christenson
Mary Clark
Laurie Derse
Tammy Gorzlancyk
Connie Griesbach
Diane Griffin
Janet Haas
Jill Haglund
Cherie Imhoff
Lynne Judd
Diana Kasbaum
Mary Beth Kopidlansky
Kelly Langer
Lori Lanphere
Karla Leithoff
Susan Levy
Carol Long
Joellyn Merz
Peggy Meyers
Barbara Mikolajczyk
Mary Moore
Ruby Jefferson Moore
Karen Nelson
Linda Palmer
Marilyn Pierce
Mary Regel
Sarah Shapiro-Hurley
Judy Smith
Patricia Struck
Joanne Stumpf
Carol Tillotson
Ardis Wells
Lynn West

Program

Welcome

Jennifer Donnelly, Director
Office of State Employment Relations

Remarks

Lieutenant Governor Barbara Lawton
Eileen Mershart, CEO, YWCA of Madison

Presentation of Honorable Mention Awards

Presentation of Virginia Hart Special Recognition Award

Concluding Remarks

Jennifer Donnelly

~Please join us for refreshments after the program has concluded.~



Honorable Mentions

2007 Virginia Hart Special Recognition Award Recipient

Peggy Meyers
Department of Corrections
Stanley Correctional Institution

Peggy Meyers has worked with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections since 1990, most recently as the Education Director at Stanley Correctional Institution, and is highly respected by her staff and many others. Peggy is a member of the Correctional Educational Association, has served as President for the Wisconsin Chapter, and recently was elected as a Regional Assistant Director for the association.

She has emphasized the importance of literacy, as an advocate of both correctional education and community literacy, and coordinating meetings and training for literacy representatives throughout Wisconsin. Most recently Peg has been chosen to receive the 2007 Celebration of Literacy Award for Literary Advocate of the Year.

Outside of her state employment, she is also involved with her family; her church community (including serving on the board and as council president); and is a past president of the Jaycees. Recently Peggy has accepted a job with the Wisconsin Technical College System Board, and will be very much missed by her staff and colleagues at the Department of Corrections.

Mary Clark

*Librarian Supervisor
Department of Public Instruction
Division of Libraries, Technology & Community Learning – Madison*

Mary has worked with DPI for 20 years. Not only has she guided the implementation of the statewide WISCAT project (transitioning libraries from card catalogs to automated systems) and supervised the team of staff that worked on it, but her experience was also invaluable when it came to investigating and carrying out some of the most difficult aspects of the project's implementation as technology changed over the years.

For years, libraries and citizens across Wisconsin have used and depended upon WISCAT as an inter-library loan tool. WISCAT is an effective and affordable product which serves this purpose. Mary frequently answers questions from libraries in the field regarding how best to use WISCAT. She is friendly and patient with assisting libraries of all sizes and types, and is described as a "pioneer" who has a "quiet authority."

In the movie, "It's a Wonderful Life," George Bailey gets the chance to see what would have happened (or not happened, in some cases) had he not been born. Mary Clark deserves recognition for her "George Bailey moments" associated with WISCAT and the inter-library loan service.

Tammy Gorzlancyk

*Contract Specialist
Department of Transportation
Division of Transportation Systems Development – Green Bay*

Tammy began working with the DTSD northeast region in 1997. She is viewed with the regional and central offices as a statewide resource on the contract consulting process. Tammy oversees all aspects of the region's \$30 million consultant program to ensure all activities are correctly performed. She has taken the lead in developing a new electronic submittal process, saving the department time and streamlining the process. Tammy has also been instrumental in modifying the statewide scheduling of key contract solicitation dates.

Tammy is the current president of the Northeast Region Employee Association which sponsors several social events and acknowledges employees and family members during illnesses and deaths. She also has served on quality advisory and mentoring teams, and statewide construction management and consultant user groups.

She is frequently recognized for going the extra mile, testifying to her unselfish efforts to help others and her contagious “I can do it” attitude which she displays every day at work. Tammy has been involved in helping family members and co-workers through difficult medical challenges, and led the region’s efforts to send care packages to U.S. troops stationed overseas. Tammy has balanced all of these activities with her busy family life which includes her husband and three young children.

Connie Griesbach

*Real Estate Specialist – Senior
Department of Transportation
Division of Transportation Systems Development – Rhinelander*

Connie has worked for the Department of Transportation for 36 years and brings vast knowledge, experience and energy to her current position as a member of the DOT North Central Region real estate team, which is entrusted with the right-of-way purchase and property management of all state, U.S., and Interstate highway right-of-ways in the 18 counties which make up the North Central Region.

Connie’s leadership qualities parallel the DOT’s commitment to create transportation solutions through innovation and exceptional service. Her commitment to coordinate quality improvement projects and to professionally communicate with other agencies, the public, counties, elected officials, and citizens have directly influenced the success of DOT. Her persistence for excellence, through constant changes in management and technology, sets an example for everyone. Connie continues to excel in a traditionally male-dominated organization and is considered an invaluable unofficial mentor to many.

In addition to her employment, Connie also devotes time to her church, an area food pantry, the annual Christmas Tree program, and helping animals, along with many other volunteer efforts. She is also a dedicated and loving mother and wife. Words frequently used to describe Connie include “reliable, dedicated, decisive, self-motivated.” Her performance consistently exceeds expectations and she brings a common-sense approach as well.

Jill Haglund

*Early Childhood Consultant
Department of Public Instruction
Division of Libraries, Technology & Community Learning – Madison*

Jill has been a DPI employee for more than 15 years and has provided steady and visionary leadership to expand opportunities for young children. Her achievements include collaborative leadership in developing Wisconsin’s first Model Early Learning Standards which provide quality early learning opportunities to support children’s success in school and in the future.

Jill was also instrumental in leading the recent effort to redesign and equip the Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners network with action teams, steering committees and communication networks – a model other states are trying to duplicate. Jill has been the quiet but forceful voice for mobilizing and encouraging communities in 257 Wisconsin school districts to begin “4K” (four-year-old kindergarten) in 2007 – a dramatic increase from only 61 districts 11 years ago.

Jill’s work as a mentor and motivator, efforts on the national level with PreK-Now, and with other professional associations across the country and Wisconsin, exemplify her professionalism, generosity of spirit, and dedication to improving services for young children and their families.

Mary Moore

*Claims Manager
Department of Workforce Development
Division of Unemployment Insurance – Milwaukee*

At least 40 co-workers and staff of Mary Moore nominated her for this honor, on the basis of her dedication to serving customers and caring for her staff. Mary has worked for 32 years in public service, rising through the ranks to become one of the earliest African-American females to assume a management role. She approaches her responsibilities with a great zest for service – inspiring her staff in the process – and gives empathy and care to those seeking her assistance.

Mary is the state Claims Director for the Unemployment Insurance program in Wisconsin, overseeing two large Call Centers responsible for receiving over 600,000 unemployment applications annually, and managing staff who process 3.5 million weekly claims each year. She also travels far and wide to job sites where people are facing layoff to ensure they understand and will

benefit from state programs and opportunities for re-employment and unemployment insurance services.

A significant contribution of Mary's has helped the Unemployment Insurance Division transition operations from more than 50 full- and part-time offices into state-of-the-art, technology-based call centers which saves the state millions of dollars. Through this effort, many staff were uprooted and had to relocate to new positions in new cities with new responsibilities. Mary made these transitions less painful because of her supportive care and concern for her staff. She led the planning, coordination, and training efforts which have resulted in a model unemployment system which has attracted attention from 42 states, 5 countries, and 7 state/federal agencies.

Also, Mary offers her time and energy to community activities, including aiding people displaced to Wisconsin by Hurricane Katrina, fundraisers for food pantries, school supplies for Boys & Girls Clubs, and other charitable organizations. She has raised diversity awareness by hosting an annual Black History Month reception.

Carol Tillotson

Office Associate

Department of Transportation

Division of State Patrol – Tomah

For more than 36 years, Carol has served the State of Wisconsin and the DOT Southwest Region Tomah post by providing critical support staff assistance. The level of skill and professionalism which she displays on a daily basis is truly remarkable. Carol has taken on many additional duties and responsibilities as a result of staff reductions and implementation of new technology.

Through all of these changes, Carol has maintained a positive and professional attitude and work ethic. Although she is extremely busy with her workload, she is always polite and courteous when dealing with customers and staff. She has great experience and knowledge of day-to-day operations and is said to be the "glue that holds us all together here at the State Patrol Tomah post."

Carol is the first person the general public speaks to when they come to the Tomah post for answers. She is experienced, reliable, professional, dedicated, and knowledgeable. Carol even helped out with the workload for a co-worker who had surgery and treatment for cancer.

2007 Senate Joint Resolution 44

(excerpt)

Relating to: the life and public service of Virginia B. Hart

Resolved by the Senate, the assembly concurring,

That the members of the Wisconsin legislature commend Virginia Hart for her decades of public service, her trailblazing efforts to advance the causes of women and working people, and her grace and spirit; express their deep sorrow at her death; and extend their sincere condolences to her family and friends.
