

339 New Leicester Hwy., Suite 140
Asheville, NC 28806
p: 828.251.6622 | 800.727.0557
f: 828.251.6353 | w: landofsky.org



PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Nathan Ramsey
Email: nathan@landofsky.org Mobile: 828-768-3216
**Land of Sky Regional Council Leadership Awards
November 29, 2023 Board of Delegates Meeting**

Land of Sky Regional Council's Annual Awards were conferred during the December Board of Delegates Meeting on November 29, 2023. The Robert G. Parrish, Sr. Intergovernmental Relations Award, The Charles H. Campbell Regional Leadership Award and The Robert E. Shepherd Excellence in Local Government Award were presented by the Council. In addition, there were three Extraordinary Public Leadership Awards and twelve Extraordinary Legislative Service Awards conferred this year.

The Robert G. Parrish, Sr. Intergovernmental Relations Award is given in honor of the late Council Chairman and first Mayor of Fletcher. It is presented at the discretion of the Council's Executive Committee to an elected or appointed official who has made significant contributions to improving intergovernmental relations. This year the award was presented to Transylvania County Board of Commissioners Chairman **Jason Chappell**, for his contributions to the Land of Sky Region, and the State of North Carolina. Chairman Chappell served as the board chair for Land of Sky Regional Council from 2011-12. He has been a long-time member of the Land of Sky Regional Council Board of Delegates, and he is currently serving on the Executive Committee. Chairman Chappell is in his fifth term as a Transylvania County Commissioner.

The Charles H. Campbell Regional Leadership Award was named for four-time Council Chairman and long-time Brevard Mayor who himself received a national award for regional leadership in 1977. The award was dedicated in 1983 to annually honor an outstanding contributor to the betterment of Western North Carolina and the Land of Sky Region. The Council's Executive Committee awards it to another Council Member who has made a major long-term contribution to the Council and its governance. This year the award was presented to Mayor of Town of Marshall and former Land of Sky Regional Council Executive Committee member and former Town of Marshall Administrator **Nancy Allen**, for her dedication and leadership on behalf of Land of Sky Regional Council and Western North Carolina.

The Robert E. Shepherd Excellence in Local Government Excellence Award is presented at the Council's discretion to a local government professional who has shown great leadership in improving governance and service delivery, especially in the areas of regional cooperation and collaboration. Dedicated in 2016, this award honors Land of Sky Regional Council's first Executive Director of 30 years. This year's award was presented to the City of Asheville Equity and Inclusion Director **Brenda Mills** for her dedication and service to greatly enhance the quality of life for the citizens of the City of Asheville and our region. Ms. Mills previously served on the Land of Sky Regional Council Board of Delegates representing the City and Asheville. Prior to her employment with the City of Asheville, Ms. Mills worked for Buncombe County Government. She is retiring soon after a 30+ year career in public service dedicated to the betterment of our region.

Extraordinary Public Service Award

This year, the Council bestowed this award on three local elected officials. Transylvania County Commissioner **Larry Chapman** has served as a County Commissioner from 2010 – 2016 and 2018 to the present. He has served as Chairman of the Board of Commissioners from 2016 - 2018, and he is currently serving on the Land of Sky Regional Council Board of Delegates and the French Broad Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Commissioner Chapman served in the US Marines Corps. He retired after 30 years of service active duty and in the Marine Corps Reserves as a Colonel. Town of Woodfin Mayor **Jerry VeHaun** has served our region for over 50 years. He has served as Mayor since 2003. He also served as Director of Emergency Services for Buncombe County Government for 47 years, retiring in 2019. Mayor VeHaun was honored by Land of Sky Regional Council in 2019 with the Robert G. Parrish Sr. Intergovernmental Relations Award. Mayor VeHaun is retiring as Mayor of the Town of Woodfin, and his record of public service is unparalleled. Buncombe County Register of Deeds **Drew Reisinger** has led efforts to increase access to public records and to celebrate the history of the Cherokee with “As Long As The Grass Shall Grow” and African Americans in Buncombe County. His work to highlight slave deeds to acknowledge the history of slavery in Buncombe County has led to the creation of a statewide database.

Extraordinary Legislative Service Award

This past legislative session resulted in historic infrastructure investments to benefit our region’s local governments in the amount of over \$70 million. These infrastructure investments will benefit local water, wastewater, and stormwater systems. Local governments in our region which have benefited from these state investments include the City of Brevard, City of Hendersonville, Town of Marshall, Town of Mars Hill, Town of Rosman, Town of Weaverville, Madison County and Transylvania County. Land of Sky Regional Council Board of Delegates confers the Extraordinary Legislative Service Award to all members of the region’s NC General Assembly legislative delegation including **Senator Kevin Corbin, Senator Warren Daniel, Senator Ralph Hise, Senator Julie Mayfield and Senator Timothy D. Moffitt and Representative Eric Ager, Representative Jennifer Balkcom, Representative Mike Clampitt, Representative Jake Johnson, Representative Mark Pless, Representative Lindsey Prather, and Representative Caleb Rudow**. Their unwavering dedication to the citizens of Western North Carolina and our state has earned the respect of both the community and their colleagues. Land of Sky Regional Council is grateful for their exemplary leadership and dedication to public service.

Photos from yesterday’s award ceremony are available at the following link: [20231129-LOS Regional Council Meeting - Google Photos](#)

