



South Carolina Association of Counties

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SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS PRESENTS GOLDEN PALMETTO AWARD TO OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

The South Carolina Commission on Disabilities and Special Needs presented the Golden Palmetto Award to Oconee County Council on Friday, July 31 for being the most supportive of people with disabilities during 2008.

Oconee County Council Chairman Reg Dexter accepted the award on behalf of Oconee County Council and the county's residents.

"Oconee County has a long track record of commitment to people with disabilities," said Kelly Hanson Floyd, S.C. Department of Disabilities and Special Needs Commission Chairman, who presented the award at the 42nd Annual Conference of the South Carolina Association of Counties (July 30 - Aug. 2). "They are champions through their advocacy, financial support and inclusion of people with disabilities. They richly deserve this honor."

DDSN is the state agency that provides services to people with mental retardation and related disabilities, autism, traumatic brain injury and spinal cord injury. The Golden Palmetto Award is presented annually to the South Carolina county that has provided exemplary support to people with disabilities during the previous year. It is the agency's way of thanking county governments for making the lives of people with disabilities a priority.

Oconee County's substantial financial commitment has allowed many individuals with disabilities to continue receiving services. This makes a huge difference in people's lives, because it often means the difference between a family being able to care for their loved one at home verses having to rely on the state for placement.

Oconee County also participated as a major partner in developing a new recreation area designed especially for people with disabilities. They cleared land, built a road, provided materials and labor for grading and paving a parking area, and added gravel to an access roadway. But they went above and beyond. They came in under budget on this project, which is commendable in its own right; but, instead of keeping the savings, they used them to landscape and further enhance the area.

"This selfless act of maximizing their contribution clearly demonstrates Oconee County's leadership and commitment to helping people with disabilities," Floyd said. "It also reflects the successful partnerships between local disabilities agencies and their county councils across the state."

DDSN has presented the Golden Palmetto Award annually since 1975.

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