Women of Achievement inducts its 24th class

Annual series honors those showing vision, charity, leadership

By CRAIG BROWN
Columbian staff writer

Women whose service and achievement span nine decades were honored as Women of Achievement at a Thursday luncheon.

The “Visionary Women: Shaping Generations” luncheon was the 24th in an annual series sponsored by Clark College and the YWCA of Clark County. Nearly 450 people attended the event at the Hilton Vancouver Washington. Over the years, nearly 200 women have received the honor.

“You must pay rent for the space you take up on Earth,” said the oldest honoree, 94-year-old Jean Lacey, quoting one of her mother’s favorite expressions.

This year’s honorees:
- Dr. Susan Davis, medical director and board president of the Free Clinic of Southwest Washington and also tends to people at the New Heights Church-sponsored clinic and at Larch Corrections Center.
- Patricia Downey, teacher and adviser at Mountain View High School. Downey teaches advanced Spanish and English and is the Key Club adviser.
- Jean Lacey, the first executive director of YWCA of Clark County.

On the Web
www.cvtt.org

On TV
The program will be televised on CVTV, cable channel 23, at 1 p.m. Saturday.
In her role, Lacey established a number of philanthropic and social service programs and is a former Clark County First Citizen.

- Kris Miller, vice president and relationship manager at West Coast Bank. Among her other roles, she is involved with Junior Achievement, teaching about the market economy at local schools.
- Tracy Reilly Kelly, program manager for mature learning and continuing education at Clark College. She was nominated for “a lifelong commitment to social justice work.”
- Elizabeth Asahi Sato, author and owner of Rise to Excellence, a consulting company. She has volunteered for many community-based organizations over the years.
- Jeannie Stewart, Vancouver City Council member. “As women we need to strive to be respected, not just appreciated,” she said.
- Susan Torres, teacher and mentor in Clark College’s English as a Second Language program. A former Peace Corps volunteer, she’s been involved in programs to provide shelter to the homeless, homes for those with limited incomes, and with the American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life.

Also honored were three high school girls as Young Women of Achievement. Each received a $1,500 scholarship. They are:

- Sarah Brown, Vancouver School of Arts and Academics. She coordinated the school’s annual “Day of Caring” and raised money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation.
- Mariah Hairston, Skyview High School. She is a member of the Clark County Youth Commission and is a nominee for the 2008 George C. Marshall Youth Leadership Award.
- Navnit Virdi, Heritage High School. She’s been involved in a number of clubs and organizations to promote multicultural understanding and peace.

Five other teens were presented with Community Service Awards. They were Kelsey Griffie, Heritage High School; Katie Klaus, Ridgefield High School; Sarah Klemz, Prairie High School; Corrie Stum, Columbia River High School; and Victoria Yeh, Mountain View High School.

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