

# Bank of Granite

NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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## **BANK OF GRANITE'S TWELFTH ASSOCIATE OF THE YEAR AWARDS BANQUET SET FOR APRIL 25**

Twelve years ago, Tom McNeel and John Forlines were discussing how Bank of Granite could recognize an important group of public school employees who make Caldwell County's School System one of the best in North Carolina. The result of the conversation was the Annual Associate of the Year Awards Program.

Now, at Cedar Rock Country Club on Tuesday, April 25, Bank of Granite, for the twelfth consecutive year, will honor Associates of the Year in each of the system's twenty-four schools and other departments and select one of these folks as the overall winner of the Associate of the Year Award. The program points out the importance of the associate personnel, employees who, along with principals and teachers, contribute so much to the success of Caldwell County Schools year after year.

The Associate of the Year program is under the direction of Karen Warlick, Senior Vice President and Human Resource Director of Bank of Granite, who has named a committee which has interviewed the nominees from each school in order to determine the final winner of the outstanding Associate of the Year. The person selected from each school receives a certificate and a pin at the banquet. The overall winner receives a plaque and a \$1,000 check from Bank of Granite to be used as they see fit to improve their school. Members of the committee, in addition to Warlick are Bill Armfield, Helen Beam, Kelly Melton, Felicia Simmons, 2005 award winner Wendy Smith, and Libby Brown, Caldwell County Schools Community Relations Coordinator.

2006 marks the 12<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Associate of the Year Program. Past winners of "Associate of the Year" for the county are 1995—Freddy Colbert, Lower Creek Elementary; 1996—Dora Lee Caudle, Davenport School; 1997—Vicki Parker, William Lenoir Middle School; 1998—Charmion Frizzell, Baton Elementary; 1999—Beverly Barnes, West Lenoir Elementary; 2000—Susan Wilson, Gateway School; 2001—Linda Beane, Hibriten High School; 2002—Danny Cassavaugh, Transportation Department; 2003—Laura Bolick, Collettsville School; 2004—Nadine Jewell, Whitnel Elementary; and 2005—Wendy Smith, Sawmills Elementary School.

John A. Forlines, Jr., Bank of Granite Chairman Emeritus, said the bank was pleased to honor these associates every year. "The Associate of the Year Program is one of the most important community relations projects the bank does every year. We are so proud of Dr. McNeel, our entire school system, and all those who do such a fine job in educating our children."

Caldwell County is the only county in the state that gives an Associate of the Year Award.

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For further information, contact Karen Warlick, Senior Vice President and Director of Human Resources at (828) 315-2870.