



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NOMINATIONS WELCOMED FOR W. T. “DOC” BALLARD AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC HEALTH

The Northeast Texas Public Health District (NET Health) announces that nominations are now being accepted for the 2017 W.T. “Doc” Ballard Award for Excellence in Public Health. This 18th annual award will honor an individual or organization exemplifying the concept of public health distinguished by dedication of protecting and promoting the health of the community. The nominee does not need to be a Public Health professional. Such service may be in the area of civic, cultural, health, welfare, religious or philanthropic endeavors.

NET Health established the W.T. “Doc” Ballard Award for Excellence in Public Health as a lasting recognition of Mr. Ballard’s contribution to Public Health. W. T. “Doc” Ballard began his career in 1946 and as a registered professional engineer for the Texas Department of Health he was a leader in protecting the health of the public. His expertise and administrative skills ensured the environmental controls crucial to the quality and safety of public drinking water and public food service; the proper disposal of wastewater and solid waste; and the monitoring of radiation. As a charter member of the NET Health Board of Directors, “Doc” served as a key figure in the formation and establishment of the Health District. He continued his service as Chairman of the Board and was a mentor to many. Throughout his career he was an active member of many professional organizations dedicated to improving the quality of Public Health. Both professionally and personally, “Doc” worked hard to help both the citizens of Northeast Texas and the entire state of Texas.

This award is NET Health’s highest accolade for outstanding service contributing significantly to the enhancement of Public Health. Previous recipients of this award are:

- 2000 – Luther Yates, volunteer for the Health District, PATH and Pfizer’s Share the Care Program
- 2001 – Brenda Elrod, Environmental Health Director for the Northeast Texas Public Health District
- 2002 – Richard J. “Dick” De Santo for his outstanding work with the MHRM programs
- 2003 – Susan Bennett, R.D., Texas Department of State Health Services, for her work on the importance of folic acid and its positive impact on prenatal care for healthier newborn babies
- 2004 – David Knowles, M.D., (awarded posthumously) for his lifelong dedication to healthcare
- 2005 – Keith McCoy, Ph.D., in recognition of his commitment to public health education
- 2006 – John English, M.D., for his outstanding work with the Bethesda Clinic
- 2007 – Bennie Webster, Ed.D., for her service to the Community Health Clinics of Northeast Texas
- 2007 – Marvin Ellis (awarded posthumously), for exemplifying the concept of Public Health through his many stories in the Tyler Morning Telegraph
- 2008 – Robert Westbrook, for his service on the Health District Board of Directors, his involvement in the Texas Restaurant Association, and his work as part of the Tyler Smoking Ordinance Task Force
- 2009 – Jonathan MacClements, M.D., for his service above and beyond the call of duty as the Smith County Health Authority as well as the leadership and aid that he provided during the hurricane events of 2008.
- 2010 – Ben Bridges, M.D., for his dedication to NET Health’s Healthy Living Initiative and educating the public on the epidemic of obesity and sedentary lifestyle
- 2010 – Reverend Ralph Caraway, Sr., for work to improve the health of his church family and the community as a whole; and for his leadership and support to NET Health concerning the H1N1 influenza epidemic
- 2011 – Dave Berry for his outstanding service and dedication to promoting and protecting the health of the community by spearheading the Fit City Challenge, a media movement educating people on the many

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aspects of fitness

- 2012 – Harold Higgins for his 35 years in Public Health, including his service as Immunization Program Manager for DSHS and Senior Deputy Director for NET Health, where he developed the Public Health Emergency Preparedness department and provided leadership during Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Ike
- 2013 – Dr. Kirk A. Calhoun for his commitment to improving public health, addressing health disparities, and advocating for public health at the local, state, and national levels
- 2014 – Barbara Bass for her service as City of Tyler Mayor and her true commitment to protect and promote the health of the public
- 2015 – Dr. Paul McGaha, who has demonstrated a true commitment to protect and promote the health of the public. For 30 years, Dr. McGaha has been a leader in public health in Texas and is sincerely dedicated to improving the lives of the citizens in East Texas.
- 2016 – Dr. Thomas A. Lowery for his relentless advocacy and leadership in seeking to improve indigent health care in Northeast Texas.

Examples of the areas of public health service may include but are not limited to:

- Environmental Health/Food Safety
- Public Health Nursing
- Nutrition
- Public Health Programs/Administration
- Public Health Engineering
- Health Promotion
- Water Hygiene
- Preventive Health & Education

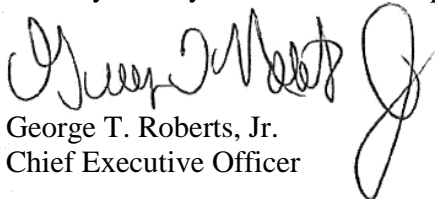
Judges for the selection of the award will be two members of the Northeast Texas Public Health District Board of Directors, the Chief Executive Officer of the Health District, and one person each from the Texas Department of State Health Services Region 4/5N and the Smith County Extension Office.

Nominations for this award may be made either by an individual or an organization. The following items are required for all nominations:

1. Nomination letter to include a 250 word or less description of why the nominee is deserving of this award. Descriptions should be concise and specific and should demonstrate the nominee's work to create a positive impact on the health of the public.
2. The nomination must be mailed to Northeast Texas Public Health District, Attn: W.T. "Doc" Ballard Award, 315 N. Broadway, Suite 404, Tyler, TX 75702.
3. A one page biographical sketch (or curriculum vitae) of the nominee.
4. No more than 5 supporting documents such as letters of support, journal, articles, etc.
5. One 4" X 5" photograph of the nominee.

All nominations must be received by Friday, March 31, 2017. Should you need additional information please contact George Roberts, Chief Executive Officer, at 903-535-0036. This year's honoree will be announced at the Northeast Texas Public Health District Board meeting on Thursday, April 27, 2017.

Thank you for your interest and support of Public Health.



George T. Roberts, Jr.
Chief Executive Officer

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