



MEDIA RELEASE

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2019 GRADD Award Winners Unveiled at 51st Annual Dinner: *City of Beaver Dam, Roxi Witt, Judge/Executive Brad Schneider, and Congressman James Comer*

One area community and three local individuals were recognized September 23, 2019, at GRADD's 51st Annual Dinner at the Beaver Dam Amphitheater in Beaver Dam.



The **City of Beaver Dam** was named the 2019 GRADD Community of the Year, for their "DBKY Ambassador Program". Help was needed behind the scenes at the amphitheater such as setting up chairs and tents, manning informational booths, scanning tickets, selling concessions and the list goes on. While the Tourism Commission could have hired people or contracted out the event/concert support staff functions, they felt to make all the events more authentic they needed to

get the citizens involved. The program was created in February and kicked off with multiple informational meetings. It provided individuals with a list of possible volunteer opportunities and asked each to check off those they were most interested in. The first two informational meetings netted over 60 volunteers signing up! Volunteers received training pertaining to their area of interest. In return, volunteers are able to receive tickets to future shows. While the Beaver Dam Amphitheater requires the largest amount of manpower, BDKY Ambassadors are available to assist with other activities such as the Strawberry Festival, Christmas Festival, and Sounds on 2nd and much more. To date, there are over 90 volunteers who have provided over 3,000 man hours of labor for various concerts and events.



Roxi Witt, received the Charles Reid Regional Citizenship Award. Over the years Witt has directed the International Bluegrass Music Awards, helped secure the \$100,000 Impact 100 grant, assisted, supervised, and expanded educational opportunities such as Arts Teach Kids; Arts in the AM; the Youth Adult Theatre Academy, and summer camps for area children. She also helped establish a Bachelor of Theatre Arts degree that is offered at the three local colleges in Owensboro and she was awarded the Governor's School for the Arts Education Award in 2017. Her leadership at the helm of the RiverPark Center has reached far beyond providing entertainment for the area. Her love for the arts and dedication to ensuring that school aged children to adults from all our surrounding areas have access to arts have made a significant impact on the GRADD region.



Judge/Executive Brad Schneider, as a leader in economic development, Judge Schneider has been vital in generating support at the state and national level for the I-69 bridge project and maintaining momentum toward completion of the I-69 corridor through the GRADD region. Prior to becoming Henderson County Judge/Executive in November of 2016, he spent the previous two-plus years as CEO of Kyndle, a regional economic development agency. Before the creation of Kyndle in 2014, he was president of the Henderson-Henderson County Chamber of Commerce for five years and was named Kentucky Chamber Executive of the Year for 2015. He is a founding board member of BridgeLink, which advocates for the building of the I-69

Bridge over the Ohio River. Judge Schneider has played a pivotal role in regional economic development through the I-69 project, he has also been vital to the success of projects such as the Ohio Drive widening project and the Henderson City/County Airport runway extension project.



Congressman James Comer, has been serving the people of Western Kentucky for nearly two decades, having first been elected to the Kentucky House of Representatives in 2000. In 2012, after six terms in the House, he was selected to serve as Commissioner of Agriculture by then Governor Steve Beshear. Since 2016 he has represented Kentucky's 1st District in the U.S. House. He has been instrumental as a member of the 2018 Farm Bill Conference Committee, paving the way for removing hemp from the controlled substances list and helping pass a Farm Bill that protects crop insurance, provides relief for dairy farmers and provides certainty and stability for American farmers.

He strongly supports the I-69 Ohio River Crossing Project and has advocated for the project at both the state and federal level. As a member of the Oversight and Reform Committee he has taken part in several hearings on combatting opioid abuse as well as childhood trauma and drug abuse. He also is deeply concerned about the challenges facing rural America and its access to broadband internet access.

The 51st Annual GRADD Dinner was sponsored by Independence Bank, Atmos Energy, Century Aluminum, Canteen, KY Utilities, OMU, Owensboro Health, Phil Brown Insurance Agency, and Q-Wireless.

The Green River Area Development District (GRADD) is a regional planning agency serving the communities of Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, McLean, Ohio, Union, and Webster Counties. GRADD offers assistance in the fields of aging, health, and social services; community and economic development; transportation planning; and workforce development. Our mission is to afford local governments and citizens a regional forum to identify issues and opportunities, and to provide leadership in planning and implementing programs to improve the quality of life in our district.

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