

Florida's Top Private Residential Communities Honored at Communities of Excellence Awards

7th Annual Awards Features New "Community Video Showcase" Category



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WESTON, FL--(Marketwired - May 18, 2015) - Winners of the prestigious Florida Communities of Excellence Awards, honoring the state's top residential communities, were announced here on May 15. The Awards are bestowed on volunteers and professional managers who have worked all year to improve the quality of life for their residents. This year, 27 communities from across the state were recognized.

On Friday, more than 500 board members, managers, and industry suppliers were on hand at the Bonaventure Resort & Spa's Conference Center in Weston for the gala celebration. This year saw the largest field of entrants and the most corporate sponsors in the history of the Awards, and included the screening of the top three entries in the new "Community Video Showcase" category for the best community-produced videos.

"Every year the judges' work seems to get harder," said Alan PENCHANSKY, Executive Director of the Awards. "A superb community is competing against another outstanding community and the margins are often very small. This year, for the second time only, the judges declared a tie in one of the categories."

"The Awards are a highly anticipated annual event for Florida's private residential communities and the numerous businesses and industries that serve their needs," said Ken Direktor, Chair of the Community Association Law practice of Becker & Poliakoff, a founding sponsor of the Awards together with the *Florida Community Association Journal*. "Each year, they spotlight the resourcefulness, creativity and dedication of volunteer board members and professional managers in addressing the challenges that condominiums and homeowner associations face."

Now in its seventh year, the Awards focuses on innovative practices in communities from across the state. Winners are chosen from small communities (up to 400 units) and large communities by a panel of independent experts. The judges include representatives of leading state and local government departments and agencies, and officials at industry and non-profit organizations. Judges also come from the fields of journalism, resource management, education, public safety and public advocacy.

The list of 2015 Communities of Excellence Awards winners follows. Descriptions of each of the winning entries is at <http://communitiesofexcellence.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/2015CommunitiesofExcellenceAwardsWinners.pdf>

Water Conservation - Water management and conservation programs.

- Large (401+ units): Stonecrest POA (Summerfield)
- Small: Apogee Beach Condominium Association (Hollywood)

Energy Efficiency - Energy management and conservation programs

- Large: On Top of the World Communities (Ocala)
- Small: City 24 (Miami)

Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ (Presented by ValleyCrest Landscape Maintenance) - Environmentally sound landscape, wetland, preserve, and lake management policies.

- Large: Evergrene (Palm Beach Gardens)
- Small: Madeira Cove Condominium Association (Madeira Beach)

Civic Volunteerism & Advocacy (Presented by VolunteerFlorida) - Supporting local and regional non-profit and charitable causes.

- Large: Fiddlesticks Country Club (Ft. Myers)
- Small: K. Hovnanian's Four Seasons at Delray Beach HOA (Delray Beach)

Communications & Community (Presented by Hotwire Communications) - Promoting positive community relations through effective use of email, newsletters, social media, Web site and other communications.

- Large: SouthWood Residential Community Association (Tallahassee)
- Small: Mirror Lakes, a 55+ Adult Community (Boynton Beach)

Family Friendly Programs & Initiatives - Promoting family participation and well-being.

- Large (three-way tie):
- Heritage Park of St. Augustine (St. Augustine)
- Independence (Winter Garden)
- Pembroke Falls HOA (Pembroke Pines)
- Small: Buckingham Estates (Sanford)

Safety & Security - Programs to protect and ensure the safety of residents and property within the community.

- Large: Island Walk of Naples (Naples)
- Small: L'Hermitage I Condominium (Ft. Lauderdale)

Disaster Preparedness - Protecting lives and property, as well as for community restoration in the aftermath of an emergency.

- Large: Kings Point (Sun City Center)
- Small: Trump Hollywood (Hollywood)

Financial Innovation - Policies and procedures to ease the impact of financial burdens during challenging economic times.

- Large: St. George Plantation (St. George Island)
- Small: Venetian Condominium (Ft. Lauderdale)

The Comeback Kid - Recognizing communities whose boards and managers have developed and implemented successful turnaround programs by revitalizing distressed properties.

- Large: The Charter Club (Miami)
- Small: The Towers Condominium Association (Ft. Myers)

Trendsetter Award - Innovation in any area not covered in the existing categories.

- Blue Condo (Miami)
- Pelican Lake Property Owners Association (Naples)
- Stonecrest POA (Summerfield)
- Timber Pines Community Association (Spring Hill)

Community Video Showcase - Three winners

- Bellaggio (Lake Worth)
- On Top of the World Communities (Ocala)
- Vanderbilt Community Association (Naples)

Community of the Year (Condominium) - Venetian Condominium (Ft. Lauderdale)

Community of the Year (HOA) - Stonecrest POA (Summerfield)

The 2015 awards are supported by these companies, which are dedicated to meeting the needs of residents of condominiums and homeowner associations:

- **Premier sponsors:** Associa, FirstService Residential, Sentry Management
- **Diamond sponsors:** Hotwire Communications, ValleyCrest Landscape Maintenance, VolunteerFlorida
- **Gold sponsors:** Association Reserves, Atlantic | Pacific Management, Castle Group, KW Property Management & Consulting
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Wetland Management, MyVendorCenter.com, PD Painting, Inc., Popular Association Banking, Progressive Waste Solutions, Shomere Security Consultants, UgMO Technologies, U.S. Security Associates, Vector Security.

About The Florida Communities of Excellence Awards

The Florida Communities of Excellence Awards is a unique program that shines a spotlight on the positive and productive initiatives taking place in condominiums, homeowners associations and cooperatives across Florida. Now in its seventh year, the independently judged program recognizes the top communities in the state for their accomplishments, while enabling others to learn from their example. For more information, please visit www.communitiesofexcellence.net

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