Organization of the Year – Skyline CAP, Inc.

As the area’s designated community action agency, Skyline CAP has been working to improve the lives of those in need and help them become self-sufficient for more than 30 years. Skyline CAP’s programs and services include Head Start to prepare children for school and provide support for overall family well-being; housing services that include rent assistance, housing counseling, and affordable rentals; a Healthy Families program to provide home-based family support and coaching services for new and expectant families to help them meet the challenges of parenting and create stable, nurturing environments for their children; and Project Discovery, a post-secondary education and career readiness program that encourages students to graduate from high school and provides resources to help them achieve success. With the support of volunteers and community partners who support the agency’s mission, Skyline CAP’s dedicated staff provided life-changing services to nearly 1,800 at-risk individuals across 17 counties, and 370 people in Madison alone.

Cultural Enrichment Award – Caitlyn Racer

Caitlyn Racer is an educator for Madison County Public Schools. This is her 10th year in education, and she has been both a classroom teacher and EL teacher, predominantly working with multilingual learners. Currently, she is the EL Program Coordinator for Madison County Public Schools, where she has worked for three years. She creates instructional learning plans for multilingual students across the division and provides academic support to help them reach their academic goals.

Caitlyn, along with her high school students, plans and implements a yearly community picnic at Hoover Ridge for her students and their families. It is an opportunity for her students and their families to learn about various community resources, including the Madison Public Library, the Madison Literacy Foundation, the Dolly Parton Imagination Library Book program, MESA, and Madison County Parks and Recreation. It also provides families with the opportunity to share their culture and experiences with other families and school personnel. Caitlyn hopes to continue working closely with Madison Parks and Recreation to get more of her students involved in their programs and events. Additionally, Caitlyn hopes to plan other events to highlight the cultural diversity of her students and their families and showcase them with the community. Her favorite thing about her job is getting to know students and their families on a personal level and being able to provide community resources and opportunities for them to be involved in the wonderful community of Madison County and beyond.

Community Hero Award – Celene Pumphrey

Celene has lived in Madison for the past 24 years and is very thankful to the Lord for leading her here. She left city life when she married her husband Andy. They settled here in his hometown, where they raised their son, Nick. Celene has had the honor of serving MESA, first as a volunteer driver, picking up donated food for the pantry, beginning in 2012. She has been on the MESA Board for the past two years.

Celene is active in her Church - Mount Carmel of Haywood. She also serves on the Madison Strong Community Coalition, helping with the Cocoa with a Cop event, and loves to volunteer at community events like Madison Day, where dedicated volunteers come together for one day to repair homes for neighbors in need. Celene has had the opportunity, through MESA and her 11 years at Social Services, to have a front-row seat to the thing that makes Madison County such a special community - the way people come together in times of need.

Environmental Stewardship Award – Woman’s Club of Madison

The Woman's Club of Madison, VA is an organization dedicated to community improvement by enhancing the lives of others through volunteer service. The original Madison Woman's Club was formed in 1958, and then reorganized in 2022, allowing them to focus more on Madison County than being part of the National organization. Conservation projects have always been an area of interest and concern of the Woman's Club, from planting trees, helping purchase outdoor play equipment, and learning about native plants and ecology.

In 2022, members began an initiative through NexTrex, a recycling program through Trex. Members of the club collected plastic material from the community and would turn it in for recycling. For each 500 lbs. of plastic collected, Trex would donate a bench to the charity. In 2023, the Woman's Club began collecting plastic with and for Madison County Parks and Recreation and Hoover Ridge Park. They collected over 2000 lbs. of plastic material that provided 3 new benches to Hoover Ridge. Because of this program, Madison Parks and Recreation received over $1,100 in new park benches!

In addition to this environmental project, the Woman’s Club also provided scholarships to local students, donation to the Youth Sports Scholarship Fund, donations to the Hoover Ridge Outdoor Recreation Center Project, and donations to other local non-profits including the Madison Learning Center, Boys & Girls Club of Madison, the Madison Free Clinic, the Madison Volunteer Fire Department, MESA, and local educators. They also made 85 fleece blankets for babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at the University of Virginia Medical Center and sponsor local Bloodmobiles.

Community Service Award – Chris Artale

Chris has long been a pillar of the community since he moved to Madison in 1982. Of his many contributions as a small business owner, coach, board member and philanthropist, he has made significant contributions to Madison Parks and Recreation and Madison Youth Sports on the youth roller hockey program.

Growing up in the Northeast, Chris was more familiar with the game than most folks in Madison. With a grand idea and several like-minded colleagues, he started the Madison Roller Hockey League in 1995. Chris served as a coach and commissioner of the league for 12 years. During that time, he helped grow the league from only 4 teams of kids from all age groups to a Junior and Senior division with 4 teams in each.

Chris remains involved with the hockey program to this day. He currently sits on the Support Hoover Ridge Board, teaches referee clinics and provides assistance and counsel to the current hockey leadership. He has also been instrumental in planning and fundraising for the new hockey rink which will be part of the Hoover Ridge Outdoor Recreation Center. Over $50,000 of the hockey rink relocation funds have been donated because of Chris Artale and his dedication to our youth hockey program.

Corporate Philanthropy Award – Cardinal Home Center – Madison

Cardinal Home Center supports local organizations and groups that make a large impact through a wide range of philanthropic efforts.

Specifically in Madison, Cardinal Home Center provided sponsorships for youth sports teams, Madison County High School Athletics, Music in the Park, and other various events and activities throughout the community. They have also provided materials at cost to help with both Habitat for Humanity and Madison Day improvements at Hoover Ridge Park. In partnership with their sister company, Madison Wood, Cardinal has also donated bulk mulch to various Parks and Rec projects throughout the years.

Youth Impact Award – Katherine Johnson

Katherine Johnson has dedicated her life to working with youth. In 1973, she left home to pursue opportunities uncommon for many African Americans at that time. With a dream fueled by the encouragement of her mother, she arrived at JMU with little financial resources and uncertain prospects of graduation. Immersed in a culture and community different from her own, she found solace in playing basketball.

Teaching had always been her passion, and upon graduating from JMU, she seized a teaching and coaching position at Madison County High School, where she dedicated 36 years of service. Later, she transitioned to a role as the ISS coordinator. She has officiated youth sports and served as an employee of the Boys and Girls Club for nearly 14 years. Reflecting on her journey, she attributes her success to her faith and acknowledges teaching as her inherent talent, with basketball paving the path to it. Choosing to work with youth, she aims to instill confidence and drive in them, helping them to recognize their potential to achieve their dreams. Witnessing the fulfillment of her former students' aspirations fills her with joy and pride, reaffirming her belief in the transformative power of education and mentorship.

Educator of the Year – Jennifer Taylor

Jennifer Taylor began her teaching career at Criglersville Elementary School where she taught Special Education and Second Grade. She transferred to Madison Primary School where she served as an Instructional Coach, and taught Kindergarten and Preschool. She retired in June 2023 after 40 years of service.

She continues to work as a substitute teacher and a tutor at Waverly Yowell Elementary.

She enjoys volunteering at MESA and is a member of Rose Park United Methodist Church. She is also a recent member of the Madison County Education Foundation.

Coach of the Year – Frankie Lewis

Coach Frankie Lewis is a 1993 graduate of Madison County High School and former Football, Basketball and Track athlete. He started the Strong Quality Basketball Association (SQBA) in 1996 for the purpose of creating a positive outlet for young people in the Central Virginia area. SQBA has expanded to work with young people throughout the state of Virginia through tournament play, college visits and showcases. Coach Lewis has not only coached but mentored youth for almost 30 years. He has also served as a Basketball Coach at the Woodberry Forest School for 15 years. Coach Lewis just completed his first season as a Volunteer Assistant for the Wetsel Middle School Girls Basketball team which finished the season with its most wins in a season in almost 10 years. Coach Lewis takes pride in developing not only basketball players but young men and women that excel in life when their sports careers are over. His goal is to teach, develop and mentor good athletes but even better people and leaders.

Business of the Year – Cowan Roofing

In 2023, Cowan Roofing made a remarkable impact on its community by generously donating over $15,000 to various local organizations and engaging in meaningful projects. The company took a hands-on approach by donating all roofing materials and labor for a Habitat for Humanity project in Orange, helping provide a safe and comfortable home for a deserving family. Additionally, Cowan Roofing supported Madison Day through donations of materials and labor, contributing to the success of this community event. Additionally, they performed an extensive roof repair for a veteran in Greene, ensuring they had a safe and durable roof over their head. These actions reflect Cowan Roofing's deep commitment to community support and making a tangible difference in the lives of those around them. Cowan Roofing just hit their 10-year anniversary February 7.