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First State Bank and Chamber Honor Elite in Workforce

The Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber recognized 17 area employees and supervisors for their outstanding efforts in the workplace at the World Class Employee Recognition Breakfast on Nov. 8 at the James H. Rainwater Conference Center. The event, presented by First State Bank and Trust Company, featured Georgia Commissioner of Labor Mark Butler as the keynote speaker.

“Innovativeness, community service, quality of work, relationship with others, professional development—these are the attributes that make for a better workforce in Georgia. Promoting these qualities and those that possess them is extremely important because when all is said and done, you can have the world’s smartest people, who can’t get along with one another, and never show up on time,” said Butler. “The Chamber and the community should be commended for taking the time to recognize these individuals as it is a great example to show others that they can learn from the attributes of these nominees and pass it on.”

Local businesses nominated their top employees for inclusion in the WCER program. Winners were chosen by an independent panel of judges. Sherry Zipperer, Marketing and Sales Officer for First State Bank & Trust Company, announced the 2011 winners: Heather Evans, Shannon Pollock, Brittney Benjamin and April Hall.

Heather Evans, Career Center Specialist for Goodwill Industries Career Center, was named the 2011 World Class Small Business Employee. “As a result of Heather’s hard work, unemployment rates decrease, helping our local economy to prosper. Heather helps to mentor, monitor and motivate people towards fulfilling their dreams, everyday,” says Supervisor Carla Gervin.

The 2011 World Class Large Business Employee award went to Shannon Pollock, Curriculum Director for Wiregrass Georgia Technical College. “Shannon pushed our college seamlessly from a quarter system to a semester system. Bridging a gap between faculty and student affairs, she catapulted WGTC to achieve their goals well in advance of the rest of the Technical College System of Georgia,” stated Dr. Ronald O’Meara.

Brittney Benjamin, Courtyard by Marriott Valdosta Manager, received the 2011 World Class Small Business Supervisor award. “Brittney has excellent time management and organizational



skills, she is a full-time student at Valdosta State University and works full-time with the same dedication and drive she gives everything and everyone she comes in contact with,” said Rebecca Smith.

The 2011 World Class Large Business Supervisor award went to April Hall, Lead at Regal Marine. “April’s philosophy is ‘the little things really make a huge difference,’ she understands the importance of effective communication and coaches her subordinates with mutual respect,” says Chip Northcutt.

Each winner was presented a check for \$1,500 along with other in-kind prizes.

Bill Cowart, President of First State Bank ended the presentation stating, “It takes two things to be a great employee. You have to be willing to give of yourself and you have to care, care about others.” Cowart added, “From what we get, we make a living; from what we give, we make a life.”

The World Class Employee Recognition program was developed out of the Chamber’s IMPACT 2012 initiatives with a goal of acknowledging and rewarding outstanding work ethics in the Valdosta-Lowndes County workforce. For more information on the Chamber’s Workforce Development and Education Division, visit www.ValdostaChamber.com.



Brittney Benjamin, April Hall, Heather Evans and Shannon Pollock were named 2011 World Class Employees and Supervisors at the World Class Employee Recognition breakfast on Tuesday at the James H. Rainwater Conference Center.