

Nov. 15, 2007

Scott, Craigie honored at First Amendment Dinner

MANCHESTER _ A Dover city councilor and a Littleton resident who don't believe the admonition "You can't fight City Hall," won local victories, and now, a statewide honor.

Dover's David Scott has been selected as the Nackey S. Loeb School of Communications 2007 First Amendment Award Recipient for helping shed light on city government operations. Sharon Craigie was named 2007 honoree for working on similar issues in Littleton.

Both were recognized Thursday at the school's 5th annual First Amendment Dinner that featured national columnist and television commentator George Will.

A panel of distinguished judges chose Scott and Craigie from among more than a half-dozen nominees. Judges included former First Lady Kathleen Gregg, inventor Dean Kamen, former Gov. Stephen Merrill, Laconia Citizen Executive Editor John Howe, Union Leader Vice President Charles Perkins III and attorney Gregory Sullivan.

Scott has been fighting City Hall in Dover for years, frequently seeking to obtain records he felt should be open to public review. He organized Dover Citizens for Sound Government and pushed for release of city financial records. A judge ultimately ordered the release of records regarding city employee contracts. Scott also spearheaded this fall's successful drive to enact a city tax cap.

"The taxpayers of the city have a right to know where their money is going," he said.

Craigie got involved in town politics because she objected to the actions of two town selectmen. She joined a new group called Littleton Open Government Supporters, challenging selectmen on topics including meeting times and the legality of a meeting. The group organized sign-carrying demonstrations during a contentious debate about where to locate the town police department and helped persuade voters to reject a plan to return the department to a renovated Littleton Opera House building.

"To my eternal joy, as a result of my speaking out, others in our town have found their voices and are asking questions," Craigie said.

Scott and Craigie each received bronze eagles, cast from an original sculpture by Mrs. Loeb. Scott also received a cash award.

The First Amendment Award was established to honor New Hampshire residents who guard and stand up for First Amendment liberties. Past recipients have been former Attorney General Philip McLaughlin, former Keene Sentinel Editor Thomas Kearney, state Rep. Daniel Hughes and The Citizen newspaper.

Four Loeb School students also were honored at the dinner as Nackey Loeb Fellows, for completing at least five classes or workshops and composing essays about the First Amendment. The newest Loeb Fellows are: Floranne Hammond of Bedford, Ashlee Lange of Manchester, Amelia Marden of Manchester and Kathy Radford of Kingston.

Manchester attorney Gregory V. Sullivan was honored for his years of service to the school. In addition to being a founding member and trustee, Sullivan teaches a popular First Amendment course at the school and has led countless workshops and seminars on the topic for audiences including journalists, police and school administrators.

Led by presenting sponsor TD Banknorth Charitable Foundation, the event is backed by a wide variety of business, civic and media leaders. Other major supporters include: Wheelabrator Technologies, Inc.; PSNH; FPL Energy, Seabrook Station; Bank of America; New Hampshire International Speedway; Sen. John Sununu and Kitty Sununu; Sen. Judd Gregg and Kathleen Gregg; Business NH Magazine; National Grid; ThermoFisher Scientific; Verizon Foundation; BAE Systems; Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Services; Amerprise Financial, Paul A. Pouliot & Associates; The Dupont Group; and SilverTech.

The 2007 dinner committee includes Mark Bodi, state Liquor Commissioner; Richard Jenkinson of ThermoFisher Scientific; attorney Ovide Lamontagne of Devine, Millimet & Branch, Professional Association; Joel Maiola of Sen. Gregg's staff; Jeff McPherson, of Silvertch, Inc.; Katie McQuaid of NewHampshire.com; Signe McQuaid; Liz Murphy of Sheehan Phinney Capitol Group; Catherine Pouliot of TD Banknorth; Judy Reardon of The Dupont Group; and William Sirak of Citizens Bank Investment Management Services.

The Nackey S. Loeb School of Communications is a non-profit school dedicated to fostering interest in journalism and other forms of communications. Mrs. Loeb, late president and publisher of The Union Leader Corp., founded the school in 1999. More than 2,200 students of all ages have attended its media-related classes and workshops.

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