



PRESS RELEASE  
OUTSTANDING  
CITIZENSHIP  
AWARD



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The City of Muskegon and the Muskegon Rotary Club are proud to announce the winners of the 2016 Outstanding Citizenship Award. This year we are pleased to present three awards. One co-recipient award and two individual awards. The winners are as follows:

Renae Hesselink and Bob Fountain, who work tirelessly at the Farmer's Market in downtown Muskegon, are co-recipients of the first award. They both exemplify the meaning of outstanding citizenship. They work countless hours to perpetuate the Market's popularity and ensure its success, while serving individually on other programs and organizations within the City.

Renae's accomplishments include establishing the "Power of Produce Kids Club" at the Farmer's Market. Renae spearheads corporate fundraising, and is a familiar face during the six-month program. She sits on the advisory board for Kitchen 242, and is the liaison for culinary chefs and managers alike. Renae is responsible for writing the grant for the USDA Farmer's Market Promotional Program, is active in United Way, Girl Scouts, and Goodwill Industries, and serves on the United States Green Council of West Michigan. Renae is a genuine home-grown hometown hero.

Bob Fountain is a tireless advocate of Muskegon as well. Bob is the volunteer administrator for the Muskegon Farmer's Market, Flea Market, and Kitchen 242 websites. He monitors the sites, updates the calendar of events, music schedule, and culinary class schedule. He patiently teaches market staff how to effectively utilize their software, troubleshoots IT issues, and tracks weekly products and growth within the market. Bob also promotes the City by snapping photographs and posting them to various Facebook pages, participates as a Social Security benefits counselor and SCORE counselor, and teaches computer classes at the Tanglewood senior services center. Bob is truly an undisputed treasure to the Farmer's Market and City of Muskegon.

George Washington Carver Walker, III is recognized as the next recipient of Muskegon's prestigious award. George selflessly participates in the CASA (Court Appointed Special

Advocate) program, which watches over and advocates for abused and neglected children. He makes sure that the children don't get lost in an overburdened legal and social service system, and ensures that they do not become languished in an inappropriate group or foster home. He remains the child's advocate until their case is closed and the child is placed in a safe, permanent home. George also helped launch "Shepherd's Table Soup Kitchen" which feeds free, nutritious meals to community members in need, and is credited with starting the class "The History of Food and Regional Culture" which provides nutritional education to youth 12 to 18 years of age. Through George's faith and a persevering spirit, he has overcome hardships that have enabled him to become a dedicated youth leader and Sunday school leader at Holy Trinity Church. George is undeniably an outstanding citizen and beacon of light to his community and his peers.

Allen Serio is the final recipient of the Outstanding Citizenship Awards. Allen's natural passion for Muskegon began at an early age. Shortly after graduating high school, Allen helped manage the Main Street Car Show, and fulfilled his dream of improving vendor relationships within City events. He nurtured those relationships and helped make the car show bigger and better by offering more food options. Known as a visionary, in 2006 with a group of friends, Allen helped create "Taste of Muskegon" which is now celebrating its tenth year. His advocacy of Muskegon continues to help foster camaraderie among businesses and public alike. He assists with other popular activities, and most recently was the driving force behind the Burning Foot Beer Festival. The inaugural event of 2015 featured breweries from around Lake Michigan, and was wildly successful. Allen also finds time to participate in Nims Neighborhood Association activities, and supported the group's fundraising efforts to build a new playground. Allen is undisputedly the epitome of an Outstanding Citizen, helping reshape Muskegon with his can-do attitude and entrepreneurial spirit.

On behalf of the City of Muskegon and the Rotary Club, we are pleased to recognize the generosity fortitude, and persevering spirits these individuals exhibit, and hereby honor them as Outstanding Citizens. We are excited to claim them as our own, and look forward as they continue to help WATCHmUSkeGOn.