

Media Release  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Porter County Community Foundation celebrates outstanding achievements

VALPARAISO - The Porter County Community Foundation celebrated its past year's accomplishments and thanked the individuals and community partners who help make it all possible at its annual meeting on July 13 at Strongbow Inn. The 2010 annual report was presented to illustrate the Foundation's impact in the community. The Foundation awarded nearly \$1.8 million in grants and scholarships in 2010.

The Foundation also acknowledged the remarkable work of local nonprofit organizations by awarding four Outstanding Achievement Awards. Outstanding Nonprofit Staff Member Awards were presented to Laura Harting and Debbie Lambert for their extraordinary leadership and commitment to their organizations' long-term sustainability.

Harting has been at the helm of the Visiting Nurse Association of Porter County since its inception in 1970 and recently retired as its executive director. Under her leadership, the VNA grew from serving 126 patients during its first year to serving more than 2,700 patients and clients in 2010. Harting helped the VNA launch a full range of care services for the community, build the Arthur B. and Ethel V. Horton Hospice Center and establish the new Phoenix Center, a bereavement center for children.

Lambert joined Hilltop Neighborhood House in 2004 and just announced her retirement from the executive director position this summer. During her tenure at Hilltop, the organization has strengthened its financial business model while focusing on the heart of the mission and the need to provide quality childhood education rather than simply childcare. She most recently helped expand Hilltop Neighborhood House community outreach with the opening of Walt's place, a center for afterschool programs and adult learning classes.

Housing Opportunities and Porter-Starke Services each received an Outstanding Nonprofit Organization Award. This award was created to honor organizations that have been innovative, are committed to building long term sustainability, and demonstrate leadership in addressing a community need. Housing Opportunities was recognized for demonstrating extraordinary leadership in addressing the issue of homelessness by working with a collaboration of community partners to purchase and re-open the Spring Valley Shelter. It has become one of the key organizations in Porter County addressing housing issues by providing the full continuum of housing needs. HO is also the lead organization coordinating the efforts of the Porter County Coalition for Affordable Housing and its staff is directing the process to create and implement a Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness in Porter County.

The second Outstanding Nonprofit Organization Award was presented to Porter-Starke Services, which has been providing behavioral health care services in our community since 1975. When Christian Community Action of Porter County was struggling to keep the Spring Valley Shelter open, Porter-Starke

Services was one of the first community partners to come to the table and offer assistance. They provided financial management assistance, case management oversight and facilities maintenance through the shelter's management transition to Housing Opportunities.

Along with the outstanding achievement recognition, the recipient of each award may direct \$1,000 to the nonprofit endowment fund of their choice. The Porter County Community Foundation partners with the nonprofit organizations in Porter County to help build their long-term sustainability.

The Porter County Community Foundation leads, unites and supports giving to make a difference in Porter County today, tomorrow and forever. For more information, please contact the Porter County Community Foundation at (219) 465-0294 or [www.portercountyfoundation.org](http://www.portercountyfoundation.org).

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PHOTO CAPTION: The Porter County Community Foundation recognized the remarkable work being done by individuals and local nonprofit organizations by awarding four Outstanding Achievement Awards at its annual celebration held on July 13. The 2011 awards were presented to (L-R) Laura Harting for Outstanding Nonprofit Staff Member, Caroline Shook on behalf of Housing Opportunities for Outstanding Nonprofit Organization, Rocco Schiralli on behalf of Porter-Starke Services for Outstanding Nonprofit Organization, and Debbie Lambert for Outstanding Nonprofit Staff Member.