Heritage Center Launches New Endowment Campaign at Annual Meeting

Members and friends of the Oberlin Heritage Center gathered at The Hotel at Oberlin on April 5 to celebrate the nonprofit’s accomplishments of the past year and to look ahead to the organization’s future. Mercy Allen Hospital President Joseph Sober presented the evening’s featured program to 170 guests, speaking on the History and Future of Oberlin’s Community Hospital. OHC Honorary Trustee Dr. Jeanne McKibben displayed a mini-exhibit about Oberlin’s medical history.

Highlighting the event was Board President Gail Wood’s announcement that the Heritage Center had quietly raised $335,000 over the past 18 months toward the Pat Murphy Endowment for Heritage Preservation and was now kicking off a community-wide public phase of the campaign at the Annual Meeting. Wood also revealed that a $20,000 challenge gift recently was contributed by donors Jane B. Nord and T.K. and Emily (Nord) McClintock that will match dollar for dollar any new gifts to the Endowment campaign.

Rounding out the evening were the 16th Annual Community Awards presentations for outstanding dedication to history, service, and the Oberlin community. Award recipients included:

**Sid Comings**, who received the Community Historian Award for researching and preserving stories from many aspects of life in Oberlin including Oberlin’s musical heritage, its historic downtown and business history, and its contributions to the fields of education, literature and sports,

**Andria Derstine** (John G. W. Cowles Director of the Allen Memorial Art Museum) and **Leo Evans, Jr.** (Oberlin College Office of Facilities Planning and Construction), who were recognized with the Heritage Guardian Award for their multi-year professional collaboration that led to the restoration of the ceiling and clerestory in the AMAM’s King Sculpture Court,

**Lisa Thacker**, Oberlin City Schools 6th Grade History Teacher, who was honored with the History Teacher of the Year award for engaging her students daily with learning activities and lessons that bring excitement and wonder to World History,

**The Oberlin City Schools Music Educator Team of Robert Duerr, Len Gnizak and Audrey John Melzer**, who received the Community Teacher of the Year Award for integrating the concept of “community” into their well-rounded musical education programs,

**Paul (Bud) Spierling**, who was hailed as the Heritage Center’s Volunteer of the Year for his work as a docent at the Oberlin historic site, and

**Radio Stations WOBL and WDLW** (Doug and Lorie Wilber), who received the Business Service Leader Award for partnering with the Heritage Center and other community nonprofits to promote upcoming events through public service announcements, remote broadcasts and sponsored events.

Heritage Center Board President Gail Wood conducted the annual business meeting. Governance committee chair Donna Shurr presided over the election of Board officers, including Wood as President, Ken Grossi as 1st Vice-President, Stephen Johnson III as 2nd Vice President, Barbara Enos as Secretary and Edward Wardwell as Treasurer. Judy Cook was re-elected for another term on the Board, and Erik Breunig, Amy Chuang, and Marlene Merrill were elected as new Trustees. Long-time Board members Nicholas Jones and Donna Shurr were appointed Honorary Trustees. For more highlights from the Annual Meeting and Awards Presentations, visit [www.oberlinheritagecenter.org](http://www.oberlinheritagecenter.org).