

RSVA® Summer Convention Awards

By: Eddie Turner, RSVA Awards Committee Chair

At the RSVA® Annual Awards luncheon, numerous awards were given. First, RSVA® acknowledged Eric Bridges in a Resolution for his years of dedication to ACB, especially his efforts on behalf of RSVA® as the ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs. RSVA® recognized his six years of service to ACB and especially his work for RSVA® on the Presidential Memorandum and legislation affecting the Randolph-Sheppard Program.

"Don Cameron Advocacy Award"

This Award is presented in memory of Don Cameron for his many years of service for blind vendors especially in the areas of communication and legislation.

Born in Greensboro, NC, this year's winner lived mostly in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia. Educated at Virginia Commonwealth University, he has always been self-employed, the first 25 years as a Randolph-Sheppard Vendor and then the last 18 years as a Lobbyist representing organizations in the environment and disability fields.

He has been on the RSVA® Legislative Committee for several years and was elected to the RSVA® Board of Directors in 2012. As Chair of the RSVA® Ways and Means Committee, he has been working hard to motivate members to sign up for the MMS Program and life memberships to boost RSVA® funding. **The 2013 "Don Cameron Advocacy Award" winner was Ken Jessup. Congratulations Ken!**

"Jennings Randolph Service Award"

This award is presented to someone outside of the Randolph-Sheppard Program who has given his or her time and energy to Randolph-Sheppard Vendors of America® and for his or her service to blind vendors, but is not an active vendor.

This year's winner dedicated her life to her careers and her family. She started out in the bookkeeping and accounting field. As children arrived, she switched to the food service industry to accommodate her daughters and husband's needs for transportation to and from school and work. After retirement from food service, she continues her bookkeeping and accounting for her husband's Randolph-Sheppard blind vendor route. She continues providing transportation for family, friends, and now grandchildren. She enjoys using online social media to maintain contact with family and friends.

She has assisted RSVA® greatly at Sagebrush with exhibits and otherwise as needed, as well as at the summer RSVA® convention, often helping with the auction. **Congratulations to Sue Sippl, our 2013 "Jennings Randolph Service Award" winner!**

"Vendor of the Year Award"

This coveted award is presented to an RSVA® member who has been an active member for at least five years and has given his or her time and energy to Randolph-Sheppard Vendors of America® and for service to blind vendors.

Our 2013 "Vendor of the Year" started her first shop at the Post Office in Cambridge, MA. She has been working at her

current snack shop for six years, a dry stand located in the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. She serves on the state vendors committee working with training. She serves on the RSVA® Board of Directors and is on the RSVA® Publications Committee. **Congratulations to Marie Keane our 2013 “Vendor of the Year”!**

“RSVA® Distinguished Service Award”

This award is given periodically to those members who have gone far above and beyond expectations and are recognized because of their many years of service and dedication. This year, we are awarding two of our valued members this prestigious award.

In 1982, this winner entered the Blind Vending Facility program. In 1985, he was the recipient of the Eva H. Smyth Award, presented by the Hawaii Association of the Blind to an individual who has made distinguished contributions to the welfare and well-being of the blind people of Hawaii. In 1986, the Hawaii Blind Vendors Association presented him with their very first Blind Vendor of the Year Award.

He has always been involved in helping others. He helped organize bowling leagues for the blind, and later helped form a bowling club for the blind. The Hawaii Association of the Blind was his brainchild; his ideas and efforts brought it into being. He was its first president, and has been its most dedicated member.

He has served on the RSVA® Board of Directors for many years and recently finished serving 4 two year terms as second Vice-President. **Congratulations to Warren Toyama for his dedication to RSVA® and all blind people!**

This next winner has been in the Randolph-Sheppard Program in Louisiana for 34 years, having served as the LA Elected Committee Chairman, Treasurer for Randolph-Sheppard Vendors of America®, and a past President of RSVA®, Randolph-Sheppard Vendors of Louisiana, and Louisiana Council of the Blind. While operating 6 locations and managing the RSVL Azalea Bingo Hall, he is Executive Director for RSVL. We appreciate the many hours Terry Camardelle has invested in the bingo operations and other efforts for RSVA®. **Congratulations Terry!**

A listing of prior award winners can be found on the rsva.biz website. All prior winners have worked tirelessly for RSVA® and Randolph-Sheppard vendors nationwide, supporting their issues.