

Governor's 2019 Agricultural and Urban Conservation Award winners honored today

DNREC Secretary Shawn M. Garvin congratulates Kent County Agricultural Award honoree Alfred Moor Jr. of Smyrna, with his granddaughter-in-law Hallie Moor, great-grandson Everett Moor, and Gail Montgomery.

Delaware Association of Conservation Districts also honors Legislator of the Year

DOVER – The Delaware Agricultural Museum and Village was the setting for today's annual Governor's Agricultural and Urban Conservation Awards. Governor John Carney, along with DNREC Secretary Shawn M. Garvin, Delaware Association of Conservation Districts President Edwin Alexander, and USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist Kasey Taylor, led a ceremony recognizing this year's honorees and signed a proclamation officially designating April 28-May 4 as Soil and Water Stewardship Week in Delaware under the theme, "Life in the Soil: Dig Deeper."

"Today's honorees have demonstrated their ongoing commitment to improving the environment, and on behalf of Delawareans, I thank each of them for their dedication and for their time, effort, and investment to implement model conservation practices," said Governor Carney. "I also want to thank all of the Conservation District supervisors and employees for the many and various contributions they make to improve the quality of life in Delaware."

"Much of the work we do at DNREC is accomplished through partnerships with Delaware's three conservation districts and USDA-NRCS, and these awards highlight the beneficial outcomes of these relationships," said Secretary Garvin. "This year's

honorees are outstanding and diverse examples of how we can learn from the success of others and can all be better environmental stewards by taking thoughtful and important actions to protect and enhance our water and air quality.”

This year’s Conservation Award winners are:

NEW CASTLE COUNTY



Accepting the New Castle County Agricultural award for the Colonial School District’s Penn Farm were Penn Farm Manager Toby Hagerott, Nutritional Services Manager Paula Angelucci, and Principal Brian Erskine.

AGRICULTURAL: Colonial School District Penn Farm, New Castle

Now in its seventh year, the Colonial School District’s Penn Farm provides real-world life experiences to more than 300 students each year in the areas of field scale crop production, production gardening, animal husbandry, agri-business marketing, environmental best practices, and food safety skills. The farming operation includes nutrient and irrigation management, soil health tillage practices, on-farm and farm market sales, and retail management experiences. The Penn Farm’s 4-acre operation produces nearly 20,000 pounds of

produce annually, with approximately half going to the school lunch program and half to the local community, local farm markets, and 40 local members of Community Supported Agriculture. The Penn Farm is Delaware's prototype farm-to-school program, and demonstrates the benefits collaboration between the school district and students, families, local communities and supporting businesses. Partners include the Delaware Department of Agriculture, Delaware State University, Delaware Cooperative Extension, Trustees of New Castle Common, Foodbank of Delaware, Delaware Greenways and New Castle County.

URBAN: New Castle County Department of Public Works, for the Westwoods Stormwater Management Pond Upgrade, near Hockessin

The Westwoods stormwater management pond failed following a severe storm in July 2017. The storm washed away a 24-inch corrugated metal pipe, resulting in the collapse of a 200-foot earthen embankment that covered the pipe, leaving an open channel emptying into a tributary of Mill Creek. New Castle County's annual stormwater amnesty program provides \$1.5 million in assistance each year to retrofit and perform major repairs on residential development stormwater facilities, which helps improve water quality. NCC's Department of Public Works contracted with New Castle Conservation District to reengineer and design the upgrade project; NCCD also provided construction inspection, permit acquisition, and construction management services when bid prices for construction of the pond upgrade project's original design exceeded the county's budget. The pond upgrade project restored the functions of the stormwater management pond as well as the accompanying benefits of water quality improvement and better sediment control.

KENT COUNTY

AGRICULTURAL: Alfred Moor Jr., Smyrna

Alfred Moor Jr., and his son Alfred Moor III, own and operate

a 6,000-acre farm near Smyrna, which over the years has included grain and dairy production, as well as a harness horse operation. An active Kent Conservation District cooperator since 1976, Alfred Moor Jr. was a responsible land steward long before it became normal operating procedure for today's agricultural operations, by implementing state-of-the-art waste storage and nutrient management systems and installing drainage practices to ensure proper water quality and management. His life-long commitment to using conservation measures on the lands under his care has contributed to good soil health, a sustained environment, and continued integrity of the land. Mr. Moor Jr. has also served as the tax ditch manager for the Mt. Friendship Tax Ditch for 43 years, representing nearby landowners, ensuring proper ditch maintenance, and improving management and quality of waters entering the Delaware River and Bay.

URBAN: Nick Alessandro, Diamond State Pole Buildings, Felton

The Diamond State Pole Building project at 7288 South DuPont Highway just south of Woodside overcame challenging site conditions through the use of permeable asphalt and bio retention. Due to the high groundwater table at this location, and the presence of environmentally-sensitive areas surrounding the site, traditional stormwater management practices were ruled out by the owner's engineering firm, The Pelsa Company of Newark. Permeable asphalt allows stormwater runoff to pass through into a stone bed under the parking lot. Three sections of permeable asphalt were installed in the parking spaces, with traditional asphalt used in the drive aisles for project longevity. As the first use of permeable asphalt approved by the Kent Conservation District, this project will serve as an example of the cost-effectiveness and applicability of the material, and will encourage its use on other challenging sites where traditional stormwater approaches may not be an option.

SUSSEX COUNTY



Sussex County Agricultural Award honorees Kathy and Richard Carlisle of Pine Breeze Farms.

AGRICULTURAL: Richard Carlisle, Pine Breeze Farms, near Bridgeville/Greenwood

Richard Carlisle of Pine Breeze Farms, and his wife Kathy farm 1,120 acres in western Sussex County near Bridgeville and Greenwood, all within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Carlisle has long supported and participated in the Sussex Conservation District's Soil Health Initiative and Cover Crop Program or the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service's cover crop programs. He was instrumental in the purchase, implementation, and ongoing updates of the District's air seeder, which he has used to establish his cover crops early to improve water quality and soil health. To address irrigation water management and improve efficiency, Pine Breeze Farms has installed new wells and pumps, and replaced aging center pivot systems and an old diesel irrigation motor with an electric motor. The farm has also improved nutrient management, using "smart soil sampling" technology and GPS yield maps to locate deficiencies in vital nutrients and help determine efficient use of fertilizers. Richard also serves as a tax ditch commissioner and officer on the Jones Mill and Jones Branch

tax ditches, and worked with the District to develop a tax ditch conservation plan with a maintenance schedule and recommendations for implementing water quality best management practices.

URBAN: Town of Laurel and Laurel Redevelopment Corporation for Tidewater Park

Constructed in spring 2018, Tidewater Park brings green infrastructure improvements and stormwater management to the Town of Laurel's waterfront area through a constructed wetland adjoining Broad Creek that was planted with native aquatic plants, and with a footbridge over the wetland connected to an existing walkway. Environmental benefits from the project include reduction of nutrients, enhancement of water quality, creation of native fish habitat, and the addition of native urban tree canopy, as well as providing stormwater management for 2.23 acres of impervious surfaces. Tidewater Park is the first phase of "The Ramble," a redevelopment plan that incorporates the town's waterfront into a mixed-use-based community, with the goal of enhancing the creek's natural features while drawing tourism and businesses to create a small-town environment that is a great place to live, work, and play. Partners for implementation of Tidewater Park include the Town of Laurel, Laurel Redevelopment Corporation, Foresite Associates, DNREC, University of Delaware and the Sussex Conservation District.

Delaware Association of Conservation Districts' Legislator of the Year

The Delaware Association of Conservation Districts (DACD) also recognized State Representative Gerald Brady, 4th District, as the 2018 Legislator of the Year, an annual award given for outstanding service, loyalty and devotion to conservation efforts in Delaware. As a former Wilmington City Councilman from 1996-2006 and a Wilmington native who served 35 years in the Delaware Army National Guard, Rep. Brady shares a firm belief in government's responsibility to provide sufficient

infrastructure and protected resources for future generations. He was also the recent recipient of the Delaware Recreation and Parks Society's Legislator of the Year.

Delaware's Conservation Districts, one in each county, are a unique governmental unit working within DNREC. Their mission is to provide technical and financial assistance to help Delawareans conserve and improve their local natural resources, including solving land, water and related resource problems; developing conservation programs to solve them; enlisting and coordinating help from public and private sources to accomplish these goals; and increasing awareness of the inter-relationship between human activities and the natural environment. Delaware's district supervisors have a statewide organization, the Delaware Association of Conservation Districts (DACD), a voluntary, non-profit alliance that provides a forum for discussion and coordination among the Conservation Districts.

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