

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **DDSN Awards the 2019 Silver Palmetto To City of Greenville and City of Rock Hill**

The South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN) awarded City of Greenville and City of Rock Hill the 2019 Silver Palmetto Award. The Silver Palmetto is DDSN's way of recognizing and thanking city and municipal governments in South Carolina for making the lives of people with disabilities a priority in the previous calendar year.

DDSN Commission Chair, Gary Lemel made the presentation February 4 at the annual conference of the Municipal Association of South Carolina's "Hometown Legislative Action Day" in Columbia, SC. City of Greenville Mayor Pro Tem Lillian Flemming was on hand to receive the award.

Greenville was recognized for its leadership and support of Thrive Upstate's first annual Drumming Up Awareness event on Main Street. Also Greenville partnered in a "Thrive Gives Back" event where people with disabilities helped to beautify city greenspaces and show what individuals with disabilities can do to contribute to their communities. Thrive Upstate individuals have also been included as "Greenville Greeters" at businesses and events, and Greenville awarded the 2018 Joel Poinsett Award to Thrive Upstate's entry in the Greenville Christmas Parade.

Greenville Mayor Pro Tem Lillian Fleming said she was very happy to accept the award. "I am so pleased that my city is being honored for its inclusiveness because that is what we strive to do in Greenville," Fleming said.

DDSN Commission Chair Gary Lemel said, "We are grateful to these cities for their leadership to include individuals with disabilities and allowing them to demonstrate their abilities, contribute to their communities through offerings of employment, community involvement, and new friendships."

This is the 30th year that DDSN has awarded the Silver Palmetto. This is the first time it has been awarded to Greenville and the first time for Rock Hill.



*(Pictured from left to right, Tyler Rex, Thrive Upstate Executive Director, Christy Cates Bright, Thrive Upstate Board Vice Chair, Dorothy Dowe, Greenville City Council, Lillian Fleming, Mayor Pro Tem Greenville City Council, Gary Lemel, Chair, SC DDSN Commission)*

The South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs is the state agency that plans, develops, coordinates and funds services for South Carolinians with the severe, lifelong disabilities of:

- intellectual disability and related disabilities
- autism spectrum disorder
- traumatic brain injury
- spinal cord injury and similar disability

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