



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Subject: Six Georgia leaders received a Turknett Leadership Character Award at the seventh annual event held February 23rd at the Georgia Aquarium.

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Winners Honored at 7th Annual Turknett Leadership Character Awards

Atlanta February 24, 2010. Turknett Leadership Group announced yesterday the recipients of its seventh annual Leadership Character Awards at a luncheon held at the Georgia Aquarium in Atlanta.

Crawford & Company was the gold sponsor for the awards this year, and KPMG was the silver sponsor. Turknett Leadership Group presented the awards in partnership with Kennesaw State's Siegel Institute for Leadership, Ethics and Character. Out of fifty-two outstanding Georgia leaders nominated, this year's award recipients were:

CEO/President/Managing Partner Category – David Geller, GV Financial Advisors
Executive/Manager Category – Luella Brown, Southern Company
Nonprofit Category – Philip Bray, Safehouse Outreach
Education Category – Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, Spelman College
Inspiritor Category – Heather Rocker, Women in Technology/WIT Foundation
Special Award – Beverly Easterling, Kennedy Middle School

More information about these inspirational leaders and their work, as well as a complete list of the nominees can be found at www.leadershipcharacter.com

Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, Ph.D., President of Spelman College said this on receiving her award: *I am truly grateful for this honor. At Spelman, we educate and empower women to make a choice to change the world. To accomplish their life goals they must embody the important elements of leadership character -- integrity, respect and responsibility - and as educators we must model that for them. I am grateful to be part of a community that inspires me to live up to that standard, and to be recognized by Turknett and my peers for exemplifying these characteristics is tremendously affirming.*

A four person advisory group consisting of **Oz Nelson**, retired chairman and CEO of UPS, **Conchita Robinson**, president and CEO of C. Robinson Associates, Inc., **Dr. Betty Siegel**, president-emeritus of Kennesaw State University and **W. Thomas Smith**, Founder and Managing Partner of Total Technology Ventures selected the winners from this year's 52 nominees. The four were also presenters for the awards in the beautiful Oceans Ballroom at the Georgia Aquarium.

Jack Shipkoski, a previous award-winner, and retired CEO of the American Cancer Society's South Atlantic Division, was attending the awards for the fourth year. He said: *It's just great to be around leaders of this quality. You know, character always trumps competency. You see that in the world. We saw it recently in the fall of a sports celebrity, but it's also true in business and politics. When leaders fall, it is because of a failure of character, not usually a failure of ability.*

Turknett Leadership Character Awards recognize individuals who demonstrate character in the way they lead others: high levels of integrity; relating to employees, customers, suppliers and others with respect; and maintaining a culture in which everyone takes responsibility for achieving results while upholding the organization's core values. "The awards were instituted in 2002, at a low point in business, when there were stories day after day about dishonesty at companies like Enron and HealthSouth" said Lyn Turknett, co-founder of the awards with her husband and partner Dr. Robert Turknett. "We believe that most business people are decent and honest, and we wanted to find a way to recognize leaders of character."

Award winner David Geller was also recognized by Barron's this week as one of the top 25 financial advisors in Georgia and, in his words: *Even though Barron's is a national publication, the Turknett Leadership Character award means much more to me, because this award is about what really matters. I believe for us and for most businesses that living by those values make it way more likely that you will be successful.*

Dr. Betty Siegel gave an inspiring keynote address reminding the audience that we are all teachers, and share the responsibility for communicating the importance of character in the workplace and in our lives. As the first woman college president in Georgia, Dr. Siegel, President Emeritus of Kennesaw University, said she was particularly pleased to present a special award to a gifted and dedicated teacher, Beverly Hayes Easterling at Kennedy Middle School. The Siegel Institute for Leadership, Ethics & Character, an academically based institute at Kennesaw State University, seeks to inspire, enable and promote ethical conduct, decision-making and leadership for the common good.

Susan Hitchcock, VP of Client Services at Turknett received a special award this year. Bob and Lyn Turknett recognized Susan for having the original idea for the awards seven years ago, and for her outstanding leadership and hard work to make them a reality. Speaking "from the heart" Lyn Turknett said she knew of no one who better exemplified the kind of leadership character the award celebrates than Susan herself.

Judi Vitale, a partner at Acuity CFO and a nominee said: *I feel privileged and honored to be in the group of people nominated. These are people of very high character, people who give back, and for whom integrity comes naturally.*

Turknett Leadership Group is a management-consulting firm based in Atlanta that has assessed and developed high level leaders and their organizations throughout the U.S. for more than 20 years. Using sophisticated assessment tools and Leadership coaching, the Turknett professional staff combines psychologist expertise in the behavioral sciences, and practical business and executive management experience. They serve small, mid-sized and large organizations such as AGL Resources, American Cancer Society, AT&T, Bennett International Group, Georgia-Pacific Corp., and Hewlett-Packard. For more information go to www.turknett.com.