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 **OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTORS RECOGNIZED BY**  
**HIGHLANDS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

HIGHLANDS, N.C., September 20, 2024 – The Highlands Chamber of Commerce proudly celebrated exceptional individuals and organizations at its annual Autumn Ovation event, held on September 17 at The Vineyard at High Holly. This gathering of Chamber members honored outstanding contributions to the Highlands community, spotlighting leadership, service, and dedication. The 2024 honorees are:

**The Volunteer of the Year**, presented to **Michael Lanzilotta**. This award recognizes an individual who demonstrates exemplary leadership, commitment to volunteerism, and community service. Since moving to Highlands in 2011, Michael Lanzilotta has dedicated his time, talent, and resources to numerous organizations across the Plateau. Currently, he serves on six boards, including the Hudson Library, Community Care Clinic, Highlands Cashiers Players, Macon County Arts Council, Eckerd Living Center, and Bel Canto. Additionally, Michael serves as the DEI District Chair for Rotary International District 7670, which encompasses Highlands and Western North Carolina. He is also an active member of the Mountaintop Rotary Club, contributing to the Arts and Crafts Show, the Annual Coat Drive, and serving as a past president. His philanthropic efforts extend to a wide range of causes, including the Community Care Clinic, Hudson Library, Literacy and Learning Center, and the Highlands Bolivian Mission. Amidst all of this, Michael still finds time to tutor students and deliver Meals on Wheels.

**The Robert B. Dupree Award for Outstanding Community Service**, presented to **Art and Angela Williams.** This prestigious award is presented to individuals who have a long-standing and distinguished record of selfless community service. Over the past 20+ years, Art and Angela Williams have continuously supported and enriched the lives of countless individuals in Highlands. Their contributions include financial support for over 500 employees and their families, along with scholarships for local daycare facilities and graduating high school seniors. The Williams’ generosity has been integral to many transformative projects in the community, such as covering the local swimming pool, installing an ice rink, funding The Bascom and Performing Arts Center (PAC), completing Founders Park, and installing the Christmas tree in the park. Their unmatched commitment to improving Highlands is a testament to their spirit of giving.

**The Del Roberts Award for Outstanding Businessperson**, presented to **Jimmy Tate**. Created in 2005, this award honors businesses or individuals who have made unselfish contributions to Highlands' business community. Jimmy Tate, a longtime business leader and owner of Tate Landscaping, has been a driving force behind Highlands’ economic growth. His company provides employment for more than 50 individuals, and both he and his wife, Allison, have contributed selflessly to the community for many years. In addition to his business success, Jimmy has held various volunteer roles, serving as a county commissioner and Chairman for over 11 years, ensuring Highlands always had a voice in county governance. His unwavering dedication to both the local economy and community makes him truly deserving of this recognition.

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For more information on the Highlands Chamber of Commerce, call 828-526-5841 or visit highlandschamber.org.

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**PHOTO 1 CAPTION:** Michael Lanzilotta, recipient of the Volunteer of the Year Award from the Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC.

**PHOTO 2 CAPTION:** Jimmy and Allison Tate. Jimmy received the Del Roberts Award for Outstanding Businessperson from the Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC.

**PHOTO 3 CAPTION:** Brian Crook of Old Edwards Hospitality accepting the Robert B. Dupree Award for Outstanding Community Service on behalf of Art and Angela Williams.

**About the Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC:**

Formed in 1931 to serve as the voice of business, the Highlands Chamber of Commerce has grown to provide services and support to businesses, residents and visitors. Hosting various events and programs throughout the year, including the Plateau Pick-Up, Leadership Highlands, Business After Hours, Outdoor Concert Series, and July 4th Fireworks and an array of holiday and winter festivities, the Chamber strives to make Highlands, NC a better place to live, visit and conduct business.

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