

2004-2005 Service To Mankind Award

Sdee Ann Jones

It is with great pride that Richland Sertoma Club has chosen Dee Ann Jones as our Service to Mankind recipient. Dee Ann has been a very enthusiastic member of our community her entire life and has not once slowed down, even after learning three years ago that her son had pediatric cancer.

Dee Ann has been very active in numerous organizations in Columbia, including Children's Chance, the Mayor's Committee, Jump For Love, and the 15-Year Americans with Disabilities Act Celebration. She has devoted tons of her own free time to helping these groups, and has really shone in our community as a stellar volunteer.

Jump for Love is a committee for the Easter Seals of South Carolina on which Dee Ann has been an active participant in the past years. She was also a coordinator for a large celebration for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) when it celebrated its fifteen-year anniversary, and she has continued to volunteer tremendous amounts of time for various committees at her children's school.

On the Mayor's Committee, she was active on a board for Employment of People with Disabilities for four years. She actually chaired this committee for one year before she had the opportunity to become the Chair for Children's Chance.

Children's Chance was formed in South Carolina in September of 1996 to assist children with cancer and their families with non-medical needs. This group raises money to fund various programs that meet the emotional, psychological and financial needs of pediatric cancer patients and their families. These programs are administered through seven pediatric oncology clinics that include: Palmetto Health Richland in Columbia, Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) in Charleston, Greenville Hospital Systems, Duke University Medical Center, Medical College of Georgia in Augusta, Carolina Medical Center in Charlotte, and Presbyterian Hospital. Children's Chance works closely alongside the staff of these clinics to ensure that its funds are making a difference in the lives of these families. The programs are provided at no cost regardless of race, creed, gender or religious affiliation.

Currently, Dee Ann is in her second year on the board of directors for Children's Chance and is the current board Chair. Her ten year-old son, Stefen, was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL) three years ago and during his treatment, her family received services from Children's Chance. Dee Ann and her family immediately saw the importance of Children's Chance for families in South Carolina, such as hers, who were devastated by a diagnosis of childhood cancer. Only one year into Stefen's treatment, Dee Ann contacted the Children's Chance office wanting to give back to the organization. She was quickly invited to become a board member and in June 2005 was

nominated for the chair position on the board. Naturally, she jumped at the opportunity to lend herself to yet another organization in need of her steadfast dedication.

Some of her duties at Children's Chance include overseeing the day-to-day operations of the organization, making decisions about dispensing funds, and working to maintain a healthy relationship with the organization's donors. She can even be found assisting the staff with smaller tasks, such as answering the phones. She has been a leader and driving force for Children's Chance and has become a good friend to many board members, as well.

Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL) is the most common malignancy in children, representing almost one-third of all pediatric cancers. Although most cases occur in children under the age of ten, it can appear in all age groups. ALL is not inherited, but is caused by a change in the cells in bone marrow. Anemia, bruising easily, and frequent infections are major symptoms of ALL. Chemotherapy is a very common form of treatment and once diagnosed, patients should start therapy immediately. Although Stefen was diagnosed three years ago and has been receiving treatments ever since, he and his family were informed at their last doctors visit several weeks ago that Stefen is now cancer-free!

Dee Ann was born in Lexington, South Carolina and has lived in the Columbia area all of her life, except for a short period of time when she moved to Germany. However, she returned to her home state and now resides in West Columbia. Dee Ann and her husband have two children. In her free time, she enjoys reading, playing board games with her children, and even cooks with her children. She is willing to do anything in which her children will include her. Dee Ann is employed full-time with the South Carolina Independent Living Council, where she has been for the past ten years. This is a non-profit organization that provides assistance to people with disabilities.

The members of Richland Sertoma Club are proud to present Dee Ann Jones as our recipient of the Service to Mankind Award. Because of her unwavering devotion to Children's Chance and other organizations, amidst holding a full-time job, being a full-time mother, and dealing with her own personal bout with pediatric leukemia, Dee Ann is most deserving of the Service to Mankind Award. The Columbia area is more than privileged to have a member of the community such as Dee Ann and we feel she will make an ideal representative as the District, Region, and International Service to Mankind Award recipient.