

For Immediate Release: January 24, 2007
Contact: Sharon Langlotz, Executive Director
Indiana Commission for Women
(317) 232-6720
Amy McQueen, Event Chair
(317) 402-0604

State Honors Women Torchbearers

The Conseco Fieldhouse Entry Pavilion in Indianapolis was aglow Tuesday evening when the state-sponsored Indiana Commission for Women held its third annual Salute to Women. In an Oscar®-style gala the Commission presented this year's Torchbearer Awards to women who have overcome obstacles and made Indiana a better place in which to live, work and raise a family. The Torchbearer Award is the highest award presented only to women by the State of Indiana.

The statewide Council of Judges chose to present several special awards this year. They are: Trailblazer Award, Dr. Virginia Caine, Indianapolis; Keeper of the Light Award, Marissa Manlove, Indianapolis; Community Spirit Award, Patricia McQuade, South Bend; Heart of Indiana Award, Nickolette Clements, Elkhart; Woman of Promise Award, Natasha Johns, Bedford; and the Commissioners' Lifetime Achievement Award to Marjorie O'Laughlin, Indianapolis.

Ms. O'Laughlin is a role model for women and a pioneer in the political arena. Her career in politics began in 1967 and culminated in her terms as the Treasurer for the State of Indiana (1986-1994) and as Clerk of the Indiana State Supreme Court. Her rise to power and influence in areas primarily dominated by men was made more impressive by the fact that she was mother to seven children and had unexpectedly become a single parent.

Marge O'Laughlin is still making news. On January 2 she was sworn in by Governor Daniels as interim state treasurer, a post she will hold until the newly-elected state treasurer takes office next month.

A very special award was presented to Sister Denise Wilkinson of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods on behalf of Saint Mother Theodore Guerin. Canonized in October 2006, St. Guerin was honored as being a true Pioneer Torchbearer.

Senator Teresa Lubbers and Secretary of State Todd Rokita were Honorary Chairs of the event and provided lively dialogue as Masters of Ceremonies for the evening. In addition to

the presentation of the awards guests were feted with dinner and a program that included the vibrant entertainment of Solluna Fire Artists & Dancers.

Commissioner Amy McQueen, Shelbyville, president of Flat Rock Furniture was Chair of the event. Melissa C. Martin, Indianapolis, president of Issues & Advocates serves as Chair of the Indiana Commission for Women and served as Executive Producer of the show.

In keeping with Governor Daniels tightened financial belt on state government, Ms. McQueen said, “We are honored to have many sponsors who made this event possible, including R W Armstrong, Clarian Health, Ball State and IPL. With their support and that of our many table sponsors we were able to honor these outstanding women without spending taxpayer dollars. I congratulate all of our finalists and award winners.”

Each of the Torchbearer Award winners listed below received a gold medallion inscribed with “Lady Victory” and the official seal of the State of Indiana.

Category	Award Winner	Hometown
Advocacy	Ann DeLaney	Indianapolis
Agriculture	Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman	Indianapolis
Business (tie)	Patricia Miller	Ft. Wayne
Business	Joyce Rogers	Indianapolis
Entrepreneurship (tie)	Jennifer Ruby	Indianapolis
Entrepreneurship	Kristen Tucker	Evansville
Education	Dr. Beverly Pitts	Indianapolis
Finance	Janice Beesley	Vincennes
Health Medicine & Life Sciences	Dr. Ora Pescovitz	Indianapolis
Human Rights	The Honorable Mary Kay Budak	LaPorte
Journalism & Communications	Glenda Russell	Indianapolis
Law	Dawn Rosemond	Ft. Wayne
Social Services	Rebecca Pryor	Indianapolis
Sports & Fitness (tie)	Rita Price Simpson	Mentone
Sports & Fitness	Susan Williams	Indianapolis
Philanthropy	Julie Davis	Indianapolis
Volunteerism	Phyllis Thompson	Fort Wayne
Women in Government	Senator Connie Lawson	Danville
	2006 Special Awards	
Heart of Indiana	Nickolette Clements	Elkhart
Trailblazer	Dr. Virginia Caine	Indianapolis
Community Spirit	Patricia McQuade	South Bend

Keeper of the Light	Marissa Manlove	Indianapolis
Spirit of Hope	Kim Boyd	Indianapolis
Woman of Promise	Natasha Johns	Bedford
Lifetime Achievement Award	The Honorable Marjorie O'Laughlin	Indianapolis