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VOLUNTEER FLORIDA HONORS TWO WITH PRESIDENT'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS

*Prestigious National Honor for Volunteer Service to be presented at
Volunteer Florida's quarterly Commission meeting. ...*

TALLAHASSEE – The Governor's Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service (Volunteer Florida) today announced it will award **two** volunteers with the **PRESIDENT'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD**, the highest national honor offered in recognition of volunteer service. To qualify for Gold, Silver or Bronze **PRESIDENT'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS**, volunteers must have logged a specified number of volunteer hours over the course of a 12-month period. To qualify for the lifetime **CALL TO SERVICE AWARD**, volunteers must have logged **4,000** hours over the course of their lifetimes.

The **AWARDS** will be presented at Volunteer Florida's quarterly Commission meeting, to be held Tuesday, Jan. 13 at the Doubletree Hotel, 101 South Adams Street. The meeting begins at 1:30 p.m. Eastern time, and the **AWARDS** will be presented at approximately 4:45 p.m. Lt. Governor Jeff Kottkamp and Volunteer Florida CEO Wendy Spencer will present the awards.

The outstanding volunteers who will receive this award are:

- **Lifetime Call to Service, David Ramsay.** David Ramsay, President and Chairman of the Board, SunTrust Banks of Northwest Florida, recently retired after working for SunTrust for more than 45 years. Ramsay is active in community services, having served as Chairman of the local Economic Development Council and as the Campaign Chair for the United Way. He is the current Chairman of the Board for United Way of the Big Bend. He was appointed by Secretary of State Sue Cobb to serve on the board of Mission San Luis and is a Vice President of Florida's Great Northwest, a regional economic development council. In 1986 – 1987, he served as the National President of the American Institute of Banking.

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In addition to his years of service to both Gov. Bush and Gov. Crist as a Commissioner of the Governor's Commission on Volunteerism, Ramsay has served on nonprofit boards and church affiliations too numerous to name. As Treasurer of the Bradfordville First Baptist Church, he was instrumental in raising funds to build their new and very large church facility on Thomasville Road.

- **Silver Award, Jim Walker.** Walker serves as a LeRoy Collins Leon County volunteer in the Library's "Friendshop" where he has donated more than 1,000 hours. The Friendshop sells greeting cards, gift books, CDs, DVDs, book bags, and many more interesting items donated by the community. The proceeds from this shop purchase new books and other media for the Library. Jim also tutors students in English as a Second Language in the Literacy Department, located on the second floor of the Library, and has done so for the last two years accumulating 220 volunteer hours there alone. **Mr. Walker is 95 years of age and loves to volunteer.** According to Helga Jackson, his Friendshop supervisor, he is always dependable and willing to volunteer anytime he is needed. He is so well liked that his present and former students from Literacy come by the Friendshop to chat with him.

"These recipients of the PRESIDENT'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD are role models for all Americans," said Volunteer Florida CEO Wendy Spencer. "Each volunteer hour contributed makes a difference in improving the quality of life for others. Through their extraordinary commitment, these volunteers have brought us closer together as families, as communities and as a Nation."

Established in 2003, the PRESIDENT'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD – WHICH IS MODELED AFTER THE PRESIDENT'S PHYSICAL FITNESS AWARD – is available on an annual basis to individuals, groups and families who have met or exceeded requirements for volunteer service and have demonstrated exemplary citizenship through volunteering. As a Leadership Organization participating in the AWARD program, **Volunteer Florida** confers the AWARDS to recognize the outstanding achievements of volunteers throughout Florida.

The PRESIDENT'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD is an award for volunteer service that every American – from every age and every walk of life – can aspire to achieve. To be eligible to receive the AWARD, individuals, families and groups submit a record of their annual volunteer service hours to participating organizations, such as **Volunteer Florida**, that will verify the service and deliver the AWARD. AWARD eligibility for individuals and groups is based upon hour requirements varying by age.

The AWARD is issued by the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation, a group created to recognize the valuable contributions volunteers are making to our nation. Volunteer Florida CEO Wendy Spencer is an appointee to the Council, which is chaired by Case Foundation President **Jean Case**. The Council is comprised of leaders in government, media, entertainment, business, education, nonprofits, and the volunteer sector.

For more information on volunteering in Florida, please visit www.volunteerflorida.org.

For more information about how to qualify for the PRESIDENT'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD, please visit www.PresidentialServiceAwards.gov or call 1-866-545-5307.

The Governor's Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service (Volunteer Florida) was established in 1994 by the Florida Legislature to administer grants under the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. The Commission grants funds to Florida AmeriCorps and National Service programs; encourages volunteerism for everyone from youth to seniors to people with disabilities; promotes volunteerism for disaster preparedness and response; and helps to strengthen and expand Volunteer Centers in Florida.

