

Media Release

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For Immediate Release

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De Queen woman regains sight and earns achievement award



Sandra Wilson of De Queen accepts the area's outstanding Consumer of the Year achievement award presented by Von Daniels, Vocational Rehabilitation Teacher with the Department of Human Services Division of Services for the Blind. To the right is Gary Walker, President of the De Queen Lions Club.

Sandra J. Wilson of De Queen has been named the area's outstanding Consumer of the Year by the Department of Human Services Division of Services for the Blind (DSB).

Wilson, who was legally blind for most of her life, has worked as a psychological examiner for 44 years. She retired from Southwest Arkansas Counseling and Mental Health Center, Inc. in 2012, and opened a private practice in De Queen. Her business, Transitions Psychological Services PLLC (TPS), serves Sevier and surrounding counties and southeast Oklahoma.

Wilson is one of only 13 people in Arkansas to receive an area award and was chosen from the area that includes Miller, Pike, Little River, Sevier, Howard, Nevada,

Hempstead, and Lafayette Counties.

The award was presented at the noon meeting of the De Queen Lions Club held at Fat Chances Buffet and Catering on November 18.

Wilson has been determined to overcome adversity. She said she has had vision problems since age 8 and, as a result, was bullied at school. Additionally, she has experienced multiple health problems including a rare form of Lymphoma and strokes, the latter of which forced her to learn to speak on the inhalation of her breath.

Through DSB, Wilson was diagnosed with cataracts and the beginning of macular degeneration. She expressed her appreciation that DSB paid for eye surgeries, doctor visits, eyeglasses, and eye medications not covered by Medicare. She said, “Now, I can actually see relatively well even without glasses.” She uses glasses to read, work on the computer, and drive.

Over the course of her career, Wilson has received service awards from several Arkansas governors and served on the Arkansas Board of Examiners in Psychology. She received an Optimist Award for Volunteer Service, and was also named Clinician of the Year for Southwest Arkansas Counseling and Mental Health Center. She is a charter member and former officer in numerous professional organizations.

Wilson is active in the Women’s Group at First Assembly of God Church and for 29 years has volunteered weekly at the local nursing home, playing piano for the group devotions. She has taught Sunday school and is a substitute teacher in one of the adult classes. She and her husband Ray have two grown children.

This is the seventh year that DSB has given Consumer of the Year awards to recognize individuals who have managed their rehabilitation plans, gained marketable skills, secured good jobs, and become role models for others. An overall state winner will be selected at the end of the year.

For information about DSB’s programs and services, visit the DSB website at <http://humanservices.arkansas.gov/dsb/Pages/default.aspx> or call 1-800-960-9270, 501-682-5463, or TDD 501-682-0093.