

Around Columbia

2011 Riley-Wilkins Dinner Event Honoring Sen. Wes Hayes, Minor Shaw



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South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley Spoke at Jan. 25 Event Honoring Sen. Wes Hayes, Minor Shaw

David H. Wilkins awards event sponsored by Riley Institute at Furman



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Photo credit: Charlie Register/Furman.

COLUMBIA, SC - January 25, 2011 - South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley had an early opportunity to address the state legislature Tuesday, January 25 when she spoke at a Columbia dinner honoring the recipients of the David Wilkins awards for Excellence in Legislative and Civic Leadership. The sixth annual event, sponsored by the Riley Institute at Furman University and held in conjunction with the beginning of the South Carolina legislative session, took place at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center.

This year's Wilkins Award for Excellence in Legislative Leadership winner was South Carolina Senator Wes Hayes, who represents York County District 15. The award recognizes a state legislator who embodies the highest principles of leadership.

For the first time, the event recognized a civic leader in addition to a legislative leader. The inaugural David H. Wilkins Excellence in Civic Leadership Award, which honors a community leader whose work has improved the lives of South Carolinians, was presented to Greenville businesswoman Minor Mickel Shaw.

Hayes is a Republican South Carolina Senator representing York County District 15. He has served in the Senate since 1991 and is chairman of the Senate Ethics Committee. Prior to that, he was a member of the S.C. House of Representatives from 1985 to 1991. A 1975 graduate of the United States Military Academy, he earned his law degree from the University of South Carolina School of Law.

Shaw is president of Micco Corp., a family investment corporation. She serves as vice-chair of the Greenville-Spartanburg Airport Commission, and is a board member of the S.C. Governors School for the Arts and Humanities Foundation, Hollingsworth Funds, Greenville Chamber of Commerce, and United Way of Greenville County. A graduate of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, she is a recipient of South Carolina's Order of the Palmetto.

Haley, a Republican, was elected South Carolina's first female Governor on Nov. 2. A native of Bamberg and a graduate of Clemson University, she was elected in 2004 to the South Carolina House of Representatives from District 87 in Lexington County, and was re-elected to that position in 2008.

Previous winners of the Wilkins Award for Excellence in Legislative Leadership are Dan Cooper, Gilda Cobb-Hunter, John Drummond, Bobby Harrell and Hugh K. Leatherman.

The Riley Institute is named for Furman graduate and former South Carolina governor and U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley. It offers a broad array of programs designed to engage students and citizens across South Carolina in the various arenas of politics, public policy and public leadership.

The institute created the David H. Wilkins Legislative Leadership Program in honor of the South Carolina politician who served as Speaker of the South Carolina House of Representatives and U.S. ambassador to Canada.

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