

On The Move

Rep. James Smith, Ed Sellers to be Honored at Riley Institute Event

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Awards for legislative leadership, civic leadership to be presented at annual David H. Wilkins awards dinner

GREENVILLE, SC - December 9, 2011 - The Riley Institute at Furman University has announced that South Carolina Representative James Smith and BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina board chair Ed Sellers are the recipients of the 2011 David Wilkins Awards for Excellence in Legislative and Civic Leadership.

Smith and Sellers will be honored in Columbia Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2012 at the seventh annual David H. Wilkins awards dinner, which takes place at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center. The evening begins with a reception at 6 p.m. followed by the dinner and awards presentation at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$150 each and can be purchased by calling 864-235-8330 or visiting the Riley Institute website. Table sponsorships are also available



Pictured: SC Representative James Smith and BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina board chair Ed Sellers

Smith is the winner of the Wilkins Award for Excellence in Legislative Leadership, which recognizes a state legislator who embodies the highest principles of leadership

A Democrat representing Richland County District 72, Smith was elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives in 1996, where he has served as Assistant Minority Leader, Chief Minority Whip and House Minority Leader. He spent a year in Afghanistan serving as an Army National Guard captain, and has received the Combat Infantryman's Badge, The Bronze Star and The Purple Heart. He graduated from the University of South Carolina in 1990 and earned his J.D. degree from the University of South Carolina School of Law

Sellers is the recipient of the David H. Wilkins Excellence in Civic Leadership Award, which honors a community leader whose work has improved the lives of South Carolinians

Sellers is chair of the board of BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina, and served as its chief executive officer for 18 years before retiring from that position in 2010. He serves as a director of Palmetto Conservation Foundation, American Red Cross, and ETV Endowment of South Carolina, as well as chairman of the board of the South Carolina State Chamber of Commerce and Columbia College. He is a graduate of Vanderbilt University and earned a MBA from Harvard Business School

Previous winners of the Wilkins Award for Excellence in Legislative Leadership are Wes Hayes (2010), Dan Cooper (2009), Gilda Cobb-Hunter (2008), Hugh K. Leatherman (2007), Bobby Harrell (2006) and John Drummond (2005). Minor Mickel Shaw of Greenville won the inaugural Excellence in Civic Leadership Award in 2010.

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.

For more information, contact the Riley Institute at 864-294-3546 or e-mail megan.dodgens@furman.edu.

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