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Florida Sterling Council and Governor Scott Announce Seven Recipients of 2015 Governor's Sterling Award

~ Florida Sterling Council Honors Largest Number of Role Model Organizations in Award History ~

TALLAHASSEE – Governor Rick Scott and the Florida Sterling Council today announced that Cape Coral Hospital, City of Tallahassee Underground Utilities, Florida Department of Health in St. Johns County, Kids Central, Inc., Hillsborough County Supervisor of Elections, Orange County Public Schools Human Resources Division, and Tax Collector for Polk County will receive the prestigious Governor's Sterling Award for 2015. These coveted awards will be bestowed at the 2015 Governor's Sterling Award Banquet at the JW Marriott Orlando Grande Lakes on Friday, June 5, 2015.

Governor Scott said, "The Governor's Sterling Award winners reflect our focus of making Florida the best state in the nation to live, work and raise a family. I am pleased that Florida is leading the nation and I congratulate this year's top-performing Sterling Award recipients. This award is the highest recognition an organization in Florida can receive for performance excellence. The Governor's Sterling Award process is an efficient tool for all organizations that saves Florida businesses millions of dollars annually."

2015 Governor's Sterling Award Recipients

For 23 years, the Governor's Sterling Award has recognized organizations and businesses in Florida that have successfully achieved performance excellence within their management and operations.

Cape Coral Hospital opened its doors in July 1977 and became part of the Lee Memorial Health System in 1996. The organization engaged and connected its 1,121 employees, over 800 volunteers, its physicians and community members to create a stronger focus on key priorities in alignment with the hospital & health system goals. The hospital, licensed for 291 beds, has become the community's center for health, wellness, and well-being through the development of its Optimal Healing Environment (OHE). The hospital's key services include Women's Care, the Orthopedic Joint Center, Primary Stroke Center, Chest Pain Center, Surgery, Emergency Care and Outpatient Radiology & Laboratory Services. The campus also includes a rehabilitation and wellness center along with an exercise pathway & gardens called, Pathway to Discovery. The Primary Stroke Center Core Measures for Discharge on Statin and Assess for Rehabilitation are both at 100%, exceeding the American Heart Association benchmark of 85%. Obstetrical Elective Deliveries are at 0%, exceeding the March of Dimes benchmark of 5% for the past 36 months and the American Hospital Association benchmark of 3% for the past 34 months. *Cape Coral Hospital is the first community hospital in the state to receive the Governor's Sterling Award.*

City of Tallahassee Underground Utilities, with 376 employees, is one of the largest departments in the capital city's government. Its employees provide natural gas, water, wastewater, and stormwater services to more than 70,000 residential and business customers. Providing these services is part of the department's mission to improve quality of life in the community, while at the same time protecting and conserving natural resources and the environment. Through a clear leadership vision and a persistent focus on developing its employees, City of Tallahassee Utilities has been able to apply technology and innovation to become a highly efficient leader in the utility industry. As a case in point, Tallahassee's cost of reclaimed water in 2014 was \$140.58 per million gallons, substantially lower than the Florida Benchmarking Consortium average cost of \$236.05. The department consistently operates in full compliance with federal and state regulations and is a frequent recipient of operating performance recognitions. *The City of Tallahassee Underground Utilities is a first-time recipient of the Governor's Sterling Award and the first public utility in Florida to receive the award.*

The **Florida Department of Health in St. Johns County (DOH-St. Johns)** is part of the integrated State Department of Health. With 63 full time employees and approximately \$5 million annual budget, it provides critical Public Health services to the County's 219,000 residents and 6.5 million annual visitors. These services include Epidemiology and Disease Control, Environmental Public Health, Public Health Preparedness and Response, Healthy Start, WIC, Pediatric Dental Services, Immunizations, Vital Statistics' Records, and Clinical Services of Public Health Significance. Services are provided at two primary locations, and throughout the County via the Public Health Mobile Center. In 2015, for the fourth consecutive year, St. Johns County has been ranked #1 in the state in both Health Outcomes and Health Factors by the University of Wisconsin and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's, *County Health Rankings Report*. St. Johns County Health Leadership Council led by DOH-St. Johns was recognized as one of 12 national *Successful Partnerships* by a University of Kentucky study of successful hospital/public health partnerships. Other significant outcomes include: customer satisfaction rates consistently higher than 97%; employee satisfaction rates greater than 85%; and consistently top ratings for surveillance of and timely responsiveness to potential local public health threats, including environmental hazards and communicable diseases, as well as for providing linkages to and assuring access to health services; healthiest weight and healthy lifestyle results with adult obesity and adult smoking rates in the top 10% in the nation. *The Florida Department of Health in St. Johns County received the Governor's Sterling Award in 2009 and the Governor's Sterling Sustained Excellence Award in 2011.*

Hillsborough County Supervisor of Elections, under the direction of Supervisor Craig Latimer, employs 42 full-time staff, expanding to hundreds and then thousands during the election cycle. A key strategic priority is conducting excellent elections. Voting in Hillsborough County is now consistently spread across all three voting methods (Vote By Mail, Early Voting, Election Day), adding predictability to elections management and reducing the likelihood of delays on Election Day. An emphasis on customer service means voters are communicating with the office in more ways than ever before, including social media, visits to regional offices, interaction at community outreach events, and 'live chat' on the VoteHillsborough.org website. And technological and organizational innovations equip employees with critical tools to prepare for and conduct elections. The Hillsborough County Supervisor of Elections' vision is to be the best place in America to vote. *The Hillsborough County Supervisor of Elections is the first Supervisor of Elections in Florida to win the Governor's Sterling Award.*

Kids Central, Inc. was founded in 2003 as a nonprofit human service agency and selected to be

the Community-Based Care Child Welfare Lead Agency for Florida's Judicial 5th Circuit (Citrus, Hernando, Lake, Marion, and Sumter Counties). In this capacity, Kids Central is charged with organizing the local response and community support for abused and neglected children and their families. Kids Central is given legislative authority and contractual responsibility to develop, integrate and manage all foster care, adoption, and related child and family services while ensuring the continuity, quality, efficiency and accountability for all children served. Kids Central's approach led the organization to consistently exceed statewide performance in the percentage of children safely served in their own home or placed with relative and non-relative caregivers, customer satisfaction with the Kinship Program exceeds the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ASCI) benchmark, and overall foster parent satisfaction as well as both youth and foster parent satisfaction with Independent Living Services exceed benchmark data from peer organizations. Further, the organization has successfully reduced the average cost of services while enhancing the well-being of children by focusing on the provision of evidence-based diversion and community-based prevention services. For example, Kids Central's 2014 cost of care per total child population of \$178.41 compares favorably to the Urban Institute's 75th percentile cost of \$326. *Kids Central, Inc. is a first time recipient and the first Community-Based Care Child Welfare State Lead Agency to win the Governor's Sterling Award.*

The Orange County Public Schools Human Resources Division and its 97 team members, provides five key services to the school district, including talent acquisition, employment services, compensation, employee relations, and human resource special projects. The division demonstrates visionary leadership by communicating the district's values and fulfilling its mission by aligning division strategic planning with the district's goals, in daily operations at the departmental level, growth and development of employees, through teacher incentive programs, and with stellar customer service. Over the last three years, the division reduced the number of instructional classroom vacancies on the first-day of school by 40 percent, outperforming similar sized Florida districts. At the same time, average classroom vacancy rates have also fallen by 40 percent, outpacing similar sized districts in the nation. The division also increased the percentage of core classes taught by highly qualified teachers, to 99.3 percent. The division created a truly team-based culture that eliminated silos, empowered and engaged employees, and raised performance. The division's high level of performance is confirmed by the satisfaction ratings (96.5 percent) of its three key customer groups as well as the division's workforce satisfaction (95.0 percent). Orange County Public Schools is the second largest employer in Central Florida with over 23,000 employees, the fourth largest school district in Florida, and the 10th largest district in the nation. The district serves approximately 192,000 K-12 students from 191 countries who speak 168 languages. *Orange County Public School Human Resources Division is a first time recipient of the Governor's Sterling Award.*

Tax Collector for Polk County (TCPC) is responsible for providing a wide range of services to the citizens and taxpayers of Polk County on behalf of other governmental units. These services consist primarily of the collection and administration of ad valorem taxes and non-ad valorem assessments, also known as Property Taxes, driver license and identification card issuances (DL), Motor Vehicle taxes/fees and registration/plate/decal issuances, county local Business Taxes and receipt issuances, tourist development taxes (TDT) and hunting and fishing fees and license issuances. These services are performed on behalf of 36 governments and agencies (local/state). The TCPC serves a population of approximately 625,000 people, which ranks ninth among Florida's 67 counties, serving the fourth largest county in Florida. The TCPC workforce consists of 193 employees working in four Service Center (SC) locations. The Kids Tag Art Program reflects a beneficial increase in schools participating from 66 in 2011 to 79 in 2014 in Polk

County and eight counties in the state replicating the program. Results from comment cards reflect favorable trends and levels for overall customer experience, from 96.7% in 2011 to 97.6% in for the first quarter 2015. This performance excellence was maintained during the implementation of a new customer service product which increased workload by 36% during the same time period. *Tax Collector for Polk County is the fifth tax collector to receive the prestigious Governor's Sterling Award.*

About the Governor's Sterling Award

Established in 1992, the Florida Sterling Council is a public/private not-for-profit corporation supported by the Executive Office of the Governor. The Council oversees the Governor's Sterling Award for Performance Excellence, presented annually by the Governor to high performing, role-model organizations, both private and public, who demonstrate superior management approaches and role model results. Sterling's Conference teaches participants how to elevate performance and increase productivity. Nearly 600 executives and professionals gather at this event for a one-stop source for education, information and inspiration. The conference concludes with the recognition of best practices, the Team Showcase Champion, and the presentation of the Governor's Sterling Awards, the highest award an organization can receive for performance excellence in Florida. For more information, contact John Pieno at (850) 922-5316 or visit www.floridasterling.com.

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