

Community awards to honor residents, service providers

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Local leaders in various occupations will be recognized Nov. 13 when the Housing and Neighborhood Development Services organization has its 11th annual Community Leadership Awards and Arts Expo.

The 6 p.m. program will be in the Appian Way restaurant in Orange.

Deborah Boatright, district director of Neighbor Works America, of which HANDS is a member, and a former assistant commissioner with the Office of Community Development in New York State, will be the guest speaker.

The honorees include: • **Kevin Dilworth:** The former reporter for *The Star-Ledger* will be honored for his dedication to reporting of events and issues in Orange and East Orange.

• **Family Connections:** This local organization works to improve the quality of life in eastern Essex County.

• **Valerie Jackson:** Orange's director of planning and economic development will be recognized for her work in attempting to improve neighborhoods and business areas.

• **Rocco Meola:** The head of the First Occupational Center of New Jersey in Orange will be honored for helping residents enter new careers.

• **Anthony Monica:** The Orange resident will receive his award for his commitment to preserving the city's history.

• **Read Up! Book Club:** The East Orange organization works to encourage children to read continuously for education and fun.

• **Karen Wells:** The Orange resident will be recognized for her dedication to keeping the history of Orange alive.

• **Catherine Willis:** Director of the East Orange Division of Senior Services, Willis is being honored for providing programs to help senior residents live longer and grow stronger.

The Community Leadership Awards annually recognizes individuals and groups who dedicate themselves to improving the lives of those around them and better the communities of Orange and East Orange.

Tickets for the event are available. Contact Kelli Copeland at 973-678-3110, ext. 8, for tickets and additional information.