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**Oklahoma Main Street Announces Award Finalists**

**(Oklahoma City, Okla.) –** The Oklahoma Main Street Center announced today the finalists of the program’s annual statewide awards competition. All finalists will be honored, and the winners announced, at the 28th annual Main Street Awards Banquet, May 9, at the Embassy Suites OKC Downtown/Medical Center Hotel.

“The Oklahoma Main Street Center Awards Banquet celebrates the communities, people and events that make the program thrive,” said Buffy Hughes, Oklahoma Main Street director. “There are 21 competitive award categories representing the Main Street Four Points, and 19 different programs are in the top three of each.  We are always excited to see so many projects, events and people highlighted by the local programs. It is a joyful time for all involved in Main Street.”

Each award category falls under one of the “four points” in the Main Street Approach – Organization, Promotion, Economic Vitality and Design. Panels of outside judges for each point review the entries and determine the winners.

The Community of the Year Award will recognize the Main Street program that earned the most quality assurance points during the 2016 calendar year. The top 10 programs (in alphabetical order) include: Altus, Bartlesville, Duncan, Guymon, Hobart, Newkirk, Okmulgee, Ponca City, Prague, and Wilburton. The top program will also be announced at the banquet.

In addition, the top Main Street Program Directors will be recognized at the banquet. Those making the top three this year include Stephen Boyd, Hobart Main Street, Inc.; Melyn Johnson, Main Street Guymon Inc.; and Ed Sharrer, Kendall Whittier Main Street.

The award finalists are:

**ORGANIZATION:**

Premier Partner

Bartlesville – Hilton Garden Inn/Bartlesville

Okmulgee – Street Signs

Ponca City – City of Ponca City

Best Community Education/Public Awareness

Ardmore – “Your Favorite New Place” Billboard Campaign

Duncan – “This Place Matters”

Wilburton – Main Street Week Activities

Best Volunteer Development Program

Durant – Durant High School Service Learning Project

Guymon – Football Families

Hobart – Main Street Design Committee

Main Street Hero

Altus – Shannon Preston

Newkirk – Caryl Morgan

Okmulgee – Richard Larabee

Ponca City – Richard Winterrowd

Best Creative Fundraising Effort

Durant – Dancing with the Stars

Okmulgee – Big Brain Trivia Night

Ponca City – 2016 Battle of the Burger

**PROMOTION:**

Premier Special Event Under 1,000 Attendees

Claremore – Food Truck Thursday

Enid – Butterfly Invasion

Enid – Downtown Dogfest

Premier Special Event Over 1,000 Attendees

Collinsville – 15th Annual Hogs ‘n’ Hot Rods

Durant – Trick or Treat on Third Street Carnival

Hobart – 9/11: Never Forget

Best Retail Event

Durant – Dash for Cash

Ponca City – Ladies Night Out

Tahlequah – Ladies Night Out 2016

Outstanding Image Promotion

Enid – Elf on the Downtown Shelf

Enid – Shop the Square & Main Street Menu

Ponca City – The Downtown Flyer

Creative New Event

Hobart – 9/11: Never Forget

Ponca City – 2016 Battle of the Burger

Stockyards City – “Cowboys and Caboodles” Art Show and Sale

**DESIGN:**

Best Placemaking Project

Enid – The Trail Mural

Ponca City – City of Ponca City/Light Poles & Street Signs

Ponca City – Veterans’ Plaza

Best Sustainable Design Project

Enid – Lamp Post Refurbishment

Enid – Mural Program

Ponca City – Veterans’ Plaza

Best Interior Design Project

Enid – Leonardo’s Children’s Museum

Kendall Whittier – The Beehive Lounge

Okmulgee – Park on the Square

Best Façade Rehabilitation Under $10,000

Claremore – Barron Law Firm

Hobart – Krieger Insurance

Newkirk – A Perfect Day

Best Façade Rehabilitation Over $10,000

Bartlesville – Chris Dizmang – CR Anthony Building

Claremore – Main Street Tavern

Newkirk – Newkirk City Hall

Tahlequah – Wilson Building Façade Project

Best Visual Merchandising

Ada – Farm Girl Boutique

Ada – Rustic Ridge

McAlester – Harper and Gray House

Best Building/Business Branding

Durant – Bliss Boutique

Kendall Whittier – The Beehive Lounge

Newkirk – Cheeky Burgers

**ECONOMIC VITALITY:**

Best Adaptive Reuse Project

Claremore – Main Street Tavern

Hobart – Frisco Creek Barbeque

Newkirk – Inner Spaces

Best Business Practices

Ada -- Scraptopia

Altus – Belles & Beaux

Durant – With Bump

Best New Business

Kendall Whittier – Calaveras Mexican Grill

Okmulgee – 102 Ristorante

Stockyards City – Prairie Dust Soaps and Stuff

Business of the Year

Hobart – General Tommy Franks Leadership Institute & Museum

Newkirk – Urban Prairie Art Gallery

Ponca City – Lewis Associates Architects, Inc.

The dinner and program will begin at 6:30 p.m. Tickets can be purchased from your local Main Street Program for $45.

For a listing of Main Street programs in the state, or for more information about the Oklahoma Main Street Program, please call (405) 815-6552 or visit OKcommerce.gov/mainstreet.

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