



## **Alexandria Beautification Commission Announces 2018 Award Winners**

*Alexandria Beautification Winners are Awarded by Mayor and City Council*

**Alexandria, VA – October 22, 2018**– On October 16, 2018, the Alexandria Beautification Commission held its annual Beautification Awards ceremony at the Lyceum in Old Town, Alexandria. The theme of this year’s event was “How Green Spaces Improve the Quality of Life.”

Mayor Allison Silberberg and members of City Council, Del Pepper and Paul Smedberg, presented the winners with their award certificates. Mayor Silberberg remarked, “This is one of my favorite events of the year. Beautification is crucial.” She stated, “We are all temporary stewards of this national treasure called Alexandria. It takes a team effort, and the Alexandria Beautification Commission is a big part of that.” Mayor Silberberg graciously thanked the honorees and the Commission for their hard work, “We are the winners here in Alexandria. We are beneficiaries of your devotion to beautification.”

Commission member, Anna Smith Lacey, announced this year’s winners who were awarded for their exceptional efforts in contributing to the beautification of Alexandria through architecture, landscaping and sustainable practices. Awards were presented in six categories: Excellence in Architecture, Excellence in Sustainable Design, Green Practices in Beautification, Community Beautification, Residential Beautification, and Commercial Beautification. Ms. Lacey noted, “This year, we are seeing a new and encouraging trend. We are seeing the City, local businesses, residents and communities coming together to create sustainable landscapes that not only create beauty, but also improve quality of life.”

Ms. Beth Tuttle, President of the American Horticultural Society, was the keynote speaker. She said, “Beautification is full of power and potential. The process of beautifying our cities builds communities that are more resilient, more connected, healthier and more equitable.” Ms. Tuttle spoke about the notion of cultivating resilience, which is the capacity to persist and solve problems and to adapt in the face of the challenging circumstances. She said, “When we employ sustainable design, as many of tonight’s honorees are doing, and as

we continue to work on the City of Alexandria’s initiative, science tells us that we are creating good conditions for both environmental and social psychological resilience.” Ms. Tuttle explained that through urban green spaces, such as gardens and parks, we build community. She said that by creating these neutral spaces for people to come together, “a sense of connectedness and ownership emerges as a result. It begins to foster greater trust, cooperation and sense of reciprocity among individuals. All of these are absolutely critical components of any well-functioning society.”

“The evening was a wonderful celebration of excellence in beautification,” remarked Christina Mazurkevich, Commission member and real estate agent. “It was about gratitude and recognizing those who do greater good to benefit all of us – our environment, our well-being, and thereby making Alexandria a more beautiful place.”

A full list of the 2018 Alexandria Beautification Award winners can be found by visiting <http://www.alexandriava.gov/Beautification>.