

For Immediate Release
March 31, 2010

Contact: Catherine Stewart
Executive Director
Luray Downtown Initiative, Inc.
(540) 743-7700
luraydowntown@embarqmail.com

Luray receives Virginia Main Street Milestone Award

- Luray Downtown Initiative *receives award for volunteer contribution at Lynchburg ceremony* -

Lynchburg, VA – On Thursday, March 25, Luray Downtown Initiative, Inc was presented with a Virginia Main Street Milestone Award for contribution of more than 15,000 volunteer hours toward downtown revitalization since being designated as a Virginia Main Street community in 2004.

The award was presented at the Virginia Main Street Milestone Achievement Awards ceremony marking the 25th anniversary of the program at a special dinner held at Lynchburg's Craddock Terry Hotel.

Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development Director William C. Shelton addressed the Main Street volunteers, local leaders, businesses, local governments and private investors in attendance. "The work being done in Main Street communities requires a collaborative effort across the private, public, and nonprofit sectors," said Shelton to the group of more than 100 gathered. "Bringing them together in a shared vision of a vibrant downtown requires leadership. Over the past 25 years that leadership fostered a new climate in Virginia downtowns, helping to create more than 14,000 jobs."

Keynote speaker Chuck D'Aprix, founder of the D.C.-based organization, The Downtown Entrepreneurship Project. D'Aprix charged the group to make downtowns the center of opportunity by providing support and resources to potential and emerging business owners. "We should continue working to attract entrepreneurs, not just businesses," Dupree said.

"I was honored to accept the 15,000 of Volunteer Service Award on behalf of the outstanding and truly dedicated volunteers to this organization. This award reflects the community support of the continued success of LDI" said LDI Executive Director Catherine Stewart.

In addition to Warrenton, VMS recognized the following communities for excellence.

- Abingdon
- Bedford
- Berryville
- Blackstone
- Culpeper
- Franklin
- Harrisonburg
- Lynchburg
- Manassas
- Marion
- Orange
- Rocky Mount
- South Boston
- Staunton
- Warrenton
- Waynesboro
- Winchester

Currently there are 21 designated Virginia Main Street communities: Abingdon, Altavista, Bedford, Blackstone, Berryville, Culpeper, Franklin, Harrisonburg, Luray, Lynchburg, Manassas, Marion, Martinsville, Orange, Radford, Rocky Mount, South Boston, Staunton, Warrenton, Waynesboro, and Winchester.

The Virginia Main Street program, managed by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, provides assistance and training to help communities increase the economic vitality of their downtown commercial districts. Virginia Main Street uses the National Main Street model to help communities revitalize their downtowns by focusing on their unique heritage and attributes. The program helps communities implement a comprehensive revitalization strategy that creates economic growth and pride in downtowns.

For more information about the Virginia Main Street program, call (804) 371-7030 or visit their Web page at: www.dhcd.virginia.gov/MainStreet.

###