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**MAY  
2016**



# City Manager's Spotlight



**TERESA WILSON  
COLUMBIA CITY MANAGER**



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*"To say that I and so many feel a profound sense of loss is an understatement. Deborah has been such a tremendous spirit and employee for almost 17 years at the City of Columbia; she is certainly missed."*

*~City Manager Teresa Wilson*

## Remembering Deborah

*Deborah C. Christie was born Dec. 31, 1956, to the late Richard W. Christie Sr. and the late Mary L. Christie in Heidelberg, Germany.*

*Deborah moved to Columbia in 1980 and began a life of public service. She worked in banking for 18 years before changing career paths in 2000 to work with the City of Columbia.*

*Deborah exhibited exemplary leadership and innovation in her professional life. Her many awards included:*

- City of Columbia Community Development 5 Year membership Award 8/28/2015*
- NUSA Neighborhood USA (Second Place) Social Revitalization/Neighbor Award 05/20-23/2015*
- Campaign 2013 Silver Award (United Way)*
- John A Sasso National Community Development Week Award 06/22/2012*
- John A Sasso National Community Development Week Award will be accepted on 06/24/2016*
- SC Association of Community Development Eagle Award 09/14/2012*
- Audrey Nelson Community Development Achievement Certificate 02/01/2013*
- United Way Gold Award 2015*
- MASC Municipal Award 2011*
- CCN Friend of the Year Award (awarded to Deborah) 2016*



*Deborah was passionate in her work in regards to empowering low-income citizens to become self-sufficient and homeowners. Her work included several positions with the City as shown below:*

- Executive Director of Columbia Housing 1/1/2000*
- Executive Director of Housing & Development Corporation 3/2004*
- Executive Director TNDC (Two Notch Development Corporation) 9/8/2006*
- Deputy Director for CD/CHDC/TNDC (Community Development/Columbia Housing Development Corporation/Two Notch Development Corporation) 8/27/2008*
- Director of Community Development (Interim) 7/13/2011*
- Director of OBO/Community Development (OBO is the Office of Business Opportunities) 7/28/2011*
- Director of Community Development 2/7/2012*

*Donations can be made to support Deborah's most recent passion, the establishment of a teaching kitchen at the Kathryn Bellfield Center through the Columbia FoodShare program. To help make her dream become reality, send donations to the Columbia Parks and Recreation Foundation designated for the Culinary Training Facility, P.O. Box 573, Columbia, SC 29202.*

# City of Columbia Recognized as 2016 Playful City USA Community

The City of Columbia is being honored with a 2016 Playful City USA designation for the third time. Celebrating its 10th anniversary, the national recognition program honors cities and towns across the country for making their cities more playable.

The City of Columbia Parks and Recreation Department operates and maintains 60 city parks and green spaces, 600 acres of city-maintained park land, 55 tennis courts and several city pools, spray pads and ponds, including a new pool facility at Greenview Park. All city parks are open year-round from dawn to dusk with no entrance fees.

The Parks and Recreation Department provides a variety of programming from athletics and cultural arts to health and wellness and special events. Such programming includes the Mayor's Drills & Skills Clinics, Kids Day, Girls Golf clinics, nature walks and more.

The City of Columbia has invested in several projects to increase opportunities for children to play including the renovation of Roy Lynch Park, the completion of the Greenview Pool and the expansion of its outdoor adventure program.

Communities across the country are creating innovative ways to bring back play and attract residents through family friendly activities. Interactive sidewalk art, designated play spaces on trails and the transformation of schoolyards into active play areas are just a few examples of how cities are becoming more playful.



To see the full list of the 257 communities named 2016 Playful City USA honorees, or to gather more information on the Playful City USA program, visit [www.playfulcityusa.org](http://www.playfulcityusa.org).

For more information about the City of Columbia's parks, recreation centers and programs, please contact the Parks and Recreation Department at 803-545-3100.



# Greenview Pool Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



The City of Columbia Parks and Recreation Department hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new pool facility at Greenview Park, 6700 David Street, on May 21, 2016. The City's swim season began on Saturday, May 28 for Greenview Pool . See details below for recreational swimming, fees and swim lessons.

Greenview Pool will be closed on Mondays for maintenance. Swim lessons will be offered now through August.

Regular hours for recreational swimming are as follows:

- ◆ Tuesday through Thursday from 1 to 5:45 p.m.
- ◆ Fridays - closed for maintenance
- ◆ Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- ◆ Sundays from 2 to 6 p.m.

Swim Season Fees:

Per visit: \$3 (ages 12 and under) | \$4 (ages 13 and over)

Season tickets: \$80 (ages 12 and under) | \$120 (ages 13 and over)

Group passes: \$75 (child) | \$100 (adults)

Swim Lessons: \$35 per session

For more information, call 803-545-3100 or visit <http://www.columbiasc.gov/parks-recreation/programs-activities/aquatics>.

# City of Columbia Proclaims May 1-7 Drinking Water Week

On Tuesday, May 3, Mayor Steve Benjamin proclaimed May 1-7 as Drinking Water Week in the City of Columbia to encourage residents to “Refill, Refresh, Repeat” by drinking tap water daily. The City of Columbia joined the American Water Works Association and water professionals across the country in highlighting the importance of understanding their water supply from source to tap.

Every day, Columbia residents turn on their faucets but give little thought to the water that flows out. Water distributed by the City of Columbia Water Works comes from surface water and is circulated through a network of more than 2,400 miles of pipe. The City operates two drinking water plants, one drawing water from the Canal in downtown Columbia and another using water from Lake Murray. Together, these plants produce an average of 60 million gallons of water each day for local use by more than 370,000 customers. City of Columbia water customers pay less than a penny per-gallon for water. At more than one dollar per-bottle, a 16 ounce bottle of water can cost 1,000 times more than water from the tap.

“Drinking Water Week is an important time to understand our drinking water and to encourage our customers to drink water at home,” said Columbia Water Works Superintendent Clint Shealy. “We want our customers to understand the health benefits of drinking water every day and the savings if they drink tap water rather than purchasing bottled water at the store.”

Throughout the week the City will be distributing reusable water bottles at City bill payment centers on Washington Street in downtown Columbia and in Eau Claire.



## **About Drinking Water Week**

For more than 35 years, AWWA and its members have celebrated Drinking Water Week, a unique opportunity for both water professionals and the communities they serve to join together to recognize the vital role water plays in our daily lives. Additional information about lead in drinking water and Drinking Water Week, including free materials for download and celebration ideas, is available at [DrinkTap.org](http://DrinkTap.org).

## **About City of Columbia Drinking Water**

For more about the City of Columbia’s Drinking Water program, including the latest Consumer Confidence Reports and local lead testing, visit [www.columbiasc.net/drinking-water](http://www.columbiasc.net/drinking-water).

# Columbia Empowerment Zone Launches New Vacant/Abandoned Building Incentive Program

The City of Columbia helps the Columbia Empowerment Zone, Inc. celebrate Economic Development Week. The week of May 8th-14th has been designated as Economic Development Week by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC). The mission of Economic Development aims to influence the development and restructuring of a community's economy; to enhance its well-being by creating, retaining, and expanding jobs that facilitate progression, enhance wealth, and grows a stable tax base.



The Columbia Empowerment Zone, Inc. in partnership with the City of Columbia announced a new Vacant/Abandoned Building Incentive Program. On May 4, 2016, a press conference was held to announce the program. The initiative will allow business/non-business owners the opportunity to renovate vacant/abandoned buildings for the purpose of economic development in the City.

Participants can submit an application and required documents to the CEZ, Inc. office. Participants must be property owners or tenants within the City of Columbia or areas adjacent to the city to be eligible to apply.

Each application will be selected based on criteria determined by the CEZ, Inc. Site Incentive Committee and as approved by the CEZ, Inc. Board of Directors. Qualified participants will be awarded a reimbursement of expenses by CEZ, Inc. generated funds. There is a minimum award amount of \$1,000 and maximum award amount of \$20,000.

The reimbursement fund award can only be used for the following:

- ◆ Purchases
- ◆ Preservation/Renovation
- ◆ Permanent Improvements

All applications will be processed on a first come, first serve basis until all available program funds are awarded. For an application package contact the VABIP Program Administrator at 803-255-8129, Eau Claire Town Hall 3905 Ensor Avenue, Columbia, SC 29203, or visit [www.columbiasc.net/cez](http://www.columbiasc.net/cez).

# Let's Move! Columbia Family Fitness Challenge



The City of Columbia kicked off a free 12-week family wellness challenge beginning Sunday, May 1, to encourage families to lead a healthy and active lifestyle.

15 families were selected to compete in the wellness challenge. Councilwoman Tameika Isaac Devine, who is spearheading the citywide wellness initiative, said the health of your family is one of the most important aspects of life. "As a Let's Move! Gold Medalist City, we are working diligently to improve access to healthy, affordable food and increase opportunities for physical activity for our citizens," Devine said.

Participants were asked to track their meals and activities, and participate in a variety of special events throughout the challenge.

Participants will receive points in the following categories:

- Fitness
- Exercise program (on their own or at the Charles R. Drew Wellness Center)
- Scheduled group activity
- Nutrition/Gardening
- Attending nutrition and cooking classes sponsored by the SC Department of Health & Environmental Control
- Attending gardening sessions or planting a garden at home
- Family Activity
- Spending time together as a family (sharing or cooking a meal together, attending a special event, exercising, shopping, gardening etc.)

Overall prizes valued at \$1,000, \$500 and \$250 will be awarded to the top three families who log the most points at the end of the challenge. All participating families will receive a certificate for their participation.



Each family selected for the challenge received the following:

- Free health screenings (BMI and blood pressure)
- Weekly emails providing physical activity and nutrition tips Cookbook
- 3-month membership to Drew Wellness Center
- Activity tracking notebook
- Activity and program calendars
- Fresh food boxes from FoodShare Columbia
- Personal potted plant for children
- Raised garden bed kit for the entire family
- Boot Camp sessions with a personal trainer
- Chance to win prizes worth up to \$1,000
- And more!

For more information, contact Wanda Austin at 803-315-4964.



# OBO Hosts 4th Annual Small Business Week Conference

The City of Columbia is committed to supporting its entrepreneurs and small businesses on a local level. Through the City of Columbia's Small Business Week Conference, the Office of Business Opportunities highlighted the impact of the city's outstanding entrepreneurs and small business owners.

The City's Office of Business Opportunities (OBO) hosted the fourth annual Small Business Week Conference on Thursday, May 5, 2016 from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Spirit Communications Park, 1640 Freed Street.

The conference was a unique opportunity for small and large business owners from the midlands to network. In addition, a great line-up of presenters with a wealth of information for every business owner were on-site. This year's keynote speakers were Gloria Larking of Target.gov and Carolyn Sawyer of the Tom Sawyer Company.

Attendees had the opportunity to learn helpful business tips and this year's workshops included:

- ◆ Taking a Business from Home to Office
- ◆ Pitch Perfect
- ◆ Doing Business with the Federal Marketplace
- ◆ Using Crowd funding to Launch your Business
- ◆ Facts of Franchise Ownership
- ◆ Uplevel: Your Voice, Your Story & Your Revenue: Strategies to increase influence and income
- ◆ When to Hire a new Employee
- ◆ 5 HR Mistakes that Every Small Business Should Avoid

For more information, contact the Office of Business Opportunities at 803-545-3950 or visit <http://www.columbiasc.net/obo>.



City Manager Wilson poses with owners of Chocolate Nirvana Bakery & Café, LLC after they were awarded the Business Spotlight.

# BPAC Celebrates National Bike Month in the City



The City's Bike Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) was established to advise the City of Columbia Transportation Planning staff, Mayor and City Council Members, community organizations and partners on bicycling and pedestrian issues facing the city; to work toward development of a bicycle/pedestrian Master Plan; to represent community and constituent interests in transportation planning decisions; and to provide feedback to staff on projects relating to walking and bicycling. City of Columbia staff will consider recommendations from the BPAC along with input from other members of the public during decision making.

To celebrate Bike Month, BPAC held various events throughout the city, such as Bike to Work Day on May 20.

To learn more about specific events from BPAC, visit <https://www.facebook.com/BikePedestrianAdvisoryCommitteebpac/>

Established in 1956, National Bike Month is a chance to showcase the many benefits of bicycling — and encourage more folks to give biking a try (Resource: <http://bikeleague.org/bikemonth>). National Bike Month has been acknowledged through Mayoral Proclamations in Columbia within recent years.

## About Teresa Wilson

Teresa Wilson is the City Manager for the City of Columbia, SC. For more details on the City Manager, visit [ColumbiaSC.net/City-Manager](http://ColumbiaSC.net/City-Manager). For more information about the City of Columbia, visit [ColumbiaSC.net](http://ColumbiaSC.net).

*Please do not hesitate to contact me with your concerns, suggestions and hopes for our City. I take pleasure in my service to each of you!*

All my best,

*Teresa Wilson*



We Are Columbia