

Dr. Debbie Conner receives 2012 Ann DeBock Leadership Award

Leadership Grand Strand presented the 2012 Ann DeBock Leadership Award to Dr. Debbie Conner of Coastal Carolina University during the Leadership Grand Strand Class XXXII graduation ceremony on May 6 at Pine Lakes Country Club.

Each year, the Leadership Grand Strand class honors one alumnus who has exhibited outstanding leadership and service. To receive this award, the recipient must volunteer in service or civic roles, serve on appointed boards or commissions, and exhibit an overall demonstration of effective leadership skills.

The 2012 award winner was born in Houston, Texas, moved to North Carolina at a young age and attended A.C. Reynolds High School in Asheville, N.C. Conner then attended Converse College where she earned her Bachelor of Arts degree as a double major in psychology and secondary education. In 1994, she moved to the Myrtle Beach area and joined the staff of Coastal Carolina University as coordinator in the Department of Student Affairs.

In the years that followed, Conner continued her education while she worked for Coastal Carolina University as the director of student activities; director of community relations, special events and stewardship; and assistant vice president for University Relations. She earned her master's in student personnel from the University of South Carolina in 1996, followed by her Doctor of philosophy degree in educational leadership from Clemson University in 2005. Currently, Conner serves as the associate vice president of University Relations at CCU.

In addition to her many academic and professional accomplishments, Conner also stays busy raising her 17-year-old daughter Kayla with her husband, Tracy, who works in the golf industry. According to those she knows and has worked with, Conner has always been a good example for young women seeking a healthy work-family balance.

"She is a tremendous inspiration for all young women who aspire to be successful in a career and successful in a marriage and family. She has a tremendous ability to assume responsibility and to handle all her duties with a cheerful attitude and a winning spirit," said Tommy Brittain of The Brittain Law Firm, P.A.



Conner also spends a great deal of her time volunteering. She has worked with several organizations along the Grand Strand including the Street Reach Ministries, Coastal Carolina YMCA, Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, Converse College Alumnae Board, Waccamaw Area Heart Association and more.

Currently, Conner serves as the vice president and conference committee logistics chair of the CCU Women in Philanthropy and Leadership organization, president of the Brittain Fellowship Class at First Methodist Church in Myrtle Beach, co-chair of the Bi-Lo American Red Cross Christmas Dinner, a member of the Rotary Club of Carolina Forest Sunrise and much more.

The Ann DeBock Leadership Award was commissioned and started by Class XIX in memory of Ann DeBock, the executive director of Leadership Grand Strand from its inception in 1979 until her death in 1998. The other nominees for this year's award were Vern Hearl of LHWH, Shannon Detzler of The Jackson Companies, and Cindy Ott of Horry-Georgetown Technical College.

For more information, visit LeadershipGrandStrand.com or call (843) 916-7222.