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## BGR Media Release

*For Immediate Release – May 10, 2018*

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## BGR Honors Excellence in Government

Today, BGR presented its 2018 Excellence in Government Awards during a luncheon ceremony at the Hyatt Regency New Orleans. Canal Barge Company, Inc. sponsored the awards program. Established in 1994, the awards program recognizes government employees and citizens for outstanding performance and creative problem-solving.

A committee of BGR members selected the 2018 honorees, listed below, through a competitive process. BGR solicited nominations from government officials and employees and the general public. BGR gave four types of awards.

*Merit Award.* The Merit Award recognizes outstanding performance by public sector employees. Four Merit Awards were presented to:

- **Sarah Babcock**, Healthy Population and Planning Manager, City of New Orleans Health Department, for her work to improve the City's emergency preparedness and response efforts, including assistance to individuals who use life-sustaining medical equipment.

- **Lacey Bordelon**, Vice President & Chief Operating Officer, Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission, for her role in recent economic development successes in Jefferson Parish and leadership on JEDCO's strategic initiatives.

- **Lucy Lejeune**, Coordinator of Career and Technical Education, Jefferson Parish Public School System, for her outstanding performance in preparing students for career opportunities.

- **Team of New Orleans Airport Employees**, including: Kristi Bennett-Holmes, Deputy Director of Aviation; Keely Herrington, Media & Marketing Coordinator; Franklin Ruiz, IT Manager; Reed Barnes, Customer Service Manager; Douglas McCrary, Terminal Maintenance Manager; Kevin Spruell, Senior Airport Engineer; R. Michael McMillan, Operations Manager; and Thomas Moore, Maintenance Contracts Manager. The team is recognized for its work to recruit and retain new flights and airlines at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport.

*Innovation Award.* The Innovation Award recognizes public employees who have implemented creative solutions to pressing problems. Three Innovation Awards will be presented to:

- **Ashleigh Gardere**, Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer, New Orleans Business Alliance, for her work to improve citizens' access to quality workforce development programs in New Orleans.
- **Benjamin Horwitz**, Director of Analytics, New Orleans Police Department, for his development of a computerized analytical platform to enhance NOPD's compliance with the federal consent decree and increase its overall efficiency and transparency.
- **Timothy Lentz**, Chief of Police, City of Covington, for launching the Operation Angel program in St. Tammany Parish to provide a treatment-based alternative to arresting and jailing drug users.

*Lifetime Achievement Award.* The Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes sustained performance over a career in public service. One award will be presented to:

- **Alexina Medley**, Principal & Chief Executive Officer (Retired), Warren Easton Charter High School, for her many contributions to New Orleans public education during her 40-year career.

*Citizenship Award.* The Citizenship Award recognizes private citizens who have worked to improve the quality of government. BGR will present two Citizenship Awards to:

- **Revia Ellis**, Early Childhood Education Advocate, for her efforts to engage parents and policymakers in support of City of New Orleans funding for early childhood education.
- **Carol Wise**, Early Childhood Education Advocate, for her leadership on local fundraising for early childhood education and the improvement of childcare centers in New Orleans.

“This year’s honorees have all demonstrated diligence and persistence to make government work better for citizens and businesses,” said Amy L. Glovinsky, BGR president and CEO. “Recognizing their achievements through the Excellence in Government Awards is an exciting part of the mission of the Bureau of Governmental Research. Like our honorees today, BGR actively works to facilitate efficient and effective government in the New Orleans area.”

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*BGR is a private, nonprofit, independent research organization. Since its founding in 1932, it has been dedicated to informed public policy-making and the effective use of public resources in the Greater New Orleans area. For more information, call 525-4152 or visit BGR’s website, [www.bgr.org](http://www.bgr.org).*