

Employee of the Year 2005

Michelle Small, Women Infants and Children (WIC) Program Assistant, was announced as the 2005 Dare County Employee of the Year at the January 3, 2006 meeting of the Dare County Board of Commissioners. Dare County's 2004 Employee of the Year, Billy Brown, was on hand to present Small with the award.



Small came to work for the County in 1997 assisting various departments and accepted a position as WIC Program Assistant in August of the same year. WIC is a federal supplemental nutrition program for low-income women, infants, and children and is available through the Dare County Department of Public Health. The Program provides supplemental foods, nutrition counseling, breastfeeding information and support, and referrals to health services for pregnant, breastfeeding, and post-partum women, infants, and children under the age of five. As a WIC assistant, Small issues vouchers for food and formula, helps monitor WIC vendors to make sure they carry the required food on their shelves, answers breast feeding questions, and also helps the Health Clinic when needed.

Brown cited the many positives about Small in his presentation to the Board of Commissioners on Tuesday including her initiative to learn Spanish to better communicate with Spanish clients. Small became eligible to receive the award after receiving the Employee of the Month Award in April. Small was selected as Employee of the Year by the selection committee who reviewed information about each Employee of the Month recipient for the entire year. The Selection Committee, which includes the Employee of the Year from the previous year along with two other Employees of the Month from the previous year, meets monthly to select each month's winner and then also selects the Employee of the Year at year's end.

"Over the years, participation in the WIC program has grown and Michelle has always met that challenge with competency and professionalism," Anne Thomas, Dare County Health Director, told Commissioners when she presented Small with the Employee of the Month Award in April. "There are so many reasons she deserves this award but she doesn't do it for the recognition. She is motivated by improving the lives of others. She has two small children, maintains her work full-time and continually strives to improve the service she provides. For instance, she has learned Spanish to better communicate with her clients. She's a role model for others, an inspiration for us, and I know I share the pride and pleasure of all of her colleagues that are here today to give her this recognition."

Small is a native of Manteo and has two daughters; 10-year-old Alisha and 4-year old Jaylin. She believes she was awarded the honor based on her work ethic along with the fact she has returned to school in an effort to attain her associates degree and hopes to eventually get a bachelors degree from a four year school.

When asked what she enjoys most about her job Small replied, "My coworkers and the job itself. I get a sense of satisfaction from what I do." That is much the same emotion she expressed back in April when she received the employee of the month award. "I love my co-workers, my supervisor... and all aspects of the WIC program," Small stated after receiving her employee of the month award.

Congratulations to Michelle Small for receiving the Dare County Employee of the Year award for 2005.

Photo: Women Infants and Children (WIC) Assistant Michelle Small