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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rutherford County Chamber announces four distinguished award recipients

Honorees will be recognized at Business at its Best on Jan. 31

Murfreesboro, Tenn. – Jan. 3, 2019 – The Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce has named John Hood as recipient of the 2018 Doug Young Lifetime Achievement Award, Gordon Ferguson as 2018 Business Legend of the Year, John Harney as the 2018 Business Person of the Year, and Chief Kevin Arnold as recipient of the Leadership Rutherford 2018 Pinnacle Award. These four honorees will be recognized at the Chamber’s annual Business at its Best celebration on Thursday, Jan. 31, at the Embassy Suites Murfreesboro Hotel & Conference Center.

2018 Doug Young Lifetime Achievement Award – John Hood

John Hood is director of government and community affairs at Middle Tennessee State University. A Rutherford County native, Hood’s blood runs True Blue. In 1954 he received a bachelor’s degree from MTSU followed by his Masters of Education in 1974.

Hood’s career spans six decades with posts in radio broadcasting, banking, human resources, higher education and government service at the city, county and state levels.

Prior to Hood’s current position at MTSU, he represented the 48th District in the Tennessee General Assembly House of Representatives from 1996 to 2008. Preceding that, he spent 20 years of his career as vice president of marketing for SunTrust Bank, 10 years at MTSU as the first director of development, followed by assistant to the president, six years as personnel manager for Samsonite Corporation and 10 years in radio broadcasting for WGNS and WMTS. He is a military veteran, having served in the United States Army from 1954 to 1956.

Hood was a member of the Rutherford County Quarterly Court (now the County Commission) from 1968 to 1978 and the Murfreesboro City School Board from 1967 to 1983.

Hood’s history of community service is one that spans decades. Affiliations include the Exchange Club of Murfreesboro, United Way of Rutherford & Cannon Counties, Read to Succeed and the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce, where he has served as a diplomat for the past 18 years. Previous leadership roles include national president of the Exchange Clubs of America, chairman of the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce, president of the Tennessee School Boards Association, chairman of the Tennessee Advisory Board for the AAA Auto Club Group, president of the MTSU National Alumni Association, and treasurer of the Rutherford County Emergency Communications District.

He was the 2012 recipient of the Murfreesboro City Schools Foundation’s Excellence in Education Award. In 2014 the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce named Hood as Business Legend of the Year. Hood was inducted in to the Tennessee Journalism Hall of fame in 2016, and in 2017 he was honored with the American Red Cross “Hero” Award.

John and his late wife, Marilyn, have three children, Garry W. Hood, Rebecca Hagan and Mark R. Hood; and four grandchildren, Christin H. Waters, twins Grady and Cooper Hood and John Robin Hood.

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2018 Business Legend of the Year – Gordon Ferguson

Gordon Ferguson serves as the president and CEO of Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital and president of the Saint Thomas Regional Hospitals. He received a bachelor's degree in business administration with honors from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and earned a master's degree in hospital and health administration from the University of Alabama, Birmingham. In 2007, Ferguson became a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives, and previously served as president of the Healthcare Executive Forum of Middle Tennessee (HEFMT).

Ferguson serves as a board member and executive committee member of the United Way of Rutherford & Cannon Counties; he is a board member of the American Heart Association, Rutherford County; the Business Education Partnership Foundation; Leadership Middle Tennessee; Alive Hospice Murfreesboro Advisory Board; and the Franklin Synergy Bank Community Board.

Ferguson was the 2011 chairman of the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. He also serves on the boards of the University of Tennessee Knoxville Alumni Association; the University of Tennessee President's Council; the University of Alabama-Birmingham Graduate Program in Healthcare Administration Alumni Board; and serves as vice-chair of the Tennessee State Board of Education. Gordon and Cindy have two sons, Robbie and Andy. He enjoys cycling, swimming, boating and UT athletics.

2018 Business Person of the Year – John Harney

John Harney is a lifelong resident of Rutherford County where he is a commercial real estate broker with the Parks Group and CEO of Park Trust Development. He began his real estate career in 1984 and in 1989 moved to Bob Parks Realty to help create the commercial sales division.

In the early 90s, Harney became a partner in Park Trust Development. He has been involved in developing more than 25 residential communities as well as office condominium parks and two industrial projects including the Joe B Jackson and I-24 industrial parkway corridor. Harney was instrumental in bringing some of the following businesses to Rutherford County: Amazon Distribution Center, NHK, Interstate Warehousing, Verizon Call Center, Tennessee Technology Center in Smyrna, Nelson Mazda, Chevrolet Buick GMC of Murfreesboro, and Honda of Murfreesboro. His numerous restaurant deals include Red Lobster, Logan's, Ruby Tuesdays, Chili's, Demos', Toot's, and many more.

He is a graduate of Leadership Rutherford; past board member of the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce; past president of the Discovery Center at Murfree Spring; an Eagle Scout, Silver Beaver Award recipient and is an executive board member of the Middle Tennessee Council of the Boy Scouts; a trustee of the Sam Davis Home Memorial Association; and a board member of Intend Ministries. Harney and his wife, Debbie, have been married for 40 years and have 2 children and 3 grandchildren.

Leadership Rutherford 2018 Pinnacle Award – Kevin Arnold

Leadership Rutherford has named Smyrna Police Chief Kevin Arnold as the 2018 recipient of the Pinnacle Award, given to someone who has demonstrated significant leadership throughout his or her career.

Chief Kevin Arnold began his career in law enforcement in 1979 working for the MTSU Police Department as a student officer. In 1982 Chief Arnold transitioned to the Rutherford County Sheriff's Office as a jailer, eventually working his way through the ranks at the Sheriff's Office as a Deputy Sheriff, Narcotics Detective, and a General Detective. Chief Arnold was selected as Officer of the Year in 1985.

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Chief Arnold graduated from MTSU in 1982 with a Bachelor's of Science in Criminal Justice Administration. In 1997 Chief Arnold graduated from the FBI National Academy, Class 190. Chief Arnold has completed various trainings from basic police to command level supervision. In 2010 Chief Arnold was presented the Director's Choice Award by the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police recognizing him as the Police Chief of the Year for Middle Tennessee. Chief Arnold served as President for the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police for 2017/2018 for over 1,000 members.

Chief Arnold is married to Lynn and they have two "perfect" grandchildren that they enjoy spoiling. In his spare time Chief Arnold enjoys attending MTSU Blue Raider sporting events, cheering on a variety of professional sports teams, golf, and reading.

The four distinguished recipients will be honored at the Chamber's annual Business at its Best event at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 31, at the Embassy Suites Murfreesboro Hotel and Conference Center. Reservations are \$50 for Chamber members and \$65 for non-members. To reserve a seat, please contact the Chamber at 615-893-6565 or visit www.rutherfordchamber.org.

The Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce, which includes the Convention & Visitors Bureau, Destination Rutherford, Economic Development, Workforce Development and the Business Education Partnership, seeks to promote economic development and a quality of life to benefit all residents of Rutherford County. Programs, events and services are offered to both its nearly 1,600 member organizations and non-members. The Chamber operates out of a main office on Medical Center Parkway in Murfreesboro, and has branch offices in Smyrna, La Vergne and Eagleville. Learn more at www.rutherfordchamber.org.

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