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**For Immediate Release
Office of Public Information**

CROWDER COLLEGE 2015 EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Neosho, MO - Three employees of Crowder College received “Employee of the Year” awards for the 2014-15 year at an end-of-year all staff luncheon today. There was one employee selected from each employee category: faculty, professional staff, and classified (support) staff. Employees were nominated by their peers and/or students and winners were selected by area Chambers of Commerce.

The **Gold Star award for faculty** went to **Latonia Bailey**, Journalism Instructor and Coordinator. Latonia was nominated based upon her dedication to her students and her profession. This year, under her direction, the Crowder College newspaper, the Sentry, received 28 awards, including Advisor of the year for Ms. Bailey, and Best Overall Newspaper. One of her nominators commented, “Ms. Bailey is an extraordinary teacher, she is hard-working, reliable, and creative in her daily teaching. She consistently goes above and beyond the call of duty in working with her students. Her leadership and instruction guide her students to success.” This award is selected and presented by the Neosho Area Chamber of Commerce.

The **Professional Staff Employee of the Year** award went to **Wade Williams**, Assistant Director Upward Bound Programs. Wade was nominated based on his ability to balance hard work with joy and fun, his ability to utilize resources wisely, and to think creatively. One of his nominators commented: “Wade epitomizes Crowder’s mission statement: Building a civil serving, literate, learning community of responsible citizens. He does this through his passion for our future and current students as he works tirelessly to help them improve their educational, emotional and spiritual lives. Every day he serves as a mentor and a role-model for our students.” This award is selected by the McDonald County Chamber of Commerce and presented the Professional Staff President.

The **Classified Staff Employee of the Year** award went to **Karen Fink**, Administrative Assistant, Agriculture Division. Karen wears many hats in her daily routine and was nominated due to her dedication, her industrious spirit, and her every day practice of servant leadership. She was nominated by several people, one of whom commented: “She is an indispensable member of our team. Whenever there is something that needs to be done, Karen is ready to help, whether it is early in the morning, late in the evening, or on the weekend. She has proctored and graded tests, given tours to students of all ages, helped with academic advisement, planned and promoted events, solicited sponsorships, cooked meals, lead meetings, and much more. She is outstanding in whatever role she assumes and is a perfect example of servant leadership.” This award is selected and presented by the Neosho Area Chamber of Commerce.

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Latonia Bailey, Gold Star Faculty Award recipient, Wade Williams, Professional Staff Employee of the Year, and Karen Fink, Classified Staff Employee of the Year.