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Three Organizations Honored with Governor's Sterling and Georgia Oglethorpe Awards

~ The Sterling Council Honors Florida and Georgia Role Model Organizations ~

Tallahassee, FL (May 1, 2025) – Today, the Sterling Council is pleased to announce the 2025 Recipients of the prestigious Sterling Award. This year, two organizations are recipients of the Governor's Sterling and Georgia Oglethorpe Award and one is the recipient of the Sterling Sustained Excellence Award. These honorees will be formally recognized on May 30, 2025, at the Hyatt Regency Orlando recognizing their accomplishments and attainment of this recognition.

The Sterling Council is the premier resource for performance and business excellence in the southeast. The recognized award process elevates organizations in ways no other system can. The extensive corps of Sterling performance excellence professionals, which includes more than 150 examiners and a 40-member Board of Directors, maintains exceptionally high standards and saves organizations, as well as the state, millions of dollars annually.

GOVERNOR'S STERLING AWARD

Hillsborough County Tax Collector's Office 2025 Sterling Award Recipient

The Hillsborough County Tax Collector's Office, led by the Honorable Nancy Millan, serves Florida's third-largest county in the state with approximately 1.6 million residents. With over 400 employees across nine offices, the office collects and distributes property, business, and tourist development taxes that fund schools, roads, public safety, and other essential community services. As an agent for several state agencies, it also provides services such as vehicle/vessel/mobile home registrations and titles, driver licenses and ID cards, disabled parking permits, birth certificates, concealed weapon licenses, and hunting/fishing licenses. Additionally, the office collects tolls and issues vehicle-for-hire permits. In fiscal year 2024, it collected and distributed over \$3.5 billion in taxes and fees. Since adopting the Sterling Management System in 2004, the office has been recognized for its excellence, receiving the Governor's Sterling Award in 2008 and the Sterling Sustained Excellence Award in 2011. Under Millan's leadership since 2021,

the office has enhanced customer service, accessibility, and innovation, achieving a 94% customer satisfaction rating and a 4.7 Google Review rating. In fiscal year 2024, it served more than one million in-person customers and returned over \$29.5 million in unspent revenue to Hillsborough County. In 2025, the office earned the prestigious Governor's Sterling Award again, reflecting its commitment to efficiency, excellence, and continuous improvement.

GEORGIA OGLETHORPE AWARD

Wellstar Douglas Medical Center 2025 Sterling Award Recipient

Wellstar Douglas Medical Center is a non-profit 108-bed community hospital in Douglasville, Georgia. The hospital delivers extensive inpatient and outpatient services, including interventional cardiology, maternity care with a level 2 neonatal intensive care unit, hyperbaric wound care, rehab therapy, and robotic surgery, including total joint orthopedics. Founded in 1974, the hospital recently celebrated its 50th year in the community. The hospital's pursuit of high reliability and its utilization of tiered safety huddles, visual management boards, department-based huddles, and A3 Thinking has created a strong system of two-way communication that links the hospital's senior leaders with its frontline team members. This approach has allowed for a high level of integration and deployment of processes across all hospital departments, leading the hospital to achieve industry-leading financial, quality, marketplace, consumer engagement, and workforce results. The medical center's unique team-based approach, combined with its commitment to resilience and dedication as a center of nursing excellence, has promoted an environment where all team members can excel in caring for the community.

Wellstar Douglas Medical Center is a first-time recipient of the Georgia Oglethorpe Award.

STERLING SUSTAINED EXCELLENCE AWARD

USF Credit Union 2025 Sterling Award Recipient

[USF Credit Union](#), headquartered in Tampa, Florida, is a best-in-class, full-service financial institution committed to empowering members with exceptional service and solutions, and deeply rooted in the powerful credit union philosophy of "people helping people." Guided by its [EPICC values](#) - Excellence, Passion, Innovation, Community, and Collaboration - USF CU's culture of continuous improvement has led to outstanding member satisfaction and growth that consistently ranks among the best in the industry. USF CU's unwavering focus on people, performance and leading with heart has also earned national and regional recognition, including being named the #1 credit union in Florida by *Forbes* as well as one of the Top 100 places to work by the *Tampa Bay Times* and one of the USA TODAY Top Workplaces in 2025. With industry-leading member satisfaction and employee engagement, [USF CU](#) exemplifies excellence with a member-first mindset that sets the standard as a true role model in financial services.

USF Credit Union won the Governor's Sterling Award in 2020.

About The Sterling Council:

The Sterling Council, established in 1992, is a public/private not-for-profit corporation supported by the Executive Office of the Governor. The Council oversees the Governor's Sterling Award for Performance Excellence and the Georgia Oglethorpe Award, which is based on the national Malcolm Baldrige Award, with Awards being presented annually to high performing, role-model organizations, both private and public, who demonstrate superior management approaches and role model results. Sterling's annual conference teaches participants how to elevate performance and increase productivity. Nearly 600 executives and professionals gather yearly at this event for a one-stop source for education, information, and inspiration. The conference concludes with the recognition of best practices, the Team Showcase Champion, and the presentation of Sterling, Oglethorpe, and Manufacturing Business Excellence Awards. For more information, please contact Dione Geiger at (850) 922-5316 or visit www.thesterlingcouncil.org.