



*A non-profit association that provides statewide proactive leadership on waste reduction and recycling through education, advocacy, collaboration, programs and services.*

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## For Immediate Release

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## AROW Honors Recycling and Waste Reduction Efforts Throughout Wisconsin at Annual Awards Ceremony

**Elkhart Lake, WI (March 8, 2018)** – The Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin (AROW) proudly held their annual awards ceremony last week at the 2018 Wisconsin Integrated Resource Management Conference ([www.wirmc.org](http://www.wirmc.org)) in Elkhart Lake, at The Osthoff Resort. The ceremony, held on March 1<sup>st</sup>, recognized individuals and organizations for outstanding work in the field of recycling and waste reduction.

This year AROW gave out a total of five awards.

“AROW always looks forward to honoring those working hard in our industry. This year’s recipients clearly demonstrate the strength of recycling in Wisconsin with achievements in private industry as well as education,” said Meleesa Johnson, AROW’s President. “AROW is the voice for recycling and waste reduction in Wisconsin and we are proud to recognize these individuals and groups.”

The recipient of the prestigious **Christy Dixon Recycler of the Year Award** was Sharon Ehrhardt, Solid Waste/Clean Sweep Specialist for Jefferson County. This recognition is given to an individual whose career demonstrates the highest professional standards. “Sharon is one of the most important people I met as I began my job with Watertown,” explained Rick Schultz, street superintendent for the City of Watertown, when asked how to describe Sharon Ehrhardt. He goes on to say that without her he would never have successfully pursued such a wide variety of waste diversion and recycling programs. “Recycling was just not something that I thought I would be doing, but Sharon was there all the way helping me operate and improve programs.”

Rick’s statement epitomizes Sharon and her enthusiasm for the work that she does. She has been dedicated to “recycling causes” not only in Jefferson County, but around the state. Sharon has spent the last 17 years of her career convincing sometimes inconvincible county and local municipal officials that waste reduction, recycling and Clean Sweeps are indeed in their best interests. Sharon has served as co-chair of AROW’s Product Stewardship Committee for the last five years and was active with the committee prior to that. She attends nearly every AROW Board and Council on Recycling meeting and is not shy about providing her opinions. She served on the Pharmaceutical Waste Working Group from its inception and recently volunteered to serve as its secretary.

Sharon’s vision is probably best expressed in the manner in which she signs her emails: “Make recycling part of your life!” AROW is proud to add Sharon Ehrhardt to our list of Christy Dixon Recycler of the Year award recipients.

The **Outstanding Achievement in Recycling Award** is awarded to an individual or group that has excelled in their recycling program. This award was given to Dynamic Recycling for their commitment to recycling electronic materials in an environmentally and fiscally responsible manner. This commitment has not only served Dynamic Recycling well, but also the regions they serve.

Dynamic Recycling was founded in 2007 in La Crosse, Wis., and has since relocated its headquarters to neighboring Onalaska, WI. Their mission is to improve the world through reuse and recycling by empowering team members to better themselves, their families, and others. Over the past 11 years, the company has grown very rapidly, with two additional locations in Nashville, Tenn., and Minneapolis, Minn., and over 200 team members. It

provides services to customers across several industries including healthcare, financial, and education, as well as residential and municipal markets, and any other e-waste generators.

Over the last few years, Dynamic Recycling has had a significant environment impact, processing over 255 million pounds of electronics, diverting these materials from landfills. The company holds itself and its approved vendors to the highest standards of integrity - all whole electronic units are processed only in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, with detailed audits conducted on all approved vendors that handle hazardous components.

Dynamic Recycling's dedication to its team members, the community, and economic development has also propelled substantial future growth for the company, with a 140,000 square-foot expansion to its Onalaska, Wis. headquarters. This new facility, scheduled for completion in spring of 2018, will drive significantly more domestic recycling value while producing higher-quality raw materials. It is also expected to add 150 more jobs over the next three years.

The **Outstanding Achievement in Education Award** is given to an individual or group that has excelled in environmental education, specifically related to solid waste and recycling. Applicants may be from the public, private or nonprofit sector. This year's award went to Christine Miller, Recycling Coordinator at Outagamie County Recycling & Solid Waste.

While Christine regularly appears in print and on television, positively and consistently promoting messages that have amplified a trend to "recycle more and recycle right," it is her work in organizing municipalities that has made a significant difference in Outagamie County this past year.

Knowing that automated carts are essential to the county's single stream recycling program, especially in rural municipalities where recycling practices tend to lag behind urban communities and where funding can be a challenge, Outagamie County Recycling & Solid Waste applied for and was awarded The Recycling Partnership's Cart Grant.

Christine's interpersonal skills and diplomatic personality served her well in her interactions with the public officials at city, town, and village board meetings. She was able to get 13 municipalities to jump aboard. She went on to help these municipalities with additional cost-savings, educational pieces, and a media supported kick-off event. In the end, Outagamie added nearly 7 thousand carts to local, mostly rural, residents. Recycling tonnages in these 13 newly carted municipalities has increased more than 14%. Accordingly, trash tonnages were reduced, saving the municipalities money, while preserving premium landfill space.

Christine is a gifted communicator, a collegial team player and an important connection between county administration and its Recycling & Solid Waste Department.

In 2017 we began honoring our next generation of recycling enthusiasts with the **Outstanding Achievement in Waste Reduction & Recycling – Student Award**. This award goes to an individual of higher education or recent graduate that has excelled with their overall activities, or a specific project, supporting waste reduction, sustainability, recycling, and/or organics management. This year's recipient was Lindsey Carlson.

Lindsey is a senior at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and will graduate in May with a degree in Waste Management and Soils. She has been an active leader in that program, now serving as the president of the Waste Management Society (WMS). She has a knack for building teams and engaging her teammates in getting the job done. Under her leadership the WMS has embarked on many campus projects that reduced waste, increased recycling and challenged students, faculty and staff to think about their "waste impact."

In addition to a strong list of volunteer involvement, Lindsey worked as an undergraduate research assistant for a project that studied the effects of vermicomposting on ginseng production, served as an on-campus recycling assistant and was part of a research team conducting an organics diversion feasibility study for the city of Stevens Point. Additionally, her academic work beyond these things has been distinguished with either Honors or High Honors.

Last, but certainly not least, Lindsey recently completed a rigorous program to become a sergeant in the Wisconsin National Guard. She has served since 2013 and has taken on increasing responsibility over this time. And something that is so uniquely Lindsey, she challenged her superior officers to implement a recycling program for their weekend and other mobilizations. When at first they would not listen to this young woman of low rank, she

took on her own private waste dive, sorting recyclables from the trash. After a bit, others started recognizing that she meant business and slowly, but surely, her plan to start a recycling program took shape!

Every now and again people who make big impacts amongst AROW need recognizing. One such person received our **AROW Lifetime Achievement Award** this year. That person is Mark Heal, recently retired from Veolia. Mark has been in the environmental field for 30 years and has served on the AROW board since 2013. We have appreciated Mark's commitment to AROW and recycling in Wisconsin and wish him well on his upcoming life adventures.

For more information on each of our award recipients please go to our awards page on the AROW website at [www.arow-online.org/awards](http://www.arow-online.org/awards)

AROW is a membership-based organization, serving the recycling and waste reduction interests of citizens, organizations, municipalities and businesses across the state. For those who support recycling and wish to see more waste diverted into productive use, consider joining the cause by becoming an AROW member.

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#### **About the Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin (AROW)**

Founded in 1990, AROW is an association representing Wisconsin's recycling, waste reduction and sustainability professionals. The organization provides leadership through education, advocacy, and collaboration and promotes effective, efficient and sustainable material recovery initiatives. For details on AROW, its positions and programs visit [www.arow-online.org](http://www.arow-online.org).