

# HAMPTON VA

## NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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## Individuals, organizations that will receive the 2016 Unity Award next month

**May 23, 2016** - The public is invited to attend the 2016 Unity Awards and help recognize two individuals and two organizations that have had a positive impact on Hampton's diversity.

The free reception will be held Thursday, June 9, from 6-8 p.m. at Hampton's Performing Arts Center. Please RSVP to Wanda Ferrell, wferrell@hampton.gov, by June 4, or call 757-728-3279 for more information. The 2016 winners are:

- **Freedom Life Church, Hampton:** Recognized for modeled behavior demonstrating a commitment to foster healthy racial and cultural relations. The nomination says: "Freedom life Church should be a model to the faith community as to how they purposefully and successfully changed and created an environment that modeled what this award seeks to recognize. Diversity in a congregation depends on diversity in leadership. Pastor Freddy happens to be Hispanic. The church also has associate pastors, both black and white, worship leaders from all backgrounds and likely the most diverse administrative team you will find."
- **Romy Singh:** Recognized for demonstrating a commitment to cultural diversity through community involvement. The nomination says: "While Romy does not live in Hampton, he leads a Virginia statewide organization (the Eastern Virginia Franchise owners Association) which services dozens of Hampton's business that serve thousands of Hampton's residents daily. He works with law enforcement in Hampton and Newport News to bring together business owners and police to work on solutions to ensure our Hampton residents feel safe and can go out and enjoy the rich cultural diversity in our city."
- **Lisa Robbins:** Recognized for demonstrating a commitment to cultural diversity through community involvement, including dance performances at Fort Monroe's Asian Pacific Islander Month and Hampton's International Children's Festival. The nomination says: "Ms. Robbins is a Girl Scout leader of many years and encouraged cultural awareness and celebrate through dance and song. She is quick to provide services as needed and has

provided ... her diverse and inspirational experience” to many. “Her love of the cultural arts is mobile, and she loves to share it with all people of all ages.”

- **X-Seeds, Inc., Hampton:** Recognized for behavior that demonstrates a commitment to foster healthy racial and cultural relations, and working to dispel myths and misperceptions. The nomination says: “X-Seeds, Inc. is a non-profit organization that focuses on cultivating lives from homelessness to wholeness. Not only do they have a commitment to fostering racial and cultural relationships between the homeless and their community, they have encouraged others to avail their gifts and talents to assist them (the homeless) as well. This has helped to dispel myths and misperceptions about the homeless and has also shown the homeless that there are people who truly care.”

The Unity awards were established in 2000. Past winners include Betty Smith, a retired dance instructor, Hampton Public Library, and Jeffrey Stern, former artistic director for the city. The awards are sponsored by the Citizens’ Unity Commission, which promotes and sponsors activities and events across Hampton that bring citizens together.

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