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## 29th Annual Cobb Collaborative Human Services Awards

**Smyrna, GA (December 9, 2022)** – On December 7, 2022, the Cobb Collaborative (CC) hosted its 29th Annual Human Services Award Luncheon. With approximately 150 in attendance, the luncheon and awards ceremony took place in the Conference Center of Piedmont Church in Marietta. This year's event was sponsored and co-presented by Cobb Community Foundation.

Jack Vaughan, Jr. was a state representative and member of the Cobb Collaborative who strongly advocated for those less fortunate in our community. The Jack Vaughan, Jr. Human Services Awards were established in 1994 in honor and memory of his unselfish dedication to public service. Each year, the Collaborative honors a volunteer and a professional who have gone above and beyond to serve those in need. Otis Brumby stated, "Vaughan always gave his best and what remains is the memory of an earnest young man eager to serve - one whose motto was selflessness, not selfishness."

The nominees in the volunteer category for the Jack Vaughan, Jr. Human Services Awards were Peggy Beascoechea nominated by United Military Care, Loretta Jackson nominated by Bald Nation Rocks Against Cancer, Hicks Malonson nominated by Rescuing Hope, and Carolyn Turner nominated by the Lions Club as a volunteer for the H.O.P.E Family Resource Center. Professional nominees were Kim Blass nominated by Marietta City Schools, Debbie Ginnochio nominated by Sweetwater Mission, Kim Scofi nominated by United Military Care, Barry Smith nominated by the Lions Club as Senior Pastor of First Christian Church of Mableton, Falecia Stewart nominated by MUST Ministries, and Jennifer Yankulova nominated by Cobb Legal Aid. Nominees were recognized for their dedication to working with or volunteering with those less fortunate in our community, professionalism within the community, collaboration with others and involvement in the community.

The Collaborative awarded H.O.P.E Family Resources' founder and volunteer **Carolyn Tuner** with the volunteer award and **Falecia Stewart, Vice President of Housing, MUST Ministries**, with the

professional award. The William E. "Bill" Hanson Collaboration Award was presented to the Cobb PATH Team for their outstanding efforts in mental health work in Cobb County.

"It's always a pleasure to gather together and humbling to learn about the sacrifices that individuals - whether volunteers or professionals - make to support others" stated Cobb Collaborative Executive Director Irene Barton. "The nominated persons address critical issues like homelessness, food insecurity, access to healthcare, veterans, workforce development and more. We are fortunate to have these leaders in our community bringing their passion, knowledge and dedication to improve outcomes for children and families."

The William E. (Bill) Hanson Collaboration Award was established in 2008 to honor Bill Hanson for his more than 25 years of service to Cobb County. He is recognized for his collaborative spirit and bringing the Cobb non-profit organizations together to tackle issues and concerns. Bill was one of the founders of the Cobb Human Services Coalition, a forerunner of the Cobb Collaborative and served in a variety of leadership positions with the CC. Each year Cobb Collaborative identifies a person or organization that represents the true meaning of collaboration. This year's Bill Hanson Collaboration Award winner is **the Cobb PATH Team**. Founded more than 3 years ago, the Cobb PATH Team is a partnership between Cobb County Public Safety and Highland Rivers Behavioral Health. Cobb PATH pairs a licensed mental health clinician with a uniformed Cobb County Police Department officer to respond to 911 calls involving individuals in a behavioral health crisis. The co-response teams help people access mental health crisis services that can often lead to a path to recovery. The team is changing lives each day by helping people with a clear path to recovery and a life that is stable and secure.

The Cobb Collaborative staff and Board of Directors appreciate the support of event sponsor and co-presenter, Cobb Community Foundation who presented their inaugural Howard Koepka Spirit of Collaboration Award to Sweetwater Mission at the event. Additionally, Cobb Community Foundation graciously provided grant funds to each H.O.P.E Family Resource Center, MUST Ministries, and the Cobb PATH Team on behalf of the Human Services Award winners from each organization.

*The Cobb Collaborative is a membership of non-profit organizations, local government, businesses, faith-based organizations, educational institutions, professional organizations, associations, and citizens who share ideas, expertise, and resources to improve outcomes for children and families in Cobb.*

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