

THE MONROE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HOSTS 95TH ANNUAL MEETING AND BANQUET

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Rambin-Silverstein Memorial Civic Award to Billy Haddad, Sr. Vice President for Business Development at Origin Bank. Haddad has had a very successful career in retailing, real estate, and banking. He was an honors graduate from Louisiana Tech University. Following graduation, he joined his dad and later his brother in Haddad's, a retail clothing business, and worked there for 33 years. He continues to be President of H Investments and a partner of both Snakeridge and SSI Partnerships. He followed retail work by joining Origin Bank.

As a volunteer, Haddad has provided leadership and assistance to a long list of organizations and causes including the United Way of Northeast Louisiana, the American Red Cross, ULM Foundation, the Monroe Chamber of Commerce, the Better Business Bureau and the St. Francis Community Board. He is married to the former Judy Baker and has three daughters, Dr. Allison Miller from Jackson, TN, Caroline Brockman and Megan Elizabeth Haddad from Monroe. In addition, he has six grandchildren.

Bennie Evans, Owner and President of Evans Oil Company and Daily Press, was recognized as the 2015 recipient of the Kitty DeGree Foundation Lifetime Achievement in Business Award. At age 19, he made the decision to join the family business full time, where he worked alongside his father, Bennie Evans, Sr. and his mother Betty Jo, and sister Suzanne Evans Underwood. The petroleum products company they started is now located on Millhaven Road and is one of the largest fuel distributors in the State, supplying over 100 locations. He and his family own twenty-nine of those locations with most of those outlets being located here in Northeast Louisiana.

Evans is active in the community, supporting the University of Louisiana at Monroe, Ouachita Christian School, North Monroe Hospital and the Monroe Chamber. He and his wife Sharon have three children: Lindsay Evans Dye, Jarred and Hallie Evans King.

Other special recognition presented during the program included the 2015 Bernard Heflin Ambassador of the Year Award that was presented to Ashley Doughty, Business Development Officer at First National Bank. The Chamber also recognized Jeffrey Laudenheimer, Vice President/Private Banking the 2015 recipient of the James M. Shipp Memorial Young Business Leader Award. Jake Wilson, Manager Pecanland Mall, was recognized with the Leadership Ouachita Charles McDonald "Twice as Much Award".

Sponsors for the event were: ANGUS, Associated Business Printing, Atmos Energy, CenturyLink, The City of Monroe, DeltaStyle Magazine, Entergy, Glenwood Regional Medical Center, Huffman and Soignier, Lagniappe Broadcasting, Ouachita Independent Bank, Patty Stewart Photography, Pecanland Mall, Progressive Bank, P & S Surgical Hospital, St. Francis Medical Center, The News-Star, The Radio People and Vantage Health Plan.