

HYDE COUNTY news

A monetary gift



OCCRACOKE FOUNDATION received \$407,710 from the Golden LEAF Foundation. Pictured at the December 19 ceremony are (from left): Joseph K. Schwarzer, director North Carolina Maritime Museums; state Rep. Tim Spear; Dan Gerlach, president Golden LEAF Foundation; Robin Payne, president Ocracoke Foundation; Hyde County commissioner Gene Ballance; Brandon O'Neal, who works at the fish house; Hardy Plyler, manager Ocracoke Seafood; and C.J. Wynn and William O'Neal, both locals who work at the fish house. (Linda Rippe photo)

Hyde projects awarded Gold Leaf grants

Ocracoke Foundation Inc. has received \$407,710 from the Golden LEAF Foundation for renovations and equipment for the Ocracoke Fish House project.

The funds mark the last in a series of grants totaling \$2 million.

Golden LEAF also announced four additional awards for Hyde County.

"This is a great day for our fishermen and the fishing industry in North Carolina," said state Rep. Tim Spear at the check pre-

sentation ceremony, December 19 in Ocracoke. "I applaud the Golden LEAF Foundation for recognizing the importance of our fishing industry by providing funding that will create jobs and help protect the livelihood of our watermen. The Ocracoke Watermen are to be commended for their efforts to save this fish house and for keeping the fishing industry alive."

Once renovation is completed, the fish house will require additional employees year round, stated a Golden LEAF press

release. The increase in operational capacity will have the potential of increasing income for over 30 commercial fishermen and enhancing sales tax revenue for the county.

"The Ocracoke Foundation is grateful to Golden LEAF for funding our project in its community assistance initiative," said Robin Payne, president of the Ocracoke Foundation. "This project will help preserve the operation of the Ocracoke Fish House, the last fish house on Ocracoke Island, as well as our vital commercial fishing industry."

The Golden LEAF community assistance initiative assists targeted communities with projects that will help stimulate economic activity or provide assistance in overcoming barriers to economic transition or community progress.

Other projects for organizations in Hyde County funded through the initiative are:

- Engelhard Medical Center with \$555,000 for construction and equipment costs related to the new Engelhard Medical Center.

- Hyde County government with two awards: \$417,000 to complete the design and engineering necessary to expand the wastewater collection and treatment to the Mattamuskeet Lodge and emergency repairs to the wastewater lagoon in Engelhard; and \$265,800 to support the

extension of water and sewer services to a proposed working waterfront business park that could serve to help the Wanchese Seafood Industrial Park expand.

- Davis High Venture Corporation with \$70,000 to complete the up-fit of a kitchen in the community center to be used for community and small business incubator functions.

"Golden LEAF is excited about the community assistance initiative process, as it addresses the unique needs and concerns of communities," said Dan Gerlach, president of Golden LEAF in a press release. "Our hope is that these projects will have a lasting effect on the county and will spur economic growth."

Officers and directors of the Ocracoke Foundation are Robin Payne, president, Rudy Austin, vice president, Ellen Gaskill, treasurer, Al Scarborough, secretary, and directors David Tolson, Dave Frum, Susie Scott O'Neal and Scott Bradley.

Advisory board members are Hyde commissioner Gene Ballance and James Barrie-Gaskill, president Ocracoke Working Watermen's Association.

The Ocracoke Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization.