

Robeson County Health Director Receives Public Health Award

William J. (Bill) Smith, IV, director of the Robeson County Health Department, received one of two statewide 2006 Ronald H. Levine Legacy Awards for Public Health on Jan. 27, 2006, in recognition of his many contributions to public health on the local, state and national levels.

Named for former North Carolina State Health Director Dr. Ron Levine, the annual award honors individuals whose life work on behalf of the public's health has resulted in significant, sustainable and positive improvements in North Carolina's public health system. The second 2006 recipient is George F. Bond, Buncombe County Health Director.

Smith's public health career began with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control in 1977. He was appointed Health Director for Robeson County Health Department in August 1988. Smith received his undergraduate degree from the University of South Carolina and a Master of Public Health from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Smith is known for his successful efforts to strengthen public health through partnerships and collaboration. On the local level, Smith's accomplishments include the development of a model obstetrical care program incorporating private/public partnerships; development and implementation of Robeson County Intensive Livestock Operation Rules; development of multi-county, public/private, immunization tracking system; the establishment of three primary care clinics—Robeson Child Health Plus, Adult Health Plus and Family Dentistry Plus; and the development of a Satellite Animal Shelter.

Under his leadership, the Robeson County Health Department achieved Jail Health Service accreditation after only 20 months of operation and Home Health Services accreditation.

On the state level, Smith is past president of the N.C. Association of Local Health Directors, N.C. Public Health Association and N.C. Association for Home Care, and was instrumental in establishing the Alliance for Home Health. He has served on numerous task forces, steering committees, executive committees, advisory committees and boards on the local, state and regional levels.

He has also served as a board member of the National Association of City & County Health Officials and is a graduate of the National Public Health Leadership Institute.

Smith's ideas and achievements have been recognized locally, statewide and nationally in numerous awards in the areas of primary care, child health, infant mortality reduction, environmental excellence, community service and partnership building, and for outstanding career achievements. Under his leadership, the Robeson County Health Department has also received numerous awards for excellence.

Smith and Bond were presented with the awards by State Health Director Leah Devlin at the 2006 State Health Directors Conference in Raleigh.