

bluffton

HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

Town of Bluffton Awards, Achievements & Accolades

Town of Bluffton/General:

- *Forbes Magazine* named Bluffton one of the "Best Places to Retire in 2016" (April 2016).
- *Huffington Post/Travel* Section featured Bluffton in an article, "Visiting Sweet South Carolina." (May 2016).
- "Only in Your State," named Bluffton #1 in its list of "10 Up & Coming Cities in South Carolina Ready to Explode" (May 2016).
- Topretirements.com website named Bluffton the 4th "Friendliest Places to Retire" in its Top 10 List. (2016).
- *Money Magazine* named Bluffton one of the Top 20 Places to Retire in 2015, also naming Bluffton "Top Waterfront Retirement Destination" within the Top 20 list (June 2015).
- *Garden & Gun Magazine* named Bluffton a "Southern Dream Town." (June/July 2015).
- "Only in Your State" website named Bluffton the 3rd "Safest and Most Beautiful Places to Live in South Carolina." (2015)
- Niche's named Bluffton one of the 2015 Best Places/Safest Towns in South Carolina.
- Niche.com named Bluffton #3, Best Towns to Raise a Family in South Carolina (2015).
- *Forbes Magazine* named Bluffton one of the Top 25 U.S. Cities for Retirement (2014).
- *Family Circle Magazine* featured Town Councilman Larry Toomer, his family and his family business, Bluffton Oyster Company (June 2014).
- *Southern Living Magazine* selected Bluffton as the site for its 2014 Idea House.
- *The Huffington Post* named Bluffton its #1 destination for its list, "Ten Amazing Non-Beach Alternatives for a Summer Getaway" (2014).
- *Only in Your State*, The 18 Wedding Venues in SC Which Are Perfect in Every Way, #10 Rose Hill Mansion; #14 Palmetto Bluff (2015).
- NerdWallet, a consumer advisory company, named Bluffton one of the ten "Cities on The Rise in South Carolina," (2014).

- NerdWallet, a consumer advisory company, named Bluffton one of the ten "Top Cities for Homeownership in South Carolina," (2014).
- Movoto, a real estate web-based service, named Bluffton one of the "Safest Places in South Carolina," (2014).
- American Farmland Trust ranked Bluffton's Farmers Market #20 in the nation for its "People's Choice Award." (2015)
- Bluffton's Farmers Market named "Most Celebrated Farmers Market in South Carolina," by American Farmland Trust (2015, 2013 & 2012).
- Bluffton's Farmers Market named #1 in South Carolina in the following five categories (People's Choice, Focus on Farmers, Healthy Food For All, Pillar of the Community, Champion for the Environment) (2015).
- Bluffton's Farmers Market named 11th best in nation by American Farmland Trust (2013).
- Bluffton's Highway 46 designated a "South Carolina Scenic Byway," by the South Carolina Department of Transportation (2012).
- Don Ryan Center for Innovation/Clemson Technology Village; Bluffton was the first non-metropolitan town in South Carolina to partner with Clemson University to form a private-public Technology Village (i.e. business incubator).

Town of Bluffton/Mayor, Council & Employee Achievement:

- Mayor Lisa Sulka, President, Association of South Carolina Mayors (2014).
- Mayor Lisa Sulka, Vice President, Association of South Carolina Mayors (2013).
- Mayor Lisa Sulka, Honorary Trustee, Board of Trustees, Heritage Classic Foundation (2014).
- Marc Orlando, Town Manager, credentialed local government manager, International City/County Management Association (2014).
- Marc Orlando, appointed to the Market Impact Council of the regional Chapters of Urban Land Institute of South Carolina, Charlotte and Research Triangle.
- Frank Hodge (retired), Chairman, South Carolina Building Code Council & 2005 Past President of the International Code Council.
- Chief Joey Reynolds, President, F.B.I. National Academy Associates (2016).
- Chief Joey Reynolds, 1st Vice President, Section III, F.B.I. National Academy Associates (2015).
- Chief Joey Reynolds, 2nd Vice President, Section III, F.B.I. National Academy Associates (2014).
- Chief Joey Reynolds, 3rd Vice President, Section III, F.B.I. National Academy Associates (2013).
- Major Joseph Manning, Deputy Chief/Bluffton Police Department, F.B.I National Joint Terrorism Task Force (6-month fellowship in Washington, D.C.)/Former Lieutenant, Pinellas County, Fla., Sheriff's Office in Narcotics Division, Internal Affairs Unit, Intelligence Unit and member of SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics) Team.

- F.B.I National Academy Graduates/Bluffton Police Department: Chief Joey Reynolds, Lt. Joseph Babkiewicz, Officer Sheldon Epstein, and Lt. Angel Tubbs (retired).
- Lt. Joe Babkiewicz honored as a "40 Under 40 Award" from the International Association of Chiefs of Police (2016).
- Officer Lauren Brown, Leadership Honoree, First Tee of the Lowcountry (2016).
- Officer Jeb Fay, Silver DUI Enforcement Recognition, South Carolina Department of Public Safety (2015).
- Officer Darius Elkin, Bronze DUI Enforcement Recognition, South Carolina Department of Public Safety (2015).
- Katherine Robinson, director of human resources, earned the following certifications: Senior Professional Human Resources (SPHR) from the Human Resources Certification Institute (2014) and Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP) from Society for Human Resources Management (2014).
- Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce Leadership Graduates: Kim Chapman, Lisa Cunningham, Shirley Freeman, Aubrie Giroux, Trisha Greathouse, Kim Jones, Debbie Szpanka, Erin Schumacher and Lt. Scott Chandler.
- Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce Leadership Alumni Board: Lisa Cunningham (secretary 2015 – present), Trisha Greathouse (president 2013 – 2015) and Kim Jones (membership 2013 – 2015).
- Shirley Freeman, reviewer of Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports (CAFR), Government Finance Officers Association of U.S./Canada, (2005-2008).
- Shirley Freeman earned a certificate of completion for National Hazards Mitigation and Recovery from the National Emergency Management Institute (1992).
- Kim Jones, watershed management division manager, professional publications:
 - "Watershed Planning, Implementation and Assessment: The May River Watershed Action Plan Case Study." General Technical Report. U.S. Department of Agriculture (2016).
 - "A Case Study in Watershed-based Plan Development and Implementation for the May River Watershed in Bluffton, SC." Journal of SC Water Resources (2014).
- Kim Jones, oral presentations at biennial SC Water Resources Conferences:
 - "Management Decision Implications Resulting from Analysis of Stormwater Best Management Practice Efficacy across Temporal and Varying Spatial Scales" (2016).
 - "From Planning to Management & Assessment: The May River Watershed Action Plan, Bluffton, SC" (2014).
 - "A Case Study in Watershed-based Plan Development and Implementation for the May River Watershed in Bluffton, SC" (2012).

- “Bluffton, SC – Continuous Monitoring and Stormwater Sampling by a Community” (2008).
- Kim Jones, oral presentations at South Carolina Chapter of American Planning Association:
 - “Integrating Stormwater Requirements into Land Development Decisions” (2016)
 - “Preserving the May River” (2007).
- Kim Jones, oral presentation at South Carolina Association of Stormwater Managers:
 - “Collaborative Water Quality Monitoring in Beaufort County” (2015).
- Kim Jones, oral presentation at the regional Southeast Stormwater Association Conference:
 - “Water Volume Causes Generation of Bacteria Loads from Wetland Systems” (2012).
- Kim Jones, oral presentation at national, triennial 5th Interagency Conference on Research in the Watersheds. Jones was the only presenter representing a municipality; her counterparts were federal agency representatives and consultants.
 - “Watershed Planning, Implementation and Assessment: The May River Watershed Action Plan Case Study” (2015).
- Sam Connor, stormwater engineer, oral presentation at the regional Southeast Stormwater Association Conference:
 - “Case Study on Best Management Practices (BMP) Selection: How Adaptive Management Has Driven the Evolution of BMP Selection in the Town of Bluffton” (2016).

Planning, Growth Management and Urban Design:

- Best Community Revitalization Award from *Southern Living Magazine* for the Wharf Street Redevelopment Project (August 2014).
- Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC) Achievement Award, 10,001-20,000 Population Category, for the Wharf Street Redevelopment Project (2013).
- Palmetto Forum Affordable Housing Achievement Award for the Wharf Street Redevelopment Project (2012).
- Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC) Achievement Award, 1,000-5,000 Population Category for the Bluffton Small Home Series (2003).

Natural Resources, Environmental Protection and Beautification:

- Charleston’s *Post & Courier* article, “Bluffton is an Innovator in Using Development Rights Transfer Program to Reduce Sprawl,” (August 2014).
- Tree City USA Designation from the Arbor Day Foundation (2013, 2012, 2011).

- Inaugural Sustainable Communities Building Block Program Participant selected by the Environmental Protection Agency (2010).

Law Enforcement/Bluffton Police Department:

- Hope and Opportunity Award of Excellence, Boys & Girls Club of the Lowcountry (2016).
- Arrhythmia Alliance Achievement Award for helping raise \$50,000 to install AEDs in each officer's patrol vehicle within the Bluffton Police Department (2016).
- National Night Out, National Town Watch Associates (2015).
- Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), Accreditation with Excellence, the highest level of recognition of the reaccreditation process (2015).
- South Carolina Law Enforcement Accreditation (SCLEA), 2013.
- Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) Re-Accreditation for the Bluffton Police Department (2012).
- Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) Accreditation for the Bluffton Police Department (2009).

Financial Management:

- AA+ Municipal Bond Rating upgraded by Standard's & Poor (2014).
- Aa2 Municipal Bond Rating issued by Moody's (2010).
- Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (2015, 2014, 2013, 2012 and 2011).
- Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Award for the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (2015, 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010, 2009, 2008).
- Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting (PAFR) from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (2014, 2013, 2012, 2011).

Historic Awards & Designations:

- Preserve America Community Designation for the Bluffton Historic District by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (2005).
- National Register of Historic Places Designation for the Bluffton Historic District by the National Park Service (1996).

Palmetto Bluff:

Bluffton is also home to Palmetto Bluff, a 19,217 acre world-renowned residential community and resort, which consistently receives top awards and accolades:

- *U.S. News & World Report* ranked Palmetto Bluff as one of the best hotels in the United States for 2015.
- Yahoo Travel News: The Coolest Hotel in Every State, The Inn at Palmetto Bluffton (October 16, 2014)
- Travelers Choice Award by Trip Advisor; Rated No. 8 Top 25 Hotels in the United States (2013).
- Readers' Choice Award by *Andrew Harper's Hideaway Report*; Rated No. 9 Top U.S. Hideaway, No. 5 Top Family Resorts (2012).
- Top 100 Golf Courses by *Golf Magazine*; Rated No. 51 (2012).
- World's Best Hotels for Families by *Travel + Leisure*; Rated No. 4 in Continental U.S. and Canada (2012).
- Five-Diamond Award by AAA; Most Luxurious Accommodations in North America (2013, 2012, 2011).
- World's Best Award by *Travel + Leisure*; Rated No. 6 Top Resort in Continental U.S., No. 79 Top 100 Hotels Overall (2012).
- Best Hotels in the USA by *US News & World Report*; Rated No. 1 U.S. Hotel (2012).
- Top Golf Resorts in the World by *Condé Nast Traveler*; Rated No. Southern U.S. Resort (2012).
- Top 270 Spas by *Condé Nast Traveler*; Rated No. 15 (2012).
- *TENNIS Magazine* Top 50 Tennis Resorts; Rated No. 3 South Carolina Tennis Resort (2012).
- Readers' Choice Platinum List by *Celebrated Living* (2012).