

# Business

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## 3 minority businesses honored

■ The Cumberland Regional Improvement Corp. holds its annual awards ceremony.

**By Ali Rockett**  
Staff writer

Three minority-owned businesses were recognized Thursday for giving back to help build a stronger small-business community.

Burney & Burney Construction of Greenville, Clean World USA of Florence, S.C., and Metcon of Pembroke received Support Service of the Year awards. They were honored during the Cumberland Regional Improvement Corp.'s annual awards ceremony at the Holiday Inn Bordeaux & Conference Center.

Susan Monroe, president of the Cumberland Regional



**Hempstead**

Improvement Corp., said the honorees are examples of how businesses can become successful and stay local.

"As you climb the ladder,



**Thomas Monroe**

construction contractor, said it takes hard work on the part of the business owner to build a successful business, as well as a lot of support.

you reach back and raise up your community," Monroe said.

Aaron

Thomas, president of Metcon, a

His company's projects include the new Embassy Suites in Fayetteville and a \$17 million dormitory at Fayetteville State University. Metcon also recently received the bid to expand the Cumberland County jail. Thomas said his company received a lot of support from Cumberland Regional Improvement Corp., and he was returning the favor.

Fayetteville native Den-

nis Hempstead, president of Clean World USA, said as his company grows, so does the community it serves.

"As we get more business from majority corporations, we have a responsibility to give back," he said. "Then, the whole community rises up."

He began his company 26 years ago in South Carolina,

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and then expanded into North Carolina. He is planning to expand into government contracting, he said.

Angela Amidon, an Army veteran who in 2006 founded Amidon Contracting Solutions, received the U.S. Small Business Administration's Minority Small Business Person of the Year award. The company is worth \$5 million and has 27 employees.

Monroe also received a surprise award. State Rep. Marvin Lucas presented her with the Order of the Long Leaf Pine.

During her 33 years with Cumberland Regional Improvement Corp., Monroe has procured more than \$70 million for Cumberland County, Fayetteville and area businesses.

County Commissioner Billy King, who was a guest speaker, said the corporation "extends opportunities to those that have been left out, shut out and pushed out."

He said the community needs to do more to encourage "historically underutilized businesses," which include minority- and women-owned businesses and is the new focus of Cumberland Regional Development Corp.'s economic development efforts.

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