

Lambright, court personnel exceed as county employees

Jay R. Jordan Published 1:43 pm, Thursday, December 10, 2015



Montgomery County Attorney J.D. Lambright was named boss of the year for the second straight year during the annual Christmas luncheon at Lone Star Convention Center Thursday. County awards were given for department of the year, employee of the year and boss of the year. Go to HCNpics.com to view more photos from the event.

Montgomery County employees were recognized for their outstanding achievement in 2015 on Friday. During the annual Montgomery County Employee Christmas Dinner at the Lone Star Convention Center, County Attorney JD Lambright won Boss of the Year for the second year in a row. County Court-at-Law 2, with Judge Claudia Laird presiding, took the department of the year award while District Attorney Investigator Gale Echols took the overall employee of the year.

"People say 'are you surprised?' I would say shocked," Lambright said. "I had no idea whatsoever. I'm so pleased and so blessed, but it really was because of the staff." Natalie Laurent, Lambright's administrative manager, said he brings out his caring nature with his staff, never micromanaging or being overbearing. "He honestly cares about all of us, and he's not the type of boss that comes in and just starts talking business," she said. "If we need a computer fixed, he'll come over and fix one of our computers. If we need shelving put together, he'll do that. He'll do the job of a janitor and do the job of county attorney."

Laird, whose entire court staff received the award, said her staff works tremendously all year long, but not just for an award. "They really do go above and beyond when an individual from the community comes in, to really help them," Laird said. "Because our department handles all the probate proceedings for the county, guardianship proceedings for the county, people are going through difficult times in their lives, and just to be there for them is more than a court but (is like being) another human being that's passionate and cares."

As for Echols, Montgomery County prosecutors described her as a selfless worker who helps victims of sexual crimes muster the courage to testify and engage in rape defense classes to better themselves. All of this was done on her own time over the weekend in some cases. "The whole point is to make girls, women, any victim, make them okay to talk about what has

happened to them,” Echols said. “We re-traumatize people by the time we make them go through (being put on the stand).”

She was able to do so in one specific case, where prosecutors say a man had sexually assaulted a 14-year-old girl. Her parents were reportedly apprehensive in having their daughter testify and take a rape aggression defense class. “They didn’t think she’d be able to (testify),” Echols said. “Now, she can. Now she has a voice in what happens with this case.”