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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

*Huntington and Charleston, WV:* Prestera Wins Awards from US Attorney Goodwin

The 2015 Law Enforcement and Victim Assistance Awards ceremony was held on September 24, 2015 at the US Courthouse in Charleston, West Virginia, by the United States Attorney, R. Booth Goodwin II. Prestera Center was recognized as part of the “Outstanding Handle With Care Program, Cabell County Handle With Care Team” along with the Cabell County Board of Education and the Huntington WV Police Department. Mindy Thornton was mentioned in the US Attorney’s remarks for her work on the Cabell County Handle With Care project. Prestera Center employs school-based counselors to work in every school in Cabell County. Handle with Care provides notifications to schools whenever law enforcement has intervened in a home where school-age children are present. The school knows to handle that child with extra care by making allowances at school and referring to a counselor as law enforcement involvement at home may be traumatic for children.

Prestera Center was also honored as the “Criminal Justice Initiative Partner of the Year” in recognition of the meritorious service and acts that have materially contributed to the attainment of the highest standards of cooperative law enforcement and justice in the United States of America. Karen Yost was on hand to receive the honor. Ken Fitzwater and Dana Petroff were mentioned for their work on Project LEAD in Charleston and Huntington where arrested individuals with treatment needs are provided the opportunity to avoid legal charges if they commit to participating in treatment services at Prestera Center. One of our partners, the Western Regional Day Report Center, was also named the “Criminal Justice Initiative Partner of the Year” while the Charleston Police Department was named the “Law Enforcement Agency of the Year”. Karen Yost, Prestera Center’s CEO commented, “Prestera Center is a proud partner and elated to receive these prestigious honors from the US Attorney. We are committed to continue leading the way in behavioral health partnerships and services in our region.”

For more information on Prestera Center, visit online at [www.prestera.org](http://www.prestera.org), like us on Facebook or call toll free to (877) 399-7776.

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Captions for photos:

Outstanding Handle With Care (Cabell County). From left to right, Mindy Thornton, Children’s Services Director; Karen Yost, CEO; Booth Goodwin, US Attorney; and Dana Petroff, Addictions Recovery Services Director.

Criminal Justice Initiative Partner of the Year – Prestera Center. From left to right, Todd Alexander, Assistant Superintendent at Cabell County Board of Education; Joseph Ciccarelli, Chief of Police in Huntington WV; Mindy Thornton, Children’s Services Director; and Booth Goodwin, US Attorney.