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## **Charleston Auto Auction Named NAAA Auto Auction of the Year**

*National Auto Auction Association's Award Recognizes Excellence in Public Service*

LA QUINTA, Calif.—Charleston Auto Auction, a member of the XLerate Group, has been named the National Auto Auction Association’s 2017 “Auto Auction of the Year for Excellence in Community Service.” The Moncks Corner, South Carolina, business was chosen for its depth of commitment in going beyond financial support to an active role in making a local high school principal’s dream of a residence for homeless students a reality.

Presented during the association’s 69th annual convention, the award includes a \$20,000 check payable to a charity of the auction’s choice along with a large crystal loving cup. The auction will also be featured in NAAA’s On The Block magazine and the 2018 membership directory.

Charleston Auto Auction had previously won a \$5,000 check for charity as one of four regional finalists chosen earlier this year to receive the NAAA Chapter Auction of the Year Award, which recognizes outstanding public service of the Eastern, Midwest, Southern, and Western chapters.

NAAA established the annual awards in 2016 to recognize the many charitable acts auctions already perform and to encourage even greater volunteer involvement.

“The public spiritedness of the four chapter finalists was inspirational, making it a challenge to choose just one for the top honor,” said NAAA President Jerry Hinton. “But the whole-hearted commitment Charleston Auto Auction made to helping homeless teens in their community — who were sleeping on benches at the mall and had no idea where they’d get their next meal — have a safe place to live and study so they could graduate was truly touching.”

Charleston County School District nominated the auction to be honored for its work addressing the problem of homeless students at R.B. Stall High School with its support of then Principal Kim Wilson’s vision of a staffed house that would provide stability and consistency as well as a bed and meals through his plan called Project H.O.M.E. (Helping Others Mirror Excellence).

After a news story about the proposed project aired on local TV, Wilson got an email from Jason Moritz, Charleston Auto Auction’s assistant general manager, saying, “Looking forward to raising some funds to help with your efforts!!!”

“I was dumbfounded; here was a guy I didn’t know representing a business I never heard of wanting to help these kids,” recalled Wilson, now the executive director for the school district’s secondary education community. “And help they did!”

The auction immediately organized a special month-long sale, partnering with its dealers to donate a percentage of every vehicle bought or sold. The response was so positive the dealers donated more money above the original agreement. Next the business reached out to the general community soliciting contributions. Additional fundraising during the year collected more than \$26,000 to begin construction with the goal of housing students this fall.

“They continue to be a driving force behind this project,” Wilson noted. “They’ve taken an active role in making this home their mission with the auction’s General Manager Laura Taylor and Jason joining our board of directors. They also speak to businesses and groups in the community to encourage involvement. It’s people like the management and employees at Charleston Auto Auction who see a need and take action that make a difference in this world.”

Taylor said working with the H.O.M.E. team has been a pleasure because “they have huge hearts,” adding, “We’re excited about giving students an environment so they can concentrate on academics and sports and not on where they’ll sleep at night. Our auction and our customers plan on continuing donations to ensure Project H.O.M.E.’s success.”

In addition to that project, Charleston Auto Auction assists a variety of other causes, including a local food bank, orphan group, animal shelter and camp program for seriously ill children.

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