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# Stephenson Receives Governor's Award

SEPTEMBER 29TH 2011 BY NEWS

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SPRINGFIELD – A Southeast Missouri educator was honored by Gov. Jay Nixon recently and recognized at the 2011 Governor's Conference on Economic Development in Springfield.

Three Rivers College President Dr. Devin Stephenson received the governor's E3 Award – Excellence in Education, Economic Development and Employment.

"I'm certainly overwhelmed," said Stephenson. "As I received the award, I felt that I was receiving it on behalf of everybody that's helped the college. I'm only the conductor; there are a lot of people playing in this orchestra. But I've never been one to shift back into neutral. We will continue to listen and look for every possibility for partnerships and growth. We have to continue to see the possibilities."

Stephenson was nominated by members of his staff and Rep. Todd Richardson (R-Poplar Bluff). The E3 Award is a workforce development award that honors extraordinary leadership and innovation in developing strategies, directions and high performance expectations to enhance employment in Missouri.

"I want to congratulate Dr. Stephenson and the college," said Richardson. "The ability of the college to reach out to area businesses and work to produce a well-trained, well-educated workforce is indispensable to our ability to maintain and grow our economy."

Stephenson and Three Rivers were recognized for actively building partnerships with individuals, businesses, community leaders, organizations, and government officials from throughout the region. These partnerships support the college and its efforts to train the area workforce and serve as the primary economic development engine in the region.

"All across Missouri, we are standing out from other parts of the country, we are working together, and we are seeing real sparks of economic growth," said Gov. Jay Nixon in his address to the conference assembly. "I really appreciate the way Dr. Stephenson and the community college system of our state embraces worker training, career training, and makes those things a focus of their mission each and every day."

"It's evident that Devin has always been involved in the business community and making sure that there's growth in our local economy," said Steve Halter, economic development coordinator and director of the Poplar Bluff Area Chamber of Commerce. "He's got great vision. Any time you have education and business working together, you're going to see growth."

"It's a humbling thing to receive this award after only being at Three Rivers for two years," Stephenson said. "I really appreciate the award, and having this stamp of approval on our work is very important. It is absolutely humbling, and that's all that I can say."

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***Photo Above: With Nixon at the 2011 Governor's Conference on Economic Development in Springfield were (fro left) Judy Stephenson, Steve Halter, of the Greater Poplar Bluff Area Chamber of Commerce, Stephenson, Nixon, college Director of Development Emily Parks, and Zora Mulligan of the Missouri Community College Association. (TRC photo)***

LAST UPDATED ON SEPTEMBER 29TH 2011 BY NEWS

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