

# NC Labor

## LEDGER

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## Mining Star Shines in Dillsboro

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The Dillsboro Quarry of APAC-Harrison Division become the seventh location to earn the Mining Star Award from the N.C. Department of Labor.

Commissioner of Labor Cherie Berry presented company officials with the Mining Star certificate and flag at a luncheon Dec. 12.

"You contribute billions of dollars to our state's economy, and we couldn't build anything without you," Commissioner Berry said. "So many products that we depend upon on a daily basis come from the ground."

APAC-Harrison Division, a division of Oldcastle Construction Products, operates five quarries in western North Carolina. In addition to the Dillsboro Quarry, they are the Cherokee County Quarry, Tubb Mill Quarry, the Waynesville Quarry and the Hayesville Quarry. The Waynesville Quarry has been a Mining Star site since September 2007.

William Gerringer, chief of the Mine and Quarry Bureau, noted that the Mining Star flags flying over the Dillsboro Quarry and Waynesville Quarry "send a strong message to the public: vendors, neighbors, contractors and visitors will see the visible symbol of the commitment your company has toward safety and health."

The quarries in western North Carolina are a vital part of that area's economy in providing aggregates for the building and highway construction industry. The division specializes in asphalt paving, site and road excavation, underground utility installation, concrete flat work, curb and gutter construction, and the production and sale of hot-mix asphalt, crushed stone and ready-mixed concrete. The division has the expertise and ability to build and manage site development projects from concept through construction. The division operates in eastern Tennessee and western North Carolina.

The Mining Star Program began in 2003. It recognizes sites



Labor Commissioner Cherie Berry (center) displays the Mining Star flag along with Darrell Mathis (left), vice-president operations manager, and David Shuler (right), plant supervisor. The Dillsboro Quarry of APAC-Harrison Division was recognized as the seventh Mining Star site in North Carolina at a luncheon Dec. 12 in Dillsboro.

where management and employees are committed to safety and health. The Mine and Quarry Bureau's evaluation team that conducted the assessment of the Dillsboro Quarry noted that the site had not had a recordable accident in three years.

Allan C. Greene, CMSP, led the evaluation team for the Mine and Quarry Bureau. Originally a miner himself, Greene recalled having been in the trenches and seeing the near misses. He said he knew what it is like to tell a wife that her husband has been seriously injured, or even worse.

"Because of dedicated individuals like the men at the Dillsboro Quarry, it is now safer to work in a North Carolina mine than to go into a retail establishment," Greene said. "I am proud to call everyone here today a friend, and each one of you deserves a pat on the back for your contribution toward achieving this goal."

The injury and illness rate for the mining industry in North Carolina has always been lower than the national rate. In 2007, the national injury and illness rate for the mining industry, excluding oil and gas extraction, was 3.7 cases per 100 full-time workers. The rate in North Carolina was 2.2.

The injury and illness rate for all private industry in North Carolina fell to a record low of 3.7 in 2007. The national rate was 4.2. North Carolina was one of 12 states that saw improvements in their injury and illness rates in 2007.

"You are very special people and have achieved remarkable records in North Carolina," Commissioner Berry said. "We have accomplished the lowest injury and illness record in our great state. Although it may at times feel like a regulatory jungle, our rules and regulations are there to keep you safe, and we place the emphasis on education and training to achieve the highest potential."

The Dillsboro Quarry is the first site in Jackson County to be associated with any of the N.C. Department of Labor's Star programs.