

# Cheers to museum director, free juror parking

Poughkeepsie Journal Editorial Board 8:19 p.m. EST November 28, 2015



(Photo: Journal file)

**To Lara Litchfield-Kimber, executive director of the Mid-Hudson Children’s Museum**, who was recently named the 2015 Athena Leadership Award winner during a ceremony at The Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel.

Litchfield-Kimber, who was hired in 2012, is credited with overhauling the museum’s programs and exhibits to create new, interactive ones, raising funds, and rebuilding the museum’s staff and board.

Since her appointment, annual attendance at the museum has doubled to more than 50,000.

In order to win the award, recipients must show exemplary professional excellence and community service, and actively assist women in their pursuit of professional excellence and leadership skills.

For her efforts, nine of Litchfield-Kimber’s fellow nominees voted for her during the award ceremony.

“I’ve never received such a warm welcome from a community before,” Litchfield-Kimber said before receiving her award. “I haven’t been here that long and to be nominated among all of these honorees adds to this special event.”

Congratulations.

**To Dutchess County and the City of Poughkeepsie** for working together to create a contract allowing sworn jurors access to free parking.

In August, the county signed a contract with the city to lease 60 parking spots annually in a city-owned parking garage across the street from the Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel.

Previously, Dutchess County was the only county in the 9th Judicial District that did not arrange free parking for sworn jurors.

The leased spaces will cost the county approximately \$40,000 per year, according to Dutchess County Court Judge Peter Forman. Currently, appointed jurors earn \$40 per day for their courtroom services. Prior to the agreement, they each paid \$12 per day for parking.

The Dutchess County Jury Board, which includes Forman, Supreme Court Justice James Brands and Dutchess County Legislator Dale Borchert, played a major role in developing the contract, along with County Executive Marcus Molinaro, his chief of staff Bill O'Neil and County Legislative Majority Leader Angela Flesland. The Commissioner of Jurors Loretta Adams also negotiated with Poughkeepsie Mayor John Tkazyik's office.

Nice work.