

Kiawah Community Group Recognized

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The Community Association Institute recently named the Kiawah Island Community Association "National Community Association of the Year."

Kiawah's 25-year-old association, also referred to as KICA, won in the "very large" category, one of four categories in the competition. Kiawah's category included communities with 1,000 or more units. There were a total of 200 associations nationwide vying for awards in one of the four categories.

"We honor these associations because, by their management excellence, their residents enjoy the many social and economic benefits of living in a well-run community, said Barbara Byrd Keenan, president of the Community Association Institute in Alexandria, Va.

"To say Kiawah Island excels in operations and management is an understatement," she added.

"We were extremely happy that we won," said Joe Bunting, KICA general manager. This year was the first time KICA applied for the award, and association representatives accepted the award on Oct. 19 at the national convention in North Carolina.

Bunting said Kiawah stood out because of its outreach program to the greater community. KICA advertises volunteer opportunities for island members or property owners throughout the greater community. Three times a year, KICA will hold brunches for new property owners and introduce them to the local charities and organizations. They serve about 10 charities and organizations, which include the Sea Island Habitat for Humanity, Lowcountry Food Bank, Crisis Ministries, Charleston Ballet Theater and The Charleston Museum.

KICA's long-range planning also helped the association succeed. In June 2000, it developed a long-range plan, including 113 action items, that addressed communications, covenant compliance, governance, land management, administration and security issues. At the end of the association's planning cycle, 107 of the actions were completed or under way.

Bunting said KICA is trying to foster a spirit of volunteerism within the island community. "Whatever someone is interested in, we try to push them in that direction," he said.

Bunting hopes this award will spur the Kiawah members on to even more service within the greater community. "If we are the best in the nation, we need to be helping the most," he said.

A residential/resort community, Kiawah Island has about 3,200 single-family homes, villas and cottages. KICA refers to its property owners as "members" instead of "residents," Bunting said, because for some, Kiawah is a seasonal home. Their permanent residences are elsewhere.

KICA provides services for its membership, including security, property maintenance, recreation and other community building opportunities. For more information on KICA, visit the Web site at www.kiawah-owners.org.

The Community Association Institute is a nonprofit association created in 1973 to provide education and resources to America's 231,000 community associations, including those of condominium, homeowners and cooperatives.

[Click here](#) to see a picture of KICA representatives accepting the Association of the Year Award in the KICA Website Photo Gallery.