

Kristin Fletcher wins "40 Under 40" award in Economic Development

Orlando, Fla. — Kristin Fletcher, executive vice president of the Cleveland County Economic Development Partnership, has been selected as a winner in De-

velopment Counsellors International's (DCI) "40 Under 40" awards, the first awards recognizing young talent across the globe in the economic development pro-

fession.

A five-member selection committee chose the winners from a pool of more than 150 candidates based on their exceptional contributions to the economic development industry. DCI, a New York-based firm that specializes in economic development marketing, managed the awards program, which was designed to discover the economic development profession's rising stars.

"The people chosen by the selection committee represent a bright future for the economic development world," said Andy Levine, president of DCI. "They are a new breed of results-driven, place makers. We're very pleased to see Kristin Fletcher among the winners."

DCI officially announced the winners at an awards reception during the International Economic Development Council Leadership Summit in Orlando and will feature an in-depth profile of each on its website during 2013.

Cleveland County Manager Eddie Bailes noted Fletcher's accomplishments in the economic development arena. "Kristin is a proactive leader who works tirelessly to expand our local and regional economies. Under her leadership, she has collaborated with local government leaders in recruiting more than 35 companies to Cleveland County over the past five years. These companies, along with existing industry expansions, have resulted in the creation of 2,638 jobs with new investments of \$4.7 billion. In spite of the current economic downturn, Kristin has been a shining star by aggressively and effectively marketing our community and building key relationships with site selection consultants and project managers, which has resulted in new jobs and investment. Her efforts will help to ensure a bright future for Cleveland County."

Fletcher is a native of Cleveland County and graduated in 1999 from North

Carolina State University. Over the past 10 years, her career and experience has spanned politics, finance, marketing, public relations and economic development. Aside from her role with the Cleveland County Economic Development Partnership, she currently chairs the Charlotte Regional Partnership's Economic Development Advisory Council, which is composed of economic development leadership from the 16-county Charlotte region. Fletcher has served and continues to

serve on a variety of boards and associations, some of which include The North Carolina State University Industrial Extension Services Advisory Board of Directors, Cleveland County Manufacturers Roundtable, Cleveland County YMCA Board of Directors and United Way Board of Directors. She is actively involved in the North Carolina Economic Developers Association, as well as the International Economic Development Council.



Kristin Fletcher is shown with the poster, which includes her photo, of the '40 Under 40'.

RACE: to raise funds, awareness for Joubert Syndrome



Laura, Haley and Will Buchanan

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diseases.

energy into raising funds for the Joubert Syndrome & Related Disorders Foundation and to raise awareness of the disease. They have raised thousands of dollars for the small non-profit JSRDF using chili and bake sales, raffles and tee shirts.

The Inaugural race to raise awareness for, research and education (R. A. R. E.) will be held at George Poston Park in Lowell beginning at 9 a.m. Coinciding with World Rare Disease Day on Feb. 28, this will be the first race of this kind for Joubert Syndrome, joining other efforts around the world to raise awareness for rare diseases as a whole. It will also be the inaugural race at Poston Park in Gaston County.

Situated on the edge of 1,250 feet Spencer Mountain, Poston Park trail offers challenges for all levels of runners. Register in advance online at www.raceforrare.com or in person until 8 a.m. race day. Fee is \$30 for the 5K and \$40 for the 10 mile race.

Rare diseases are ironically not so rare, says Laura. There are 7,000 known rare diseases affecting nearly 30 million people in the U. S. or 1 in 10 Americans and 50% of those affected are children. She said that rare diseases are often under researched, underfunded and unrecognized by insurance companies leaving children without proper treatment or therapies. She said policy development is urgently needed to help promote education and treatment of rare

Laura said that her baby could not crawl or even get up on all fours at age 12 months. After an MRI, radiologists recognized the disease but most doctors had never heard of it.

Laura graduated from Kings Mountain High School in 1996 and Will from McDowell High in 1995. The couple met after college and was married 10 years ago. They lived in Columbia, SC for a few years before returning to Dallas in 2004. Will works as a branch manager at South Central Pool Supply in Charlotte. Laura is a part time home health nurse and is attending graduate school at the University of Missouri to become a doctoral prepared pediatric nurse practitioner.

Will and Laura both ran cross country in high school and he also ran track.

As adults they both ran off and on until creating Jog for Joubert Syndrome (JJJS).

They appreciate the numerous sponsors and corporate sponsors for the upcoming race, including Warlick & Hamrick Insurance of Kings Mountain.

Haley enjoys watching the races and cheering for the runners. The Buchanans are confident that Haley will one day be running beside them.

(To donate to JJJS email raceforrare@yahoo.com. Visit www.jsrdf.org or email info@jsrdf.org for more information on Joubert Syndrome and the JSRDF .To learn more about JJJS, Race for R.A. R. E., the Poston course and directions, visit www.raceforrare.com.)



Army Spec. Daniel Ruff is welcomed home by his wife Summer and their son Jacob.

Spec. Ruff returns to U.S.

Army Spec. Daniel L. Ruff has returned to the U. S. after being deployed overseas at a forward operating base to serve in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Operation Enduring Freedom is the official name given to anti-terrorism military operations involving United States troops and allied coalition partners. Active duty and reserve component members from all branches of the U. S. Armed Forces have been deployed to support the war against global terrorism outside the borders of the United States. U. S. troops serve in South, Southwest and Central Asia, the Arabian Peninsula, the Horn of Africa, islands in the Pacific, and Europe.

Ruff is an Infantryman assigned to the Fourth Airborne Brigade Combat team, 25th Infantry Division, at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Anchorage, Alaska. He has served in the military for five years and returned from Afghanistan to his Unit in early October 2012.

He is the son of Darlene Ruff of Kings Forest Drive, Kings Mountain, and the grandson of Abe and June Ruff of Kings Mountain. He and his wife, Summer, and their son, Jacob, reside in Anchorage, Alaska.

The specialist is a 2005 graduate of Kings Mountain High School.

PLAY: Beauty and the Beast opens Friday

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will get in for \$6 and may sign up for a raffle to win a tiara at the end of the show. Proceeds from the raffle will go to help the Theatre Department raise money for its trip to Kentucky to represent North Carolina at the Southeastern Theatre Conference High School Theatre Festival.

"Beauty and the Beast" is one of Disney's most endearing musicals. It was a hit on the Broadway stage and paved the way for all the Disney musicals that came after. Following the story of Disney's classic movie, this is a timeless tale of a cursed man who must learn to love and a lost girl who seeks her place in the world. Through their meeting and relationship, they find challenges they never expected to face and hope they forgot could exist. With lyrics by Tim Rice

and Howard Ashman, music by Alan Menken and the book by Linda Woolverton, the show ran on Broadway for more than 13 years, over 5,000 performances, and was nominated for 9 Tony Awards.

"Kings Mountain High School once again proves its incredible wealth of talent with its production of this challenging show," said Theatre Director Dan Treharne. The Performing Arts Department brings together proven talent and promising new performers for a show that everyone is sure to love.

Kelton Stone, best remembered as Red Riding Hood in the KMHS production of Into the Woods, returns to a lead role as the show's leading lady, Belle. Stone expertly captures the innocent strength that confuses her peers and wins over the Beast. Playing the gruff but hopeful Beast is Alan Williams, a favorite as the Tinman in last year's The Wiz. His honest portrayal of this tortured soul truly makes you understand both the fear the villagers feel and the affection Belle discovers.

Along with Williams, several other favorites from last year's musical are returning to the stage for Beauty and the Beast. Joining him are Justin Chapman and Josh Webb, who played the all-powerful Wiz and the silly, soulful Scarecrow. Fresh off an award winning performance at the State High School Play Festival, Chapman is delightfully horrible as Gaston, the man whose greatest love is his reflection in the mirror. Webb brings the energized goofiness of the Scarecrow to the quirky, but endearing Lumiere and makes a character that is truly memorable.

New to the stage is Kasey Church, playing Lumiere's grumpy, but well-meaning friend, Cogsworth. Approaching the part with an honesty that is refreshing, Church is sure to impress everyone with his performance. With an ensemble that matches the leads for energy and talent, Beauty and the Beast is sure to keep you smiling long after the curtain closes.



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