

# JIM EARLY RECEIVES WINNER'S CIRCLE AWARD

Monday March 20th 2017, VisitNC365 presented NCBS Founder & CEO, Jim Early its WINNER'S



CIRCLE AWARD. The award ceremony was part of the VisitNC365 annual convention in Greenville North Carolina. Jim's guests included Steve Grady and his wife Gerri Grady of Grady's BBQ in Dudley, North Carolina, Sam Jones of the Skylight Inn and Sam Jones BBQ and his wife Sarah of Greenville, North Carolina and Jim's wife Kimberly of Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Wit Tuttell, Executive Director of VisitNC365 introduced Sam and Sam introduced Jim. The Winner's Circle Award originated in 2004 in an effort to recognize communities, organizations, events and people in the tourism industry that have made significant



and continuing contributions to the growth and success of North Carolina's tourism industry. The award is given annually, and is presented at the Visit NC 365 Conference on Tourism, the largest gathering of the state's tourism industry leaders.



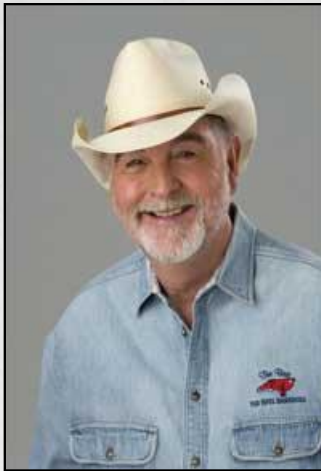
Some of the past recipients are:

- Humpy Wheeler – Lowe's Motor Speedway
- Jerry Richardson – Carolina Panthers
- Hugh Morton – Grandfather Mountain
- Craig Madison – Grove Park Inn
- Steve Miller – Biltmore
- Spencer Robins – Tweetsie Railroad and others
- Bill Cecil Jr. – Biltmore
- Richard Childress – Richard Childress Racing
- Mary Jaeger-Gale – Chimney Rock State Park
- Lynn Minges – N.C. Restaurant and Lodging Association
- Horace Holden – Nantahala Outdoor Center
- Richard Petty – Richard Petty Racing
- Reg Jones – U.S. Golf Association
- Steve Woody – Great Smoky Mountains National Park Service



## JIM EARLY RECIEVES WINNER'S CIRCLE AWARD (Cont.)

The following is Jim's picture and bio as printed in the awards program.



### ***JIM EARLY***

Jim Early, a Henderson native and longtime Winston-Salem resident, is a Wake Forest University law school graduate. More than three decades into his law career, Early embarked on a journey that led him out of the courtroom to chart a course celebrating North Carolina barbecue. After six months of travel covering 18,000 miles, he published *The Best Tar Heel Barbecue: Manteo to Murphy* in 2002. The next year he took his passion for the pit further and established the North Carolina Barbecue Society to preserve North Carolina's barbecue tradition, raise awareness of the state's standing as the "Cradle of Cue," and promote pitmasters who continued to cook over wood. From that quest came the society's Historic Barbecue Trail, which has mapped a decade's worth of barbecue pilgrimages and generated extensive media coverage. In 2007, Early closed his law office to focus on Barbecue Society. Its activities include three yearly BBQ Boot Camp & Judges School events, which have been featured in Ladies Home Journal, CNNgo.com and other outlets. Early has written two other books, *Reflections: The Memories and Recipes of a Southern Cook* and *Shining Times: The Adventures and Recipes of a Sportsman*, which explores his love of hunting and cooking.

In his acceptance remarks Jim had the opportunity to tell over 500 hundred editors and writers of major magazines and news papers and leaders of



the tourism industry in attendance about The NCBS Historic Barbecue Trail and the NCBS BBQ Boot Camps. Anyone who knows Jim knows he did not miss this opportunity.



*Ben Thompson  
NCBS Social Media Director and Photographer*