



*A non-profit association that provides statewide proactive leadership on waste reduction and recycling through education, advocacy, collaboration, programs and services.*

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## For Immediate Release

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## AROW Honors Recycling and Waste Reduction Efforts Throughout Wisconsin at Annual Awards Ceremony

**Stevens Point, WI (March 9, 2022)** – The Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin (AROW) proudly held their annual awards ceremony last week at the 2022 Wisconsin Integrated Resource Management Conference ([www.wirmc.org](http://www.wirmc.org)). The ceremony, held on February 24th, recognized individuals and organizations for outstanding work in the field of recycling and waste reduction.

This year AROW gave out a total of four awards.

“AROW always looks forward to honoring those working hard in our industry. This year’s recipients clearly demonstrate the strength of recycling in Wisconsin with achievements in private industry as well as education,” said Meleesa Johnson, AROW’s President. “AROW is the voice for recycling and waste reduction in Wisconsin and we are proud to recognize these individuals and groups.”

The prestigious **Christy Dixon Recycler of the Year Award** was awarded to Steve Melstrom, retired Pierce County Solid Waste Administrator, located in Ellsworth, WI. This recognition is given to an individual whose career demonstrates the highest professional standards. Steve has been a leader in the waste and recycling industry for over 30 years.

In his time with Pierce County, Steve has worked his way up to become the administrator and has overseen and advocated for many changes and improvements to the county’s recycling system. Steve has been a part of the county’s transition from source separated collection, to building a dual-stream MRF, to adding new materials to their recycling stream over the years. He has helped expand access to drop-off sites for the primarily rural residents of Pierce County.

Steve was passionate about recycling education, particularly in schools. He worked with many of the counties school districts to help provide access to recycling containers, promote recycling at school and athletic events and provided a carton recycling program for schools.

Steve believed in the regional approach to recycling as evident through many partnerships with counties in western Wisconsin for education efforts, Clean Sweep Hazardous Waste collections and processing recyclables. Steve was an active member of the Western Wisconsin recycling group and was always willing to take the time to listen and talk through issues with anyone in the industry. He is a wealth of institutional knowledge of the solid waste industry in western Wisconsin and will be truly missed in the industry in his retirement.

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The **Outstanding Achievement in Waste Reduction and Recycling Award** for an individual was awarded to Tom Jisko from Johns Disposal and Portage County Solid Waste. This recognition is given to an individual that has excelled in their recycling program.

Tom's tireless work ethic and daily commitment to the Portage County Material Recovery Facility, as well as his commitment to leading his fellow team members have played an integral part in the success of the Portage County Material Recovery Facility over the years.

The **Outstanding Achievement in Waste Reduction and Recycling Award** for an organization was awarded to Outagamie County Recycling and Solid Waste. Similar to the individual award, this award recognition is given to a group that has excelled in their recycling program.

The Outagamie County Recycling and Solid Waste Department redesigned expanded their residential drop-off or Resource Recovery Park with the intention of making it easier for customers to safely source separate and unload their materials. Their Resource Recovery Park features two lanes of one-way traffic to encourage a continuous flow of customers with 15 mirrored dumpsters on each side of the lanes. A total of 30 source separated dumpsters are arranged in a "z pattern" that are all colorfully coordinated to their designated materials. Outagamie's source separation goal focuses on eight different material outlets: clean wood, construction and demolition, metal, recycling, rigid plastics, furniture, mattresses and box springs, and trash.

The **Outstanding Achievement in Education Award** was awarded to Sustain Dane of Madison, WI. This award is given to an individual or group from the public, private, or non-profit sector that has excelled in solid waste or recycling environmental education.

Sustain Dane in partnership with the City of Madison and thanks in part to a grant by the Carton Council created and taught the inaugural Master Recycler course for Madison area residents. The goal of the two-class course was to teach residents more about recycling and waste diversion, and to empower them to perform an outreach project to help spread information about recycling.

The course taught 524 individuals, and the completed outreach projects touched an estimated 44,532 people.

For more detailed information on each of our award recipients please go to our awards page on the AROW website at [www.arow-online.org/awards](http://www.arow-online.org/awards).

AROW is a membership-based organization, serving the recycling and waste reduction interests of citizens, organizations, municipalities and businesses across the state. For those who support recycling and wish to see more waste diverted into productive use, consider joining the cause by becoming an AROW member.

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### **About the Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin (AROW)**

Founded in 1990, AROW is an association representing Wisconsin's recycling, waste reduction and sustainability professionals. The organization provides leadership through education, advocacy, and collaboration and promotes effective, efficient and sustainable material recovery initiatives. For details on AROW, its positions and programs visit [www.arow-online.org](http://www.arow-online.org).