



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**County Council Member Ilene Shapiro
is a candidate for Athena Award**

Summit County At-Large Council member Ilene Shapiro is one of six Summit County finalists for an award to be presented by Athena International.

Shapiro was selected for her community leadership and advocacy working to improve the quality of life for others in the region.

“I’m honored and humbled to be considered for such a prestigious award,” said Shapiro. “It is a privilege for my name to appear with such a worthy group of high-caliber individuals who have such a positive impact on the community.”

Athena International focuses on personal traits of strong, successful leaders. It captures the spirit and collaborative leadership style often exemplified in women leaders, while also recognizing the importance of traits such as courageous acts and fierce advocacy in the pursuit of excellence.

The awards dinner will take place September 25, 2008 at the Landerhaven in Cleveland, OH. Two Athena awards will be presented at the dinner, including one to the pool of Summit County finalists, and another to one of five from the Cleveland area. The northeast Ohio regional sponsor for the event is Inside Business Magazine.

The other Summit County finalists in addition to Councilwoman Shapiro are: Vivian Celeste Neal of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; Marie Covington of Covington Communications, Inc.; Laura Culp of Brockman, Coats, Gedelian & Co; Dr. Angela Neal-Barnett of Rise Sally Rise, Inc./Kent State University; and Chris Yuhasz of the Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority.

The award is represented by an original bronze and marble sculpture inspired by the goddess of Greek mythology known for her strength, courage, wisdom and enlightenment – qualities embodied in the Athena leadership model. The Athena award is presented to a woman or man who is honored for professional excellence, community service and for actively assisting women in their attainment of professional excellence and leadership skills.

The Athena award is presented annually by chambers of commerce, women's organizations and universities. The award is established through local host organizations in partnership with Athena International's national underwriters, local businesses and individual sponsors.

For more information, please contact the Summit County Council Office at (330) 643-2725.

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