

MARY L. THOMAS | **mt**
Award for Civic Leadership & Community Change



HISTORY OF THE AWARD

In 2006, Mary L. Thomas, then serving as Executive Vice President of the Spartanburg County Foundation, was honored by the Council on Foundations with the Robert W. Scrivner Award for Creative Grantmaking. This prestigious award is a memorial to the creative legacy left to the field of philanthropy by Robert W. Scrivner, long-time director of the Rockefeller Family Fund. Mary was selected because she best exemplified the imagination, creativity and optimism that were the hallmarks of Scrivner's distinguished career. She had the courage to lead The Spartanburg County Foundation into a period of innovation and grassroots leadership that even today continues to change the fabric of the greater Spartanburg County community and beyond.

With this award came a \$10,000 prize. In the spirit of the award, Mary decided to use the \$10,000 as seed money to establish the Mary L. Thomas Award for Civic Leadership and Community Change Fund. Through the support of the Foundation's Trustees and numerous individual donors, the fund has grown to over \$100,000 and supports the annual recognition of a community leader, who, like Mary, is an innovative leader of change, addressing critical issues throughout Spartanburg County. The first award was presented in 2007 to Mary Ann Deku, a career educator and youth mentor who led multiple efforts to increase voter registration across Spartanburg County.

Mary Thomas went on to serve as the Foundation's Chief Operating Officer from 2013 through 2023. She then took her expertise to the national level, accepting the role of Chief Executive Officer position for CFLeads, an organization helping community foundations build strong communities by advancing effective practices, sharing knowledge and galvanizing action on critical issues of our time.

The Mary L. Thomas Award for Civic Leadership and Community Change has continued to be presented to a Spartanburg County resident who has demonstrated outstanding commitment to improving the quality of life in Spartanburg County by developing innovative solutions to tackle critical community issues. The award is presented during the Spartanburg County Foundation's Annual Meeting.

Information about award recipients and the process for making a nomination for the award are available on the Spartanburg County Foundation website, www.spcf.org.