Press Release – For Immediate Release

August 23, 2016

Pat and Ken Ackerman

Named 2016 Robert N. Pursel Award for Community Service Recipients

Danville – The Holiday Happenings committee is pleased to announce this year’s recipients of the Robert N. Pursel Award for Community Service. Pat and Ken Ackerman have received this distinct honor. Their life’s work and dedication to the Danville area will be recognized at the 21st Annual Holiday Happenings Gala on Saturday, November 5.

Pat and Ken’s legacy began more than sixty years ago when they shared their life dreams with each other as teenagers. After both graduated from Ohio’s Mansfield Senior High School in 1957, he pursued a bachelor of science degree at Denison University, while she attended Ohio Wesleyan University and obtained her bachelor’s degree in English from Ohio State University in 1961. Married December 17, 1960, their first of three sons was born in Danville, PA, in 1966. Together they raised Franklin Kenneth, Robert Christian and Peter Jonathan Ackerman M.D., who were all student athletes at Danville Area High School and scholar athletes in college.

Pat Ackerman began her career as an English teacher in Granville, OH, and Ypsilanti, MI, and then at Highland Park High School, MI, while doing graduate work in English at Wayne State University, Detroit. After moving to Danville, PA, she continued to touch the lives of many students at Milton High School and Danville High School. Pat retired from Danville after teaching college prep and honors English at Danville High School for more than twenty years.

Mrs. Ackerman also worked as a teacher for Montour County’s Head Start Program and provided leadership for the child abuse initiative in Montour County. Pat was a member of the Geisinger Auxiliary. She taught Sunday School at Christ Memorial Episcopal Church and served as Chair of the Altar Guild. In addition, Pat served on the board and as chair for the Thomas Beaver Library. Her dedication and service
were honored by the Pat Ackerman Guys and Girls Reading Program at the Thomas Beaver Library in cooperation with the Danville Area School District.

Mr. Ackerman furthered his studies and received his master’s degree in Healthcare Administration from the University of Michigan in 1963. After working on the administrative staff of the Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, MI, Ken began his career at Geisinger Medical Center on March 1, 1964, as an assistant administrator and later became president. He held a variety of executive positions in the Geisinger Health System over a 30-year career. Throughout his professional career, Ken participated in numerous civic and professional activities in the Danville area which included serving on boards and volunteer service for Christ Memorial Episcopal Church, Columbia Montour Home Health Services, Danville Area Community Center, Geisinger House of Care, Geisinger Health System Foundation, Greater Danville Area United Fund, and FNB Bank. As a board member, he also extended his service to state and national organizations including the Hospital Association of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry, PA Governor Richard Thornburgh’s Transition Team, University of Michigan Health Administration Alumni Association, National Committee for Quality Healthcare, National Advisory Committee on Rural Health U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Washington, D.C., Medical Group Management Association, Healthcare Executives Study Society, Healthcare Research and Development Institute, Eli Lily National Board of Advisors, US Preventive Medicine National Board of Advisors, Health Insights, Suburban Hospital and Health System, Washington D.C., and Pennsylvania Millers Insurance Co (NASDAQ), Wilkes-Barre, PA, where he served as chairman of the board.

Currently, Ken serves locally on the board of directors for the Good Samaritan Mission, Geisinger – Keystone Accountable Care Organization and Danville Area Community Foundation. In addition, he continues to serve on national boards including 1-800 Doctors and Uniphy.

Mr. Ackerman’s lifetime achievements as a professional and philanthropic citizen are recognized through numerous awards. In 1975, he was the recipient of the Hudgens’ Memorial Award, “Young Hospital Administrator of the Year,” given by the American College of Healthcare Executives. In 1988, the American Group Practice Association named Ken “Administrator of the Year.” In addition, he was
the 1991 recipient of the National Award of Merit of Duke University Hospital and Health Administration Alumni Association and received the Harry J. Harwick Lifetime Achievement Award from the Medical Group Management Association in 1994. Ken is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives and the American College of Medical Practice Executives. During his career, he published more than 50 articles and co-authored two books and a monograph relating to various topics in health administration.

The November 5th event will feature silent and verbal auction items from one-of-a-kind art pieces and jewelry to week-long getaways to vacation homes at the shore or wine country. Mark your calendars for an evening in celebration of Mr. and Mrs. Ken Ackerman. Proceeds from the Holiday Happenings gala will benefit the Danville Area Community Foundation’s Neighbors Helping Neighbors Fund.

For more information, please contact Mike and Joanne Benjamin at 570-594-4664 or Kara Seesholtz at 570-752-3930.