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Governor Phil Bryant, right, presents Claudia Cartee with the Governor's Award for Excellence in Visual Arts.

Cartee honored with Governor's Award for excellence in visual arts

Ka Pottery artist attends awards ceremony on Feb. 11

Seminary's Claudia Cartee received the Excellence in Visual Arts award from the Mississippi Arts Commission Governor's Arts Awards.

The ceremony was held Thursday, February 11 at 6 p.m. at Duling Hall in Jackson.

The Governor's Arts Awards program signifies the important relationship between government and the arts.

The arts combine vision and creativity while enriching society's cultural horizons.

Established in 1988, the Governor's Arts Awards recognize those who have made noteworthy contributions to, or achieved artistic excellence in, the State of Mississippi. The awards event is presented each year by the Mississippi Arts Commission in partnership with the Governor's Office.

Cartee was among five recipients.

Cartee has worked as a professional studio potter since 1973. She was born into a family of artists. Her mother was a visual artist and her father was a musician and master mold maker. He was the one to set Claudia on her journey in clay by purchasing a potter's wheel for her. She began her formal college-level studies in

pottery and received her degree at California State University.

In 1978, she was asked to join the Craftsmen's Guild of Mississippi. She was one of only a few female artists who worked with clay on a wheel. She has been a Guild Fellow since 1987. Cartee has served as president of the Guild and on the Board of Directors and has shown her work for decades at the popular Chimneyville Crafts Festival.

Cartee received a scholarship to study at The Penland School of Crafts in North Carolina, which she credits as a turning point in her career. A year after studying at Penland, she was awarded the Mississippi Arts Commission's

See CARTEE, Page A-8

Cartee (Brought from A-1)

Artist Fellowship award. She received the honor again in 2012.

Among her clay sculptures and wall pieces, Cartee's usable pottery and functional works are very popular with collectors. She signs her work "Ka", which means the part of the spirit that lives on after death.

She has received

numerous awards from juried shows and festivals throughout Mississippi and the region. Her gallery and museum exhibitions range from the Meridian Museum of Art to the Attic Gallery in Vicksburg, the University of Southern Mississippi's Museum of Art, and the

Mississippi Museum of Art, among many others. Her work resides in permanent collections throughout Mississippi.

Cartee's exceptional success as a potter from rural Mississippi has cultivated arts tourism in Seminary, where her studio and sales gallery are located. She has shared her love of creating pottery by teaching throughout her career, mentoring clay artists and conducting countless workshops to help the next generation of potters.