NEW ORLEANS & WEST SACRAMENTO NAMED “MOST LIVABLE” CITIES IN AMERICA

U.S. Conference of Mayors Announces 2014 City Livability Award Winners at Annual Meeting in Dallas, Saturday, June 21 to Monday, June 24

Dallas, TX — New Orleans, LA Mayor Mitch Landrieu and West Sacramento, CA Mayor Chris Cabaldon have been awarded first place honors in the 2014 City Livability Awards Program during The U.S. Conference of Mayors’ 82nd Annual Meeting in Dallas.

This is the 35th year in which cities have competed for the award, which is sponsored by the Conference of Mayors and Waste Management, Inc., the nation’s largest environmental solutions provider. The award recognizes mayoral leadership in developing and implementing programs that improve the quality of life in America’s cities, focusing on the leadership, creativity, and innovation demonstrated by the mayors.

This year’s winning cities were selected by former mayors from a pool of over 200 applicants.

Barry Caldwell, Waste Management’s Senior Vice President for Public Affairs and Communications, presented the awards during today’s annual luncheon in Dallas, TX. “It remains a joy for Waste Management to partner with the USCM to honor mayors who are enhancing their cities’ quality of life, which the City Livability Award represents,” said Mr. Caldwell. “For more than 25 years, Waste Management has sponsored the Award because as the leading provider of comprehensive waste and environmental solutions in North America, our services are vital to the quality of life of cities and communities across the nation.”

"Our City Livability Awards Program gives us the opportunity to highlight mayoral leadership in making urban areas cleaner, safer, and more livable," said Tom Cochran, CEO and Executive Director of the Conference of Mayors. “We are grateful to Waste Management for its many years of support for the City Livability Awards Program, and for the opportunity to showcase the innovation and commitment of mayors and city governments across the country."

In addition to the two top awards, Outstanding Achievement Awards were given to five cities with populations of 100,000 or more—Arlington (TX), Philadelphia, Phoenix, Mesa (AZ), Providence — and five cities with populations of less than 100,000— Beverly Hills (CA), Braintree (MA), Roanoke (VA) Tamarac (FL) and York (PA).

Honorable Mention citations for cities with populations of 100,000 or more went to Aurora, (CO) Gresham (OR), Little Rock, (AR), and Orlando, (FL). Citations for cities with populations of less than 100,000 went to Brick (NJ), Cathedral City (CA), Newton (MA), and Wauwatosa (WI).
FIRST PLACE PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

New Orleans, LA (Large City): NOLA FOR LIFE --

New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu comprehensive murder reduction, NOLA FOR LIFE, was created in 2012 as a response to the city's historically high murder rate. Mayor Landrieu mobilized city government, non-profit organizations and the business community to commit to reducing murder and changing New Orleans' culture of violence. Under the Mayor's leadership, NOLA FOR LIFE was developed with an emphasis on evidence-based practices and data-driven accountability to drive large-scale change in a short period of time. Over 60% of the funding for NOLA FOR LIFE has come from non-public sources, including donations from national corporations, local businesses and citizens as well as significant investments from local businesses and citizens as well as significant investments from local and national foundations. In 2013, murders were down 19% compared to 2012, down 22% compared to 2011. Through the first quarter of 2014, New Orleans has the lowest number of murders since 1970 and the lowest murder rate since 1985, excluding the year after Hurricane Katrina. Although there is no single answer to reducing murder, leadership from the Mayor has been essential to mobilizing a diverse set of stakeholders to be a part of the solution. Across Prevention, intervention, enforcement and rehabilitation, NOLA FOR LIFE is improving the quality of life by changing the culture of violence in New Orleans.

“I am proud to accept this year’s City Livability Award on behalf of the citizens of New Orleans who have come together as a community to build safer neighborhoods and connect young men with the resources they need to thrive. NOLA FOR LIFE is our comprehensive murder reduction strategy that gives everyone a stake in creating a safer city," said Mayor Mitch Landrieu. “Today; the number of murders in the city is at a 30-year historic low and we are continuing to do what’s hard for the sake of doing what’s right.”

West Sacramento, CA (Small City): Universal Preschool for West Sacramento (UP4WS) --

Universal Preschool for West Sacramento (UP4WS), is a collaborative partnership between the City of West Sacramento, the local school district, the County Office of Education and First 5, both at the County and State levels. The Goal of UP4WS is to provide high quality preschool and childcare for all children ages 0-5 in the City of West Sacramento at little cost to residents through significant subsidies. West Sacramento has enabled children ages 0-5 to optimize their natural capacities for learning, social interaction and creative expression, preparing them for successful participation in the educational system. Children who attend UP4WS preschools show consistent growth in all domains assessed, and in particular, have progressed in the areas of pre-literacy and language. Most impressive are the gains shown in English language learners, whose growth in language and literacy mirrors that of their native English speaking peers. UP4WS, which was originally created through a Universal Preschool Task Force initiated by Mayor Christopher Cabaldon in 2003, has served between 450 and 600 0-5 year old children yearly and has served over 3,500 children in its 8 years of existence.

"West Sacramento has rapidly transformed from a neglected industrial town to a thriving, livable city, and Universal Preschool for West Sacramento (UP4WS) gives our youngest residents and their parents to create a future full of educational success and economic prosperity. I’m honored to accept this award on behalf of UP4WS and all of our partners who put kids first and turf aside to achieve the impossible," said Mayor Cabaldon.

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About The United States Conference of Mayors -- The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are nearly 1,400 such cities in the country today, and each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor. Like us on Facebook at facebook.com/usmayors, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/usmayors.