PHILADELPHIA (PA) & JACKSON (TN) NAMED “MOST LIVABLE” CITIES IN AMERICA

U.S. Conference of Mayors Announces 2013 City Livability Award Winners at Annual Meeting in Las Vegas, Saturday, June 21 to Monday, June 24

Las Vegas, NV—Mayor Michael Nutter of Philadelphia (PA) and Mayor Jerry Gist of Jackson (TN), have been awarded first place honors in the 2013 City Livability Awards Program during The U.S. Conference of Mayors’ 81st Annual Meeting in Las Vegas.

This is the 34th 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.

“Ann Reeves, Waste Management’s Vice President for Public Sector Solutions, presented the Awards during today’s annual luncheon session in Las Vegas. “We are honored to again partner with the USCM and sponsor the City Livability Awards for the 24th time. As the nation’s leading provider of comprehensive waste management services in North America, Waste Management’s sponsorship of USCM is very important to us and we care passionately about the livability of our cities,” said Ms. Reeves.”

"Our City Livability Awards Program gives the Conference 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 creativity 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—Baltimore, Dayton, Denver, Mesa (AZ) and Washington, DC. — and five cities with populations of less than 100,000—Fayetteville (AR), Hallandale Beach (FL), Oak Park (IL), York (PA), and West Palm Beach (FL).

Honorable Mention citations for cities with populations of 100,000 or more went to Fresno (CA), Memphis (TN), Milwaukee (WI), and Orlando (FL). Citations for cities with populations of less than 100,000 went to Lawrence (MA), Mayor Sumter (SC), Sunrise (FL), and Turlock (CA).
FIRST PLACE PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

PHILADELPHIA (PA) (Large City):

The GunStat program, launched by Mayor Nutter, works to combat street crime using a micro, place-based strategy to focus on repeat offenders which addresses the physical conditions that contribute to crime, and build neighborhood capacity to sustain safety and security. The Mission of GunStat is to identify violent repeat offenders who are known to law enforcement, increase collaboration between City departments to share data and information, and to promote safety within the targeted neighborhoods. Targeted offenders are monitored from arrest through incarceration and the parole period. By ensuring that violent offenders are monitored closely, GunStat ensures prioritization, communication and coordinated decision making by all levels of law enforcement. In 2012 - the first year - there was a 25 % drop in gun crimes and a 56% drop in shooting victims in the targeted GunStat areas compared with the previous five year averages. Comparable citywide statistics show a 9 % and 11% decrease in gun crimes and shooting victims, respectively.

“I am extremely pleased to accept the 2013 City Livability Award on behalf of the City of Philadelphia for our GunStat Program,” said Mayor Nutter. “GunStat is a multi-faceted, interdepartmental, neighborhood-targeted approach to reducing crime and increasing public safety across the city. I would like to thank both the United States Conference of Mayors and Waste Management for their recognition of our great city’s innovative approach to reducing gun violence.”

JACKSON, TN (Small City):

Mayor Gist’s JumpStart Jackson initiative is a community-wide health and wellness initiative intended to make Jackson the “Healthiest City in Tennessee.” Stemmed initially from a “wake-up call” the city received when a company decided against moving to the city because of potentially high employee healthcare costs, JumpStart Jackson has encouraged active lifestyles and has made an impact on the quality of life in the city. The program has improved walkability and bikeability in the city, increased access to low-cost nutritious foods in local “food deserts,” and created a 80,000 sq. ft. Wellness Center in downtown Jackson. Not only has the initiative improved livability, it has also provided economic benefits with the City seeing a $2 million reduction in city employee healthcare costs in the first year of the program.

“We are indeed honored and thankful to be recognized by the United States Conference of Mayors for the most livable small city. The success is relative to the willingness of the citizens of Jackson, Tennessee to rethink livability and connect to long-term viability. JumpStart Jackson pioneered a willingness among citizens to surmount a complex challenge. Essential values of cultural diversity, social-engagement, health, and education combined a focus on infrastructure, work-force and economic development efforts to create an attractive and sustainable future,” said Jackson Mayor Jerry Gist.

For more information, visit http://usmayors.org/81stAnnualMeeting/media/agenda.pdf

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The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,210 such cities in the country today, and each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor. Find us at usmayors.org, on facebook.com/usmayors, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/usmayors.