WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Conference of Mayors today recognized partnerships between cities and private companies at the Conference’s 79th Winter Meeting. Conference President Burnsville Mayor Elizabeth B. Kautz presided over the awards ceremony. U.S. Conference of Mayors CEO and Executive Director, Tom Cochran, also participated in the ceremony.

In announcing the awards, Mayor Kautz remarked, "Mayors have always understood the power of the private sector to affect change and improve lives and we can point to successful public private partnerships in cities across the nation. Today’s awards recognize four successful and outstanding relationships between cities and businesses."

The Mayors Business Council established the awards to encourage businesses and cities to work together to improve local communities. An independent panel of judges was appointed by the Conference of Mayors to review individual submissions. Selections were made based on a set of criteria including: improvement in delivery of services, replicability, sustainability, cost-savings, creativity of approach, benefits to both public and private partners, economic and business benefits, and measurable results.

There were two award categories: The Award of Excellence (one award presented) and Outstanding Achievement Awards (three awards presented).

The award winners and brief program descriptions are below. To read additional information on these award-winning programs on our website, go to http://www.usmayors.org/buscouncil/.

**AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE:**

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<td>“Smart Communications Broadband Adoption Program”</td>
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**OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS:**

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<td>Sacramento, CA</td>
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AWARD OF EXCELLENCE:

Chicago, IL/Sprint Nextel

Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley’s Smart Communities Program has created a unique partnership that drives broadband adoption by building on the strengths of government, community organizations and the private sector.

The City of Chicago – with support from the federal Broadband Technology Opportunities Program – provides funding for computers and other hardware and software tools, eliminating some of the costliest barriers to home internet use.

Additionally, the community development organization LISC/Chicago and its partners deliver targeted, culturally appropriate digital skills training programs, grassroots outreach and hyper-local content.

In further support of the initiative, Sprint Nextel will offer free or low-cost wireless broadband services to avoid financial barriers faced by vulnerable families.

The pilot partnership program has three phases:

In Phase One – Nearly 60 youths from five underserved Chicago neighborhoods participated in this year’s inaugural Digital Youth Summer Jobs program. Sprint awarded the participants Virgin Mobile Broadband2Go aircards with free service, exposing the students to new broadband technology.

In Phase Two – More than 1,200 residents at six Family Net Centers and 100 small businesses will receive netbook computers loaded with links to local online content with Sprint Nextel offering both groups reduced-price 3G and 4G wireless broadband services.

In Phase Three – Nearly 270,000 Smart Communities residents will benefit through the Sprint Nextel partnership and will have access to new affordable broadband options.

With the City of Chicago and its partners assuming the “customer acquisition” costs, Sprint Nextel is able to offer its services at the lower prices required to connect with a previously unseen, underserved market of residents and businesses.

For more information, please contact: Daniel Gillison, National Director, Sprint at 703-433-4682 or daniel.gillison@sprint.com or Jackie Heard, City of Chicago at 312-744-3334 or jheard@cityofchicago.org.

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS:

Port Arthur, TX/Linebarger Goggan Blair Sampson, LLP

In 2008, Port Arthur was in the midst of an economic downturn. Then, Hurricane Ike struck, turning many homes and commercial buildings into vacant lots and abandoned structures.
Mayor Deloris “Bobbie” Prince, using an idea from Clayton Mayfield, Managing Partner of Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson, LLP to use the Property Tax Code to acquire abandoned and dilapidated properties, had a vision to revitalize Port Arthur.

Mayor Prince and & Mr. Mayfield created an incubator area for redevelopment, by identifying properties to purchase subject to tax sale.

To date, using a Neighborhood Stabilization Plan grant, 254 properties have been purchased, eight homes are now under construction, and other lots are being marketed for residential and commercial development, benefitting the city by generating future tax revenue; eliminating maintenance costs; and improving financial conditions to enhance the city’s borrowing capacity.

Port Arthur is poised for a much brighter future, with a sense of hope and opportunity for the first time in several years.

For more information, please contact: Glenn Lewis, Attorney, Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson, LLP at 817-877-4589 or glenn.lewis@lgbs.com or Mike Mason, City of Port Arthur, at 409-983-8237 or mike.mason@portarthur.net.

Sacramento, CA/Nehemiah Corporation

Township Nine (T9), a 65-acre, urban scale, mixed use, transit-oriented master planned neighborhood consisting of 2,350 total dwelling units, 800,000 square feet of office space, 150,000 square feet of ground floor retail, 20+ acre of open space and a light rail station, was developed by Capital Station 65 LLC and its managing member, NCRF Holdings, a subsidiary of the Nehemiah Corporation of America.

The city secured 30 million dollars from the California Department of Housing and Community Development and worked with T9 staff to establish new urban design guidelines and ordinances involving the American River Parkway.

This collaborative effort established a model for urban project development that will be utilized throughout the Sacramento Region and can be replicated nationwide.

T9 won top honors from the State of California and is regarded as a “Catalyst Project”.

For more information, please contact: Darrell Teat, Special Assistant to the CEO, Nehemiah Corporation at 916-231-1715 or dteat@nehemiahcorp.org or Joaquin McPeek, City of Sacramento at 916-808-5300 or jmcpeek@cityofsacramento.org.

Schenectady, NY/Veolia Water North America

In 1991, the City of Schenectady formed a public-private partnership with Veolia Water for the operation, maintenance and management of its wastewater treatment plant and composting program.

Schenectady faced major problems with its wastewater infrastructure, and Veolia was able to provide immediate working capital to the project.
By identifying and prioritizing defects before they become dilemmas through its Underground Asset Management program, Veolia has limited the City’s exposure to costly fines, improved efficiency, and saved the City $600,000 on a sewer cleaning project.

Veolia Water is also working on a co-generation program and drying system to reduce the plant’s electrical consumption and carbon footprint.

Both partners view their relationship as extremely resilient and beneficial, even as tough times have gotten worse.

For more information, please contact: Sandra Sullivan, Vice President, Government & Industry Relations, Veolia Water at 401-965-8922 or sandra.sullivan@veoliawaterna.com or Sharon Jordan, City of Schenectady at 518-382-5000 or sajordan@nycap.rr.com.

To read additional information on this award-winning program on our website, go to http://www.usmayors.org/buscouncil/.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,139 such cities in the country today, each represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the Mayor.

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