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Wayne County Receives Eight National Achievement Awards for Innovative Programs

Wayne County – Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano today announced that eight of Wayne County’s programs received 2009 NACo Achievement Awards from the National Association of Counties (NACo).

NACo’s annual Achievement Award program, initiated in 1970, recognizes innovative county government programs across the country for high caliber county programs and projects. The awards are granted for demonstrated hard work to promote quality, efficient and responsive management and administration.

“Being recognized among the country’s top county programs is truly an honor for Wayne County,” said Executive Ficano. “Responding to our residents and businesses with quality programs is not only a necessity, but a priority, and our staff is dedicated to creating programs to meet their needs. These awards represent a culmination of our efforts and honor all of the hard work going into our programs.”

The following Wayne County programs received awards:

Community/Economic Development category

- *Mortgage Foreclosure Prevention Program (MFPP)*: Provides assistance to residents throughout Wayne County who are amidst the mortgage foreclosure process or who may be at risk for mortgage foreclosure through education, counseling, referrals and other support services at no cost to its residents. Since the inception of its services in October 2008, the program already has helped hundreds of Wayne County residents.
- *Wayne County Land Bank (WCLB)*: Has created renewed housing, commercial, industrial and retail development in targeted areas throughout the County; cleaner and safer neighborhoods; and the retention and creation of sustainable jobs in Wayne County. In its first two years, the WCLB has helped stimulate millions of dollars in investments and created and retained thousands of jobs.

Criminal Justice and Public Safety category

- *Correct Course*: Designed to provide an alternative, community-based program for rehabilitation of low-risk, youthful offenders who might otherwise be placed under juvenile court supervision. To date, 97 percent of the youth completing the program have not received additional charges.

Environment category

- *Comprehensive Assessment and Master Plan Project (CAMPP)*: This comprehensive program created efficiencies for wastewater treatment, resulting in a savings of more than \$10 million at Wayne County's Downriver Wastewater Treatment facility, the second largest in Michigan.

Information Technology category

- *Permit Assistance Construction Permit Management System*: Developed to make doing business with the County quicker and easier through a shared information system tracking permit applications. In five months, the program already has significantly decreased past due review rates from 42 percent to just one.
- *Systematic Monitoring and Reporting Tracking (SMART)*: Provides improved methods for Head Start managers to track their programs to ensure they are meeting and/or exceeding federal program performance standards and quickly detect areas for improvement.

Personnel Management, Employee Training and Employee Benefits category

- *Organizational Effectiveness (OE)*: Was created to help find efficiencies and work with County departments to ensure that the streamlined processes created led to cost savings and/or operational efficiencies for all county agencies. In its first year, the Division has generated a cost savings of more than \$3 million in the Department of Public Services.

Civic Education and Public Information category

- *It's a No Drainer*: A series of one-day sessions inviting the general public to drop off unwanted/expired non-controlled medications, sharps and mercury thermometers in an environmentally safe way.

Founded in 1930, NACo is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States. With a membership totaling more than 2,000 counties nationwide, NACo represents more than 80 percent of the nation's population as a full-service organization that provides legislative, research, technical and public affairs assistance to its members.

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