



NEWS The United States Conference of Mayors

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TALLAHASSEE (FL) & TUSCALOOSA (AL) NAMED "MOST LIVABLE" CITIES IN AMERICA

U.S. Conference of Mayors Announces 2011 City Livability Award Winners at Annual Meeting in Baltimore, MD, Friday, June 17 to Monday, June 20

Baltimore, MD — Mayors John Marks Tallahassee (FL) and Mayor Walter Maddox of Tuscaloosa (AL), have been awarded first place honors in the 2011 City Livability Awards Program during The U.S. Conference of Mayors' 79th Annual Meeting in Baltimore

This is the 32nd 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. "For more than three decades now, the City Livability Award has been one of the most prestigious awarded by this organization, and one of the most competitive," said Conference President Burnsville Mayor Elizabeth Kautz. "Each year, hundreds of mayors and their city governments submit a wide range of programs for consideration, vying for the honor of calling themselves a City Livability Award winner. We thank Waste Management, Inc. for their decades of support in honoring and giving national attention to mayoral innovation and leadership. It is through this partnership that we continue to salute the mayors who

have developed the best practices and successful programs that improve the quality of life for all city residents.”

Barry H. Caldwell, Waste Management’s Senior Vice President for Public Affairs and Communications, presented the awards during today’s annual luncheon session in Baltimore “At WM, we believe there’s a direct correlation between a city’s quality of life and the combination of mayoral leadership, involved citizens, organizations and business all working together. Especially in light of their fiscal challenges, we applaud all mayors continuing to improve the livability of their cities, and we are again pleased to partner with the USCM to recognize these exemplary livability programs.”

In addition to the two top awards, Outstanding Achievement Awards were given to five cities with populations of 100,000 or more – Denton (TX), Fresno (CA), Houston (TX), Louisville (KY), and Philadelphia (PA) – and five cities with populations of less than 100,000 – Elkhart (IN), Germantown (TN), Racine (WI), Sugar Land (TX), and Miami Beach (FL).

Honorable Mention citations for cities with populations of 100,000 or more went to Alexandria (VA), Baltimore (MD), Bayamon (PR), and Durham (NC), and for those with populations of less than 100,000 -- Auburn (WA), Lodi (CA), Monrovia (CA) and West Palm Beach (FL).

"Our City Livability Awards Program gives the Conference a chance 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."

FIRST PLACE PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Tallahassee (FL) (Large City)

The City of Tallahassee Utilities' Neighborhood REACH program is a collaborative effort, which brings together a variety of city services focused on improving livability within Tallahassee's traditionally low-income neighborhoods. At the core of the REACH program is a team of energy professionals working door to door to provide participating residential customers with free home energy and water saving measures and related educational materials. While in the home, the

REACH team performs several energy-efficiency services at no cost to the customer, such as weather-stripping exterior doors, caulking windows, replacing HVAC filters, cleaning refrigerator coils, and replacing light bulbs with CFLs. A key component of REACH is hands-on learning, whereby the energy auditor walks through the home with the customer and highlights simple changes that will help further reduce home energy and water consumption. Nearby, other city crews repair sidewalks and broken street lights, clean drainage ditches and overgrown vacant lots, repaint faded crosswalk signs, repair street shoulders, replace faded street signs, and repair broken sewer caps, to name a few of the many services. At this time Neighborhood REACH is a two-year pilot program designed to assist approximately 8 income-based neighborhoods, serving nearly 3,000 residents and resulting in 6,300 MWh of annual savings.

Tuscaloosa (AL) (Small City)

The mission of the Tuscaloosa Pre-K Initiative is to advance un-served academically at-risk four-year old children in the City of Tuscaloosa and prepare them for their educational future. 93% of children who graduate from the Initiative are no longer considered academically at-risk. Tests have proven that without the initiative, 75% of Tuscaloosa's academically at-risk children would never graduate high school. The Initiative has united their community by bringing together several stakeholders ranging from the Tuscaloosa City schooled to the Tuscaloosa Ministerial Alliance. Realizing that 25% of Tuscaloosa County residents were functionally illiterate, and that 50% of Children in the City were unprepared to enter kindergarten, the elected officials felt that it was time to act on behalf of these at risk children. In 2005 Mayor Maddox requested and was granted funding by the city Council for 5 pre-k teacher units for the 2007-2008 school year. Next, the University of Alabama, along with Stillman College, placed student aides in pre-k classrooms. The Initiative also spawned the Tuscaloosa's Annual Mayor's Cup which raises thousands of dollars for the Initiative, while promoting health and wellness for all residents. The Initiative continues to grow without assistance from the state or federal funds.

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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](https://www.facebook.com/usmayors), or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/usmayors.