Dear Honorees,

I am so pleased to welcome you to the 2022 Governor’s Awards for Local Government Excellence. Each year during Local Government Week, we honor the dedication of Pennsylvania’s local government officials. The work you do for your community is important and valued.

Local government affects every Pennsylvanian, and today’s honorees are a shining example of working for the people. Each Governor’s Awards for Local Government Excellence recipient has shown exceptional dedication to improving public services through innovative initiatives. The individuals, municipalities, organizations, and counties we are recognizing today have provided critical services and assistance to residents in need across the commonwealth.

Our people and communities make Pennsylvania a great place to live, work, and play. Without the passion you bring to your role improving government services for members of your community, the commonwealth would not be the wonderful place it is today.

Thank you for all you have done.

Tom Wolf  
Governor
GOVERNOR’S AWARDS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXCELLENCE
April 13, 2022
Auditorium, State Museum

10:30am  Reception

11:00am  Welcome and Recognition of Guests

Richard P. Vilello, Jr.
Deputy Secretary for Community Affairs & Development

C. Kim Bracey
Executive Director
Center for Local Government Services

Remarks
Presentation of Awards
GOVERNOR’S AWARDS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXCELLENCE

“Local government plays a significant role in the day-to-day lives of each citizen of the commonwealth. Recognizing the motivated individuals who make up these municipalities, organizations, and counties is so important. Pennsylvania depends on the dedication of their local government officials and organizations, and I am proud to honor the 2022 Governor’s Awards for Local Government Excellence recipients.”

— Tom Wolf
Governor

“Every Pennsylvanian has been impacted by the work our local governments do. From building community partnerships and responding to adversity, to creating health and wellness initiatives and promoting community and economic revitalization, the work our 2022 Governor’s Awards for Local Government Excellence recipients have done for their regions is so appreciated. I want to thank these recipients for all they have accomplished, and I look forward to seeing what you continue to achieve.”

— John Fetterman
Lieutenant Governor
GOVERNOR’S AWARDS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXCELLENCE

“Local government can make great things happen. Through the facilitation of partnerships and the leveraging of resources, local government helps strengthen Pennsylvania’s economic climate while enhancing the communities we call home. Thank you to each of the 2022 Governor’s Awards for Local Government Excellence recipients for working hard to improve the life of Pennsylvanians.”
— Neil Weaver
Acting Secretary
PA Dept. of Community & Economic Dev.

“Congratulations to each of the 2022 Governor’s Awards for Local Government Excellence recipients. The dedication you have shown to improving your communities with innovative initiatives is valued and appreciated. Today we celebrate you and all you have done. Thank you for your hard work.”
— Mike Hanna
Executive Deputy Secretary
PA Dept. of Community & Economic Dev.

“Local government plays a huge role in the lives of all Pennsylvanians. The work each of you do every day makes a difference in your communities. Congratulations to each of the 2022 Governor’s Awards for Local Government Excellence recipients; your legacy is in the lives you’ve impacted.”
— C. Kim Bracey
Executive Director
Governor’s Center for Local Government Services

“Congratulations to the 2022 Governor’s Awards for Local Government Excellence recipients. The impact local government has on citizens cannot be understated, and its effects run deep. Passionate and dedicated individuals, like each of the recipients here today, truly make a difference. Thank you for all you have done for your communities.”
— Richard P. Vilello, Jr.
Deputy Secretary for Community Affairs & Development
Each year, this award recognizes local governments and individuals that have found creative ways to improve their communities. The Governor’s Awards for Local Government Excellence are a celebration of successful local government initiatives in many areas. In total, 22 local government leaders and communities from across the state will receive awards today to recognize their achievements.

In partnership with the organizations listed below, the Governor’s Center for Local Government Services sponsors the Excellence in Local Government Awards Program to honor local governments and officials who serve their communities and improve the quality of life for their residents.

- Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors
- Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs
- Pennsylvania Association of Councils of Governments
- PA Chapter of American Planning Association
- Pennsylvania State Association of Township Commissioners
- Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association
- Pennsylvania Municipal League
- County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania

DO THE RIGHT THING.
IT WILL GRATIFY SOME PEOPLE
AND ASTONISH THE REST.

– MARK TWAIN
BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

**Conshohocken Borough**

Conshohocken Borough has made community partnerships a priority since Mayor Yaniv Aronson took office in 2018. Whether it’s with a local nonprofit, a local business, a school group or even a neighboring municipality, nearly every event that occurs within the borders of Conshohocken Borough features elected leadership and a strong community partner. These events have run the gamut from a bi-annual Community Neighborhood Cleanup to the Conshy Strong fundraising and community spirit initiative for victims of COVID-19 and flooding.

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FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

**Worcester Township**

Over the past year, Worcester Township rescued its Sewer Fund from insolvency with the result that it fully provides for the operational and capital needs of the Township’s sanitary sewer system. Through smart financial decisions, the Township kept operating costs way down managing an increase in its annual sewer rates of only 2.3% since 2015 and successfully building capital reserves totaling more than $1.5 million.
HEALTH & WELLNESS INITIATIVES

Delaware County

The measure of success for Delaware County Emergency Rental Assistance (Delco ERA) Program has always been more than just the expenditure of the funds. Success for Delco ERA is about serving the most marginalized residents with dignity and respect. Through a remarkable array of partnerships, Delco ERA has successfully served nearly 2,500 of the most vulnerable households in the County. Building community partnerships has been instrumental in the deployment of the Delco ERA Program and it is now one of the top-performing rental assistance programs in the country.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Dauphin County Register of Wills and Clerk of Orphans’ Court

When COVID-19 threatened to close courthouse offices indefinitely, the Dauphin County Register of Wills and Clerk of the Orphans’ Court, Jean Marfizo King, recognized the need to continue operations by going virtual. Innovative cloud-based software that can accept and process marriage license applications, probate applications, and e-filing for both existing and new cases in both of her offices were the first of their kind in the United States. Productivity and efficiency increased. The development of this technology has truly changed the landscape of how a local government office can function and deliver services.
INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY/GOVERNMENTAL INITIATIVES

East Goshen Township

East Goshen Township and the Movie Tavern Exton have created a remarkable public event that celebrates teenagers in a unique way. Complete with red carpets and limousines, the Southeast PA Teen Filmmakers Showcase challenges teenagers to speak up, celebrate their talents, and face the difficulties of teenage life head on. Since 2019 teenage filmmakers from across the commonwealth have visited East Goshen to share a love of creating original films. The entire experience is free of charge and the result has been a highly successful event for teenagers, with women and minorities making up over 50% of the Official Selections almost every year.

INNOVATIVE PLANNING/SOUND LAND USE PRACTICES

Middletown Township

In September 2021, Middletown Township became the first township in southeastern Pennsylvania and the first municipality in Bucks County to adopt a Climate Action Plan. The Climate Action Plan serves to coordinate the township’s sustainability efforts and recommends initiatives and strategies for community-wide greenhouse gas reduction. The Plan was developed in partnership with the Board of Supervisors, the Township’s Environmental Advisory Council (EAC), and the Department of Environmental Protection’s Local Climate Action Program. As a result of the partnership, residents now know how to reduce the carbon footprint of their home or business and sustainability, and energy efficiency top the list of conversations between the township, the community, and developers.
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Lower Allen Township Development Authority

The Lower Allen Township and the Development Authority (LATDA) partnered to bring the stability of government and the flexibility of an authority to help guide development. As part of their 2018 comprehensive plan implementation, Lower Allen Township purchased and redeveloped a vacant and strategic site in the township’s business district to ensure economic vitality. With no state or federal funding, just the backing of the township, LATDA secured a loan and purchased the site with the goal of creating an economic anchor and removing a blighted space. Now Marriott is developing a hotel onsite and Trader Joe’s is set to locate in the business district. This development has brought new life to an old property.

PROMOTING COMMUNITY/ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

Cranberry Township

When discussions began in the mid-1990s about building a connector from Interstate 79 to points north of Route 228 in Cranberry Township, it seemed like a monumental task. After 20 years and thousands of hours of community collaboration, the MSA Thruway is a reality, improving traffic at the intersection of three major transportation arteries.

Thanks to support from the commonwealth and a donation of private land from MSA Safety Inc., the MSA Thruway features two roundabouts and a dedicated off-ramp from I-79 to improve traffic flow and provide better access. This infrastructure improvement allows for major economic drivers to benefit from better highways while adding features that enhance the community like bike and pedestrian lanes.
PROMOTING COMMUNITY/ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

Bellefonte Borough

For nearly 20 years, the Borough of Bellefonte has been working to redevelop its waterfront properties along Spring Creek. First was the historic Match Factory revitalization, then the expansion of Talleyrand Park, and most recently, the Gamble Mill restoration and re-opening. The waterfront redevelopment provides an opportunity for outdoor recreation and serves as a community gathering space for events, making it an ideal location for tourists and residents. The Gamble Mill project both strengthens the tax base with the development of a hotel and condominiums and enhances the quality of life for the current residents of Bellefonte.

PROMOTING COMMUNITY/ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

The City of Warren in Warren County

Opened in December of 2021, the Innovault Coworking project is a triumph of organization and community spirit that involves the redevelopment of one floor of the former National Bank Building in Warren from a blighted vacant structure into a vibrant and productive coworking space. The project involved many partners who worked tirelessly. Successful fundraising raised over $100,000 in grants and donations to redevelop the space, including its vault (hence the “Innovault name”). Now a building that was previously 95% vacant has become a driver of economic growth for both Warren City and the surrounding area.
RESPONDING TO ADVERSITY

**Modena Borough**

Despite development pressures on a historic sight, severe flooding, and the passing of its mayor, small but mighty Modena Borough both persevered and thrived in tough times. Much success has been attributed to the leadership of Jennifer Daywalt, the current mayor and former Borough council president. Daywalt quickly stepped-up to fill the void left by the mayor’s passing. The mayor had an extraordinary year, stepping in to save threatened historic structures, working tirelessly to enhance local parks, and facing down two massive flooding events in 2021, all while dedicating remarkable time to her constituents.

RESPONDING TO ADVERSITY

**Mansfield Borough**

During the summer of 2021, Mansfield Borough experienced a series of flooding events in the south end of the municipality which caused severe private property damages. After extensive investigation, borough officials discovered that the proximate cause of the flooding was a failing storm sewer main pipe. The partnering spirit of the chairs of the Borough’s Public Safety and Finance Committees were instrumental in assessing the problem and finding solutions. So quick was their action, that the main storm water drainage pipe was repaired within a month of discovering the problem.
MUNICIPAL LEADERSHIP AWARD
The Honorable Ross Swords, Jr.

Mayor Swords has been serving his community since he was 21 years old. He was first an elected constable and then moved through the ranks of the volunteer fire company serving as Fire Police Captain, Vice President, and currently Fire Police Lieutenant. Swords has also been involved in local government; at 27, he became the youngest person ever elected to the position of Councilman in the Borough of Brownsville. He chaired the Public Safety and the Buildings and Grounds Committees managing to keep the police department in the borough and adding a K-9 unit to its ranks. Six years ago, he successfully ran for Mayor and still holds the office today. Swords rounds out his time with a growing family and as president of the Brownsville Area High School football booster organization.

THE PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE
CAREER RECOGNITION AWARD
The Honorable Michael Lombardo

In 1996, feeling frustrated with the condition of his hometown, Mayor Michael Lombardo entered the race for mayor of the City of Pittston. In November 1997 he was elected the youngest mayor in the history of the city and served for two terms. Lombardo’s experience as mayor resulted in a passion for economic and community development, and in mid-2005 he left a career in education to serve as Chief Operational Officer of the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Business and Industry and subsequently served as acting Chief Executive Officer. In 2017, Lombardo decided to run again for Pittston Mayor and is now beginning his fourth term. Over the course of the last 20 years, Pittston and its vibrant main street have grown and thrived thanks in great part to Mayor Lombardo’s leadership and commitment to the city.
PA STATE ASSOCIATION OF TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS
CAREER RECOGNITION AWARD
The Honorable David R. Nyman

David Nyman is in his 28th year as a Township Supervisor in East Rockhill Township, Bucks County. Additionally, he has been with Upper Makefield Township, Bucks County as a Township Manager for four years. Since 2000, he was the Interim Manager for several other townships. Mr. Nyman serves on the Bucks County Association of Township Officials Board of Directors. He has served on the PSATS’ Executive Board since 2016.

PA ASSOCIATION OF TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONERS
CAREER RECOGNITION AWARD
The Honorable R. Samuel “Sam” Valenza

Sam Valenza has served as a township commissioner in Upper Moreland Township, Montgomery County since 2008. From 2010 to 2017, Mr. Valenza was president of the Upper Moreland Board of Commissioners. He has also been active at the regional and state level serving as president of both the Montgomery County and Eastern Associations. In October 2021, he was sworn in as president of the PA State Association of Township Commissioners. As a commissioner, Mr. Valenza never seems to stop and has involved himself with numerous local projects.
THE PA MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES ASSOCIATION
CAREER RECOGNITION AWARD
The Honorable Thomas Zeuner

Thomas Zeuner has been with the Northampton Bucks County Municipal Authority for 20 years, 15 of those years serving as Executive Director. He began his career in a privately held business designing and manufacturing electro-hydraulic control valves for the agricultural harvesting market. Zeuner is credited with seven United States patents with corresponding foreign registrations in the field of hydraulics, electro-hydraulics, and fluid power.

At the age of 34, he was elected and served on the Northampton Township Board of Supervisors. He served as a Board member of the Bucks County Opportunity Council for four years, and Board member of the Bucks County Community College Foundation for 17 years. Mr. Zeuner has served the Municipal Authorities Association faithfully, currently as its President.

PENNSYLVANIA STATE ASSOCIATION OF BOROUGHS
CAREER RECOGNITION AWARD
The Honorable Mark E. Nickerson

In addition to decades of volunteer work with a variety of entities in Crawford County, Mark Nickerson has proudly served on Blooming Valley Borough Council in Crawford County since 1980 and as Council President for 36 years. His exceptional commitment to local government advocacy and education extends to the statewide level. Mr. Nickerson has been an active board member of the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs since 1996, serving in leadership and heading-up many committees and initiatives. Mr. Nickerson is committed to civil discourse and has been very passionate in advocating for the continued viability of borough communities statewide.
PA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
CAREER RECOGNITION AWARD
The Honorable Bradley D. Shaffer

Bradley Schaffer is the current president of the PA COG and the president of the Northern Wayne COG. Through his work with both COGs, Schaffer has strongly supported and advocated for intergovernmental cooperation. He has also been involved in local government for over two decades, both working and serving in a variety of capacities in Buckingham Township as a roadmaster, emergency management representative and township supervisor.

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION OF PA
CAREER RECOGNITION AWARD
The Honorable Kevin Boozel

Kevin Boozel serves as both a Butler County Commissioner and the 2021 CCAP president. Commissioner Boozel’s service on multiple boards matches his commitment to a wide variety of issues, such as workforce development and human services. In addition, he has also been one of the key driving forces behind a county’s priority to address the emergency medical services crisis, relentlessly pursuing legislative and other initiatives. As CCAP President in 2021, Commissioner Boozel maintained a focus on keeping counties connected and on getting answers, information, and results for the membership especially during the COVID crisis.
PA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION
CAREER RECOGNITION AWARD
Charles Guttenplan, AICP

Charles Guttenplan, AICP started his professional planning career in 1973 when he joined the staff of the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) and served for 14 years, followed by nearly three years in Lower Merion Township, and then 21 years as a land planning consultant for The Waetzman Planning Group. There he served as a land planning consultant with most of his time devoted to municipal clients in Southeastern Pennsylvania, chiefly Whitemarsh Township in Montgomery County. He currently teaches courses for the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute (PMPEI) and sits on their board. He has also been an adjunct planning instructor and served on the planning commission in Hatfield Township, in North Wales Borough, and was a founding member and chair of their Historical Architectural Review Board.

SPECIAL SERVICE RECOGNITION
DCED PEER Consultant, John Eller

John Eller has served as a consultant in police and public safety services since 1988. In 2022, he decided to retire. After a distinguished career as a police chief, an instructor at numerous police academies, and many years of service to the Department of Community and Economic Development by advising countless municipalities on public safety efficiencies, we offer him both our gratitude and our best wishes for the future.
THE FOREMAN AWARD FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

Michael Foreman

You can’t have been in public service in Western Pennsylvania, or the entire commonwealth for that matter, over the past nearly 40 years and not known Michael Foreman. It is fitting that an award be named for this consummate public servant, and it is appropriate that he is its first recipient.

Since the early 1980s when he first started with the Office of City Comptroller in Pittsburgh, to his time with the Bureau of Local Government Services of the Pennsylvania Department of Community Affairs in the Southwest Regional Office, to the merger which created the current Department in 1996, Foreman has been there providing valuable hands-on technical assistance services to local municipal elected and appointed officials; he has provided sound advice and assistance on general government, financial, and human resources management, and administration, municipal taxation, collective bargaining, intergovernmental cooperation, boundary change, home rule, and delivery of municipal services. Foreman’s presence has always been as the calm and experienced giver of help and assistance and advice, and he has prided himself on being the helpful and knowledgeable public servant.

For all the time he has given to his job and to the communities with whom he has worked, DCED is grateful, and congratulates him on both his success and this moment of recognition. DCED also wishes Foreman well in retirement and wants him to know that his legacy of solid public service is safe.
If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.

— John Quincy Adams
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