



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 17, 2014

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Allegheny County Recipient of Two Governor's Awards for Excellence

PITTSBURGH – Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald announced today that Allegheny County and the Allegheny County Economic Development Department were recognized earlier this week as recipients of the Governor's Award for Local Government Excellence in the categories of information technology and promoting community/economic revitalization. The awards were presented at a ceremony in Harrisburg on April 15, 2014.

"In Allegheny County, we have the opportunity to see the great work and recognize the initiatives that our departments and employees are working on each day. It is particularly rewarding to have those efforts acknowledged at the state level," said County Executive Fitzgerald. "The Allegheny County Jail Collaborative and the Allegheny Vacant Property Recovery Program are just two examples of innovative and creative programs that allow us to provide services and benefits that assist all of our residents."

The Information Technology award was presented to the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative, a partnership of the President Judge of the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas, Warden of the Jail, and the Directors of the Health Department and Human Services Department. In 2010, the Collaborative began designing an Information Technology application that would track information across the jail, human services, courts and 15 providers, to track referrals and program outcomes at the client and service levels. The Collaborative is generating key information to help judges make informed parole decisions and to help the Collaborative leaders make key programmatic decisions. Accepting on behalf of the County was Deputy Warden LaToya Warren and Human Services Deputy Director of the Office of Administrative & Information Management Services, Randy Brockington.

"The Fifth Judicial District is proud to be recognized as a partner in this technological endeavor which supports evidence-based decisions in evaluating re-entry programs and enhancing public safety for our community," said President Judge Jeffrey A. Manning.

The Promoting Community/Economic Revitalization award was presented to the Allegheny Vacant Property Recovery Program. The program acquires vacant, blighted properties on behalf of applicants who have developed a concrete reuse plan and demonstrated the capacity to implement it. Over the past five years, the program has acquired more than 200 blighted properties for County residents, community groups, local businesses and private and nonprofit developers. The acquiring entities have restored the properties to productive reuse as side yards, public parks, parking to support main business districts and affordable housing, among other uses. Accepting on behalf of the County was the Manager of Housing Development, Cassandra Collinge.

"I'm very proud of the work that the Allegheny Vacant Property Recovery Program has done, and the assistance that we have provided to many communities and organizations within the County," said Allegheny County Economic Development Director Dennis Davin. "The Local Government Excellence Award is recognition of the employees of the Department and the effort and time that they put into making the program work. It is quite an honor."

The Governor's Awards for Local Government Excellence are presented annually to communities and individuals by the Governor's Center for Local Government Services, an office within the Department of Community & Economic Development that works to assist Pennsylvania's 2,562 local governments. Other honorees from Allegheny County included Chairman Michael Dennehy, Jr., Pine Township Board of Supervisors and President David Barie, Reserve Township Board of Commissioners. Both were recognized for outstanding service to their communities and local government associations.

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