



WISCONSIN POLICY FORUM

IMPARTIAL RESEARCH FOR INFORMED DEBATE



28TH ANNUAL

SALUTE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH, 2020

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ABOUT THE SALUTE

The Salute to Local Government is one of the few events in our state that highlights the value of public sector performance and the benefits that public sector innovation and excellence bring to taxpayers and our communities. This event reflects the Forum's strong belief that good government is worth celebrating, and that there are many examples of ingenuity and outstanding performance that need to be recognized. While the pandemic required that we reimagine this event, it's more important than ever to recognize local governments, school districts, and individual public sector employees who are excelling in these challenging times.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

DAVID CROWLEY

Milwaukee County Executive



AWARD JUDGES

SARAH DIEDRICK-KASDORF
Wisconsin Counties Association

SHERI KRAUSE
Wisconsin Association of School
Boards

DAN MCCARTHY
Zilber, Ltd.

KENNETH MUNSON
Community Care, Inc.

JOAN PRINCE
University of Wisconsin-
Milwaukee

CLAIRE SILVERMAN
League of Wisconsin
Municipalities

ROBERT WHITAKER
North Shore Fire Department

SAM LEICHTLING
City of Milwaukee

JANET SCHUTZ NELSON
Milwaukee County (*ret.*)

AWARD RECIPIENTS

INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO PROBLEM SOLVING

VILLAGE OF PALMYRA

PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT

What if you called 911 and nobody came? As in many communities, this was a very real concern for the citizens of Palmyra. The village's solution was to create a Public Safety Department employing full-time public safety officers cross-trained in law enforcement, firefighting and EMS to supplement paid, on-call Fire Rescue responders. The department implemented strategies that enhanced teamwork and improved employee retention, leading to greatly improved outcomes within budgetary limitations - and providing a framework that could be emulated by other rural communities.



Accepting award: James Small, *Chief of Police & Public Safety Director, Village of Palmyra*

INNOVATIVE USE OF DATA OR TECHNOLOGY

CITY OF JANESVILLE

PARK PLACE PERFORMS

In January 2020, the City of Janesville relaunched its online performance dashboard, Park Place Performs! This tool was originally launched in January 2017 to enable public and city officials to track progress of the city's strategic goals. In the month following the site's relaunch, the site page views totaled 2,277 - about a 1,200% increase from the same period in 2019. Park Place Performs increases accountability and transparency of the City of Janesville for the benefit of the community.



Accepting award: Maggie Darr, *Assistant to the City Manager, City of Janesville*

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION WASHINGTON COUNTY

BARTON SCHOOL APARTMENTS

In 2012, Washington County's Brownfield Site Redevelopment Program began its objective of transforming formerly contaminated and unused industrial sites into new and vibrant economic developments. The program includes a collaboration of five municipalities with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Economic Development Washington County. The Barton School Apartments project in West Bend is a recent beneficiary of this program. It consists of 22 historically-preserved apartments renovated from the former 1924 Barton Elementary School building, and 18 townhomes constructed on the former school playground.

Accepting award: Josh Schoemann, *Washington County Executive*

HONORABLE MENTION: Milwaukee County and its 19 municipalities - Milwaukee County Unified Emergency Operations Center



PUBLIC-PRIVATE COOPERATION

CITY OF MILWAUKEE DEPARTMENT OF CITY DEVELOPMENT & WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

MILWAUKEE EMPLOYMENT/RENOVATION INITIATIVE (MERI)

In the wake of unrest in Milwaukee's Sherman Park neighborhood in August 2016, elected officials and citizens alike called for swift action to address problems such as poor housing and lack of jobs. A partnership between state and city officials and six private developers created the MERI. This initiative invested \$7.9 million in over 100 tax-foreclosed properties, well above the original goal of \$1 million. Further, 33,000 hours of work were performed by city residents, many of whom later received permanent employment.

Accepting award: Amy Turim, *Real Estate Development Services Manager for the City of Milwaukee*



EFFECTIVE RESPONSE TO COVID-19

CITY OF MADISON

PUBLIC HEALTH & CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

The City of Madison emerged as a model, a leader, and a success story during this difficult time, in close partnership with Dane County, State of Wisconsin, UW-Madison, the medical community, Wisconsin National Guard, and other stakeholders. Extensive COVID-19 public health metrics were developed and free and fair elections were held in the midst of this dangerous pandemic.

Accepting award: Satya Rhodes-Conway, *City of Madison Mayor*

HONORABLE MENTION: City of New Richmond - NR Strong



EXCELLENCE UNDER PRESSURE

TJ MCCRAY

DIRECTOR OF INSTRUCTIONAL AND LIBRARY MEDIA SERVICES, MADISON METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

When schools shut down on short notice due to COVID-19, TJ McCray worked to transform Wisconsin's second largest school district - with over 27,000 students and 3,000 employees - into a virtual one. That challenge included purchasing and distributing 1,800 hotspots with six-month data plans so children without home internet had equal access to virtual learning opportunities. He also created professional development for teachers to help them adapt to this new way of teaching.



JEAN B. TYLER LEADER OF THE FUTURE AWARD

ABBY ATTOUN

**DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
CITY OF MIDDLETON**

Abby Attoun leads the Department of Planning & Community Development for the City of Middleton. Thirteen years ago she started with the City as a planner, and over that time her passion, diverse interests, and collaborative approach to work and community engagement has resulted in her fingerprints being on many transformative projects, and all well before her 40th birthday. Today, she continues to lead a variety of key city initiatives involving planning, community and economic development, affordable housing, public art and sustainability.

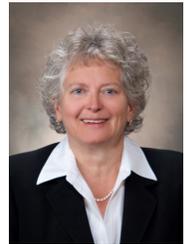


JAMES R. RYAN LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

DIANNE ROBERTSON

**RETIRED ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK/TREASURER
VILLAGE OF THIENSVILLE**

Perhaps the greatest accomplishment over Dianne's 45-year career was to make flooding a thing of the past in this historic community. Thiensville has erected a bridge named "Dianne's Bridge" in her honor and she has donated a bench in her late husband's memory to mark the area. In addition, Thiensville entered uncharted territory for most municipalities these days by becoming debt-free in 2007 and remained debt-free through her retirement.



NORMAN N. GILL AWARD FOR INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE

DALE PETERS

**RETIRED CITY MANAGER
CITY OF EAU CLAIRE**

It's a testament to the collaborative, results-oriented leadership style of Eau Claire City Manager Dale Peters that area businesses and community leaders breathed a collective sigh of relief this past spring when he postponed his May retirement until the end of the COVID-19 crisis. A city employee since 1989, he's developed a well-earned reputation for effective and innovative management.



THANK YOU, SPONSORS!

BADER PHILANTHROPIES, INC.

Milwaukee-based Bader Philanthropies, Inc., strives to be a philanthropic leader in improving the quality of life of the diverse communities in which it works. The organization funds innovative projects and programs, convenes partners, and shares knowledge to affect emerging issues in a number of areas, including city youth, workforce development, and Alzheimer's and aging. Since its founding in 1992 as the Helen Bader Foundation, the organization has committed more than \$350 million in grants and program-related investments, such as loans and equity investments to advance its charitable mission.

BAKER TILLY

Baker Tilly is a leading advisory, tax and assurance firm with a specialized public sector and municipal advisory practice whose dedicated professionals guide governmental clients through an ever-changing landscape. Backed by 90 years of industry service and experience working with more than 1,000 public sector organizations, our insightful strategies and customized solutions help clients win today, anticipate tomorrow and face the future, together. For more information, visit bakertilly.com.

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EHLERS

A pioneer in municipal advisory services since 1955, Ehlers helps clients build strong, vibrant and sustainable communities by delivering independent, integrated advice across all areas of public finance. We work with more than 1,500 local governments, schools, and public agencies across five states, placing our clients' needs and best interests at the center of everything we do.

HERB KOHL PHILANTHROPIES

Herb Kohl Philanthropies is a private foundation that operates as one entity supporting several initiatives all aimed at improving the economic opportunity and quality of life for the people of Milwaukee and Wisconsin. The foundation's passion and commitment emphasize investments in education. Highlights include support for collaborations including M-cubed, Milwaukee Succeeds, and City Forward Collective, funding for classroom projects designed by and in support of Wisconsin teachers, over \$25.2 million in awards to Wisconsin educators, students, and schools, a \$10 million initiative to expand the UW Madison LaFollete School of Public Affairs, and annual Learning journeys to Washington DC for Wisconsin students.

LEAGUE OF WISCONSIN MUNICIPALITIES

The League of Wisconsin Municipalities works to help Wisconsin's cities and villages do their job. We advocate on behalf of cities and villages, working with the governor and legislators to make sure municipalities have the tools needed to serve local citizens. The League also provides extensive legal information and training opportunities for both elected and appointed municipal officials. The League partnered with the Wisconsin Policy Forum to produce "Dollars and Sense," an important research report that will form the basis for an historic conversation about how local government is funded in Wisconsin.

NORTHWESTERN MUTUAL

Northwestern Mutual has been helping families and businesses achieve financial security for over 160 years. Northwestern Mutual and its subsidiaries offer a comprehensive approach to financial security solutions including: life insurance, long-term care insurance, disability income insurance, annuities, life insurance with long-term care benefits, investment products, and advisory products and services. With \$265 billion in assets and more than \$1.7 trillion worth of life insurance protection in force, Northwestern Mutual delivers financial security to 4.5 million people through our financial representatives nationwide.

POTAWATOMI HOTEL & CASINO

Potawatomi Hotel & Casino has a long tradition of investing in Milwaukee's Menomonee Valley. For three decades, the property has provided the area with the best in entertainment; strong partnerships with local and regional vendors as well as the public sector; and family-supporting jobs to thousands of area residents. Potawatomi's social responsibility efforts include a commitment to responsible gaming; contributing \$1 million annually to area non-profit organizations; and revenue sharing with the City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County and the State of Wisconsin to help reduce the tax burden for area citizens.

QUARLES & BRADY LLP

Quarles & Brady, founded in 1892, is a full-service AmLaw 200 firm with approximately 475 attorneys offering an array of legal services to clients ranging from individuals to small entrepreneurial businesses to Fortune 100 companies. The firm has practice focuses in health care and life sciences, business law, labor and employment, real estate, intellectual property, data privacy and security, and complex litigation. Its 10 U.S. offices are in Chicago, Indianapolis, Madison, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Naples, Phoenix, Tampa, Tucson and Washington, D.C. Additional information can be found at quarles.com, as well as on Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Facebook.

VEOLIA NORTH AMERICA / VEOLIA WATER MILWAUKEE

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WE ENERGIES

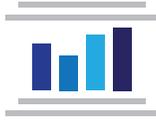
We Energies serves more than 1.61 million electric customers and 1.1 million natural gas customers in Wisconsin and is committed to delivering world-class reliability and the very best customer care anywhere. We Energies is a utility subsidiary of WEC Energy Group Inc. one of the nation's premier energy companies. Visit We Energies at we-energies.com



We are very grateful to TankThink for producing the video vignettes and the virtual event.

ABOUT TANKTHINK

TankThink is a media production company dedicated to strengthening cultural ecosystems. The Milwaukee-based company grew from the freelance practice of multimedia artist Wes Tank, who built his name locally by creating engaging content related to the arts, education, health, and social justice. In the face of the pandemic shutdown, Wes turned to YouTube, creating the “Dr. Seuss Raps over Dr. Dre beats” series, which went viral, racking up over 10 million views and global recognition. With this unexpected attention, Tank realized his mission could have a wider reach and enlisted award-winning documentary filmmaker Ryan Sarnowski to help grow the business and develop new projects. Recognizing the demand for high quality literary content for young people, TankThink launched StoryRaps on Kidoodle TV with the hopes of building accessible, fun, positive entertainment for families. TankThink’s work has been featured in Oprah Magazine, CNN.com, Upworthy, The Today Show Australia and Variety Magazine.



WISCONSIN

POLICY FORUM

Impartial research for informed debate

The Wisconsin Policy Forum is a statewide nonpartisan, independent policy research organization with offices in Milwaukee and Madison. We provide informed analysis of critical policy issues affecting local governments, school districts, and the state of Wisconsin. Our research and facilitation activities encourage elected officials and community leaders to find effective, data-driven solutions to pressing policy challenges, and promote productive discussion among the public and private sectors.

We are supported by hundreds of corporations, nonprofits, local governments, school districts, and individuals. Our membership includes political, business, and civic leaders in our community.

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