



## Application process opens for Richard H. Driehaus Courthouse Initiative Grants

On March 7, 2009, philanthropist Richard Driehaus announced a four-year, \$1 million commitment to Landmarks Illinois to establish a grant program that assists communities throughout Illinois in restoring their historic county courthouses.

"Richard Driehaus is a long-time leader in the historic preservation movement," said Jim Peters, President of Landmarks Illinois. "We are honored to accept his gift and partnership with Landmarks Illinois to help preserve many of our state's greatest works of public architecture — the County Courthouse."

This matching grant program was designed to help fund the restoration of critical courthouse features, such as clocks, bell towers, cupolas, and ornament, as well as to support the installation of cutting-edge and energy-efficient exterior lighting.

Eligible beneficiaries are active or former courthouses that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places or determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places with the intention of becoming listed. Applicants must be not-for-profit organizations or governmental bodies.

The size of the grant will range from \$35,000 to \$80,000 based on the need of the eligible applicant and will be awarded on a 1:1 matching basis. Half of the funding will be given at the midway point of the project and the remainder will be paid out at the conclusion of the project.

Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact Suzanne Germann, Director of Grants and Easements, at [GermannS@lpci.org](mailto:GermannS@lpci.org) or call (312) 922-1742 ext. 225.

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## New kidney gives county commissioner boost of health

by Charlie Ban, NACo Staff Writer

Cook County Commissioner Robert Steele's malfunctioning kidneys took their toll over the years. The fluid trapped in his body made movement a chore and greatly limited him. Two years of dialysis treatments drained his schedule faster than it drained his body. His 27-year struggle with Type 2 diabetes was exhausting him.

"I was carrying around 50 pounds of useless fluid," he said. "I couldn't drive myself around, and I might be able to do more than one event a day if I got lucky. It wasn't the way I wanted to represent my district."

That all changed in November after his sister, Joyce Mosely, donated one of her kidneys to Steele. Doctors tested his six siblings for a match, and on the last try found one in Joyce.

"I was lucky that I had my family nearby," said Steele, 47, a Chicago native. "So many people who live in Cook County don't have local family; that's just the nature of a city like Chicago."

That experience made Steele aware of the need for organ donation program awareness. Illinois currently has more than 5,000 people on its organ donation waiting list, and Steele sees that as an opportunity to make Chicago, and Cook County in general, a hotbed for organ matchups, drawing specifically from Wisconsin and Indiana.

"The best thing people can do is get on a donor list and have themselves screened," he said. "That could be for just their blood type or their bone marrow, because those registries work wonders."

Also, signing up as an organ donor can benefit many, because organs from one person can go to up to seven people on transplant lists.

"That's the opportunity to be a real hero," Steele said. "Either registering as an organ donor or even doing a live donation. It's scary to do that — give up a part of yourself or pledge to do so when you die — but it can make a difference for a lot of people. I hope to use my public profile to show what an organ donation can do for recipients' quality of life."

Read more inside about how Cook County is promoting organ and tissue donor awareness.



Cook County, Ill. Commissioner Robert Steele and his sister, Joyce Mosely, whose kidney donation relieved his body of years of Type 2 diabetes and kidney failure, and has allowed him to resume an aggressive work schedule. Photo courtesy of Robert Steele.

## NLC report offers lessons in resilience

Ways in which cities and counties are successfully responding to the continuing waves of home mortgage foreclosures

by James Brooks

The foreclosure crisis is an opportunity to reorient housing strategies to focus on creating and supporting neighborhoods that offer residents an attractive place to live. Further, the neighborhoods that can be expected to thrive and grow will have a diversity of housing types that meet the needs of people at different life stages and income ranges, solid anchor institutions, such as schools, businesses or public facilities and access to employment.

These are some of the insights developed by a group of research scholars, local elected officials and housing practitioners who jointly examined home mortgage foreclosures in six metropolitan regions as part of a National League of Cities (NLC) project. The Building Resilient Regions Network, funded by the MacArthur Foundation through the University of California at Berkeley, is developing applied knowledge about how regions can be resilient in the face of significant challenges, such as foreclosures, rapid immigration and economic restructuring.

The new NLC Research Report, "Resilience in the Face of Foreclosures: Lessons from Local and Regional Practice," highlights the ways in which cities and counties, and their elected local leaders, are successfully responding to the continuing waves of home mortgage foreclosures, vacant properties and destabilized neighborhoods. Covering six metropolitan areas, St. Louis, Atlanta, Chicago, Tampa-St. Petersburg, Fla., Cleveland and Riverside-San Bernardino, Calif., the report offers a summary of significant strategies that not only help mitigate the foreclosure challenge but also are setting the stage for the next set of initiatives designed to revitalize the neighborhoods that have been adversely impacted.

The research report reflects the successes, challenges and capacity development needs of the six metropolitan regions, as they strive to combat the foreclosure crisis and develop resilient neighborhoods. As seen through the eyes of the six regions, the foreclosure crisis was multi-faceted.



## Message from the ICA President

by Ruth Anne Tobias, DeKalb County Vice-Chair



I hope best wishes to you all for a successful year in 2011. I hope that this finds the fiscal crises we are all facing easing up, and that you all are able to meet the service and fiscal goals you've set without losing staff. Many citizens do not realize just what it is that county government does for them, except collect property taxes! Ninety percent of these taxes do not even go to county government, but to schools, libraries, and cities. We just get the hard work of sending out the notices and collecting the funds to distribute.

The new President of the National Association of Counties (NACo), Glen Whitley from Tarrant County, Texas outside Dallas, has a campaign initiative for the year, 'County Government Works'. We need to tell our constituents and public officials at other levels of government, as well as our local businesses, just what it is we do

and how well we do it. Counties are an administrative arm of the state, doing things locally more efficiently than the state can do them. We keep the public's records, ensure public safety, build roads and bridges to provide safe transport and encourage productivity and commerce, mind the public health, and conduct elections, along with a myriad of other services. We use technology to innovate and provide faster, better services, and we are leaders in our communities, often making very difficult decisions not everyone appreciates. We do what we do because we care for our communities. We will try to promote this message throughout Illinois, and hope that we can get the word out.

One other thing that Illinois Counties Association is doing for our communities is providing 12 scholarships to entering freshmen in Illinois to assist with some of those first year expenses. Students need to apply online at [www.illinoiscountiesassociation.org](http://www.illinoiscountiesassociation.org), and get a letter from someone in local government. We'll do the rest. Last year we gave six \$1,000 scholarships to students in Effingham, Peoria, Washington, and Will counties. We've expanded it this year and hope you can help us promote the program. We like to reward hard-working students and help promote the idea that smart is cool!

Finally, NACo has a new member initiative whereby all counties not currently members of NACo will have a paid membership from a special fund for one year. That means you can take advantage of the opportunities that being a NACo member affords your county. Go to [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org) and check it out! There is a free prescription drug discount card offer, a low-cost dental participation program, many free data resources with your membership, and lots of training and information opportunities with NACo webinars on current topics of great import to county government. Please take note of the advantages this membership will offer you and see for yourself. It would be wonderful if Illinois could stay a 100% member state after this year.

## Resilience in the face of foreclosures

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Assessing the true nature of the problem is difficult due to a lack of accessible and reliable data. Moreover, the problem tends to shift every few months, and local actors constantly must adjust priorities.

Leadership at the local level is often present and visible.

For example, city and county elected officials in Riverside and San Bernardino acted quickly and collaborated effectively as the crisis escalated. In St. Louis, the Federal Reserve played a key role in forming the Metro Foreclosure Intervention Task Force, and a local television station bolsters local foreclosure prevention efforts with public service announcements about the availability of foreclosure counseling services.

Nonetheless, the local capacity, be it regional coordinating mechanisms or nonprofit housing and community development resources, is lacking in some regions. Ultimately, this lack of capacity makes it difficult to redirect resources or mobilize new ones and also to make the case for support from the private sector or from higher levels of government.

NLC will continue its efforts to expand the knowledge base developed under the first phase of this project. The second part of this project will begin on March 1. The new work, also funded by the MacArthur Foundation, will look beyond the limited matters of housing and foreclosures and consider the recovery of neighborhoods and communities.

For further information about NLC's work on housing, neighborhoods and community development, contact the author at (202) 626-3163 or [brooks@nlc.org](mailto:brooks@nlc.org). The full report can be downloaded from the Housing topics page of the NLC website at [www.nlc.org](http://www.nlc.org).



# A SMILE IS

*a curve that sets everything straight.*

The National Association of Counties (NACo) has launched a new Dental Discount Card Program to help uninsured and underinsured residents in member counties. NACo is partnering with Careington, Inc. to provide the program. With this program, residents of NACo member counties will experience significant savings on dental exams, cleanings, x-rays, braces, dentures, crowns, root canals, cosmetic procedures and more. This affordable plan starts at \$6.95 per month or \$59 per year for individuals.





**A COST-EFFECTIVE WAY FOR SENIORS AND RETIREES TO MEET THEIR DENTAL NEEDS.**

This plan is not insurance. The NACo Dental Discount Card Program is designed to complement health insurance plans or work in conjunction with health savings accounts, flexible spending accounts and health reimbursement arrangements.

For more information contact Andrew Goldschmidt at 202/942-4221.

**NACo DENTAL DISCOUNT PROGRAM**

- Save 5% to 50% on dental procedures including routine oral exams, cleaning, dentures, crowns and more
- Discounts are available at the time of service
- Everyone is accepted
- Unlimited program usage, with no administrative forms to file
- Program can include all family members



## Cook County promotes organ and tissue donation awareness

Commissioner Robert Steele works to educate residents about preventative care and health education



Pictured from left: Gift of Hope Community Affairs Director Jack Lynch, Joyce Mosely, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, Commissioner Robert Steele, and Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White.

Cook County Commissioner Robert Steele in a partnership with Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, Secretary of State Jesse White and the Cook County Board of Commissioners are recognizing the Gift of Hope Organ and Tissue Donor Network and Donate Life Illinois for their work to promote awareness of organ and tissue donations.

The Cook County Board approved a proclamation to recognize Jan. 4, 2011 as Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Day in Cook County.

Preckwinkle said it's important to make opportunities to promote organ and tissue donations.

"More than 5,000 people here in Illinois are waiting right now life-saving organ transplants. We all know someone who has been touched by this issue. It's an honor to be able to salute the people at Gift of Hope Organ and Tissue Donor Network and Donate Life Illinois who are working day in and day out to coordinate and promote organ donations. Becoming an organ donor is an important personal commitment that saves tens of thousands of lives every year," she said.

Steele is a recent recipient of an organ donation. In November 2010, he received a kidney his sister, Joyce Mosely donated during a successful procedure. Steele said his surgery and his sister's generosity has helped him make a new commitment to promote education about organ donation in Cook County.

"This experience has taught me the importance of increasing awareness about preventative health care and education on illnesses that so often afflict members of our community. More importantly I would like to encourage people to learn more about becoming living organ donors and/or organ donors," he said.

Minorities make up more than half of the patients on the Organ/Tissue Donor Registry.

White said it's important for African-American leaders to promote increased awareness of organ and tissue donations. African-Americans, as a group, are twice as likely to suffer from diabetes and hypertension, both of

which can lead to the need for an organ transplant if not properly treated.

"I commend Cook County President Toni Preckwinkle, Cook County Commissioner Robert Steele, and the Cook County Board for helping to bring awareness to the issue of organ and tissue donation," said Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White, who administers the state's Organ/Tissue Donor Registry. "Illinois has one of the largest organ and tissue donor registries in the nation with over 5.5 million, but sadly, each year, more than 300 lives are lost due to the lack of organs. Currently there are almost 5,000 people waiting for life-saving organs. You can help by signing up to become an organ and tissue donor at [www.LifeGoesOn.com](http://www.LifeGoesOn.com). By joining the registry, many people can get the second chance that Commissioner Steele was fortunate enough to receive."

**"I commend Cook County President Toni Preckwinkle, Cook County Commissioner Robert Steele, and the Cook County Board for helping to bring awareness to the issue of organ and tissue donation. Currently there are almost 5,000 people waiting for life saving organs." – Secretary of State Jesse White**



Under White's leadership, Illinois has built one of the nation's largest donor registries with more than 5.5 million participants.

White said donating blood is one simple way people can help. More than 4.5 million lives are saved each year through blood transfusions and 40,000 pints of blood are used daily in the United States.

"These types of organ transplants we hear about, they cannot happen without blood donations so we try to remind people about how donating blood is something they should try to do regularly," White said.

Gift of Hope Organ and Tissue Donor Network is a federally designated not-for-profit organ procurement organization that coordinates organ and tissue donations and services to families of donors in the northern portion of Illinois and northwest Indiana. Gift of Hope works with 183 hospitals in educating some 11.7 million residents in their service area about donations and how to register as organ and/or tissue donors.

Donate Life Illinois is a coalition of donation-related agencies responsible for organ, tissue, eye, blood and marrow donation, education and organ/tissue donor registration.

Steele discussed his experiences and his sponsorship of the resolution at a press conference held at the County Building in January. He was joined by Preckwinkle, White and Dr. Joseph Levanthal, M.D. PHD, Director of Living Donor Kidney Transplant, Program Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Jackie Lynch, Gift of Hope Organ and Tissue Donor Network; and Dr. Terry Mason, Cook County Bureau of Health Services.

The resolution was presented to Jackie Lynch of Gift of Hope Organ and Tissue Donor Network at the board meeting on January 4, 2011.

For more information about Cook County Organ and Tissue Awareness Day or for a copy of the resolution contact Patrick Corcoran, Special Assistant to the Public Affairs Director, at 312-603-2821 or Melva Brownlee, Chief of Staff to Commissioner Steele, at 312-603-3019.

More than 108,000 people  
are waiting for lifesaving transplants  
nationwide.

Our mission is simple:  
to save and  
enhance the lives of as many people  
as possible through  
organ and tissue donation.

[www.giftofhope.org](http://www.giftofhope.org)



are **YOU** registered to be  
an organ/tissue donor ?

Join the registry:

Visit [www.LifeGoesOn.com](http://www.LifeGoesOn.com)

Complete and mail a registration card

Call 800-210-2106

Visit any Driver Services facility

it's up to  
**YOU**

[www.LifeGoesOn.com](http://www.LifeGoesOn.com)

Jesse White • Secretary of State

## McHenry County ribbon cutting ceremony with Congressman Manzullo



Water Resources Manager Cassandra McKinney, Congressman Don Manzullo, and County Board Chairman Ken Koehler with the McHenry County Groundwater Taskforce.

The McHenry County Groundwater Taskforce hosted U.S. Representative Don Manzullo (16th District) for a ribbon cutting ceremony in recognition of his support for the McHenry County Groundwater Protection Program. With Congressman Manzullo's support, McHenry County received \$590,000 with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to install a County-wide Observation Well Network consisting of 27 wells. Also, in 2010, McHenry County received a \$280,000 grant with the United States Geological Service to: install real-time data transmitters on 40 observation wells; to install 2 Stream Gauges in the Kishwaukee River Watershed; and to conduct a water quality analysis of each observation well County-wide for basic water chemistry in September.

"Over the past three years, the McHenry County Division of Water Resources, with the support of Congressman Don Manzullo and the McHenry County Board, has been actively developing a comprehensive Groundwater Protection Program in an effort to better understand our finite water supply," stated McHenry County Board Chairman Ken Koehler during the ceremony. "McHenry County is 100% dependent on groundwater for all of our water resources with no other alternatives available."

"It is going to take every resident, business and local government working collectively to ensure that we have a sustainable and safe water supply," continued Chairman Koehler, "everyone needs to be a part of the solution because every drop counts."

The McHenry County Groundwater Protection Taskforce was formed in 2007 to address the water quality and quantity concerns in McHenry County. Over the past three years, the Taskforce has developed the Water Resources Action Plan and the comprehensive Groundwater Research Program, which is now available at [www.mchenryh2o.com](http://www.mchenryh2o.com).

For more information on McHenry County's efforts in Groundwater Protection, contact Cassandra McKinney at (815) 334-4216 or visit the Groundwater Resources website at [www.mchenryh2o.com](http://www.mchenryh2o.com).

## NACo Prescription Drug Card FREE to your County and your residents



Counties across the country are providing valuable savings for their residents through NACo's Prescription Discount Card Program.

### Is your county?

The prescription drug cards are free to NACo member counties and their residents. More than \$355 million has been saved by consumers in the past six years.

If your county is not one of the 1,375 counties participating in the program, get started today.

**NACo** National Association of Counties  
The Voice of America's Counties

## DuPage County switches to e-quotes

As of Jan. 1, purchases greater than \$5,000 but less than the \$15,000 bidding limit, will be procured utilizing e-quotes (electronic quoting). This process will promote enhanced transparency and competition in the purchasing process and encourage greater local vendor participation. "It is my intent to increase transparency and efficiency in County processes and I'm pleased the Finance Dept. has taken this step to promote increased accountability in procuring County services," said Dan Cronin, DuPage County Board Chairman.

E-quoting will be done online through the Onvia system that the County currently uses for bidding. Vendors can register free for automatic notification of both County quote and bid requests. All bidders will now be able to see the bids of their competitors online in real time. This new process will increase County efficiency in the procurement process in a professional manner consistent with the County's overall goal of providing quality services at the optimal cost.

## Grant pays county back for developing preserve

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources sent Crawford County a check for \$191,400. The money comes from a grant and reimburses the county for funds spent to develop the Crawford County Forest Preserve. Dr. Gus and Eula Schmidt donated the property to the county in 1991 to be used for recreational purposes. The property officially opened to the public last August and sports a walking path, fishing pond and picnic shelter. More is planned for the site including a bike trail and potentially a meeting hall.

For more information contact Andrew Goldschmidt at 202/942-4221.



## Will County creates green team Committee to steer conservation efforts countywide

To further its green mission, Will County is creating a team that will offer ideas and policy recommendations to departments countywide about energy efficiency and conservation-oriented practices. The green team will be under the Will County Executive's office in the newly formed Resource Recovery and Energy Division of the Land Use Department. The team will work with the various county departments and elected officials to establish protocol to reduce energy use, waste disposal, and water consumption.

"We are leading by example," said Will County Executive Larry Walsh. "The creation of this team is an important part of continuing our green efforts. This team will ensure efficiency and sustainability practices are consistent throughout county operations."

The team plans to meet monthly and will collectively "brainstorm" ideas for saving energy and recycling. Last summer, the County received a \$3 million grant from the Department of Energy to finance a gas-to-energy plant at the County-owned landfill, a green roof on the County Office Building and an extensive retrofit program of county office buildings. According to Mike Miglorini, maintenance director, the County is also making strides in reducing energy costs by installing a "cool roof" on the Court annex building, replacing windows in the County Office building and the Court Annex building, and replacing HVAC unit at the county-owned Sunny Hill nursing home.

The initial task of the green team was to ask all the members to provide information regarding the size of their respective buildings, the year built, the number of daytime employees, and the number of computers and copy machines. This information will be instrumental in evaluating energy needs and potential cost saving measures. Methods of saving energy will be published on the Website [www.willcountygreen.com](http://www.willcountygreen.com).

## EPA approves disposal of waste at Southern Illinois landfill

Laboratory results from air samples, and from samples of the solidified waste that caused significant odor problems at the Southern Illinois Regional Landfill in December, have been found to contain no contaminants at levels of concern.

Discussions between the operator of the landfill, Jackson County officials and the Illinois EPA have concluded that the landfill can proceed to prepare and implement a work-plan to safely unearth the waste and move it into the landfill for final disposal. Jackson County Health Department will be present to oversee the process.

The wastes generated by Tri Rinse, St. Louis, and delivered to the landfill by Illinois Environmental, Caseyville were determined to be the source of strong odors that lead to complaints several miles from the landfill. The odors caused some nearby residents to leave their homes, and the temporary closure of Highway 149 between Murphysboro and DeSoto.

Jackson County Sheriff's Department, DeSoto Township Fire Protection District, Jackson County Ambulance Service, Jackson County Emergency Management Agency, Jackson County Health Department, and the Illinois EPA Emergency Response Unit all responded to the incident.

## Lake County Board Member explores national justice and public safety priorities



Audrey Nixon  
Lake County Board

Lake County Board Member Audrey Nixon (Dist. 14), recently attended the 2011 National Association of Counties (NACo) Annual Justice and Public Safety Symposium on behalf of Lake County. Nixon discussed critical justice and public safety priorities with some of the nation's foremost public safety experts and learned how county officials can best shape federal policies to enhance services for Lake County residents.

Nixon is the Chair of Lake County's Law and Judicial Steering Committee, and also serves on NACo's Justice and Public Safety directly supports Lake County's Strategic Plan. One of the five strategic goals in this plan is to "Provide Public Safety", specifically to enhance the safety of residents through an integrated criminal justice system, including law enforcement and other programs that reduce crime, recidivism, domestic violence and substance abuse.

According to Nixon, "The NACo justice and public safety symposium was a great opportunity to hear directly from experts on many of the issues facing counties across the country. I look forward to bringing this information back to Lake County, and looking for ways to apply it in our local communities."

The theme of the symposium, hosted by Orleans Parish, La., was "Strengthening County, State, and Federal Partnerships for Disaster Recovery and Safely Lowering Jail and Prison Population." Issues discussed included: improving indigent defense and expanding access to justice, the cost effectiveness of bail reform, enhancing long term disaster recovery and emergency communications, the benefits of effective floodplain management, and the importance of intergovernmental partnership for lowering jail and prison populations, and juvenile detention.

To learn more about Lake County's Strategic Plan contact Audrey Nixon at [ANixon@lakecountyl.gov](mailto:ANixon@lakecountyl.gov) or visit [www.lakecountyl.gov](http://www.lakecountyl.gov).

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Simply pack your lunch a couple of times a week, and invest that savings toward retirement.

Lunch money saved per pay period	\$20
Pay periods per year	x 26
Total lunch money saved per year	<b>\$520</b>
Savings over 30 years with inflation	<b>\$29,164<sup>(A)</sup></b>
Invested over 30 years	<b>\$92,015<sup>(B)</sup></b>

Call 1-877-677-3678 to put a Retirement Specialist from Nationwide on your side or visit [NRSFORU.com](http://NRSFORU.com) to learn more about how to invest for your future with deferred compensation.



Investing involves risk, including possible loss of principal.

(A) Amount per pay adjusted for inflation by 4% annually.  
(B) Assumes an average annual return of 8%. Also assumes savings are invested at the end of each month. Total balance of \$92,015 does not reflect deductions for federal or state taxes. Withdrawals are taxed as ordinary income.  
This illustration is hypothetical and is not intended to serve as a projection of the investment results of any specific investment. Neither the accumulation or after-tax amount takes into consideration fees or expenses associated with any particular investment. Investment return is not guaranteed and will vary depending upon your investments and market experience.

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## LaSalle County Broadband Initiative receives \$17 million in federal and state funding

The LaSalle County Broadband Initiative (LCBI) coalition was thrilled to learn of the announcement by Governor Quinn of nearly \$17 million in state and federal funding for the LCBI. In a response to a federal and state effort to fund large "regional" projects, LCBI joined with six counties (JoDaviess, Carroll, Stephenson, Ogle, Whiteside, and Lee) in the Blackhawk Hills Network and the City of Rockford to submit a single grant application.

LCBI has evolved into a growing collaborative made up of representatives of Northern Illinois University (NIU), LaSalle County, North Central Illinois Council of Governments, and Illinois Valley College.

LCBI was inspired by the funding success of the DeKalb Advancement of Technology Authority (DATA) project application filed in the first Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) round. The DATA project extends into northern LaSalle County – connecting Leland and Earlville. LCBI is following the model established by neighboring DeKalb County – a public private partnership known as DeKalb Fiber Optic.

In September, 2010 NIU received \$46.1 million in federal dollars matched with nearly \$14 million in state capital funds and \$6.5 million in private funding for the project. The LaSalle County portion of the project will include installation of over 180 miles of fiber across the county. Forty-eight (48) strands of the fiber will be publicly owned. The grant funds will also be used to directly connect over 200 Community Anchor Institutions.



Northern Illinois University and LCBI coalition.

## Report on the 2010 NACo fall board meeting for Illinois Counties

*"It is an honor to represent Illinois on the NACo Board of Directors."*

**Gregg Goslin**  
Cook County Board  
Commissioner



On December 2 – 4, 2010, I attended NACo's fall Board of Directors meeting, along with my fellow Illinois representative DeKalb County Board Vice-Chair Ruth Ann Tobias. It was a substantive gathering and I am pleased to provide a concise briefing for you and your members. Please contact either of us for more information regarding any NACo Board issue. Again, it is an honor to represent Illinois on the NACo Board of Directors.

### Veterans and Military Service Task Force:

President Whitley announced the formation of a new NACo Task Force, to highlight county best practices and policies for our nation's military, veterans and their families. "We will find ways to welcome home our military and watch over their families while they are away," promised President Whitley. The Task Force will focus on four areas: physical and mental health; homelessness; employment; and justice.

**Green Government Initiative:** As Chairman of the Green Government Initiative, I reported on our charge to serve as a catalyst between local governments and the private sector to facilitate green government best practices, products and policies. We have several exciting events coming up, including two workshops at the Legislative Conference: RENEWABLE ENERGY FACILITY SITING and FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABILITY AFTER YEAR ONE.

### The Board Approved Key Legislative Priorities:

- Promote county fiscal relief and save jobs
- Save jobs by repealing the 3 percent tax with holding requirement passed by Congress
- Support job creation by enacting aviation and surface transportation program reauthorizations
- Support county health priorities
- Support job creation by making rural development a priority within the farm bill reauthorization
- Oppose job-killing unfunded mandates and preemptions.

### Other Board Actions:

- **Prescription Discount Card Program:** 1,371 counties are now participating, about 45% of the nation's counties. The program has saved more than \$338 million on more than 27 million prescriptions.
- **New Membership Effort:** The Board approved a Membership Initiative to encourage non-members to become active with NACo. Funded by CVS Caremark, the Initiative will pay the first year dues for a nonmember county as a one-time, introductory promotion.
- Like all of us, NACo is well aware of the impact the current economy has upon each county and its participation in the organization. Thus, its goals for 2011 include initiatives that bring additional value to members, and the Board approved a dues structure that does not increase membership dues for the fifth consecutive year.

## ICA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM OPENS!



### ELIGIBILITY & OBLIGATIONS

THE ICA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM IS OPEN TO ALL STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED INTO AN ACCREDITED COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY.

THE FOLLOWING SCHOLARSHIPS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED FOR THE 2011-2012 SCHOOL YEAR:

**ICA SCHOLARSHIPS**  
(available to freshmen students)  
Up to 10 scholarships at \$2,000 each

**CARL HANSEN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**  
(available to freshmen students who are residents of Cook County)  
1 scholarship at \$2,000

**JOHN STROGER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**  
(available only to master's level students and above)  
1 scholarship at \$3,000

APPLICANTS FOR ANY OF THE ABOVE SCHOLARSHIPS MUST MEET ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- Be a U.S. citizen and resident of the State of Illinois.
- Be enrolled full-time (minimum 12 credit hours) at an accredited college or university.
- Must continue the entire academic year without interruption.
- Have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
- Must demonstrate a financial need.
- Applicants may only submit one application per year.

### AWARDS

Awards are not renewable and are for one year only. ICA scholarship funds are intended to assist students with the cost of tuition and fees. No funds can be used for housing or any other incurred expenses. Funds must be used for the regular school year and cannot be used for summer courses.



FOR MORE INFORMATION OR ONLINE APPLICATION GO TO  
[www.illinoiscountiesassociation.org](http://www.illinoiscountiesassociation.org)

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE: MARCH 15, 2011**

Keep up with ICA online at  
[www.illinoiscountiesassociation.org](http://www.illinoiscountiesassociation.org)

# Serving Our Veterans, Armed Forces and Their Families



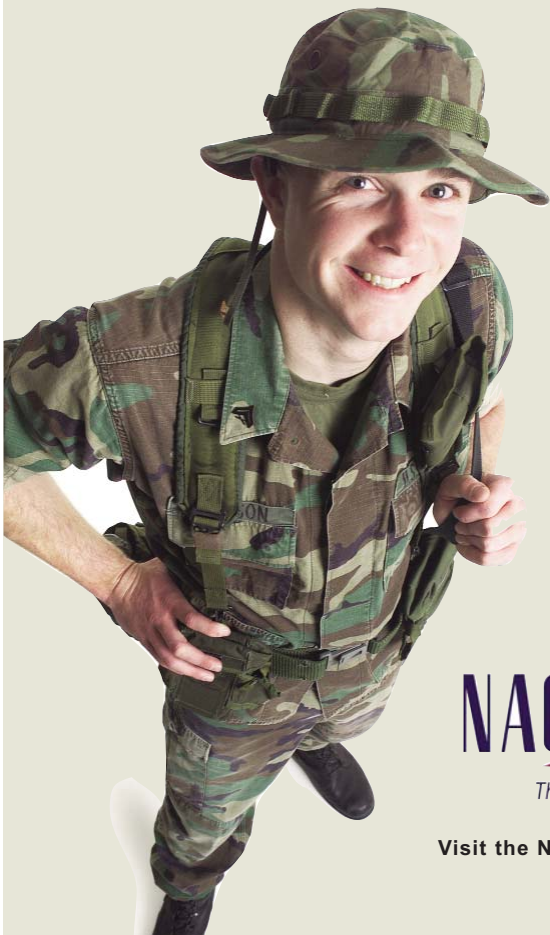
## National County Government Month April 2011

National County Government Month – held each April – is an annual celebration of county government. Since 1991, the National Association of Counties (NACo) has encouraged counties to actively promote the services and programs they offer.

Counties can schedule activities any time during the month. National County Government Month is an excellent opportunity for your county to highlight effective county programs and raise public awareness and understanding about the various services provided to the community.

This year's theme is "Serving Our Veterans, Armed Forces and Their Families." Try to plan events around this theme. Popular events include holding public tours of county facilities; talking to students, community organizations and business leaders about county programs and services; holding essay and art contests; and sponsoring "County Family Day" events on the courthouse grounds.

**Start planning today to celebrate county government month!**



**NACO** National Association of Counties  
*The Voice of America's Counties*

Visit the NCGM webpage at [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org).





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**COUNTYREVIEW**

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# Nationwide Retirement Solutions and Illinois Municipal Retirement representatives provide joint presentation in St. Clair County

## You Can't Afford Not to Invest In You Own Future !!!

by Dr. Linda Renee Baker

I have had the pleasure of observing the talents of the Retirement Specialist for Nationwide Retirement Solutions (NRS) over the past few years. Retirement Specialist, Tamme Ford, has been instrumental in efforts to increase awareness and greater participation by the government employees of St. Clair County in their Deferred Compensation Program. Most recently, I accompanied Tamme as she spent time, after-hours, at the county building to get this message across. I was very impressed with the detail with which she explained the importance of this pre-tax retirement savings plan and the value of these plans for municipal employees. Tamme's presentation was done in conjunction with Jean Parson from the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF). Both Tamme and Jean stressed the importance of using the deferred compensation program to supplement an individual's retirement plans.

Tamme described how the National Association of Counties (NACo) Deferred Compensation Program, also known as 457 plans (according to the section of the tax code providing for their creation), is a critical component to any individual's retirement income plans. Public sector pensions, once among the most secure and generous in the nation, are now increasingly facing problems of full funding from the legislative authorities who must allocate annual payments from declining General Revenue funds. More than half of the nation's state governments are having difficulties meeting their annual pension obligations for a variety of reasons, chief among them, falling tax revenues due to decreased economic activity. Further, periodic economic crises and investment choices could lead certain pension funds to have less than optimal levels of savings. It is thus incumbent on all employees to use as many retirement income options as possible. Reliance only on Social Security or your pension may no longer be sufficient to ensure the level of income most workers will want in their retirement. It is my hope that the employees who attended these joint sessions recognize the importance of enrolling in this deferred compensation program to supplement their public pension.

**Key points of the 457 Deferred Compensation Program:**

- Contributions and earning accumulate on a tax deferred basis.
- Distributions can occur at separation of service (retirement, termination) with no minimum age requirement.
- No 10% federal penalty for distributions prior to age 59 1/2
- The plan includes an early withdrawal option for unforeseen emergencies, that meet certain IRS criteria.
- Distributions are available in a lump sum, periodic installments or as an annuity
- Upon separation, you can transfer your account to your new employer's tax deferred plan (457, 401k, 403b, IRA plan) with no current tax withholding.

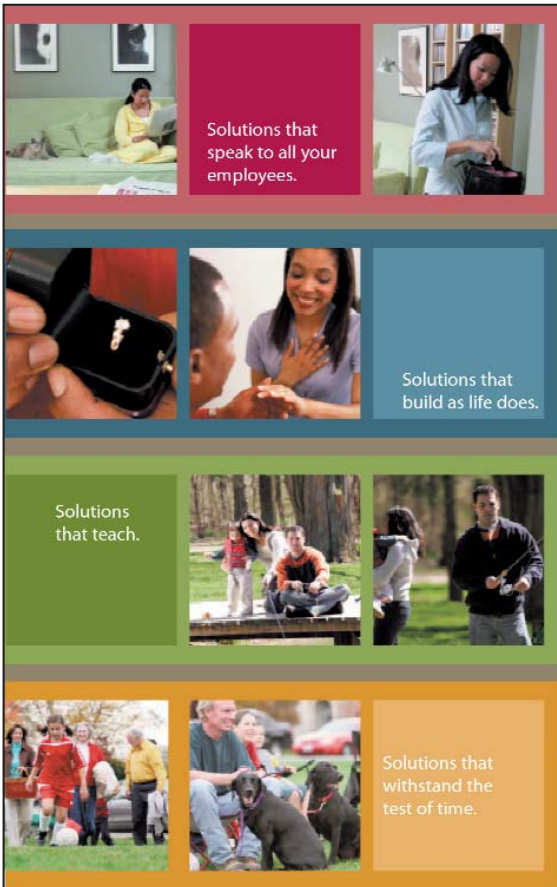
The joint presentations were well received, generating significant interest and comment. Special thanks to St. Clair County Chairman Mark Kern and his staff for helping arrange these events for their workforce. Plans are underway to follow-up with various departments and employees throughout the county.

In speaking with some of the staff following the presentation, the following messages seemed to resonate: "The sooner you begin to save, the better!" "It is never too late to start!" Even a small amount can make a huge difference over time because of the tax deferral of this savings plan. Saving even \$25.00/pay, may only impact your take home paycheck by \$19.00 or less. In this economy, you can't afford not to invest in your own future!!!

We thank Tamme Ford from Nationwide Retirement Solutions (NRS) and Jean Parson from the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) for such an outstanding and informative joint presentation!



Tamme Ford, NationWide Retirement Solutions, Betty Martz, St. Clair County personnel and benefits manager, and Jean Parson, Illinois Municipal Retirement.



Solutions that speak to all your employees.

Solutions that build as life does.

Solutions that teach.

Solutions that withstand the test of time.

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