

Oklahoma County Commissioner Ray Vaughn

Earns National Recognition for Innovative Governance

PORTLAND, ORE. – The National Association of Counties (NACo) has recognized Oklahoma County Commissioner Ray Vaughn with the association’s prestigious 2011 County Courthouse Award for Innovative Governance.

Vaughn was selected from over fifty entries as the Urban Category winner by an independent panel of judges. He was recognized for his dedication to improving the lives of Oklahoma County’s residents, including his leadership in the county’s acquisition of a shuttered General Motors manufacturing plant. The county leased the facility to the area’s largest single-site employer, Tinker Air Force Base. By doing this, nearly all of the 2,400 jobs lost as a result of the plant closure are on track to be replaced.

“On behalf of the nation’s counties, I commend Commissioner Vaughn for his bold leadership in turning a devastating economic hit on the community into economic boom,” said NACo President Glen Whitley, county judge, Tarrant County, Texas. “He was the driving force behind the public/private partnership which led to passage of the \$55 million bond issue to purchase the GM plant and lease it to Tinker Air Force Base, keeping nearly 2,000 jobs in the area.”

This year’s winners were honored at NACo’s 76th Annual Conference and Exposition in Portland/Multnomah County, Ore.

Established in 2001, County Courthouse Awards recognize elected county officials who demonstrate innovative and effective leadership to improve the quality of life of their residents. One County Courthouse Award is presented each year in three categories: Rural County, Suburban County, and Urban County. The Rural County winner was Sheriff Scott Story of Waldo County, Maine. The Suburban County winner was Sheriff Steve Waugh of Yavapai County, Arizona. Each winner receives a \$5,000 college scholarship to present to a local student.

The County Courthouse Awards are sponsored by Siemens and presented by NACo’s Large Urban County Caucus and Rural Action Caucus. More information is available at www.naco.org.

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The National Association of Counties (NACo) is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States. Founded in 1935, NACo provides essential services to the nation’s 3,068 counties. NACo advances issues with a unified voice before the federal government, improves the public’s understanding of county government, assists counties in finding and sharing innovative solutions through education and research, and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. For more information about NACo, visit www.naco.org.