



4855 Woodland Drive
Enola, PA 17025-1291
Telephone: (717) 763-0930
Fax: (717) 763-9732
Internet: www.psats.org

PENNSYLVANIA STATE ASSOCIATION OF TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS

news release

May 18, 2020

Contact: Ginni Linn
(717) 805-3588 (cell)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sanko Named to National Advisory Team for *Small Town America Civic Volunteer Award* Program

David Sanko, executive director of the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors (PSATS), has been appointed to serve on a five-member national advisory team for the *Small Town America Civic Volunteer Award* program.

Sanko was selected to serve on the award program advisory team because of his long-standing support for strong grassroots local government. He is also past president and current member of the board of directors of the National Association of Towns and Townships (NATaT).

NATaT joins a representative from the National Association of Counties, the National Volunteer Fire Council, Points of Life (*the nation's largest volunteer service organization, which was founded by President George H.W. Bush*), and the National Main Street Center on the board.

“In some places, democracy and self-government are being taken for granted,” Sanko says. “Apathy is on the rise. Some municipalities struggle to fill local government vacancies, whether it’s finding candidates for civic service on boards and commissions or recruiting volunteer firefighters to help ensure citizens’ safety. I am honored to join this advisory team and promote efforts to address a critical challenge facing the nation’s countryside communities.”

The award program is intended to spotlight a growing crisis facing thousands of smaller townships, cities, and rural counties: the decline in the availability of citizens to serve in critical public safety and community service roles, including volunteer firefighters, emergency medical personnel, and local

-more-

government boards and commissions. The awards will recognize 100 hometown “heroes” from countryside communities nationwide for their extraordinary public service. Eligible municipalities include those of 5,000 people or less.

The civic volunteer award program is being underwritten by CivicPlus, the largest local government technology company in the country. Local governments represented by the top three winning honorees will receive cash grants of \$10,000, \$7,500, and \$5,000, respectively. Municipalities and counties represented by these top 100 nominees will receive custom CivicPlus websites (*and one year of website hosting at no charge*) featuring a unique module offering civic volunteer retention and recruitment resources. The program has an estimated total value of more than \$1 million in donated services and grants.

The Barton Russell Group (BRG) has been chosen to design and manage the Small Town America Civic Volunteer Award program. BRG has built and/or consulted on several national award and grant programs, including the *Best Small Towns in America* contest, the *American Hometown Leaders Award*, and the *America’s Best Communities* competition.

The Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors represents Pennsylvania’s 1,454 townships of the second class and is committed to preserving and strengthening township government and securing greater visibility and involvement for townships in the state and federal political arenas. Townships of the second class cover 95 percent of Pennsylvania’s land mass and represent more residents — 5.5 million — than any other type of political subdivision in the commonwealth.

###