

County Leadership Institute

FREEHOLDER ACTON JOINS COUNTY LEADERS FROM ACROSS U.S. FOR INTENSIVE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM AT ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE AT NYU

6th ANNUAL COUNTY LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE COMPLETED

25 County Leaders from Across U.S. Convene for Intensive Leadership Program at Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service at New York University

(New York – June 1, 2009) Twenty-four county leaders and one state association executive director came to New York City at the end of May from counties as close by as Westchester (NY) and as far away as Santa Barbara, (CA) to complete the 6th Annual County Leadership Institute (CLI). This rigorous four-day program – developed by New York University’s Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service and the National Association of Counties (NACo) – focused on how elected county officials can exercise leadership to address the complex challenges facing counties.

“The Institute provided an opportunity not only to hear from nationally recognized experts but also to work with my colleagues from across the country on specific approaches to address the challenges that all counties share,” said Freeholder Acton. “The intensive program of instruction provided invaluable insights that will help me serve the people of Salem County better.”

“At the very heart of the Wagner School’s approach to public service education is a commitment to learning from both theory and practice,” said Ellen Schall, dean of NYU Wagner. “The County Leadership Institute embodies this approach. These county leaders not only discussed the core principles of public service leadership with prominent experts, they also collaborated intensively with each other to develop new ways to attack real-life issues of importance to the citizens of their counties.”

CLI participants heard a number of unique perspectives on how they might exercise creative leadership on difficult challenges. Wagner Adjunct Professor Angela Terry discussed how to build and sustain collaborations. In addition, Ruth Nybro, NACO’s Director of Education and Training facilitated a roundtable conversation - involving executives from ESRI, NACO’s Financial Services Corporation, and Freddie Mac – about how to address “Public and Private Leadership in Recovery.”

Marty Linsky, Harvard Kennedy School faculty member and Co-Founder of the global leadership development firm Cambridge Leadership Associates, whose newest book, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, has just been published by Harvard Business Press, is faculty director for the Institute. Linsky led participants through discussions examining the challenges elected officials face when they attempt to mobilize people to address tough issues. “Leadership that surfaces conflict, questions long-held beliefs

and demands new ways of doing things inevitably creates disturbances,” said Linsky. “This Institute is designed to help elected county officials skillfully and successfully lead necessary change in these difficult times.”

“We’re very happy that our partnership with NYU has been so successful,” said Larry Naake, executive director of NACo. “The county officials who participate in the institute get information, ideas, and perspectives they can’t get anywhere else.”

Established in 1938, the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service offers advanced programs leading to the professional degrees of Master of Public Administration, Master of Urban Planning, Master of Science in Management, and Doctor of Philosophy. Through these rigorous programs, NYU Wagner educates the future leaders of public, nonprofit, and health institutions as well as private organizations serving the public sector.

The National Association of Counties (NACo) is a full-service organization that provides legislative, research, technical and public affairs assistance to county governments. Created in 1935, NACo continues to ensure that the nation’s 3,068 counties are heard and understood in the White House and Congress.