



Leaders at the Core of Better Communities

2011 Annual Awards Program

Program Excellence Awards Nomination Form

Deadline for Nominations: March 11, 2011

Complete this form (sections 1 and 2) and submit with your descriptive narrative.

SECTION 1: Information About the Nominated Program

Program Excellence Award Category (*select only one*):

- ☐ Community Health and Safety
- ☒ Community Partnership
- ☐ Community Sustainability
- ☐ Strategic Leadership and Governance

Name of program being nominated: UDon't Need It?

Jurisdiction(s) where program originated: City of Newark, DE

Jurisdiction population(s): 31,545

Please indicate the month and year in which the program you are nominating was fully implemented. (Note: All Program Excellence Award nominations must have been fully implemented by or before January 31, 2010, to be eligible. The start date should not include the initial planning phase.)

Month: May Year: 2007

Name(s) and title(s) of individual(s) who should receive recognition for this award at the ICMA Annual Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, September 2011. (Each individual listed MUST be an ICMA member to be recognized.):

Name: Carl Luft

Title: Former City Manager Jurisdiction: City of Newark, DE

Name: Kyle Sonnenberg

Title: City Manager Jurisdiction: City of Newark, DE

Name: _____

Title: _____ Jurisdiction: _____

SECTION 2: Information About the Nominator/Primary Contact

Name of contact:	<u>Dana Johnston</u>		
Title:	<u>Community Affairs Officer</u>	Jurisdiction:	<u>Newark, DE</u>
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“UDon’t Need It?” Student Move-Out Program

The City of Newark, Delaware like many other college towns and cities across the country faces the same situation each spring when the semester ends. There is a mass exodus of nearly 20,000 university students from dorms, off campus houses and apartments. With the exodus there comes additional effort, waste, and costs. For years the end of May saw the streets of rental home and apartment areas littered with household furnishings, refuse, clothing, and other home goods. Students pressured to get out of rental properties soon after finals or the day of graduation discarded their belongings haphazardly. Our citizens complained, we all shook our heads at the mess, took pictures, attempted to levy fines, but the next year the same thing happened. Until the City Manager’s Office decided in 1999 to take a more proactive approach.

Prior to launching the “UDon’t Need It?” program in 2007, Newark tested and tweaked efforts at addressing this annual problem that brought complaints, excessive overtime, increased landfill costs, the occasional sofa fire and even managed from time to time to cause the closure of a street or two. Early on we focused only on getting the students to bring their throwaways to targeted locations around town instead of dragging them to their curbs, sidewalks and front lawns. While these efforts were successful in limiting the number of areas we had to clean up, after a few years of witnessing the waste and enduring much concern for the level of “dumpster diving” that was occurring, additional tweaks were necessary. What was once an effort to simply control the mess became in 2007 a full-fledged, three week long program titled “UDon’t Need It?” with a goal of reducing waste, overtime and landfill costs.

The City of Newark partnered with the University of Delaware's administration and Green Delaware Recycling to implement the first "UDon't Need It?" program on the site of a former paper company owned by Newark. The site allowed ample space for roll-offs to be placed to collect refuse and badly damaged furnishings in addition to sheltered space for the many items that were in good condition and ready to be given a new home, to be repurposed, or recycled.

As a result of our experience in 2007, and with the continued guidance of Green Delaware Recycling, additional relationships were developed to include greater outreach to non-profit groups that serve individuals and families in need or with organizations that already had programs established to distribute some of the items we collected. In the four years that "UDon't Need It?" has been offered we have grown our limited partnerships to include groups like The Home of the Brave Veterans Shelter, the Food Bank of Delaware, Better World Books, the Urban Bike Project, Recycling Angels, the Delaware Solid Waste Authority (DSWA), and more than ten faith-based community programs from locations throughout the state.

Collected items run the gamut from furniture and kitchenware to air conditioners, T.V.s and small appliances. The items found to be in good condition are sorted, displayed and first made available to members and clients of charitable organizations associated with our program, secondly to our partner agencies and lastly to ensure we end the program with the least amount of items, through sales to the community at large at extremely low prices. The funds raised during the sales portion are deposited and assist Newark in offering the program the following year.

Each year's efforts have built upon earlier successes and without really knowing or planning it, we were weaning the students from a very bad habit. We held out hope that once four full school years had passed, our program would become the culture of "just what the students at UD do at the end of another successful school year." While the staff and volunteers involved would suggest that we have in fact achieved making the program part of the culture at the University of Delaware, we think actions speak louder than words as demonstrated during the 2010 "UDon't Need It?" program when a young lady needed help unloading a desk with a coordinating chair and a loveseat – all of which were purchased by the same young lady at the 2008 "UDon't Need It?" program.

ICMA Program Excellence Awards Criteria

- The program initiates intense advertisement and outreach directly to the target participants including students, tenants, landlords, the community and charitable organizations. Replication of our program is most certainly feasible.
- It provides volunteer opportunities to the local community and organizations.
University of Delaware employees make up much of our approximately 100 person volunteer goal for a three week period. The program has become an annual event for other groups such as the Verizon Pioneers and numerous local citizens.
- Limited partnerships with the agencies noted in our narrative above such as Better World Books, the Food Bank of Delaware, and others span the state and increase our community presence and ability to succeed. We are currently working on a new relationship with a rug recycling organization so that less than perfect rugs can be repurposed rather than sent to the landfill. Modifications were made to increase the

recycling opportunities of the program through dedicated bins for cans, metals, wood, and glass, all of which helps to reduce tonnage going to the landfill. Likewise, the delivery of hazardous materials caused changes to be made to properly collect/capture and store these items so they are not disposed of improperly. This result was a relationship with the Delaware Solid Waste Authority and its \$5,300 funding of the collection and cataloging of these materials by the firm Clean Harbors.

- The size and scope of the program requires strong leadership and innovation provided by Newark and its partners from the University of Delaware. Areas of leadership and innovation include advertising and promotion, outreach and evaluations, volunteer recruitment and appreciation, site set-up and equipment rental or donations, contractual obligations, supplemental city staffing or equipment use, standard operating procedures for the program and its volunteers and modifications of the same, safety and health measures, site security and cleanup .
- Outreach and accommodation of local charitable organizations for meeting the needs of families and individuals requiring home furnishings and household goods helps get items to people who need them while reducing our need to dispose of the same.
- Final sales of remaining reusable items to the community with funds from the sale directly benefiting the following year of the program allows for the much desired community involvement. While sales were not initially imagined as part of our program, they became necessary as a result of having more furnishings and goods than we could get rid of. The funds raised average approximately \$3,000 each year and help to fund the program's soft costs the following year. In addition to the hauling and

tipping cost that are still a necessary aspect of the program, we also spend approximately \$6,000 a year on other necessary fixed costs.

ICMA Program Excellence Awards - Measuring Benefits, Efficiencies and Value

- The Newark community at large has benefited from the virtual elimination of discarded household goods and furnishings from the streets of our City. Since the start of the “UDon’t Need It?” program, Newark has been praised by members of the community, landlords, students and parents alike for making the program available.
- In 2010 more than 70 families benefited from donated household furnishings and home goods, 450 pounds of non-perishable food went to the Food Bank of Delaware, in excess of 20 boxes of books went to Better World Books program and numerous bikes were donated to the Urban Bike Project. Three tons of metal were recycled and the local Goodwill and Salvation Army accepted generous donations of clothing.
- The City of Newark as an organization has benefited from reduced overtime and landfill costs as well as gaining control of what once was a very out of control reactionary time as associated with our responsibility for the provision of refuse collection and disposal services. Below is a snapshot of the costs reductions since the start of the program compared to an average of the three prior years.

Program Year	Tonnage to Landfill During Program	Landfill Costs	UDNI Affect on Landfill Tonnage	Overtime Costs
2004	270	\$18,803.00	} average tonnage 215 tons, 3 yrs prior to UDNI	\$10,722.00
2005	203	\$16,208.00		\$17,246.00
2006	174	\$17,389.00		\$18,500.00
			Diversion Tonnage Estimate	
2007	149	\$12,620.00	66 tons less than the avg. of 3 yrs. Prior	\$17,067.00
2008	59	\$9,241.00	156 tons less than the avg. of 3 yrs. Prior	\$13,470.00
2009	69	\$9,410.00	146 tons less than the avg. of 3 yrs. Prior	\$7,251.00
2010	66	\$7,674.00	149 tons less than the avg. of 3 yrs. Prior	\$7,203.00