



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACADEMY

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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Newly Elected Officials Course Slated for Southwestern Pennsylvania

Pittsburgh, PA----While Tuesday's elections mark the end of the local political season, they mark the start of the real work to be done—governing. Local Government Academy, an independent, nonpartisan organization formed to promote excellence in local government is set to begin offering its Newly Elected Officials Course on November 21, 2009. All winners of local office in the general election will receive a formal invitation to attend.

"We deliberately offer a number of the sessions before the swearing-in of the new officials" says Susan Hockenberry, Executive Director. "This is to help the election-winners shift from campaigning to governing and to help communities transition smoothly." The Academy provides training at a variety of dates and locations for throughout southwestern Pennsylvania. The course includes 19 offerings throughout Allegheny, Butler, Washington and Westmoreland Counties, which may be attended by elected officials from any local government.

Held every other year following the General Election, the course is designed to promote "good government" by preparing newly elected officials to deal with both the technical and policy-making aspects of leading at the local level. These sessions include: the legislative process; scope of municipal powers; working with the media; understanding finances and the budget; personnel law; public safety; public personnel administration; infrastructure; planning, zoning, and development; and leadership and ethics.

More than 600 officials in southwestern Pennsylvania have participated in this award-winning programming throughout its 26 year history. This year brings the most widely offered set of courses to date. Numerous academic, government, and nonprofit institutions assist Local Government Academy in delivering the Newly Elected Officials Course. Corporate donors, or *Advocates for Good Government*, provide further financial and technical support. According to Hockenberry, "This collaboration is essential because it assures our programs are responsive to community needs and interests," according to Hockenberry.

With a combination of evening and Saturday sessions, the course is designed to accommodate a variety of schedules. Pre-registration is required to guarantee attendance. Communities declared distressed under Act 47 attend at an 80% discount and other communities with financial difficulties may apply for a Michael P. Lynch Scholarship which provides a limited number of partial scholarships for first-time elected officials based on need.

Local Government Academy (LGA) is a collaborative effort of business, government, education and civic leaders promoting excellence in government through education. As a nonprofit organization specializing in programs for municipal elected officials and employees promoting economic development and revitalization, environmental quality and intergovernmental cooperation, Local Government Academy has been in existence for 26 years, and serves the 10 county region of Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Details about the Newly Elected Officials Course are available on the Academy's website at www.localgovernmentacademy.org or by phone at 412.237.3171.

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