N E W S R E L E A S E

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NACo announces six community dialogue sessions to improve county health

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Association of Counties (NACo) today announced six counties have been selected to participate in NACo Community Dialogue to Improve County Health sessions to be held in their respective counties in 2014.

Through support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and in collaboration with RWJF and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, NACo will assist the six counties in conducting the one-day community dialogues. The sessions will convene officials and community stakeholders from the selected counties to assess, plan and strategize efforts toward coordinating health initiatives to improve the overall health of residents in the participating counties.

Stakeholders may include representatives from the local health, transportation, parks and recreation and business sectors, as well as schools, faith-based organizations, nonprofits, health mobilization groups, United Way chapters and other community partners.

The six counties selected for the community health dialogues are:

- Bullitt County, Ky. (2010 pop., 74,319)
- Fulton County, Ga. (2010 pop., 920,581)
- Leon County, Fla. (2010 pop., 275,487)
- Salt Lake County, Utah (2010 pop., 1,029,655)
- Washington County, N.C. (2010 pop., 13,228)
- Wayne County, N.C. (2010 pop., 122,623)

“NACo is excited about this county health project and our partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation which makes it possible,” said NACo President Linda Langston, supervisor, Linn County, Iowa. “The community health dialogues will encourage communities to synergize efforts, build and strengthen coalitions and leverage local efforts already in place.”

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Through a professionally facilitated discussion, each group will share insights on the challenges and opportunities facing the local government in addressing community health.

“Our goal for each participating county is to develop a concrete strategic plan and action steps that the county government and community partners can use to improve the overall health of the county,” Langston said. “The participating counties have already demonstrated commitment to improving county health. These dialogue sessions take it to the next level and will serve as a roadmap for other counties to follow to achieve better county health.”

The six counties were selected after NACo solicited applications throughout September and October. NACo will assist the selected counties in covering costs associated with each dialogue. The specific dates of the sessions have yet to be determined. A publication documenting all the community dialogues, including the process, strategies and action steps, will be developed and shared with NACo member counties and partner organizations.

For more information, contact Katie Bess, kbess@naco.org or 202.942.4215 or visit http://www.naco.org/improvingcountyhealth.

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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 assists America’s 3,069 counties in pursuing excellence in public service to produce healthy, vibrant, safe and resilient counties. NACo promotes sound public policies, fosters county solutions and innovation, promotes intergovernmental and public-private collaboration and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. More information at: www.naco.org.