

For Immediate Release
April 18, 2011

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Raleigh, N.C. Named Nation's Most Sustainable Mid-Size Community

Raleigh, NC – The Raleigh area once again shows its commitment to sustainable practices by being named the 'Nation's Most Sustainable Mid-Sized Community' by the U. S. Chamber of Commerce. The 2011 Siemens Sustainable Community Awards was awarded to North Carolina's Capital City for "a range of factors including its commitment to developing a 'green economy.'"

The award was presented at the U.S. Chamber's National Conference on Corporate Community Investment in Philadelphia. Raleigh was honored along with San Jose in the large-size community and Greensburg, Kansas, which took the top honors for the nation's small communities.

"Winning a national award of this caliber truly shows that the Raleigh area is well on its way to becoming one of the nation's greenest cities," said Denny Edwards, president and CEO of the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau. "We want to provide our visitors, on both the leisure and business side, peace of mind that the community they are visiting has best practices in sustainability top of mind and that we are mindful of protecting natural resources in any way that we can."

David Chavern, U.S. Chamber executive vice president and COO, and Alison Taylor, vice president of sustainability for the Americas for Siemens Corporation, presented the awards. While they acknowledged that Raleigh was the winner for a "range of factors" it specifically mentioned its initiatives to cultivate a "green economy."

"Raleigh created a work force development program to retrain workers with the skills needed to make them more employable in the green economy; training more than 200 people in the program's first year. Additionally, Raleigh is home to the Raleigh Convention Center, one of only a small number of Silver LEED Certified convention centers, attracting substantial economic activity that bolsters the entire community," the presenters said.

Raleigh has a number of sustainable offerings including The Raleigh Convention Center, which from construction to present, has earned the reputation of being committed to sustainability practices evident in its energy-efficient design, proximity to mass transit and recycling efforts. The City of Raleigh also takes sustainability seriously with projects and initiatives including; LED lighting, public utilization of alternative fuel vehicles, electric vehicle charging stations as part of Project Get Ready and partnerships with local researchers at N.C. State University to discover environmentally friendly breakthroughs. Greater Raleigh is home to the state headquarters of groups such as the N.C. Sustainable Energy Association and the Sierra Club.

The Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau, as the official destination marketing organization of Raleigh and Wake County, accelerates sustainable growth and development by increasing visitor and convention business. Through its website, VisitRaleigh.com and other tools, the GRCVB assists local visitors in a variety of ways.

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