IBM Smarter Cities Challenge Team Recommends Community-Wide Effort

May 17, 2013 - After three weeks of study and meeting with local stakeholders, an international IBM Smarter Cities Challenge team today recommended ways the City of Knoxville can lead efforts to reduce residential emergency utility bills through better communication, weatherization and energy efficiency.

The five-member team came to town in late April as the result of a competitive grant awarded to the City through IBM's Smarter Cities Challenge program. The City's application asked for advice on the most effective way to connect weatherization and energy education services to residents who receive emergency utility bill assistance. This will help reduce the demand each year for emergency assistance with utility bills for low-income ratepayers, particularly those in older, inefficient buildings.

Mayor Rogero thanks the IBM Smarter Cities Challenge Team for their work and recommendations. Left to Right: Dr. Anika Schumann, Avalyn Pace, Rudi Loepp, Mayor Madeline Rogero, Jeni Vancura, and Debbie Bonner Perkins.

"I'm very grateful for the time and effort provided by IBM and this great team," said Mayor Madeline Rogero. "They took three weeks out of their personal and professional lives to help us grapple with a problem that affects many of our most vulnerable citizens. We will use the insights and information they have compiled as we work together with our partners to address this challenging issue."

The team will provide a final report to the City in about 30 days, but highlights of their recommendations include:

• Developing one voice around a shared vision: The City should form a council of stakeholders, including utilities, nonprofit groups and community groups, to raise awareness of energy efficiency and the benefits of weatherization.
• Harnessing the data: Coordinate information among the different agencies that deal with utility bills and emergency assistance for low-income residents.
• Educating the community: Coordinate a unified education campaign aimed at low-income residents, landlords, school-age children, churches and the community at large.

- Funding the programs: Develop pilot programs that move funding for utility bill assistance toward elevating the quality of housing stock, and seek other funding sources for weatherization and education efforts.
- Engaging the landlords: Find ways to identify, engage and collaborate with landlords, and provide incentives for improving the energy efficiency of their properties.

The team met with dozens of local representatives of utility and energy companies, governmental and nonprofit agencies, and community and resident organizations. The team members, who came from all over the United States as well as Canada and Ireland, also got the chance to explore Knoxville and East Tennessee, including visits to WDVX's Blue Plate Special, Dollywood and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

"We want to thank the City of Knoxville for having us as guests," said Tina Wilson, manager of IBM Corporate Affairs and Corporate Citizenship for Tennessee. "Our global team has truly discovered the meaning of Southern hospitality. We have talked to nearly 30 stakeholders during our time here, and everybody was very candid and helpful. We really believe there is an opportunity for the City of Knoxville to speak with one voice and a common purpose on this issue."

For more information about the IBM Smarter Cities Challenge, the City's application and to see a video of Mayor Rogero at the IBM Smarter Cities Summit in November 2012, visithttp://www.cityofknoxville.org/smartercities.

Mayor Rogero with the City's Office of Energy and Sustainability and the IBM Smarter Cities Challenge Team. Left to Right: Debbie Bonner Perkins, Avalyn Pace, Jeni Vancura, Dr. Anika Schumann, Rudi Loepp, Mayor Madeline Rogero, Tina Wilson, Susanna Sutherland and Jake Tisinger.

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Below is biographical information on the IBM team members:

Rudi Loepp brings 34 years of experience to the Smarter Cities Knoxville project. During his time at IBM, he has held a number of management positions and has worked primarily with Public Sector clients. Currently Rudi has business development and responsibility for IBM's Smarter Cities suite of products. Rudi is a public sector expert. He is very familiar with the operations of city governments and has worked with cities to assist them in becoming smarter cities. Rudi also participated in IBM's Corporate Service Corps program in Africa. Rudi enjoys golfing, music and cooking.

Avalyn Pace is a 30-year veteran with IBM leading the Energy & Utilities (E&U) team in IBM's Global Solution Center. Avalyn works with the E&U industry to create solutions addressing key industry problems in Power Generation Optimization, Intelligent Utility Network and Customer Operations Transformation. Avalyn holds an MBA from Southern Methodist University in Dallas and a certification in nonprofit management. She was selected for the 2013 Leadership Dallas program and is a recipient of the Women of Color Technology All Star award.

Debbie Bonner Perkins is a Client Services Leader in IBM's Global Technology Services division. She focuses on providing business value to clients in Tennessee, North Carolina and Virginia. She has also supported clients in the Industrial, Financial Services and Public Sectors including the State of Tennessee. In her 30-year career with IBM, Debbie has held a number of sales and technical support positions including Systems Engineer, Client Executive, Software Account Manager and Client Services Manager. She is an active member in the Memphis community having served on the Board of Directors for Junior Achievement of Memphis & the Mid-South, the University of Memphis Alumni Executive Committee and as a Leadership Memphis graduate. She works with a number of organizations focused on providing mentoring and leadership skills to

youth in underserved areas in the city. Debbie has been recognized with numerous civic awards for her service.

Dr. Anika Schumann is a Research Staff Member at IBM's Smarter Cities Technology Centre in Dublin, Ireland, where she is leading the research efforts on smart buildings that seek to exploit and advance Artificial Intelligence methods for fault identification, reduced energy use, and increased occupant comfort in buildings. Anika has led the work on semi-automatically configuring building energy management systems. Anika joined IBM Dublin two years ago and has been working at the intersection of smart buildings and artificial intelligence for four years. In that area, she has written several scientific papers, organized international workshops, and given keynote and invited presentations at European and International venues. Anika has already lived on five continents and has worked at IBM's TJ Watson Research Centre in New York, the University of South Australia, Australia, the University of Potchefstroom, South Africa, Infineon AG in Bangalore, India, the Technical University of Munich, Germany, and the Cork Constraint Computation Centre, Ireland.

Jeni Vancura is IBM's Director of Human Resources, Corporate, providing strategic support across the realm of HR programs and initiatives for IBM's Finance, Marketing and Communications, Legal, Strategy, CIO and HR organizations. She is also the Westchester County "Senior Location Executive," responsible for sponsoring and planning corporate social responsibility and community events across the county's five Westchester sites, representing IBM internally and externally. Jeni holds an MS degree in Organizational Management and Human Resource Development from Manhattanville College in Purchase, N.Y. She has also developed skills and experience in effective change management processes while at IBM. Jeni lives in Sandy Hook, Connecticut. She enjoys traveling, cooking and the outdoors. She also enjoys volunteering her time mentoring veterans who are attempting to re-enter the workforce.

The IBM liaison for the team during its time in Knoxville is **Tina Wilson**, the manager of Corporate Citizenship & Corporate Affairs for Tennessee and North Carolina. She serves as the focal point for IBM's corporate citizenship activity at one of IBM's largest sites.