



# Mt. Vernon's first annual non-profit summit held at the Wartburg

**On Tuesday, June 6**, over 100 non-profit organizations and social service providers jammed the Gatz Conference Center at the Wartburg to attend the city's first ever non-profit summit, hosted by the City of Mount Vernon.

During the registration period, Wartburg provided an excellent breakfast for the many that attended the summit.

The goal of the event was to have organizations that work closely with the people inform City Hall on how best the city can move forward - and how the city can help them accomplish their goals more efficiently.

Acting as the Master of Ceremonies was Recreation Commissioner Darren Morton, who opened the program with the invocation. He then introduced David Gentner, President and CEO of Wartburg, who provided opening comments.

After Gentner's comments, Angela Ciminello, Vice President of Development and Marketing at Wartburg also welcomed the guests.

When Morton introduced Mayor Richard Thomas, the audience provided a lengthy and loud applause.

The mayor immediately introduced the panel members, which consisted of Meghan Taylor, Mid-Hudson Regional Director, Empire State Development; Mark Thielking, Executive Director, Energize NY and Tyrae Woodson-Samuels, Staff Assistant, Congressman Eliot Engel's office.

The agenda was an interesting one and included:

- A presentation by Mayor Thomas on how his administration seeks to partner with nonprofits to help address the needs of New York/Mount Vernon residents;
- Congressman Eliot Engel's office: Information on the 2017 federal budget process and how proposed social service budget cuts may affect the New York/Mount Vernon-area
- Empire State Development Corp.: Information on the Consolidated Funding Application process and encouraging more nonprofits to participate this year;
- Energize NY: Resources available for nonprofits to better achieve local and regional clean energy and economic development goals.

Each panelist provided a wealth of information for those that attended, and all in attendance gave them their undivided attention throughout the entire program.

The information provided by Meghan Taylor was extremely interesting, and kept the audience on the edge of their seats during her presentation.

"The governor has directed over \$800 million in state resources to be made available in 2017 to support the economic development priorities of the regions and spur job creation across the state, including \$225 million in competitive funds from Empire State Development," said Taylor. That statement attracted everybody's attention in a big way.

"In 2011, Cuomo created ten Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC) and the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) to advance the administration's efforts to improve New York's business climate and expand economic growth," she added.

"In 2017, REDCs will advance projects and other actions identified for implementation and identify new strategies, as appropriate, to pursue. The Regional Councils are having a positive impact on economic development, helping to bring unemployment levels down through the creation and retention of thousands of jobs," she emphasized."

Taylor advised all those in attendance to seek grants from the CFA as a way to help their organizations move ahead.

Many found Thielking's presentation interesting as well, since he explained how organizations that own buildings can save a lot of money.

"Energize NY helps break down the barriers to energy saving solutions for building owners in NY State. Sometimes a lack of knowledge about energy saving solutions is the barrier, other times it may be access to qualified contractors or affordable financing. Energize NY drives demand for clean energy upgrades through community-based outreach about energy saving opportunities and by providing low-cost, long-term financing for commercial clean energy projects. We work with our member communities throughout NY State to help PACE building owners eliminate energy wasted in their buildings-saving money, fuel and greenhouse gas emissions," he stated.

Woodson basically explained the many services offered by Engel's office, which is located on Gramatan Avenue in Mount Vernon. Some of the services include help with immigration issues, Medicaid, Medicare and more. He also spoke about the 2017 federal budget process and how proposed social service budget cuts may affect the New York/Mount Vernon area.

At the conclusion, the audience was able to engage in a Q&A session and they asked many interesting questions.

Prior to ending, the summit transitioned into a networking session that allowed the guests to interact with the many city representatives that were in attendance.



**DAVID GENTNER**



**MAYOR RICHARD THOMAS**



**REV. DARREN MORTON**



**TYRAE WOODSON-SAMUELS**



**MEGHAN TAYLOR**



**MARK THIELKING**

URL: <http://www.mvquirer.com/mt-vernonrsquos-first-annual-non-profit-summit-held-at-the-wartburg.html>

File name in EE: media\_article\_commercial\_170616

Uploaded: June 16, 2017

Section: Commercial Energize - In the News