

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## Small Town Civic “Heroes” To Be Recognized, Honored

**MANHATTAN, KS – June 29, 2021** – The nation’s top 100 small town public service volunteers will again be recognized and honored for their service in the second annual Small Town America Civic Volunteer Award (STACVA) program. The nationwide program will open for nominations beginning July 15. STACVA recognizes extraordinary contributions by public service and public safety volunteers in small towns and counties with populations of 25,000 or less.

In addition to recognizing these hometown heroes, STACVA is designed to spotlight the growing decline in the availability of citizens to fill critical local government roles, such as county boards and city councils, volunteer firefighters, EMTs, and the many advisory committees that support other key local government functions.

STACVA is sponsored by CivicPlus®, the nation’s leading provider of technology solutions that enable local governments to optimize the experience they deliver when interacting with citizens. The program is co-sponsored by the National Association of Counties, National Volunteer Fire Council, National Association of Towns and Townships, Main Street America, and Points of Light. Representatives of these organizations are serving on the STACVA Advisory Team. The Barton Russell Group ([www.BartonRussell.com](http://www.BartonRussell.com)), the nation’s leading small town and rural America consultancy, has again been retained to administer and judge the 2021 program.

Municipalities and counties represented by the top 100 nominees will qualify for a free volunteer management module that can be integrated with their website to help engage, recruit, track, and retain community volunteers. They will also receive 12 months of free support services for the module from CivicPlus. Localities represented by the top three national STACVA winners will also receive cash awards of \$20,000, \$10,000, and \$5,000, respectively.

“Every day, we see the vital role these civic volunteers play in their communities,” said Brian Rempe, CivicPlus Chief Executive Officer. “We not only want to recognize them but also want to encourage others to step up and support their municipalities by volunteering to fill these important public service positions.”

Local government representatives may nominate citizens or citizen organizations for the Small Town America Civic Volunteer Award using an online application that can be found on the program’s website ([www.civic-volunteer.com](http://www.civic-volunteer.com)). Nominators are asked to describe their candidate’s compelling story of local volunteerism and its positive impact on their community. The award program will launch on July 15, with applications due no later than October 15. Winners will be announced at a ceremony to be held in November.

Last year’s national winner, Becky Ketchum of Norridgewock, Maine, is the consummate example of a small town civic volunteer. She is president of the Norridgewock Historical



Society and is, or has been, active in the Village Improvement Society, Somerset Grange, Town Planning Board, Town Cemetery Committee, Budget Committee and is a Norridgewock Library Trustee. Most recently, Becky served on the committee leading a community revitalization effort.

Brian Shoemaker of the Gilt Edge, Tennessee volunteer fire department was the second-place winner of the 2020 STACVA program. After joining the fire department in 2013 and completing basic firefighter training, he enrolled at the local community college where he earned national and state certifications in basic and advanced EMT, then earned an associate's degree and ultimately completed a Bachelor of Science degree in fire service administration. He now volunteers at the community college as an EMT instructor. Remarkably, Brian also serves as a town council member and vice mayor for Gilt Edge.

Tammy Hutchinson, from Hartwell, Georgia, was the third-place winner. She has played a leading role on the Town's Main Street committee for the past decade and has served the community on a long list of volunteer projects and fundraisers for most of her life.

"Volunteers like Becky, Brian, and Tammy are exactly the kind of selfless servants we hoped to spotlight when we launched the Small Town America Civic Volunteer Award last year," said Rempe. "I can't wait to see the wonderful stories we will uncover this year."

### **About CivicPlus**

CivicPlus delivers technology solutions that enable local governments to optimize the experience they deliver when interacting with citizens. Over 4,000 local governments use our solutions when serving their 250 million citizens. We deliver the industry's first and only Civic Experience Platform. It enables local governments to drive more revenue, operate more efficiently, and generate positive recognition for the many services they provide every day. For more information, visit [civicplus.com](http://civicplus.com).

### **About the Barton Russell Group**

The Barton Russell Group is the nation's leading small town and rural America consultancy. BRG has built, launched, and managed major branding and community and government relations projects, programs and services for Fortune 500 companies and others seeking to do good while doing well. BRG was founded by Bart Russell, a nationally recognized expert on "everything small town." One former U.S. President called him "the voice of small town America."

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