



Jourdan Celebrates Three Years As MORPC's Executive Director

Chances are good that at some time over the last three years you've been in the same place at the same time as MORPC's Executive Director Chester R. Jourdan, Jr. After only three years at MORPC, Jourdan has spoken to thousands of people through meetings with Councils and Commissioners, Chambers of Commerce, Kiwanis Clubs, Rotary Clubs, summits, workshops, education forums and of course MORPC's largest event the State of the Region luncheon. His message of regionalism, collaboration, and advocacy provides inspiration for people to work together to build a better region.



Promoting collaboration and cooperation is at the core of Chester's passion for regions and local governments. By bringing people together Jourdan and MORPC are able to move forward initiatives that enhance the quality of life for every central Ohio resident. One example of that was securing \$28 million in federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) highway dollars for central Ohio and an additional \$4.5 million for Home Weatherization Assistance Programs for people who need help reducing their home energy costs. In 2010, MORPC's budget will reach a record high of over \$11.9 million, the largest in the agency's history.

Jourdan has also spent much of 2009 traveling throughout the 12-county region talking about MORPC's 40th Anniversary as a planning commission and sharing the agencies goals for the future. He has worked hard to build new strategic partnerships among the public and private sector, non-profit organizations, and members of the state and federal legislature to ensure the strength and vibrancy of central Ohio's future.

Almost immediately upon his arrival, Jourdan had a vision to develop the agency's Greenways program into something much larger. Together with the then program director, Erin Miller, the two created MORPC's Center for Energy & Environment. The Center's creation has allowed MORPC to respond to new challenges in the areas of sustainability, air quality, greenways and energy conservation in our region.

Today, the importance of technology in resources and priorities is evident throughout every department at MORPC. New technology resources have been installed throughout the agency's offices and MORPC was the first Ohio regional planning commission to create a Facebook page and begin using Twitter. Many of the similar agencies in the state look toward MORPC for its information, technology sharing and initiatives in attempts to formulate them for their region. Utilizing social media tools has helped to collaborate with other entities in central Ohio on news, announce events and notify residents of specific projects. MORPC's board members and sister agencies have asked them to host a training session to present their social media policy, strategies and successes with using these tools, and how to get started in the social media world.

The combination of MORPC's use of technology and Jourdan's leadership has resulted in him being nominated for two 2009 TechColumbus Awards in the categories of Executive of the Year and Innovation in Non-Profit Service Delivery. The award winners will be announced on February 4, 2010.

Working to Build a Better Region

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