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Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce
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**Yakima Chosen as Finalist for All-America City Award:
Spotlight on Healthy Communities**

(Yakima, WA) April 10, 2014 – The Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce Yakima is included in list of 25 finalists for the “2014 All-America City Awards,” the country's most prestigious award for outstanding, community-based civic accomplishments organized annually by the National Civic League.

Each year, the National Civic League recognizes ten communities across the nation for outstanding civic accomplishments. To win, communities must demonstrate innovation, inclusiveness, civic engagement, and cross sector collaboration by describing successful efforts to address pressing local challenges. To date, more than 600 communities have won the award. Yakima last received the designation in 1994.

At the urging of Chamber incoming Board Chair, Joe Mann and executive director Verlynn Best, a group of interested citizens starting meeting weekly in late January to draft and finalize a written application before the March 15th application deadline. Self-titled the All-American City Committee, participants included representatives from local media, healthcare, the City of Yakima, Visitors and Convention Center, and local businesses.

“This really was a grass roots effort,” said chair Joe Mann. “Verlynn (Best) and I talked, the called some people to start brainstorming. “We are own worst enemies. Yakima is a great place to live. We hope this designation will change locals’ perceptions.”

Yakima’s application presented the much-improved educational system, the Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences and innovative “Gang Free Initiative” as models of innovative civic partnerships.

The All-America City award program culminates in a three-day event where community delegations tell their stories of successful change to a national jury of business, nonprofit, and local government experts. All-America Cities benefit by increasing community pride, networking with civic activists from across the country and gaining national recognition. The 2014 All-America City Awards will be held in June in Denver, Colorado.

NCL is a 120-year old nonpartisan, nonprofit organization based in Denver, Colorado. Its mission is accomplished by fostering and sharing promising practices of local government and public engagement and celebrating the progress that can be achieved when people work together.

For more information, contact Verlynn Best, Executive Director at the Chamber of Commerce at 509.248.2021 or Joe Mann, Ron’s Coin at 509.248.1117.

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