



CITY OF MOUNT VERNON, N.Y.

Board of Water Supply

SHAWYN PATTERSON-HOWARD
Mayor

City Hall, One Roosevelt Square
Mount Vernon, NY, 10550
(914) 668-7820 – Fax: (914) 668-2316

CARLTON SPRUILL
Commissioner
JOHN ARENA
Superintendent

September 17, 2024

Honorable City Council Members
Of the City of Mount Vernon
City Hall, Mount Vernon, New York
(Through the Office of the Mayor)

Re: Request to attend The 2024 Catalyst Experience

Dear Members of the City Council,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to inform you of an exciting opportunity that has been extended to Monica Hughes, Lead Administrator, and Milton Vann, Lead Service Line Field Coordinator, and to our city. They have been invited by the Environmental Policy Innovation Center (Epic) to represent Mount Vernon at the 2024 Catalyst Experience, hosted by Rogue Water Lab. This event will take place in San Antonio, Texas, from October 16th to October 18th.

This year's theme: *A World of Pure Imagination*, high-lighting the collective power of water sector communicators and educators. The conference will focus on interactive experiences that deliver real-world impact, elevate the visibility of strategic communications, and drive positive, lasting change within the industry and the communities we serve.

Conference Tracks Include:

- How to build trust
- The spectrum of engagement
- How do local elected officials prefer to be engaged on water issues?
- Connecting to water through poetry
- Navigating difficult conversations with communities through transparency
- Storytelling: The untold stories of water heroes
- The role of perceptions and perspectives in community engagement
- Crafting memorable, impactful experiences

This prestigious invitation reflects our city's active participation in the Cities Initiative. On May 19, 2023, Jon Altenberg, President of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, awarded Mount Vernon the Lead Service Line Replacement Initiative. Our continuous engagement has not only brought national

"The Jewel of Westchester"



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recognition to our city but has also highlighted our commitment to clean water, environmental justice, well-being, and equity. This recognition is a testament to the innovative strategies and dedicated efforts we have implemented to enhance the quality of life for all our residents.

Mount Vernon has been at the forefront of addressing these crucial issues, particularly the intersection of environmental justice and public health in BIPOC communities. Our experiences can serve as a model for other cities facing similar challenges.

Importantly, for one attendee, expenses related to this engagement—including travel, lodging, and meals—will be fully covered by the Environmental Policy Innovation Center (Epic). For an additional attendee, the registration fee for the event is \$225.00. Airline transportation and hotel accommodations not to exceed \$1,275 will be incurred. The total cost for the additional attendee shall not exceed \$1,500.00 and is available in Board of Water Supply budget code 001-581-581001 (Staff Development & Trainings).

Your support, is vital for us to seize this opportunity to showcase Mount Vernon's leadership and continue advancing our efforts in water sustainability and community engagement on a national scale.

Please feel free to contact me directly or Ms. Monica Hughes at (914) 650-4646 or via email at mhughes@cmvny.com. Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,



Carlton Spruill
Commissioner, Board of Water Supply

cc: City Clerk
Mayor's Office