

REMARKS BY MATHY STANISLAUS
CARE NATIONAL WORKSHOP
NEW YORK CITY
OCTOBER 20, 2009

AS PREPARED

I want to join with the other speakers here this morning to welcome all of you to the 5th annual CARE workshop.

For me, this is like a homecoming, a rebirth, a return to my roots, all rolled up into one great event. I'm seeing lots of familiar faces, some of whom I haven't seen in a long time, too long a time. We're meeting in New York, where I've worked most of my professional life. And we're meeting to discuss better ways of doing something that's been my life's work: improving environmental and economic conditions in America's communities, particularly those communities that have been overlooked and underserved by governments at every level.

I may have been invited here because I'm EPA's Assistant Administrator for Solid Waste and Emergency Response, and we're now the lead office for CARE at EPA. But I accepted the invitation because New York is my home soil, you are my neighbors and friends, and your concerns about the future are my concerns as well. I'm positively delighted to be here.

Given my professional roots, I'm also delighted that the CARE program is now being directed by my staff at EPA. Care was brought to life by other EPA offices. They did a great job, and I thank them for it. Now Marsha Minter of my office is responsible for oversight of the program, while Pat Carey and Gale Bonanno serve as co-leads of CARE's day-to-day operations. If you don't

already know them, introduce yourselves at this workshop. Their job is to make your job as productive and successful as possible.

During this workshop, you're going to be discussing the nitty-gritty details of how CARE works, and how to make it work better. So let me spend a few minutes telling you why I think CARE is one of EPA's most important programs, and why we're seeing such promising results in our CARE communities.

CARE is working well because it's YOUR program, not ours. We supply some up-front seed money, but the ideas, the inspiration, the team-building, the priority-setting, and the hard everyday work come from you. We listen to you, because you own the projects in your communities.

CARE is working well because it looks at the big picture, the whole picture, at one time. In a sense, CARE is like a jigsaw puzzle. There are lots of pieces: the air and water quality piece, the toxic pollution piece, the transportation piece, the facility siting piece, the housing piece, the area planning piece, the business development piece. Each piece is important. But our goal is to put the pieces together to create a coherent, beautiful picture, a picture of the sustainable future we want for our communities.

CARE is successful because it builds teams, and those teams raise community interest while strengthening community spirit. CARE projects rely on broad-based, collaborative partnerships that bring together residents young and old, businesses, universities, non-profit organizations, and local governments. And local partnerships are the best way, maybe the only way, to make America's communities sustainable.

Finally, CARE is successful because it is liberating. As your projects evolve, as your teams come closer – piece by piece – to realizing the complete picture of your future, you will become less dependent on EPA and the federal

government, and more dependent on your own skills and initiative. Whenever and wherever possible, we want you to build the local technical skills, and develop the local sources of funding, so your dream of a sustainable community can continue long after EPA grant funding has ended.

You've come to this workshop to teach and to learn. You've come to tell others what you've done in your communities, how well it's worked, and why it may have failed. You've come to learn the lessons of success and failure in other communities much like yours.

This is critically important work. I wish you the best of luck.

Thank you .