

# NADO news release

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS**

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400 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 390, Washington, DC 20001  
Tel: (202) 624-5948 • Email: [info@nado.org](mailto:info@nado.org) • Website: [www.NADO.org](http://www.NADO.org)  
For Immediate Release: September 21, 2012  
Contact: Laurie Thompson, Deputy Executive Director

## **Piedmont Triad Regional Council Receives National Association of Development Organizations 2012 Innovation Award**

WASHINGTON, DC – The Piedmont Triad Regional Council, based in Winston Salem, North Carolina, received a 2012 Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Research Foundation for the *Forsyth County Real World Event*.

**Real World Event: A Community Collaborative Program** ... designed to expose youth ages 15-21 to real world situations concerning jobs, finances and personal decisions.

The Real World Program for youth has been successful in helping young people develop life skills, including carving out educational and career plans, learning the basics of getting and keeping a job, and locating appropriate housing, but mostly, it has introduced youth to the variety of options that are available to young people. We believe that by exposing youth to better options, they will make better decisions. This is proving true every day. Goals include:

- Bringing youth from similar situations together to share their future dreams/goals for when they leave the social service system or home
- Teaching youth the life skills necessary to meet their goals as productive adult citizens
- Providing a one-day simulation based on how to make daily responsible, financial decisions necessary for adult life

The April 12, 2012 “Real World Event” as a one-day simulation addressing education and employment decisions youth make in combination with lifestyle choices, such as housing, transportation, leisure, etc. Participants were given an occupation based on an employment-educational assessment. The occupation provided a salary, some with benefits. Youth were challenged to take their salary and develop a budget based on every day needs (food, electricity, rent, etc.) and situational crises such as medical, emotional, social, and accidental. This event helped youth re-evaluate occupational choices based on lifestyle preference. For some, it will mean finishing high school. For others this event may prompt furthering their education at a community college or university.

Collaborating with the PTRC Workforce Development Department on the “Real World Event” were the following partner organizations: Goodwill Industries of NWNC, Forsyth County eLink Program, Forsyth County Department of Social Services, Consumer Credit Counseling, and State Farm Insurance.

NADO is a Washington, DC-based association that promotes programs and policies that strengthen local governments, communities and economies through regional cooperation, program delivery, and comprehensive strategies. The association’s Innovation Awards program recognizes regional development organizations and partnering organizations for improving the economic and community competitiveness of our nation’s regions and local communities. Award winners will be showcased during NADO’s 2012 Annual Training Conference, to be held October 13-16 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

“For more than 25 years, NADO’s Innovation Award has provided regional development organizations throughout the nation a unique opportunity to showcase their important work and their critical role in promoting economic development for rural and small metropolitan communities. The creativity and significant, long-term impact of regional programs and projects like the Forsyth County Real World Event are the key to advancing the economic growth and sustainability of our nation’s regions and communities,” said NADO President Russell Cowley, executive director of the Six County Association of Governments in Richfield, UT.

For more information about the award-winning project, contact the Piedmont Triad Regional Council at 336-761-2111.

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**Founded in 1967, the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) provides advocacy, education, networking, and research for the national network of 540 regional development organizations. NADO members provide professional, programmatic and technical assistance to over 2,300 counties and 15,000 municipalities.**