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Providence mayor Smiley selected as one of nation's rising leaders by NewDEAL

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Brett Smiley

Providence, RI Mayor Brett Smiley was selected as one of 22 leaders from across the country to join the NewDEAL (Developing Exceptional American Leaders), a selective national network of state and local elected officials with honorary co-chairs U.S. senator Chris Coons and congresswoman Marilyn Strickland.

Members of the network have been chosen from more than 1,900 nominations over NewDEAL's 12 years, and are united by their work to enact pro-growth progressive solutions across their diverse array of communities.

Smiley joins the group at a time when state and local leaders are on the frontlines of responding to economic issues around the cost of living and the changing nature of work, as well as challenges caused by climate change, racial inequities, and threats to our democracy. At a moment when unprecedented federal resources are flowing to states, counties, and cities from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and Inflation Reduction Act, NewDEALers are supporting each other in thinking big and sharing model policies and programs, including through in-person and virtual convenings. In one effort, NewDEAL has released an ARPA impact report highlighting some of the innovative ways members of the network have used federal funding to transform their communities. NewDEALers also led a working group that released a Democracy Playbook, featuring actionable steps elected officials across all levels of state and local government can take to strengthen elections. NewDEAL Leaders' work also has contributed to reports of policy recommendations on education, climate change, broadband, and the future of work.

NewDEALers' next major convening will take place at the 2023 Spring Ideas Summit, May 15-16 in Detroit, MI, where about 50 members will join other innovators from the public and private sectors to discuss a forward-looking agenda for state and local Democrats to address the biggest challenges facing our country, including housing, education, climate change, and threats to our democracy.

Elected in 2022, Smiley was selected to join NewDEAL because of his lifelong commitment to public service and responsible governance. Prior to his election as mayor, Smiley served as chief operating officer for Providence City Hall, chief of staff to former governor Raimondo, and director of administration, where he oversaw the state's COVID-19 response. He has made improving access to high-quality education a focus of his career in state and local government, working to expand early education and childcare programs across the state and leading the push for free community college for all high school graduates.

NewDEAL Leaders have found broad support for their work across red, blue, and purple states and cities, with more than 20 rising to higher office in the past few years. Throughout the organization's history, more than one in four NewDEAL Leaders has moved to higher office. These leaders include members of Congress, such as Marilyn Strickland in Washington, Brittany Pettersen in Colorado, and Jennifer McClellan in Virginia, governor Josh Shapiro in Pennsylvania, and new mayors in cities from San Jose, CA to Stamford, CT.

"As mayor, I am committed to making Providence the best-run city in America," said Smiley.

“Providence has all the right ingredients to be a world-class city, and with the team of dedicated professionals that have joined my Administration, we are going to improve the local quality of life, tackle some of the biggest challenges facing cities today and make Providence a leader in the new economy. I am thrilled to collaborate and share ideas with the many inspirational NewDEAL leaders from across the country who are also looking to transform their communities.”

About NewDEAL

The NewDEAL brings together leaders focused on expanding opportunity, helping them develop and spread innovative ideas to spur economic growth that is broadly-earned and sustainable. Most importantly, the organization facilitates the exchange of ideas among its members and connects them with other pro-growth progressive political, policy, and private sector leaders. NewDEAL alumni have included Pete Buttigieg, Stacey Abrams, Jason Kander, Alex Padilla, Ben McAdams, and more.

Today’s announcement brings the total number of NewDEAL members – statewide officials, legislators, mayors, councilmembers, and other local leaders – to 191 leaders from 49 states.

Learn more about Smiley and the NewDEAL at <http://www.newdealleaders.org/leaders>.

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