

**Item Title:** Recognition of Recent Awards

**Specific Action Requested:**

**That the Board of Commissioners recognizes recent award winners.**

**Item Summary:**

**Wake County Recognized for Excellence in Technology**

The Center for Digital Government (CDG) and the National Association of Counties (NACo) have ranked Wake County as the No. 2 digital county of its size in the country in the 16th annual Digital Counties Survey. This is Wake County's seventh consecutive top 10 finish.

The Digital Counties Survey, conducted by CDG in partnership with NACo, identifies the best technology practices among U.S. counties, including initiatives that streamline delivery of government services, encourage collaboration and shared services, and enhance cybersecurity. The survey results commended several of the county's current technological initiatives, including:

- As sustained commitment to align IT with broader county strategies;
- Strong citizen engagement and customer service efforts;
- Strategic expansion of accessibility and fiber service across the county; and
- Robust cybersecurity practices and training resources.

**2018 NACo Achievement Awards**

Wake County has received six Achievement Awards from the National Association of Counties (NACo). Achievement Awards recognize innovative county programs.

**Children and Youth Category**

**Improving Educational Outcomes for Children in Foster Care (Human Services)**

Study after study has shown that children in foster care have lower academic achievement compared to the general population. To reverse this trend, Wake County partnered with Friends of Wake Guardian ad Litem Program, Wake Guardian ad Litem Program and Triangle Literacy Council to launch the Educational Advocacy Project. The project involved enrolling underperforming students in a unique tutoring program that addressed the specific challenges often faced by children in foster care. Of the 49 foster children who participated in the program, more than 70% demonstrated progress in reading and 55% showed improvements in math.

**Community and Economic Development**

**An Innovation Challenge to Revitalize a Vulnerable Community**

Wake County partnered with United Way, City of Raleigh, Southeast Raleigh Promise and other community stakeholders to sponsor the Southeast Raleigh Innovation Challenge, which brings skill-building, resources and networks for innovation to fuel the economic engine vital to the historic yet vulnerable Southeast Raleigh community. The competitive Challenge invited local community residents, small businesses, nonprofits,

faith-based groups and youth to develop innovative but practical solutions to the area's specific economic and social issues, then present their ideas for a chance to win seed money from a \$120,000 prize pool. The Challenge's first year success measures included community engagement, ideation for economic vitality and authentic skill building.

### **Personnel Management, Employment and Training**

#### **Holistic, Whole Life Approach to Well-being (Human Resources)**

In 2016, Wake County expanded its employee wellness program to include a holistic, whole-life approach to well-being. The new program goes beyond the traditional focus on physical health and emphasizes emotional, social and financial wellness as well. The expanded program, Living Great @ Wake, is anchored by an innovative, interactive website. Through the website, employees can access more than 200 different wellness programs ranging from disease management and acute care to financial seminars and stress relief workshops. The variety of topics covered ensures that all employees have opportunities to improve their personal wellness, regardless of where they fall on the continuum of health and well-being.

In addition to helping employees reduce their health risks and make measurable improvements to their personal wellness, Living Great @ Wake has also contributed to Wake County being named the Healthiest Employer in the Triangle by the Triangle Business Journal and the 14th Healthiest Employer in the Country by Springbuk, Inc.

#### **Supervisory Training Achieves Results (STAR) (Human Resources)**

After a countywide needs assessment and feedback from exit interviews revealed deficiencies in training for leadership, Wake County developed the Supervisory Training Achieves Results (STAR) program to provide training in eight competencies identified as essential for leaders. The 40-hour, application-based program covers topics such as problem-solving, decision-making, collaboration and managing the workforce. In addition to completing a self-assessment and engaging with senior-level executives, participants must identify, develop and present a SMART goal and demonstrate progress quarterly. Pre- and post-program testing allows Human Resources to evaluate and substantiate the knowledge gained in the program and ensure that the STAR program effectively promotes Wake County's culture of continuous improvement and professional development.

#### **Training Goes Virtual (Human Resources)**

With a multi-generational workforce and increasing training demands that often exceed available resources, Wake County had to find a new training approach to meet evolving training needs. When analysis revealed that some of the county's training goals could be effectively achieved through online training rather than instructor-led training, HR created nearly 70 interactive e-learning courses covering topics such as diversity, discrimination and interviewing. In addition, HR transitioned the four-hour benefits orientation and the annual open enrollment process to interactive e-learning modules, allowing employees and their families to review benefit options virtually, when and where it was most convenient for them to do so.

Wake County's virtual training program has reduced the costs associated with learning and development and increased employee participation by almost 500%.

## **Risk and Emergency Management**

### **Animal Services Safety Team: Empowering Employees to Address Safety Concerns (Environmental Services)**

In 2017, the Wake County Animal Center launched an employee-led safety team to deliver consistent evaluation of work environments and provide employees with a framework for addressing safety concerns. The team created and implemented a safety checklist for monthly employee-led facility inspections, addressed safety concerns and identified general building issues in need of repair. The team's efforts have also led to the development of a new employee safety orientation and the certification of key employees in First Aid and CPR/AED. This program demonstrates how launching an employee-driven safety team can engage front-line staff and create a safer, healthier environment for everyone who works at or visits a county facility.

### **Petteway Named Living Legend by Raleigh-Wake Citizens Association**

The Raleigh-Wake Citizens Association (RWCA) presented Human Services Director Regina Petteway with the 2018 Living Legend Award in Public Health in recognition of her diligence in promoting good health among the area's underserved and most vulnerable communities.

Petteway was recognized for her work to improve the systems that serve the county's most vulnerable residents and as a champion for affordable housing. The RWCA also acknowledged her work to strengthen the county's network of services for health and economic vitality, and the fact that under Petteway's leadership of Human Services, Wake County was named the healthiest county in North Carolina.

A list of awards and recognitions can be found at:  
[wakegov.com/awards/Lists/Recognitions/AllItems.aspx](http://wakegov.com/awards/Lists/Recognitions/AllItems.aspx).

## **Attachments:**

None