

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. 5 digital county of its size in the country in the [17th annual Digital Counties Survey](#). This is Wake County's eighth consecutive top 10 finish.

The survey is conducted each year to recognize counties across the U.S. that have the best technology practices, including initiatives that streamline the delivery of government services, encourage open data, collaboration and shared services, enhance cybersecurity and contribute to disaster response and recovery efforts.

Several of the [Wake County initiatives that were highlighted in this year's survey](#) demonstrated our commitment in the areas of cybersecurity, data governance, public safety, and infrastructure modernization to name a few.

2019 NACo Achievement Awards

The National Association of Counties (NACo) has announced the winners for the [2019 Achievement Awards](#), which recognize innovative programs in county government.

This year, NACo recognized 616 entries from counties and state associations in 32 states, and six Wake County initiatives were selected for this national recognition.

Children and Youth Category

Fighting Food Insecurity and the Summer Slide (Community Services)

Thanks to a partnership between Wake County Public Libraries and Parks, Recreation and Open Space, 945 at-risk children in south Raleigh received nutritious meals at Historic Oak View County Park during school breaks in 2018.

Through the USDA's Summer Food Service Program, more than 60 volunteers worked through the summer alongside youth serving with WCPL's Teen Leadership Corps to help address issues of food insecurity and help participants avoid the "summer slide" - when students forget skills learned the previous school year.

Smiles at Sunnybrook (Human Services)

More than 2,200 Wake County children have a reason to smile thanks to a grant-funded initiative at Wake County Human Services' Dental Clinic. The Smiles at Sunnybrook program ensures uninsured children receive preventative dental care and educates parents on their vital role in their child's dental health.

Since July 2018, program staff have actively promoted the program through collaboration with community partners including the Poe Health Center and Boys & Girls Clubs of Wake County. The program was expanded beyond the main Sunnybrook Road location to the county's three regional centers, allowing more children to be served.

Community and Economic Development

Targeted Growth Area Incentive: Driving Equitable & Inclusive Economic Development (County Managers' Office)

Equitable economic development unlocks the full potential of the local economy by dismantling barriers and expanding opportunities for lower-income citizens and communities of emphasis.

For three years, Wake County Government has worked closely with Wake County Economic Development, a program of the Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce, to better understand the county's most vulnerable communities and how to support and promote economic mobility for these Targeted Growth Areas. The partnership resulted in the adoption of a new Targeted Growth Area incentive policy, which seeks to ensure all county residents have an equitable opportunity to thrive as a result of economic development growth, new jobs and investment.

County Administration and Management

Leveraging Artificial Intelligence Valuation Models (Tax Administration)

To accommodate Wake County's new four-year reappraisal cycle, the Tax Administration department began working in 2016 on a six-year staffing plan to gradually increase industry-low staffing and meet the increased workload demands. At the same time, staff began exploring automated methods to assist in performing critical but historically labor-intensive tasks.

In 2017, Tax Administration engaged SAS through a research and development project to explore the capabilities of SAS's cutting-edge, machine-learning-based software, SAS Viya, to assist in performing these labor-intensive tasks. SAS Viya provides nightly models that produce highly accurate valuation and adjustment recommendations, which has enabled Tax Administration to adhere to the staffing plan laid out in 2016.

Health

HCV/STD Community Program (Human Services)

As many as 1 in 30 baby boomers have Hepatitis C and most don't even know they're infected. Left untreated, Hepatitis C (HCV) can cause cirrhosis, cancer and death. In September 2016, Human Services received grant funds to implement an HCV screening and linkage-to-care project targeting Wake County residents born between 1945-1965 and those with other risk factors.

At the end of the program's second year, 12,480 residents had been screened. In addition to the testing services, counselors contact HCV positive clients and link them to medical care and other appropriate services such as mental health and substance abuse assistance. The program also allows staff to quickly identify the highest risk residents in need of closer contact, reducing the chance that these residents will be lost to care.

Parks and Recreation

Wake County Park Locator – All the Parks, In One Place (Community Services)

Wake County's Park Locator app is a digital tool that puts information about every state, county and municipal park at users' fingertips. Developed collaboratively with the City of Raleigh, users can access it in a mobile-friendly format, search by activities and get customized directions.

Because government data is often siloed by jurisdiction, citizens traditionally must visit multiple websites for a complete picture. In Wake County, parks are managed at the state, county and municipal level, and had no unified data source. To solve this "jurisdictional fatigue," the Park Locator was born - all the parks, in one place.

A list of awards and recognitions can be found at:
wakegov.com/awards/Lists/Recognitions/AllItems.aspx.

Attachments:

None.