

PRESS RELEASE



Virginia Counties Recognized for Model Programs



RICHMOND (August 7, 2018)—The Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) is pleased to announce the 25 recipients of the 2018 Achievement Awards, which recognize excellence in local government programs. VACo received a record 106 submissions.

Winning entries focused on addressing high-priority issues that challenge counties today.

[Winning Achievement Award Submissions](#)

[Winning Program Descriptions](#)

“This is the 16th year of the Achievement Awards, and we continue to be rich with innovative programs that truly help Virginia’s counties,” VACo Executive Director **Dean Lynch said**. “I want to thank all who participated. This year, we received 106 entries, which is the highest in the program’s history. This tells me that Virginia counties continue to find creative ways to solve the complex challenges they face every day.”

Tedd Povar, Associate Director of the Virginia Institute of Government; **Dr. Sheryl Bailey**, Senior Vice President at Springsted Incorporated and former Chesterfield County Deputy County Administrator; and **Larry Land**, retired VACo Director of Policy Development, served as judges for this year’s statewide competitive awards program.

Pittsylvania County and its **Park Project Program** won this year’s Best Achievement Award.

“Pittsylvania County’s Park Project was selected as the overall winner for 2018 in recognition of their multiyear effort to leverage \$150,000 in County seed money to raise over \$500,000 from other sources to build their first public parks,” Povar said. “Located at the County’s four middle schools, the new multipurpose facilities provide badly needed health and recreational opportunities to residents throughout the County. While these facilities have already received commendations from other agencies, it became clear that VACo needed to also recognize and congratulate Pittsylvania County on this major achievement.”

The judges also selected a Best Small County Achievement Award (50,000 or less population) and a Best Large County Achievement Award. **Isle of Wight County** captured the Best Small County Achievement Award while **Chesterfield County** earned the Best Large County Achievement Award for the second consecutive year.

“The Achievement Awards Program is a treasure trove of ideas for all localities in Virginia and beyond,” Dr. Bailey said. “I encourage all county administrators and staff as well as elected officials to review the 106 entries this year. The VACo Achievement Awards are not just a competition but also a sharing of ideas. Each batch of entries every year is a best practice repository available to everyone in the Commonwealth to learn from and to replicate.”

Land said he’s encouraged by how counties continue to find solutions despite budget or other restraints. “This is the first time I’ve judged the VACo Achievement Awards, and I admit I felt a sense of pride after reading all the entries,” Land said. “After working at VACo for almost 30 years, I can’t say I’m surprised because Virginia counties have always shown a high level of resourcefulness and ingenuity.”

Chesterfield County tops the all-time Achievement Awards list with 29. Chesterfield County has won an award in each of the 16-year history of the program. **Henrico County** is second on the list with 22 Achievement Awards while **Loudoun County** is third with 21. **Prince William County** is fourth with 19 awards.

The VACo Achievement Awards are a competitive program open to local government members of the association. VACo will present awards at Board of Supervisors meetings and recognize award-winning counties at the 2018 Annual Conference in November.

[Winning Achievement Award Submissions](#)

[Winning Program Descriptions](#)

[Achievement Awards Website](#)

[2018 Achievement Awards Entries](#)

[Past Winners](#)

[Past Judges](#)

VACo exists to support county officials and to effectively represent, promote and protect the interests of counties to better serve the people of Virginia.

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