



Loudoun County, Virginia

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NEWS RELEASE

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Loudoun Wins National Achievement Awards for Innovation

Loudoun County has been recognized with five 2022 Achievement Awards from the National Association of Counties (NACo). The awards honor innovative, effective county government programs. Loudoun's award-winning programs, which include several that came out of the COVID-19 pandemic, are:



COVID-19 Related Business Grants

Loudoun County's COVID-19 business support program was created just weeks into the pandemic to help fund innovative solutions to accelerate business growth for companies forced to pivot in the wake of COVID-19. Administered by the [Department of Economic Development](#), the program was the first of its kind in the region and among the most successful in the country for providing funding quickly to businesses that were in danger of closing indefinitely. The [Board of Supervisors](#) invested nearly \$12 million in federal coronavirus relief and local funding in the Business Interruption Fund and the Outdoor Seating Grant program to provide critical financial support to more than 2,000 small businesses, and later an additional \$9 million in federal funds for the Hotel Relief Grant Fund and the Business Reinvestment and Recovery Grant.

Discover Your Outdoors

The [Department of Parks, Recreation & Community Services](#)' "Discover Your Outdoors" initiative created recreational opportunities during the pandemic, providing quality programs for physical and mental health while following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's COVID-19 guidelines. The program included indoor, outdoor, active and passive programming opportunities at the county's parks, performing and visual arts center and nature preserve. The activities were geared to all, regardless of age and ability. The department served more than 100,000 patrons during the most critical moments of the pandemic.

High Threat Team

The Loudoun County High Threat Team is a cooperative effort of the [Loudoun County Combined Fire and Rescue System](#) and the [Loudoun County Sheriff's Office](#). The team is designed to foster cooperation and coordination at all levels between fire and rescue personnel and law enforcement officers to improve response to day-to-day emergencies and acts of violence. The Loudoun team has developed innovative programs that include integrated training, policy development and combined response initiatives as well as full-scale exercises. The team creates the opportunity to build relationships between the two agencies before incidents occur so that they can conduct an effective response when an emergency or act of violence occurs.

Online Community Service Hubs

Although the [Loudoun County Public Library \(LCPL\)](#) was forced to close to in-person service at the start of the pandemic, the staff came up with a way to assist patrons by providing information and services that would help them cope with both isolation and the transition to remote schooling and telework. With the help of schools, local businesses and nonprofits, LCPL created

two online sites: The Online Learning Hub and the Quarantine Survival Kit. The Online Learning Hub catered to the needs of students, educators, parents and caregivers. The Quarantine Survival Kit focused on overall well-being, with age-appropriate resources for children, teens, and adults. Both sites featured interactive elements that allowed customers to chat with librarians, tutors, and career coaches. Over 20,000 unique customers made use of these focused, high-quality information hubs.

Site Assessment Program

The Loudoun Master Gardeners Site Assessment Program assists landowners with best management practices for natural resource conservation and improving the health of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Through this [Virginia Cooperative Extension \(VCE\) Loudoun](#) program, Master Gardener volunteers assess ponds, landscapes and land bordering streams that, through the years, have grown shady or stagnant and may threaten natural resource conservation during a weather event. The volunteers document the issues through photos and samples of pond weeds and water, and also survey the surrounding landscape. Property owners then receive a detailed report, including options that can help them better maintain their landscape, such as methods for erosion and sediment control. This program also earned a 2021 Achievement Award from the Virginia Association of Counties.

More Information

More information about the National Association of Counties and the NACo Achievement Award Program is online at www.naco.org.

More information about Loudoun County government's award-winning programs is online at loudoun.gov/awards.

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