



# SOUTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

Johnnie Wright Sr., President  
*Orangeburg County*

Timothy C. Winslow  
*Executive Director*

Oct. 1, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Stuart Morgan  
Public Information Director

## **SCAC RECOGNIZES 10 COUNTIES PRESENTING ENTRIES IN THE ASSOCIATION'S 2020 COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RESILIENCY SHOWCASE**

South Carolina Association of Counties (SCAC) held a Virtual Watch Party at 10 a.m. on Thursday, October 1 at the SCETV Studio in Columbia to recognize the following 10 counties that presented entries in the COVID-19 Response and Resiliency Showcase on August 26 at SCETV: Berkeley, Calhoun, Charleston, Dorchester, Georgetown, Horry, Kershaw, Lancaster, Pickens and Spartanburg. SCAC livestreamed a tribute to the counties on Facebook and on SCAC's website at [www.SCCounties.org/livestream](http://www.SCCounties.org/livestream).

The Showcase, a new segment added this year to SCAC's Annual Awards Competition, was not adjudicated. It was designed to provide counties an opportunity to showcase how they have responded to the pandemic while continuing to provide essential services to citizens.

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, this is the first time that SCAC's Annual Awards Competition has not been held at the Association's annual conference in Hilton Head Island. The Association's Awards Competition was held last month at SCETV instead, and livestreamed on Facebook and on SCAC's website at [www.SCCounties.org](http://www.SCCounties.org)

Judging the J. Mitchell Graham and Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Awards portion of SCAC's 2020 Awards Competition and observing the COVID-19 Response and Resiliency Showcase were: Head Judge—William E. Tomes, Fellow, Joseph P. Riley Jr. Center for Livable Communities, College of Charleston; J. Milton Pope, Principal, Parker Poe Consulting; and Paula E. Sanford, Ph.D., Public Service and Outreach Faculty Member, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia.

"All of this year's judges were impressed with the quality of the entries submitted in this year's COVID-19 Response and Resiliency Showcase, particularly in light of the other challenges counties have faced this year," said Tomes, who headed this year's panel of judges.

Tomes introduced the tribute video that was livestreamed at the Virtual Watch Party. The video recognized each of the following 10 county programs:

### **Berkeley County**

From acquisition of protective equipment to continual communications to coordination with other agencies for testing sites and blood drives, Berkeley County took early action to ensure citizens and staff were prepared, informed, and safe. The county formed a task force, advanced remote access capability, enhanced safety to address pandemic concerns, and continues to monitor and mitigate spread of the virus. Leaders worked with staff to develop plans and methods to ensure businesses could operate through the pandemic in a safe way.

### **Calhoun County**

The Calhoun County Museum provided vital emotional support during the restriction and isolation of the COVID-19 crisis by bringing the museum and other county programs into citizens' homes. The program was especially important to older residents and parents teaching from home. The museum provided non-stop service through Facebook, Zoom, its website, and telephone. Citizens from 20 South Carolina counties and 20 states connected to the museum and its historical information, genealogy, and audio-video presentations.

### **Charleston County**

To help contain the spread of COVID-19 in Charleston County, staff launched a comprehensive mobile testing strategy. The measure focused on under-served areas with limited travel capabilities and internet access. The testing sites assisted both pre-registered patients and walk-up clients. The county collaborated with Fetter Health Care Network and completed more than 1,000 citizen tests for COVID-19 in its first week of mobile testing. Eventually, more testing sites were added and, as of June 26, more than 4,000 people were tested.

### **Dorchester County**

Dorchester County's response to COVID-19 began with the formation of a COVID-19 Task Force. The group worked tirelessly with county council, elected and appointed officials, and department heads to develop mitigation strategies, including public messaging and contingency plans for COVID-19. The county's priority was protecting employees and citizens through safety and sanitation measures and effective public messaging. Team Dorchester County continues to use innovative ways to ensure continuity of government operations.

### **Georgetown County**

When COVID-19 hit South Carolina, Georgetown County was in the difficult position of not having a county administrator. Still, the county's staff and the new administrator (who came on board in April) have handled the pandemic and all the challenges it presented in a way it is proud of, working diligently—and at times creatively—to protect the health and safety of residents.

### **Horry County**

Like counties across our state and country, Horry County experienced significant impacts due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With challenges unique to a rapidly growing community and tourist destination, strategic operational planning and communication were critical to maintaining the local economy while keeping the community healthy and safe. Horry County implemented technology improvements, new programs, and updated standards to meet the challenges of the pandemic.

### **Kershaw County**

On March 7, 2020, the first patient in Kershaw County and the State of South Carolina tested positive for COVID-19, followed two weeks later by the first death from the virus. Immediately, Kershaw County became the epicenter and the face of the virus within the state. Within a matter of days, the county became one of the most impacted in America. The professional response to this pandemic is a testament to the Kershaw County staff and the community they serve.

### **Lancaster County**

COVID-19 impacted every employee and government service in Lancaster County. The unprecedented nature of the pandemic, concern for the safety of employees and their families, the overwhelming amount of information from federal and state agencies, and the rapid spread of the virus mandated a deliberate, focused, and proactive approach to the crisis. County employees shouldered unique

COVID-19 challenges and served the public by performing their duties with extraordinary professionalism, teamwork, compassion, energy, and resiliency.

**Pickens County**

KickStart Pickens County was the county’s three-phase COVID-19 revitalization plan to ensure a gradual, intentional approach to reopening with consideration for public health and the local economy. As restrictions were eased to get back to a “new normal” after closures to the public, the county’s careful plan allowed the county offices time to assess the needs to keep the public and staff safe as various facilities opened.

**Spartanburg County**

To meet the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, Spartanburg County took a “OneSpartanburg” approach and benefitted from the teamwork and synergy that is created when a community and county unite for a common cause. This approach brought together community partners and subject matter experts from diverse backgrounds to respond to COVID-19.

SCAC, chartered on June 22, 1967, is a nonprofit and nonpartisan organization whose membership includes all 46 counties in South Carolina. Governed by a 29-member board of directors elected each year by county officials at the Association’s annual conference, SCAC is the only organization representing county governments in the state.

The Association provides a number of services, programs, and activities to county governments and their officials, including: research and technical assistance; education and training; legal assistance; policy development, advocacy, and legislative information; publications, including a magazine and newsletter; meetings and conferences; public information, including an annual directory and website; and financial services, including the S.C. Counties Workers’ Compensation Trust and S.C. Counties Property & Liability Trust.

###