

2021 Awards Competition – ENTRY SUMMARIES

June 8, 2021
SC ETV

J. MITCHELL GRAHAM MEMORIAL AWARD

Berkeley County

The Berkeley County Sheriff's Office set up community substations and a Citizens Advisory Board to provide the public with a unique and effective platform to express their concerns and amplify their voices. The Board helps solve the perceived disconnect between the public and police. The presence of substations and proactive efforts of the Board reduces crime, ensures safer communities, and affirms that county deputies value residents.

Charleston County

The Satellite Voting Unit (SVU) brings the Board of Elections and Voter Registration Office to voters within Charleston County. Citizens can now cast their absentee vote close to where they live. The SVU also serves as a traveling billboard that allows citizens to learn more about voter registration and elections services and puts a face on the county elections office within the community.

Clarendon County

Clarendon County used teamwork, cooperation, resources, and hard work to merge its Fire and EMS Services under the county's umbrella. This successful merger, done during the COVID-19 pandemic, has enhanced and improved the services to and quality of life of county citizens. Clarendon County Fire and Rescue is now an impressive model on which other counties can base future endeavors of this type.

Greenwood County

The Soils Class Application was developed as a method for the Assessor's Office of Greenwood County to combine with current technology in order to create a simple and quick way to determine accurate soil classifications of agricultural properties in Greenwood County. Taxpayers and county employees benefit from the exponentially reduced time, accuracy, and fairness of the new automated process.

Kershaw County

The Enhance U Program improves and better utilizes Kershaw County's greatest talent – its employees. The county implemented a radical culture change by mapping talent, devising individualized development plans, and investing in comprehensive learning solutions. The initiative can easily be replicated by other counties seeking to comprehensively manage talent and create an agile workforce.

Lancaster County

During the COVID-19 pandemic, local governments quickly implemented protocols to limit exposure; however, protection after a death occurs was not widely considered. Immediately after a death, infectious diseases can continue to be released through bodily fluids and air escaping the body. The Lancaster County Coroner's Office developed a protection protocol after death, which rendered the spread of infection non-existent.

Marion County

Marion County is developing a park in downtown Marion to memorialize the life of the late Sen. Clementa Pinckney and provide recreation opportunities for underserved populations. As South Carolinians continue to heal from the tragic loss of The Charleston Nine, Marion County hopes to offer the Senator Clementa C. Pinckney Memorial Park as a means of remembrance and a place to enrich a community.

Pickens County

Pickens County experienced multiple severe weather events between February and November 2020 that resulted in the need for numerous culvert replacements, including one that would restrict access to main roads for 22 households in a residential neighborhood. This became an opportunity for Pickens County's Public Works Division to develop a template that would serve the county and its residents for many years to come, allowing for more resourceful, fiscally responsible, and eco-friendly operations in Pickens County.

Richland County

Richland County faced the challenges of a global pandemic with determination and resolve. Using \$1 million in financial support from the COVID-19 Pandemic Relief grant, the county assisted over 50 local small businesses and more than 15 local non-profits. The COVID-19 Pandemic Relief Grant is unequivocally an example of Richland County's strive for excellence.

BARRETT LAWRIK MEMORIAL REGIONAL COOPERATION AWARD

Berkeley County

Berkeley County took exceptional measures to safely and effectively execute an essential and popular annual event—the Delinquent Tax Sale. Through unique partnerships among county departments and a creative collaboration between local government and local business, Berkeley County was the only county in the state to offer both online and in-person options for the annual tax sale. The tax sale set a surprisingly strong and successful standard for all future sales.

Lancaster County and the City of Lancaster

Operation Significant Impact (OSI) is Lancaster County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) project that positively impacts the county by reducing substance misuse, overdoses, and crime to make Lancaster County a safer and healthier community. Each of the grant programs within OSI works closely together and with other governmental entities in Lancaster, community organizations, and businesses. OSI reduces harm to individuals with substance use disorders, lowers crime, and improves the environmental design of certain area neighborhoods.

Pickens County, Pickens County School District, and Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative

The Pickens County Broadband Initiative is designed to alleviate the challenges a lack of internet service creates for the community, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Using facilities as anchor institutions, the county will develop an enhanced cyber loop through areas with the highest concentration of underserved households, creating the backbone of fiber implementation in these communities.

COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RESILIENCY SHOWCASE

Berkeley County

Berkeley County adjusted and prioritized safety over all else in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, while also ensuring that county business continued. By providing additional online services, the county made processes more efficient. The county worked with surrounding agencies to promote testing sites and vaccine distributions. County leaders and staff developed plans that continue to make employee and citizen safety a top priority while ensuring the continuation of normal operations.

Charleston County

In 2021, Charleston County partnered with the Fetter Health Care Network to develop the COVID-19 Rural Vaccination Program, making COVID-19 vaccines available to the county's rural population. While Charleston County has three major hospitals in the central part of the county, this program brought vaccines to the most vulnerable communities located outside of the urban center without ready access to a hospital.

Lexington County

In February 2020, lifestyles were altered, and daily activities became more complicated with the COVID-19 pandemic. The County of Lexington made strategic decisions to ensure that critical services for the citizens of Lexington County continued, while also maintaining safety for its employees and citizens. Steps were taken to respond to, cope with, and mitigate the impact of the virus.

Pickens County

Pickens County was able to enhance safety protocols to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission without interrupting essential government services. The county sought innovative ways to ensure that public services were not interrupted during the pandemic. A Temporary Information Pod was deployed, which served as a drive-thru and makeshift front desk where citizens were assisted from their vehicles by knowledgeable staff.

Richland County

Using every resource at its disposal, Richland County worked tirelessly to educate and protect its residents throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The county exhibited strong financial policies and practices, continued its economic development efforts, and collaborated with governmental entities, community-based organizations, and local businesses to be "Richland Strong."