

2022 Awards Competition

ENTRY SUMMARIES

SCETV, COLUMBIA S.C.
JUNE 9, 2022

J. MITCHELL GRAHAM MEMORIAL AWARD

Anderson County

Anderson County has unified and reformed its EMS system into a two-tier response system by placing paramedics in “Quick Response Vehicles” instead of ambulances. The new system doubled the county’s emergency response capability, allowing paramedics to be dispatched only to critical life-threatening emergencies, making the county’s EMS much more streamlined to help citizens in need of immediate care.

Beaufort County

Without a landfill of its own, Beaufort County implemented a decal system to regulate entrance into and usage of county collection centers. The Solid Waste and Recycling Department fully implemented the decal system in the fall of 2021, saving the county thousands of dollars. This new system has eliminated misuse of centers resulting in reduced operational costs, traffic, and environmental concerns.

Charleston County

To reduce the risk of homelessness and financial insecurity of those severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, Charleston County’s Community Development Department applied for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) and later opened the application process in April 2021. The county so far issued over \$24 million in aid to provide rent and utility assistance to citizens in need.

Colleton County

Colleton County’s Fire-Rescue Department improved access to urgent Trauma Care in rural communities by creating the Pre-Hospital, Whole Blood Administration by Paramedics pilot program. Initially approved for twelve months, the project was extended to eighteen months and allowed paramedics to administer whole blood products to trauma patients on ambulances. The program delivered a critical resource to patients in need, and it produced a DHEC established protocol that set a precedent for other agencies to replicate.

Dorchester County

In 2009, Dorchester County completed its first Parks and Recreation Master Plan to create a world-class park system. The county purchased 83.11 acres of bank foreclosed property along the Ashley River, turning it into playgrounds, picnic shelters, a splash pond, fishing pond, walking trails, a kayak launch, dog parks, an event pavilion, and an event lawn. The park was inspired by residents and has had over 30,000 visitors since its opening on March 19, 2022.

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, named the Amazing Grace Park, as a means of remembrance and a place to enrich a community.

Pickens County

For several years Pickens County held the highest suicide death rate in South Carolina. By collecting information from stakeholders and evaluating gaps in crisis services, county leaders responded with a strategic plan to increase awareness, educate the public, reduce mental health stigma, and increase lethal means safety. Led by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the program has had a positive impact and provides a model for other counties.

Richland County

To mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on housing insecurity, Richland County implemented its Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program in April of 2021. Over 2,000 households received allocations to avoid eviction or utility disconnection. Recognized from rapid program implementation and outreach efforts, Richland County remains committed to assisting its underserved populations.

York County

In response to uncontrolled growth, Councilwoman Allison Love proposed a special tax district to residents of the Bethel Lake Wylie community to preserve recreational land and slow development. This gave residents a stake in the properties purchased and has preserved over 150 acres of land since voter approval in 2020. This land provides citizens and residents a break to enjoy parks, a farmers' market, an art museum, and so on.

BARRETT LAWRIKORE MEMORIAL REGIONAL COOPERATION AWARD

Abbeville, Greenwood, and McCormick Counties

In 2021, Greenwood and Abbeville counties partnered with McCormick Area Transit (MAT) to meet the needs of public transportation that had lingered for over two decades. Ridership increased 121% in the first four months and by a monthly average of 27.2% in the first ten months. The goal of creating a reliable, easy to use transportation system for residents in Greenwood and Abbeville counties was accomplished. Greenwood County even received a grant of \$150,000 from the South Carolina Department of Transportation that served as a match for its partnership with MAT.

Beaufort County

Beaufort County and five municipalities initiated the Southern Lowcountry (SoLoCo) Stormwater Design Manual with the goal of achieving fishable, swimmable, and drinkable water standards set forth by the EPA. The region is more resilient to weather and local flooding issues by implementing better site design principles and requiring green infrastructure (GI) and Low impact development (LID) practices. Since implementation, 28 projects were submitted for review under the new standards, and 6 have received permits for construction.

Charleston County

In order to improve road quality and environmental efficiency, Charleston County and municipal partners conducted a pilot program to add titanium dioxide to asphalt rejuvenator treatment. While rejuvenator prolongs the life of roads, the addition of titanium dioxide helps remove vehicular pollution from the air while decreasing urban heat island effect. Since its implementation, the project has shown such great success that the county plans to treat approximately 306 additional roads in 2022. The county has received regional and international recognition for this innovation solution.

Pickens County

In response to staffing shortages and an urgent need for employees among local businesses, Pickens County and local partners developed drive-thru job fairs to better connect job seekers with local employers. Along with improved safety protocols that have allowed these events to carry on throughout the pandemic, the project has also created a unique way for employers to be noticed and reached by attendees. Since September 2020, the program has helped 300 jobseekers connect with local employers.

Spartanburg County

Spartanburg County, with area partners, developed a unique Litter Hero Program to reduce litter, build sustainability, and serve the community. Teams of individuals experiencing homelessness were hired at a livable wage to assist with the litter program. Since implementation, a total of nine individuals were hired and six have completed the program. So far 8.56 tons of roadside litter along 244 miles of roadway has been removed. With the success of their pilot program, Spartanburg County plans to continue and expand the project.