

# COUNTY FOCUS

**SOUTH CAROLINA  
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES**  
FALL 2023

## **A Look Ahead With SCAC President Roy Costner, III**

**Highlights from the  
2023 Annual Conference**

**Jasper County Shares  
Blueprint for Rural  
Development**

**Cornerstone for Future  
Growth: Greenville County  
Opens New Headquarters**



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Charles T. Edens  
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### **Treasurer**

Julie J. Armstrong  
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**SCAC Board of Directors  
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## **SCAC STAFF**

### **Executive Director**

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### **Deputy Executive Director and General Counsel**

Joshua C. Rhodes

### **Senior Director of Operations**

Anna B. Berger

**SCAC Staff Members  
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*County Focus Magazine* is published quarterly by the South Carolina Association of Counties.

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**Local Leaders. Statewide Strength.®**

VOLUME 34, NUMBER 3

FALL 2023

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SOUTH CAROLINA  
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

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**Roy Costner III**  
Pickens County  
Council Vice  
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### First Vice President



**William E. Robinson**  
Allendale County  
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### Second Vice President



**Mary D. Anderson**  
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### Third Vice President



**C. David Chinnis**  
Dorchester County  
Council Vice  
Chairman

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Council Member

### Secretary



**Charles T. Edens**  
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Council Member



**Johnnie Wright Sr.**  
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Council Chairman

# A Message from the President

By Roy Costner III  
*Pickens County Council Vice Chairman*

**Thanks to the SC Association of Counties, I constantly learn and discover incredible ways to serve and improve as a county councilman. This year, I look forward to learning even more by working with you, our members in all 46 counties.**

In case we have not yet met, I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself and share thoughts for the year ahead. I am currently on Pickens County Council and have served on council seven years as Chairman and Vice Chairman. I started my term as SCAC President in August and have already been busy traveling the state and visiting many of you.

Not long after starting the role as SCAC President, I launched a listening tour with the goal of having brief meetings with leaders in all SC counties. I want the opportunity to sit down for 20 or 30 minutes to talk about your challenges, your opportunities, and together, discover ways to learn from each other. I am confident that by working together, we can come up with brilliant ideas on how to give back to the people we serve.

I get asked all the time what got me into politics. It happened one Sunday afternoon downtown in my hometown of Liberty. A group of gentlemen I refer to as the “Grumpy Old Men’s Club,” who hang out on the park benches in the town center discussing the world’s problems (every community has one of these groups that can be found at local diners or gathering spots!) called me over that afternoon.

They said, “You know what, you need to be in politics.”

My first thought was “Why? You guys are crazy.”

But they convinced me as they pointed out my desire to serve and my love for my community.

At the time, I was serving as a youth/associate pastor at our church. Growing up, I was very involved in the Boy Scouts and even pledged the national service fraternity of Alpha Phi Omega when I



attended Clemson University. I suppose I have always had a heart for service, so it only made sense for me to continue to give back to my community and county by running for County Council.

What surprised me the most was how much there is to learn about county government and how it all works. I am very thankful for SCAC and their staff, who always take the time to give the information and tools we need to be successful as public servants.

Being involved with SCAC has further given me a great chance to connect with colleagues across the state and give back to South Carolina.

What I’ve always found extraordinary about our Association is the willingness of the membership from all 46 counties to find commonalities and work together for what we hope to help accomplish for the people of South Carolina.

That spirit of partnership is why I’m especially excited about this year and continuing to build on the various ways SCAC empowers county officials through advocacy, education, and collaboration. How we might take a proactive approach to solving problems and finding the best way to get a visible return on investment for our time.

*(Continued on next page)*



I plan to use this space as well as our Association's newsletters, social media, and videos to keep you updated along the way. My favorite quote is "Do all you can, with what you have, in the time you have, and in the place you are." – Nkosi Johnson

My question for each or you is: "What are **you** going to do today?"

Reach Roy at [roy.costner@charter.com](mailto:roy.costner@charter.com) or [rcostner@co.pickens.sc.us](mailto:rcostner@co.pickens.sc.us).



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# SCAC News

**We are pleased** to debut this news column to wrap up recent Association events and provide you with upcoming advocacy, education and collaboration opportunities.

Keep up with monthly news, events, funding opportunities and more by subscribing to our monthly County COMPASS e-newsletter. To sign up, visit [www.sccounties.org/email](http://www.sccounties.org/email).



President Roy Costner III addresses the membership.

## New officers, board members selected during 2023 Annual Conference

Pickens County Council Vice Chairman **Roy Costner III** was elected President of the South Carolina Association of Counties (SCAC) for 2023-24 during the Association's Annual Conference held Aug. 1-3.

"Thankful, honored, and thrilled. These words merely begin to describe my feelings on having the opportunity to serve as president for the South Carolina Association of Counties this year," Costner said. "Part of SCAC's purpose is to promote more efficient county governments while studying, discussing and recommending improvements within all levels of government. What I find extraordinary is the willingness of the membership from all 46 counties to find commonalities and work together for what we hope to help accomplish for the people of South Carolina."

Read more about Costner's background and goals for the year in the President's Message on page 3.

Other officers elected for 2023-24 were Allendale County Council Vice Chairman **William E. Robinson** for First Vice President, Chesterfield County Council Vice Chairwoman **Mary D. Anderson** for Second Vice President, Dorchester County Council Vice Chairman **C. David Chinnis** for Third Vice President, Sumter

County Council Member **Charles T. Edens** for Secretary, and Charleston County Clerk of Court **Julie J. Armstrong** for Treasurer.

In addition, the following members of the Board of Directors were elected to a four-year term: Clarendon County Council Chairman **Dwight L. Stewart Jr.**, Colleton County Council Vice Chairman **Phillip M. Taylor Sr.**, Dillon County Administrator **Tim Harper**, Horry County Council Member **Cam Crawford**, and Laurens County Council Chairman **Brown Patterson**.



Lexington County Deputy Administrator Michael Spires, County Attorney Jeff Anderson and County Administrator Lynn Sturkie.

## Anderson honored with David K. Summers Jr. President's Cup

Lexington County Attorney **Jeff M. Anderson** was recognized for his public service and dedication to South Carolina county government with the 2023 David K. Summers Jr. President's Cup.

Each year the Association's president honors a county official who has merited special recognition for service to county government and assistance to the SCAC president.

"I have the privilege of recognizing someone who exemplifies the best of county government—the best of Lexington County government," said Debra B. Summers. "In my nearly 20 years as a council member one of the constant guiding forces has been Jeff Anderson, who gives us legal guidance and professional opinion."

Anderson, who practices at Davis Frawley and has served as Lexington County's attorney since 1988, received the award from Summers during SCAC's Annual Conference closing event Aug. 2.

*(Continued on next page)*

He performs a wide variety of legal services for the county and has argued cases before the South Carolina Supreme Court and Court of Appeals.

"Jeff loves Lexington County and has given back to our county for more than three decades," Summers said. "I am so appreciative of his service and guidance over the years. It's my honor to recognize his contributions to making Lexington County the best it can be for our citizens."

An Edgefield native, Anderson graduated from Clemson University and the University of South Carolina School of Law. Before joining Davis Frawley in Lexington, Anderson served as a judicial law clerk for former Governor and Circuit Judge George Bell Timmerman, Jr. and for Circuit Judge Hubert E. Long.

He comes from a family of lawyers. His father, Joe F. Anderson, Sr. was an attorney in Edgefield for 40 years. His brothers Greg, Ben and Joe are also lawyers. All of the Andersons graduated from Clemson University, and the moot courtroom at Clemson is named in honor of Joe F. Anderson, Sr.



Lexington County Councilwoman and SCAC Immediate Past President Debbie Summers, County Attorney Jeff Anderson and his wife Melanie Anderson.

Anderson and his wife Melanie have two children and are members of Lexington United Methodist Church.

Named for former SCAC president and Calhoun County Council Chairman David K. Summers Jr., the President's Cup is one of the Association's highest awards. The late Summers was the longest-serving SCAC Board of Directors member in addition to his four decades of service on Calhoun County Council.

## Congratulations, Institute of Government grads

Forty-three county officials recently graduated from SCAC's Institute of Government for County Officials, Levels I and II.

"It is an honor for me to recognize members of the class of 2023," said 2022-23 SCAC President **Debra B. Summers**, Lexington County Councilwoman, when recognizing graduates at the SCAC Annual Conference general session on Aug. 2. "Thank you for your dedication to county government, as demonstrated by your graduation."

Level 1 graduates were:

Anderson County—**Glenn Davis**, Council Member; **Matt Hogan**, Roads and Bridges Manager  
 Bamberg County—**Chip Maier**, IT and Administration  
 Barnwell County—**Linda Cook**, Human Resource Manager  
 Beaufort County—**Jared Fralix**, Assistant County Administrator  
 Chesterfield County—**Benjamin Conklin**, Council Member  
 Clarendon County—**Hampton Barrineau**, Director Emergency Management  
 Dillon County—**Detrice Dawkins**, Council Vice Chairwoman  
 Fairfield County—**Douglas Pauley**, Council Chairman  
 Greenville County—**Stephen Shaw**, Council Member  
 Horry County—**Ashley Carroll**, Clerk to Council; **Barry Spivey**, Assistant County Administrator  
 Lancaster County—**Cathy McDaniel**, Procurement Director  
 Laurens County—**Jeff Carroll**, Council Vice Chairman; **Shirley Clark**, Council Member; **Melissa Ferqueron**, Executive Assistant to the County Administrator; **Thomas Higgs**, County Administrator; **Cheyenne Noffz**, Clerk to Council  
 Lexington County—**Amber Conger**, Library Director; **Michael Spires**, Deputy Administrator  
 McCormick County—**Jacqueline Brown**, Council Member  
 Orangeburg County—**Joseph Garvin**, Council Member  
 Richland County—**Gretchen Barron**, Council Member; **Anette Kirylo**, Clerk to Council; **Jesica Mackey**, Council Vice Chairwoman; **Lori Thomas**, Assistant County Administrator  
 Sumter County—**Carlton Washington**, Council Member

## Institute of Government for County Officials Level I Graduates.





Level II graduates were:

Bamberg County—**Everett Comer**, Council Vice Chairman  
Beaufort County—**Denise Christmas**, Finance Director  
Berkeley County—**Steve Davis**, Council Member  
Chester County—**Mike Levister**, Planning/Zoning Director  
Dorchester County—**S. Todd Friddle**, Council Chairman  
Fairfield County—**Shirley Greene**, Council Member  
Greenville County—**Mike Barnes** and **Stephen Shaw**, Council Members  
Jasper County—**John Kemp**, Council Member; **Cathy McDaniel**, Procurement Director  
Lexington County—**Lynn Sturkie**, County Administrator  
McCormick County—**Charles Cook**, Council Member  
Newberry County—**John Scurry**, Council Member  
Oconee County—**John Elliott**, Council Chairman  
Williamsburg County—**Torrance Wilson**, Council Member  
York County—**Karen Brogdon**, Clerk to Council

The Institute of Government for County Officials provides elected county leaders and employees with the opportunity to enhance their skills and abilities. Participants must complete 27 hours of instruction to graduate from Level I and 18 hours of instruction to graduate from Level II.

SCAC partners with the Joseph P. Riley Jr. Center for Livable Communities, College of Charleston, to offer the Institute of Government three times a year. Clemson University's Master of Public Administration program sponsors the Institute.

### Fall Advocacy Meeting offers chance to shape SCAC policy positions

The Fall Advocacy Meeting, scheduled for Oct. 19 at Embassy Suites in Columbia, offers all county officials the opportunity to engage in the Association's policy development process for the upcoming legislative session.

Formerly known as the County Council Coalition meeting, this rebranded event features reports from SCAC Policy Steering Committees, a presentation on the economic forecast that will shape next year's state budget by **Frank Rainwater**, executive director of the SC Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office, and sessions on partnerships and advocacy.

Lunch is provided as part of the meeting and registration is now available online at [www.sccounties.org](http://www.sccounties.org).

Institute of Government for County Officials courses in Level I and Level II are being offered on Wednesday, October 18 in conjunction with the Fall Advocacy Meeting. See full agenda and register at [www.sccounties.org](http://www.sccounties.org).

### Attorneys' Institute returns to in-person in November

The Local Government Attorney's Institute is back this year in person for a day-long continuing legal education event on November 17 at the USC Alumni Center in Columbia.

One of the best opportunities to learn about and discuss common issues that face public sector attorneys, the session is expected to be approved for 6.0 hours of MCLE, including one hour for Legal Ethics and Professional Responsibility (LEPR) and one hour for Substance Abuse and Mental Health (SA/MH). Topics covered will include federal and state caselaw updates, ethics, mental health, procurement law and First Amendment auditors. The early registration deadline is November 9. Visit [www.sccounties.org](http://www.sccounties.org).



### Institute of Government for County Officials Level II Graduates.





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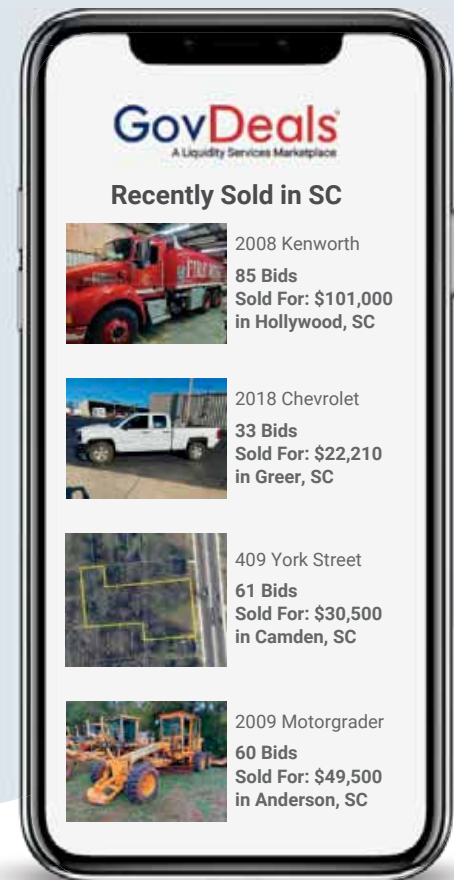


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# Annual Awards Celebrate Creative Solutions to Common County Challenges

**C**harleston County was honored for its innovative approach to addressing poll worker staffing shortages with the 2023 SC Association of Counties' J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award.



SCAC President Debbie Summers presents the 2023 J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award to Isaac Cramer, Charleston County Director of Elections and Council Chairman Herb Sass.

Barnwell, Aiken, Beaufort, Dorchester, and Hampton counties received the Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award for their collective efforts in putting out a landfill fire in two days with no injuries. (See page 14.)

These counties as well as four honorable mention recipients and all entrants to the 2023 SCAC Awards were recognized during the Association's Annual Conference general session Aug. 2 in Isle of Palms.

## Meet the J. Mitchell Graham Memorial award winner and honorable mention honorees

Charleston County's "Adopt a Polling Location" and "Day for Democracy" programs were recognized for their creative strategy for solving a prevalent issue facing governments across the nation.

"Access to polling locations and voter confidence in elections are two top priorities at Charleston County Government. I'd like to commend staff at the Board of Elections and Voter Registration for this outstanding initiative," said Charleston County Council Chairman **Herb Sass**. "Adequate staffing at polling locations cuts

down on wait times and I'm proud to see our community partners play a critical role in elections as well."



Signage in a Charleston County polling place encourages voters to volunteer as poll managers.

The Adopt a Polling Location initiative offered opportunities for nonpartisan community organizations to adopt a polling location on Election Day 2022, and each group's staff served as poll workers. Pay was donated to a local nonprofit organization of the group's choice. The companion Day for Democracy offered Charleston County employees the chance to serve their community by working at a voting site and earning poll worker pay in addition to county pay.

Rather than incentivizing submission of an interest form to work at a polling location, these programs encourage people to serve on Election Day. Participation is linked to their status as a member of a group, whether it be county employees or employees of local organizations. Serving with other members of their groups can increase the likelihood of loyalty to the program. The program also results in savings for taxpayers as less time will be spent by county staff on processing individual poll worker for payroll.

"Charleston County's creative approach to addressing a complex and prevalent issue provides a blueprint for future success in upcoming elections. These initiatives are sustainable and can be replicated in other counties across the state and country," said **Bill Tomes**, head judge for the 2023 awards.

Honorable mentions were awarded to Dorchester and York counties in the over 150,000 population category, Oconee County in the 50,000-150,000-population category, and Calhoun County in the under 50,000-population category.

*(Continued on next page)*

## J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award Honorable Mentions



SCAC President Debbie Summers presented the 2023 J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award Honorable Mention (Under 50,000 pop. category) to Calhoun County representatives EMS Director Crystal Youmans and HR Director Brandy Roberson for the county's Community Paramedicine program.



Council Chairman S. Todd Friddle and Council Vice Chairman C. David Chinnis accepted Dorchester County's 2023 J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award Honorable Mention (Over 150,000 pop. category) from President Summers. Dorchester County's competition entry was their "Know Your Zone" Safety Campaign.



Oconee County won the 2023 J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award Honorable Mention (50,000-150,000 pop. category) for their Comprehensive Expansion of Health Services in the county. President Summers presented Councilman John Elliott, Council Chairman James Hart and County Administrator Amanda Brock with the award.



President Summers presented the 2023 J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award Honorable Mention (Over 150,000 pop. category) to York County's Council Chairwoman Christi Cox and Assistant County Manager Kevin Madden for the county's Catawba Bend Preserve entry.



**Dorchester County** promoted hurricane preparedness messages through a partnership with local Tradesman Brewing Company to create the “Know Your Zone” beer including a QR code on the can connecting citizens to evacuation routes and safety tips.

“Receiving this recognition from SCAC is a tremendous honor. It highlights the dedication and hard work put in by our entire team to develop new ways to reach residents with hurricane preparedness information,” said Dorchester County Council Chairman **Todd Friddle**. “We hope that other organizations can use this approach as an example to incorporate creative strategies that engage and interest their residents so that together we all become a stronger and more prepared community.”

Initially, the safety campaign was designed to connect to a younger demographic within the Dorchester/Charleston area, but it ended up attracting local, state, and national attention which elevated the project and conversation surrounding hurricane preparedness to a broader audience.

After gaining national traction, the project was modeled by the Florida Division of Emergency Management. Dorchester County and its partners at Tradesman Brewing continue to highlight the innovative collaboration and emphasize the need for creative messaging and public outreach when it comes to preparedness.



**York County's** effort to preserve 1,900 acres of woods, ponds and fields as a park for residents and visitors called Catawba Bend Preserve will make a lasting impact on citizens and the community far into the future.

“Catawba Bend is a very rare property, boasting over five miles of pristine riverfront along the Catawba River and is home to diverse native landscapes and ecosystems. Once slated for private access and development, as a result of York County’s bold vision, innovative planning, and county-wide engagement, Catawba Bend is now an asset for all citizens to enjoy,” said York County Chairwoman **Christi Cox**. “The Preserve will now be developed pursuant to a community driven masterplan, and its acquisition was funded responsibly through existing tax revenue streams.”

Preserving greenspace is paramount in a county where rapid growth is the number one issue for residents. The county not only protected the land from development, but also purchased the site using a unique source of funds. Catawba Bend Preserve will eventually boast a five-mile riverfront walking path, 25 miles of interior hiking trails, dozens of primitive camping sites, an RV park, mountain biking areas, and a natural amphitheater for events.

**Oconee County** focused on improving primary healthcare, addiction recovery and mental health support for residents with a variety of partnerships to offer little to no cost services for those in need.

The project included establishing a central data set of available resources through the public library system, expanding and creating health clinics for primary care, and starting the Oconee Addiction and Recovery Solutions or OARS program. In addition, the Oconee County Law Enforcement Center implemented the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program to assist inmates with mental health care.

“We have learned that placing mental healthcare professionals in key areas has proven to have a positive impact on our citizens and has expanded awareness for those suffering from mental health issues,” said Oconee County Administrator **Amanda F. Brock**. “This approach has helped address mental health as ‘healthcare’ and lessen the stigma surrounding mental healthcare.”

**Calhoun County's** Community Paramedicine Program provides medical care for underserved and vulnerable citizens, preventing unnecessary emergency department visits and maximizing ambulance resources.

Community paramedics—who completed necessary training, clinical hours, and certification testing—offer assessments, treatment, and education in patients’ homes. The project focused on vulnerable and underserved populations including the elderly and those with limited mobility. Assisting patients with their needs at home improves their daily lives, reduces the community’s overall risk, and keeps ambulances available for emergencies.

*(Continued on page 14)*





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Since November 2021, EMS utilization has decreased 89%, ER utilization decreased 96.7%, and hospital admissions decreased 55.6%. The county saved \$185,649 in the first quarter of 2023.

“This recognition continues to validate the great work that’s being done by our EMS Department to help the citizens in our community,” said County Administrator **John McLaughlin**. “The

program, while still in its infancy, is already showing great results. We strive to continue offering these services while collaborating to offer more.”

## Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Award Honors Five Counties for Teamwork



Summers presents the 2023 Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Award to Roger Riley, Barnwell County Emergency Management Director, and Councilman Don Harper.

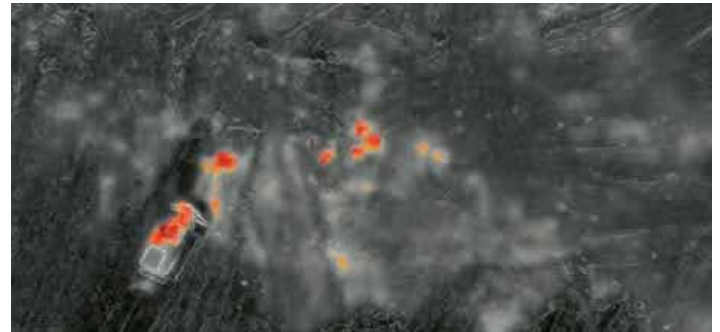
The Barnwell County Landfill caught fire on May 15, 2022. Landfill fires often take months to put out and have the potential to expose citizens to burning pollution.

Thanks to support, staff assistance, and equipment from Aiken, Beaufort, Dorchester, and Hampton counties, as well as local municipalities and state agencies, the fire was fully extinguished within two days. And most importantly, there were no reported injuries, heat exhaustion or burns.

These five counties received the 2023 Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award for their teamwork.

“This effort truly exemplifies regional partnership as each entity worked well with other team members, looked out for the safety of others and followed directions as given by the leaders to mitigate risk and protect human and natural resources,” Tomes said.

Barnwell County Emergency Management worked quickly to secure assistance in manpower and resources such as bulldozers and dump trucks from other counties and state agencies to stop the fire with dirt. Technology helped the responders in targeting areas that were still a potential issue. Having the knowledge and ability



Infrared video from a drone shows hot spots in the landfill fire, allowing users to direct the placement of dirt to combat the burning.

to access needed resources from regional partnerships so quickly made a key difference in Barnwell County.

“We also learned the importance of technology in the process of getting this fire under control. The Civil Air Patrol provided a drone with infrared cameras to see under the dirt to identify hot spots underground,” said Barnwell County Emergency Operations Center Manager **Roger Riley**. “This enabled us to place dirt only on those areas that were still a potential issue. The impact of this project was a benefit to all our citizens as we were able to contain the amount of burning pollution to a minimal amount. I am honored our county was recognized for this effort, but the main point of sharing our work is to give others ideas or solutions to similar problems they may face.”

SCAC’s annual awards—the J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award and Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award—recognize top innovative projects completed by counties in the past fiscal year.

The winners represent the best qualities of local governance—attention to details, service to citizens, efficient use of tax dollars, and improvement in the quality of life. Projects are judged on written entries and 10-minute oral presentations before a panel of judges. The competition was held before a panel of judges in May at SCETV.

See videos of all presentations and project summaries at [www.sccounties.org/awards](http://www.sccounties.org/awards).

# Cornerstone for Future Growth: Greenville County Opens New Headquarters

By Bob Mihalic

**S**tanding on the skywalk watching citizens glide through the breeze way to their easily accessible destination, Greenville County Council Chairman Dan Tripp absorbed all that was around him.

“There is not another county government building in the nation that looks like this,” he says.

The new Greenville County Administration building is 250,000 square feet of “openness.” Its unique steel and glass design is intended to be reflective of the transparency of government.

“It’s a one-of-a-kind building,” says Councilman **Butch Kirven**. “It symbolizes the spirit of residents of Greenville County.”

Designed by the world-renowned architects at Foster +Partners, the building is a landmark that will serve generations of residents.

“It is something to be proud of and reflects the high level of professionalism that is our county workforce,” says County Administrator **Joe Kernell**.

Beautiful and highly functional, the structure features North and South buildings connected by a third-floor skywalk with the terrace level being one continuous floor that houses five courtrooms and other support offices. The North building features County Council Chambers and administration while the South is home to customer service departments such as the Tax and Auditor’s Offices, Real Property, and Land Development divisions.

The building is supported by a new 1,050 slot parking garage, is accessible by the 22-mile Prisma Health Swamp Rabbit Trail and is framed by green spaces that include a Veterans Memorial and reflection area.

“Easy access and a user-friendly experience were an essential part of the design,” says Tripp.

Creating an efficient and desirable workspace for the more than 500 county employees was also the goal.

“Behind the scenes, departments that work together are now interconnected creating easy work flow,” says Kernell

acknowledging that this new building will attract and maintain an excellent workforce.

The building is the cornerstone for future growth, and Kernell says he is most excited about what is yet to come.

## The Development

The number for the overall economic impact of the private sector development around the new facility is jaw dropping but accurate: \$1 billion.

The sale of the surrounding 37 acres of property will pay for the new County Administration building, creating close to 5,500 jobs in the process. Greenville County partnered with RocaPoint Partners to redevelop the land. Plans include office space, street level retail, residential properties, hotel, entertainment and more. Whole Foods was first to announce its intention to build on the site, followed by Lima One Capital, which plans its headquarters there. Three more major entertainment and hospitality businesses have shared plans to build.

“Greenville is experiencing a surge in popularity due to recent investments from major employers, a growing array of unique dining and retail concepts, and an abundance of walking trails and open-air spaces,” says **Phil Mays**, principal of RocaPoint Partners. “Greenville County Administration building serves as a catalyst for this growth, and we’re excited to continue progress with residents, the county and our growing team.”

The project embraces the spirit of downtown Greenville and enhances connectivity within and to surrounding destinations making it an attractive new home for small and large corporations.

“South Carolina is home to not one Fortune 500 company, and we want to change that,” says **Mark Farris**, leader of the  
*(Continued on next page)*



Greenville Area Development Corporation (GADC), the county's economic development group.

While manufacturing remains a priority for the GADC, this development "signals a transition in our economy."

RocaPoint estimates that upon completion of the entire private sector project that the area will generate \$560 million of yearly economic activity. Greenville County expects it to generate more than \$25 million in tax revenue.

"We have turned this government asset into a public asset," Kernell says.

## The Journey

Nothing of this size and scope comes easy.

"This is a team sport," says Kirven, who was Chairman of Council for most of the development process.

Ideas and concepts as bold as this requires multiple levels of support from various segments of the public and private sectors. Getting feedback from multiple sources early and often allowed the county to navigate the project from concept to reality.

"The first reaction from citizens and elected leaders was concern about cost," says Kirven. "We needed to take the time to fully explain the concept of how the land sale would pay for the new building and that the completion of the county facility was just the start."

Consensus building takes patience and proper timing. The first mention of a new county building was floated in 2005 when a Miami-based developer identified the Greenville County offices as a good fit for a project along the I-85/I-385 corridor. The concept was to move the county to free up the land for new downtown development. This confirmed the belief of the great value of the property at 301 University Ridge and got the county thinking of its best use.

The global economic slow-down in 2007-08 quieted discussion. "With the crash of stock and real estate markets and increase in interest rates it made it a challenge to develop any property," says Kernell. "Because of the magnitude of our project we needed to sit tight and wait for the opportunity to present itself."

Steadily improving national economic conditions and the deterioration of the current outdated facility re-ignited interest in the project. In May 2018, with concepts firmly in place, the council voted unanimously to move forward with the project.

Two committees were created to hold public meetings. The University Ridge Public Facilities Corporation and the University Ridge Redevelopment Management Committee provided open discussions on plans, actions and future considerations.

The relocation of the onsite state services dominated early discussion.

"Private sector real estate professionals began making very aggressive pitches to individual leaders," recalls Kirven. "Some were 'sold' on certain relocation sites and it took months of discussion to finally get to a consensus."

The offices of the former Fluor headquarters located in the heart of the county were eventually chosen to house Family Court, the Health Department and Probation and Parole. The up-fitting of those facilities began in 2019 and continued as plans for the new site pushed forward.

**Designers consulted experts in space planning and security as well as county staff to identify needs unique to a county building.**

"Relocating 230,000 square feet of multiple, high-traffic agencies was no small feat," says Assistant County Administrator **Shannon Herman**.

Experts in space planning and security were consulted along the way, and input from the soon-to-be relocated staff identified unique needs and opportunities.

"This knowledge became invaluable to selecting high quality, attractive facilities," says Herman. "Their excitement about the improvement of the working environment was essential."

The successful relocation continued the project's positive momentum. The next step was getting required outside support because the county project was taking place within Greenville city limits creating two issues that required nurturing.

First was to assure the small neighborhoods bordering the property that their quality of life would be improved through this project and that there would be no displacement. An in-depth presentation



of the master plan including details of potential building heights and use, traffic, zoning, and more was given at several interactive neighborhood community meetings.

“We did not necessarily need ‘approval’ from these groups,” says Kernell. “But assuring them that key issues such as walkability and public spaces were being addressed helped reduce skepticism.”

Next up was working with the city on zoning and design standards. “We stressed that our standards were actually higher than what the city was demanding,” says Kirven.

Eventually, a compromise on several issues including affordable housing and parking were resolved and the near 430-page rezoning application was passed.

“There is no name or brand for this development because it’s not a ‘stand alone,” says Kernell. “We will seamlessly blend into existing downtown. The goal is to enhance the city.”

Political will and public support were secured and not even an

unprecedented pandemic could slow the project. In January 2021 ground was officially broken. Photos of the event featuring masked participants and guests forever time stamp the era. The supply chain crisis and workforce issues that would soon hamper America were deftly addressed on the fly.

“We started during the height of COVID,” says Kernell. “But we absorbed price hikes, made changes, and it came together nicely.”

Starting in July 2023, different departments began to officially execute the move, getting comfortable in their new surroundings and ready to start a new era in Greenville County government.

At 8:31 a.m. July 17, 2023, the new

administration building served its first citizen. Council Vice Chairwoman **Liz Seman** was there doing media interviews, greeting citizens and reflecting on a decades long project.

“Great pride in seeing it go from a conversation to ground breaking to actually serving our people,” says Seman. “This is an iconic building and it was such an exciting day for all.”

On August 15, Chairman Tripp gavelled the first full County Council meeting. Both the main council chambers and committee room are tied into broadcast quality video production suites using multiple cameras and graphics packages to livestream meetings.

“The professional stream is part of the brand, if you will,” says Tripp. “It confirms the openness of our local government and the pride we take in serving and growing our community”

The new Administration building’s glass windows provide a perfect view of the private sector development that will continue to transform the area.

“This project is the financial future of the county,” says Kernell. “It will provide a stable funding source for the county for generations.”

*Bob Mihalic is the Governmental Affairs Coordinator for Greenville County.*



The new county building is supported by a new 1,050 slot parking garage, is accessible by the 22-mile Prisma Health Swamp Rabbit Trail and is framed by green spaces that include a Veterans Memorial and reflection area.



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# Jasper County Shares Blueprint for Rural Development



Former Council Vice Chairman Dr. Curtis Brantley, Council Vice Chairwoman Barbara Clark, County Administrator Andrew Fulghum and Development Services Director Danny Lucas. Photo courtesy of Brookings.

**J**asper County and its leaders recently received attention in the national spotlight for their success managing growth and economic development in a rural area.

The nonprofit public policy Brookings Institution published a case study on the county called “Erasing Stigmas Through Community-Directed Change,” as part of its Inclusive Opportunity Project.

“We are happy and pleased to see recognition for the accomplishments,” said County Council Vice Chairwoman **Barbara Clark**. “We came a long way to get where we are today. When you are living through it, it’s one thing. It’s only when you get an article like this that you have time to look back and reflect.”

Clark was one of several local leaders who spent two days in spring 2022 with Brookings researchers. The in-depth interviews and tour of the county offered a chance to extensively explore how rural Jasper County handled unprecedented growth and built capacity in government services while forging important partnerships

with non-profit and business sectors. These years-long strategic initiatives were carried out to improve the quality of life for residents.

“A lot of people in Jasper County historically were living in poverty, working in tourism jobs and having to travel far outside the county to work. County council over the years wanted to change that,” recalled County Administrator **Andrew Fulghum**, who’s served in the role for 19 years and was one of the people interviewed for the case study. “The beauty now is seeing that growth and bringing in the types of jobs where people who live in the county can now spend more time with their families.”

The case study identified Jasper County as a “model of rural development.”

“...A closer look at Jasper reveals a story of resilience and transformation rooted in both structural forces and bold leadership choices,” the case study’s introduction said. “This closer look reveals a community brimming with assets—physical assets, such as a port and an airport, and social assets including a successful jobs training center—which can drive economic growth.”

The published article along with the interview process gave leaders a chance to not only reflect but to also think about the county’s future, said **Danny Lucas**, director of the Development Services Division. Continuing to balance the effects of population growth on infrastructure and the environment is one of those critical issues for the present and future.

“It is important for planners to keep in mind the impact of new residents and growth on roads, the environment and ecology—some of those key factors that draw in the new residents to our area,” said Lucas, who has been in his role at Jasper County since 2018 and has a 30-year career in economic and airport development work.

He further identified staff recruitment and retention as an ongoing challenge and opportunity for the county. Lucas and Fulghum also point to the county’s strategy for building capacity through partnerships with the non-profit sector as an example of problem solving and overall success.

One important lesson learned in his years working in Jasper County is to seize every opportunity to engage with the community

and listen to creative ideas, Fulghum said. For example, a non-profit organization had ideas about how to more efficiently run the animal shelter; county officials listened to the proposal; and the group now operates the shelter.

“It is important to not be territorial if others have ideas,” Fulghum said. “The community will become stronger along the way...Our story shows that in each and every day working hard and doing the things intuitively you know are right will pay off as you grow.”

Clark emphasized that the county’s success is due to the hard work of elected leaders and dedicated staff.

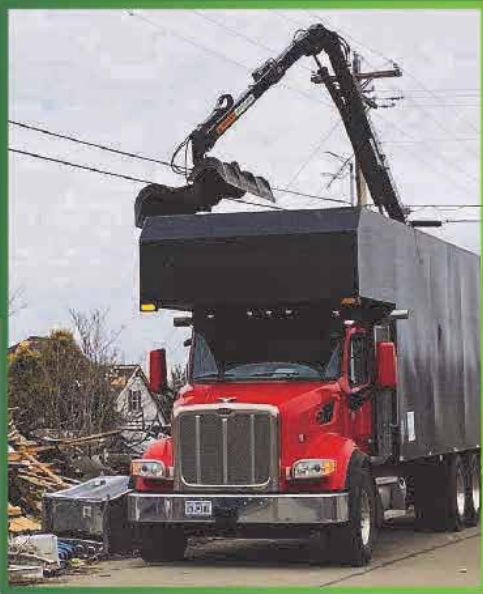
“Jasper County has really made improvements and through the Brookings article to help expose the work of our county, we are showing while we may be a little county, we are a hardworking county,” she said.

### Learn More

Download and read the full case study on Jasper County online at [www.brookings.edu](http://www.brookings.edu).

See the full Jasper County photo gallery: [bit.ly/JasperBrookings](http://bit.ly/JasperBrookings).

The Inclusive Opportunity Project also features a case study on Gullah/Geechee of the Carolinas, Georgia and northeastern Florida with interviews and photos from women in Beaufort and Georgetown counties: [bit.ly/BrookingsGullah](http://bit.ly/BrookingsGullah).



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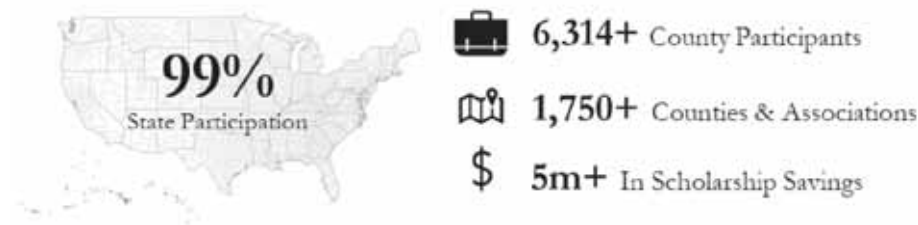


## SCAC and NACo Partnership: Take Your Leadership Skills to the Next Level by Attending NACo's Leadership Academies

SCAC is pleased to partner with NACo to build strong county leaders. The [NACo High Performance Leadership Academy](#) is an online 12-week program that empowers frontline county government professionals with the leadership skills to deliver results for counties. The [NACo Enterprise Cybersecurity Leadership Academy](#) is similarly structured and geared for county employees dedicated to cybersecurity and IT.

NACo launched these programs in partnership with the team from the Professional Development Academy, including the late General Colin Powell, Dr. Marshall Goldsmith, and many other executives from both private industry and government agencies.

Over 1,600 counties have enrolled emerging and existing leaders since the launch of the program last year, with incredible feedback and results. In fact, the positive feedback and demand for this NACo program has been truly unprecedented.



The programs have proven relevant and practical for leaders and are convenient and non-disruptive to busy schedules. The 12 weeks of content are expertly facilitated online, and it takes about 4-5 hours per week for participants to fully engage in the program.

\$1,895 per enrollee for South Carolina counties. The retail price is \$2,995.

To enroll visit the [NACo High Performance Leadership Academy](#) and [NACo Enterprise Cybersecurity Leadership Academy](#) webpages at [naco.org/skills](http://naco.org/skills). For questions and assistance in enrolling please contact Luke Afeman at [lukea@pdaleadership.com](mailto:lukea@pdaleadership.com), Professional Development Academy/NACo Leadership Academy.



"This is a transformational leadership program that has proven to be the most scalable, cost effective, and efficient way to make your leaders better."

*The Late General Colin Powell*

"The commitment of time and energy towards this program served as an important reminder of the value of continued learning and professional development...for all levels of public servants/leaders. The High Performance Leadership Program completely reignited my passion and commitment to my career in local government service."

*Beth Goodale  
Georgetown County (SC) Recreation  
& Community Services Director*

"I think it would be helpful to all levels of leadership in the organization, but especially to mid-level managers that are seen as "rising stars"...I thought it was an excellent program."

*Clay Killian  
Aiken County (SC) Administrator*

# Strengthening The Shield: Celebrating Cybersecurity Awareness Month in South Carolina's County Governments

By Thomas Scott

**I**n our increasingly interconnected world, the importance of cybersecurity cannot be overstated. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, the need for robust defenses against cyber threats becomes more critical with each passing day. This October, we join the nation in celebrating Cybersecurity Awareness Month, a time to not only reflect on the challenges we face but also to highlight the innovative solutions and collaborative efforts that protect our country from cyberattacks.

## The cyber threat landscape

Before delving into the proactive measures being taken across South Carolina, it's essential to understand the nature of the cyber threat landscape. Cybercriminals are becoming increasingly sophisticated, with attacks ranging from ransomware to phishing attempts. As our counties become more digitally reliant, our assets, services, and data become attractive targets for malicious actors.

## The power of awareness

One of the primary goals of Cybersecurity Awareness Month is to educate and empower individuals and organizations to be proactive in safeguarding their digital presence. At the South Carolina Cybersecurity Association – CyberSC, we've embraced this mission wholeheartedly. Throughout October, we will be hosting a series of workshops, seminars, and webinars tailored to both government employees and the public with notice going out via our events website at [www.cybersc.us](http://www.cybersc.us). These events will cover a wide range of topics, from recognizing common phishing tactics to securing personal devices and data. We believe that an informed and vigilant community is the first line of defense against cyber threats.

## Collaboration for resilience

In the Palmetto state, cybersecurity is a collective effort that extends beyond the public sector. Collectively, we have fostered strong partnerships with local businesses, educational institutions, and community organizations. These collaborations have led to the development of a robust cybersecurity ecosystem, where information sharing, and best practices exchange are the norm.

One notable example of such collaboration is the State Law Enforcement Division's South Carolina Critical Infrastructure and Cybersecurity team, a cross-sector initiative between state government, local government, law enforcement agencies, and private-sector cybersecurity experts. Together, they work to identify emerging threats and devise strategies to mitigate them effectively.

## Investing in technology

While human awareness and collaboration are vital, technology plays a pivotal role in our cybersecurity strategy. County governments must continue to explore collaborative ways of working along with peers to collectively invest in cutting-edge cybersecurity tools and infrastructure to safeguard our digital assets.

## Some key initiatives your county should be working toward completion

- Multi-factor Authentication (MFA): The implementation of MFA across county systems adds an extra layer of security, ensuring that only authorized users gain access to sensitive data.

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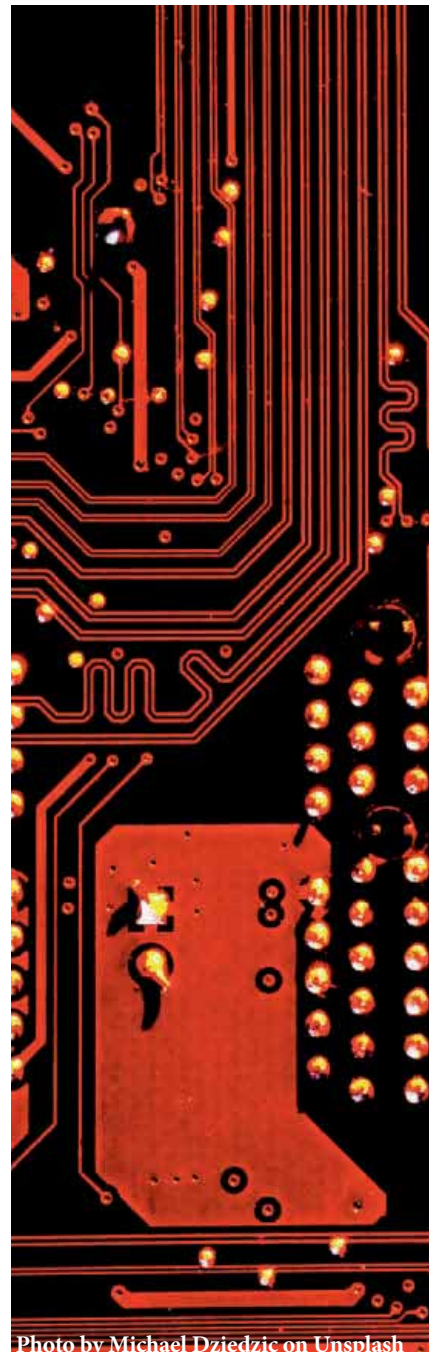


Photo by Michael Dzedzic on Unsplash

- Incident response plans: Preparing for the worst is the driver in developing comprehensive incident response plans to minimize damage and downtime in the event of a cyberattack.
- Regular security audits: Routinely assess and audit to identify vulnerabilities and weaknesses, allowing your county to proactively address potential threats.
- Employee training: All county employees MUST undergo mandatory cybersecurity training to stay informed about the latest threats and best practices.

As we celebrate Cybersecurity Awareness Month, it's clear that the challenges posed by cyber threats are ever-present. However, through a combination of education, collaboration, and technological innovation, your county can stand strong and resilient in the face of these challenges. We invite all county employees to join us in this critical mission, ensuring that our county governments remain a safe and secure digital space for all. Together, we can continue to strengthen the shield that protects our community from cyber threats.

#### More information:

- Cybersecurity Infrastructure and Security Agency (CISA) | [www.cisa.gov/cybersecurity-awareness-month](http://www.cisa.gov/cybersecurity-awareness-month)
- South Carolina Cyber Association | [cybersec.us/](http://cybersec.us/)
- SCAC Cybersecurity resources | [www.sccounties.org/cybersecurity](http://www.sccounties.org/cybersecurity)

*Thomas Scott is the executive director of CyberSC.*

## Cybersecurity Basics for Organizations

Contributed by the SC Department of Administration Division of Information Security

Cyberspace — the virtual space in which our different computer systems connect and communicate — can be particularly difficult for organizations to secure for a variety of factors. The ability for cybercriminals to operate from anywhere at any time, the links between cyberspace and our physical systems, and the difficulty of reducing vulnerabilities and consequences in complex cyber networks are just a few.

Developing tailored cybersecurity plans, best practices and processes is important for organizations of all sizes and is essential to protecting and maintaining business operations. Using strong passwords, updating your software, thinking before you click on suspicious links and utilizing multi-factor authentication are the basics of what we call “cyber hygiene.” Utilizing these best practices, along with those detailed below, can drastically improve your organization’s online safety.

- Ensure server and workstation operating systems, services and software packages, especially third-party plugins, are patched and up-to-date.
- Utilize encryption to protect data both at rest and in transit.
- Utilize vulnerability scanning to identify potential weaknesses in systems and software and take appropriate remediation actions.
- Maintain an inventory of hardware, software and other systems used to conduct operations and replace those systems that are no longer supported.
- Ensure firewalls are implemented to secure internet connections.
- Use multi-factor authentication to add an extra layer of security to authentication.
- Ensure account and file permissions are set properly, including changing the default administration username and password.
- Ensure users only have access to the specific data, resources and applications needed to complete required tasks.
- Consider deployment of a server security monitoring solution that includes antivirus as well as security monitoring and logging (including administrative login attempts).
- Ensure wireless networks are secure and encrypted, and password protect access to the wireless devices.
- Ensure data is backed up on a regular basis (automatically if possible or at least weekly). Store copies either off-site or in the cloud.
- Provide security and privacy awareness training on a regular basis (at least yearly). Training should include information on any cybersecurity policies and secure usage guidelines.
- Review security policies and procedures on a yearly basis.

As information technology becomes increasingly integrated with all aspects of our society, there is increased risk for wide-scale or high-consequence events that could cause harm or disrupt services upon which our economy and the daily lives of millions of Americans depend.

As our cyberspace will only continue to grow, we must be ever vigilant and continue to improve our enterprise security systems, applications and plans as well as ensure each individual using our systems is trained in the best practices for securing the data we handle every day. For more information, visit [admin.sc.gov](http://admin.sc.gov).





# GOING FURTHER



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# A Refresher on Training Requirements for Planning and Zoning Officials

By Susan B. Turkopuls, SCAC Director of Research and Training

**F**rom approving plans for new subdivisions to preserving historic landmarks, county planning commissions, boards of zoning appeals, and boards of architectural review make decisions that have a significant impact on their community's future.

To make sound planning and zoning decisions, community leaders must have extensive knowledge of state and federal laws, local land use ordinances, and public meeting and hearing procedures.



In 2003, the SC General Assembly established training requirements for local government officials and professional staff who are involved with planning and zoning. In 2020, the SC Planning Education Advisory Committee (SCPEAC) revised some of the training format requirements for planning and zoning officials and employees, which allowed opportunities for certain online training.

This article addresses the educational requirements for local government planning and zoning officials and training resources from the South Carolina Association of Counties and other approved providers.

The SCPEAC is charged with approving orientation and continuing education courses to satisfy the training requirements addressed in the SC Local Government Planning Enabling Act. The committee also determines the type of advanced degrees, training, or experience that qualify individuals to exempt the educational require-

ments. Appointed officials and professional employees are required to comply with the educational provisions. See State Code Section 6-29-1340 for more information:

[www.scstatehouse.gov/code/t06c029.php](http://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/t06c029.php).

## Orientation training

A minimum of six hours of orientation training is required to be completed within one year of appointment or hiring. Both SCAC and the Municipal Association of South Carolina are approved providers of this training. Each association offers online, on-demand training that allows an individual to engage in the training remotely. A certificate of attendance is generated after completion of each training module or session for the number of hours taken. More information for each association's offerings and how to access training may be found online at [www.sccounties.org/planning-zoning-education](http://www.sccounties.org/planning-zoning-education) and [www.masc.sc/online-orientation-planning-and-zoning-officials](http://www.masc.sc/online-orientation-planning-and-zoning-officials).

## Continuing Education

A minimum of three hours of continuing education training is required annually and within one year of appointment or hiring. This continuing education training may be conducted in a classroom or group setting in the presence of a coordinator, or in a virtual or on-demand format. For both in-person and online training formats there should be a method for confirming participation and/or attendance. Home study or self-study methods where participation or attendance cannot be independently verified are not permitted. The SCPEAC strongly recommends planning and zoning officials and employees participate in training where attendance can be tracked and confirmed by the provider or jurisdiction. The SCPEAC cautions that training lacking such safeguards could be subject to challenge.

As an SCPEAC-approved sponsor, SCAC provides orientation and continuing education training through live webinars and streaming videos. These training programs are provided free of charge. Four courses from the Institute of Government for County Officials curriculum also offer continuing education credit; however, these classes require a registration fee. For more information on the

specific courses, including how to access them, visit SCAC's website at [www.sccounties.org/planning-and-zoning-education](http://www.sccounties.org/planning-and-zoning-education).

### Additional resources

The National Association of Counties (NACo) provides continuing education through webinars that address community and economic development, transportation, and infrastructure. For more information about NACo webinars, visit NACo's website at [www.naco.org/education-events](http://www.naco.org/education-events).

County officials can also visit the SCPEAC's website at [www.scstatehouse.gov/SCPEAC/ContEdPrograms.htm](http://www.scstatehouse.gov/SCPEAC/ContEdPrograms.htm) for a list of all organizations that are approved to provide training for local planning and zoning officials/professional staff.

*Questions? Contact Susan Turkopuls, SCAC Research and Training Director, via e-mail [sturkopuls@scac.sc](mailto:sturkopuls@scac.sc) or by calling 1-800-922-6081.*

### Frequently asked questions for Planning and Zoning training requirements

**Q: Are coordinators and facilitators required when board/commission members meet as a group to view a recorded training?**

**A:** The SCPEAC has determined that facilitators and coordinators are not required when individuals or groups view a recorded training. However, the committee strongly encourages the use of a facilitator or coordinator either during or after a commission or board member views a training in order that any questions they have may be answered. If the training method does not automatically issue a certificate of attendance, the facilitator or coordinator would do this and be responsible for filing the form with the clerk to council.

**Q: Who must receive training and how much training is required?**

**A:** The training requirements apply to the following positions:

- Appointees who serve on a planning commission, board of zoning appeals, or board of architectural review.
- Planning professionals, zoning administrators, zoning officials, and deputies/assistants to these positions.

**Q: What qualifications are required to exempt the training?**

**A:** Appointees/staff with one of the following qualifications may exempt the training; however, they must document their qualifications for exemption:

- American Institute of Certified Planners certification;
- A master's or doctorate degree in planning from an accredited college/university;
- A master's or doctorate degree or specialized training/experience in a related field as determined by the SC Planning Education Advisory Committee; or
- A license to practice law in South Carolina.

**Q: How are the exemptions and training documented?**

**A:** Each year, no later than the anniversary date of their appointment/employment, planning and zoning officials/staff must file an Educational Requirements Certification Form with the clerk to council and attach a certificate of attendance for the required training.

SCAC does not retain these records. Copies of the certification form and the suggested Uniform Certificate of Attendance are available via SCAC's website at [www.sccounties.org/planning-and-zoning-education](http://www.sccounties.org/planning-and-zoning-education).

Although the statute only requires appointees/staff who are exempt to document their exemption within one year of their initial appointment/employment, SCAC recommends that the Educational Requirements Certification Form be completed and filed annually, so the exemption remains an official public record.

Individuals and county planning/zoning offices are responsible for completing the required paperwork, filing it with the clerk to council, and maintaining department file copies for reference.

The clerk to council must keep original forms and documentation in the official public records for three years after the calendar year in which forms are filed.





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# SCAC-Sponsored Insurance Trusts



## History of the Trusts

The SC Counties Workers' Compensation Trust (SCCWCT) was formed in 1984 with only 11 counties. Today, the membership consists of 41 of South Carolina's 46 counties and an additional 47 county-related entities. SCCWCT is approved as a self-insured trust by the SC Workers' Compensation Commission in accordance with South Carolina statutes. It provides statutory workers' compensation coverage for its members.

The SC Counties Property & Liability Trust (SCCP&LT) was formed in 1995 due largely to the success of the Workers' Compensation Trust. SCCP&LT started with only four members and now has 29 members, including 19 counties.

## Boards of Trustees

The Trusts were designed by and for county government with the goal of providing insurance to counties at the lowest rates possible, while providing services uniquely tailored to the needs of county governments. The Boards of Trustees are made up of county officials who are elected by the SCAC's Board of Directors. Although not a requirement, both Boards of Trustees currently share the same membership.



## Risk Management

Because member contributions (premiums) are based both on the accident histories of the individual counties (experience modifiers) and on the membership as a whole, both Trusts employ very aggressive risk management strategies. The philosophy adopted by the Trusts is that, if accidents are caused, they can be prevented. Risk Management services are provided by the SCAC staff. The payoff is lower premiums and a safer working environment.

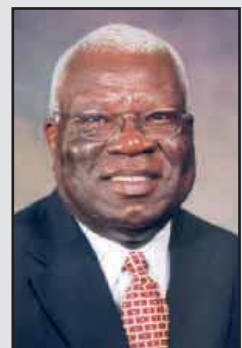
## Claims Administration

SCAC's staff administers the SC Counties Workers' Compensation Trust and SC Counties Property & Liability Trust.

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# Collaboration Between SCAC, SC Sheriffs' Association Focuses on Safety

**Issues county jails** across South Carolina and the nation currently face reflect common problems in the communities where they are located.

"Fentanyl is not just a jail issue, it's a community issue. Mental health is not a jail issue, it's a community issue," criminal justice consultant and instructor **Karen Albert** said to a room of South Carolina sheriffs, deputies and county detention center administrators who attended a recent two-day class in Newberry.

Hosted by the South Carolina Association of Counties and the South Carolina Sheriffs' Association, the Jail Leadership Training brought together county law enforcement leaders to brainstorm ways to tackle these problems and improve overall operations.

"This training is a major step forward for our state. Not only is this the first time in recent memory that the SC Sheriffs' Association and the SC Association of Counties have come together to co-host training, but it is also the first time in recent memory that sheriffs and jail administrators have intentionally dedicated time to train together," said **Jarrod Bruder**, executive director of the SC Sheriffs' Association.

SCAC recognized the potential liability detention centers pose to county governments and forged a partnership with the Sheriffs' Association on a proactive approach.

"Prevention and safety are the top priorities of our risk management team," said SCAC Executive Director **Tim Winslow**. "We know counties face staff shortages in public safety positions and numerous other daily challenges in jails so creative problem solving, open communication and time dedicated to simply discuss issues and share ideas with colleagues across the state goes a long way. We were pleased to partner with the Sheriffs' Association to offer this opportunity to jail administrators, sheriffs and staff and facilitate such important conversations."

Sessions were held in Columbia and Newberry, and a third is planned for Myrtle Beach in November. The first training was for county administrators and jail administrators. The August training hosted at the Newberry Sheriff's Office featured sheriffs, deputies and jail administrators from 14 counties in the Upstate region. To date, 40 county officials have completed the training.

"We were happy to be able to host this meeting," said Newberry County Sheriff Lee Foster of the event. "We should all be on the same sheet of music working for the common good so it is good to be able to come together and discuss ways we can work together for our communities."

Presented by Albert of Practical Solutions for Public Safety and **Alan Richardson** of Justice Planners, the two-day curriculum

*(Continued on next page)*



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McCormick County  
Council Chairman



**Gary M. Mixon**  
Sumter County  
Administrator



**Debra B. Summers**  
Lexington County  
Council Member



**Cecil M. Thornton Jr.**  
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Council Member



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**Timothy C. Winslow**  
Executive Director, SCAC

focuses on implementing effective risk management practices, engaging with stakeholders, maximizing resources, staffing and workforce sustainability, and managing inmate behavior. Richardson started his career as a correctional officer in Lexington County and served as jail administrator there. Albert retired as director of administration for the Arlington, Virginia Sheriff's office. Both have worked with the National Institute of Corrections and are currently based in South Carolina.



Cherokee County Sheriff Steve Mueller, Chester County Chief Deputy Joe Tate and Newberry County Sheriff Lee Foster take part in a breakout session during the August 30 Jail Leadership Training in Newberry.

The Jail Leadership Training featured small group exercises, discussions and brainstorming work.



during this training will help reduce officer and inmate injuries while mitigating some of the counties' liability exposures," Benfield said. "The value of this training is confirmed by the number of officers and counties who have attended the training so far. Collaboration, training, and networking among county detention centers strengthens the entire criminal justice system and enhances the safety of the citizens of South Carolina."

"Sheriffs and jail administrators are so busy that it is difficult to find time to step back and evaluate where they are as an organization and where they want to be," Bruder said. "I want to thank the leaders of the SC Association of Counties for partnering with the SC Sheriffs' Association to host this training. Ultimately, we all have the same objective of having safe, effective, and efficient detention centers. We look forward to collaborating again in the future."

Detention center operations represent one of the most significant liability and safety exposures in county government, explained Robert Benfield, SCAC's director of Insurance Services.

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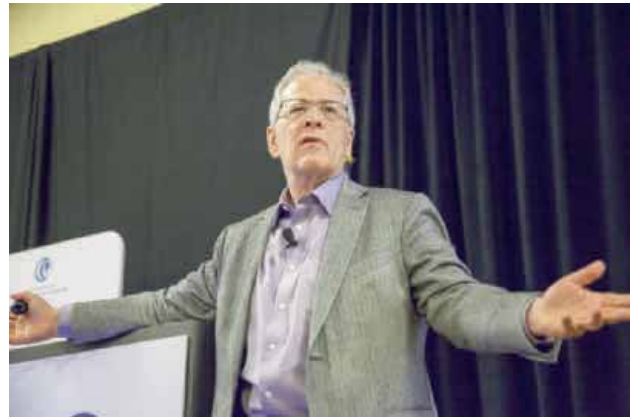
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# Capturing Connections: Photos from the Annual Conference



Richland County Council members Yvonne McBride and Derrek Pugh, and Colleton County Council Vice Chairman and SCAC Board Member Phillip Taylor.



Keynote speaker Bill Stainton encourages county leaders to make connections.



Darlington County Clerk to Council JaNet Bishop speaks with Hampton County Clerk to Council Aline Newton.



Bamberg County Administrator Joey Preston, Councilman and SCAC Board Member Larry Haynes, and Council Vice Chairman Evert Comer.



Jim Armstrong, NACo President Mary Jo McGuire and Charleston County Clerk of Court Julie Armstrong.





The Institute of Government offered a wide range of classes to augment county officials' professional development.



Sen. Thomas Alexander addresses the membership at the Legislative Power Hour and Breakfast.

**The 2023 Annual Conference** and Institute of Government held July 31 through August 3 featured outstanding speakers, time dedicated to learning, and best of all—connecting with colleagues.

Some highlights included:

- classes on topics such as emergency preparedness and economic development;
- an entertaining keynote address by Bill Stainton;
- the opportunity to speak with state lawmakers at the Legislative Power Hour and Breakfast; and
- time to reflect on a successful year with colleagues, family and friends at the Closing Reception.

See more photos online at [sccounties.smugmug.com/](https://sccounties.smugmug.com/).



SCAC members take the opportunity to speak with SC legislators, including Rep. Chris Wooten, after the Legislative Power Hour and Breakfast.



Charleston County Sheriff's Color Guard presents the colors at the Closing Reception.



Oconee County Councilman John Elliott, Fairfield County Councilwoman Peggy Swearingen, Chester County Councilman Michael Vaughn and Fairfield County Council Vice Chairman Clarence Gilbert.



SCAC is grateful to all the Corporate Partners who participated in our Exhibit Hall, introducing county officials and employees to vital services.



Spartanburg County Emergency Services Director Doug Bryson, SCEMD Emergency Manager - Region 3 Bethany Morton and Dorchester County Deputy Administrator Mario Formisano.

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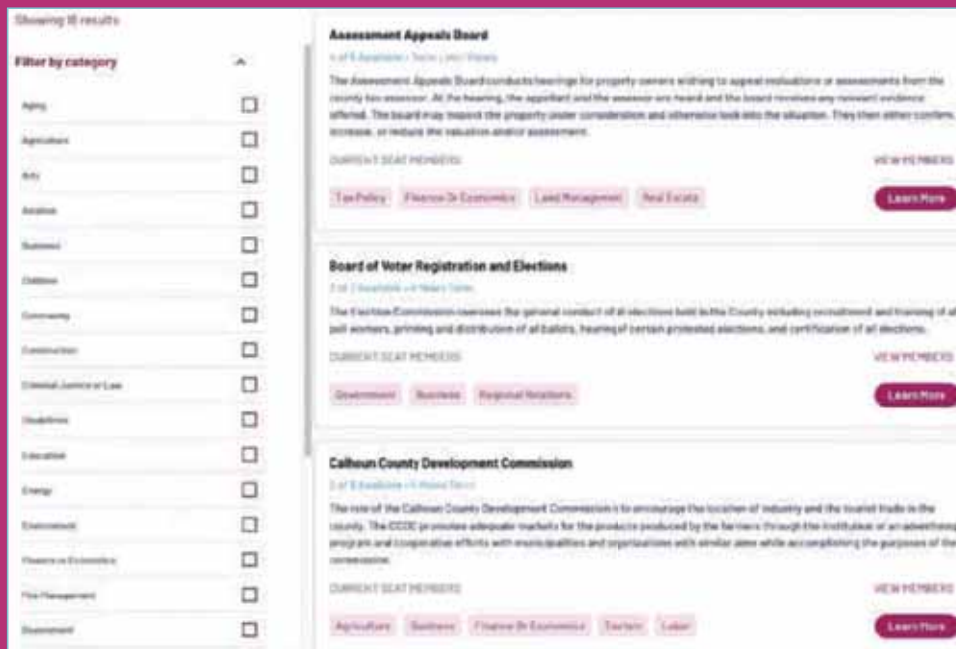


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# For The Good of The Order

## *A Message from the Executive Director*

By Timothy C. Winslow

You might have noticed some subtle changes in this issue of County Focus. About a year ago our organization conducted a survey on member communications, and we appreciate many of you taking time to share your thoughts and ideas. Results of the research showed that you highly value this magazine and want more information on best practices, good news happening in counties across the state and continued useful information on SCAC conferences and meetings.

With your insight in mind, we've revamped a few items including adding this column each issue to briefly update you on key happenings and share future opportunities.

It was great to see many of you in August at our Annual Conference where we were able to spend time delving into issues counties are facing across the state and share best practices. Networking with colleagues is a key benefit to our Association, and I hope you enjoyed the time to connect and share ideas with each other throughout the conference and talk with state legislators during the breakfast event.

We were honored to host and hear from National Association of Counties President **Mary Jo McGuire**, who visited us as a first stop on her presidential tour of the country. If you were not able to attend the conference's general session and hear Mary Jo's motivational remarks, her presentation as well as other keynote information and workshop presentations are available at [bit.ly/ACHighlights23](https://bit.ly/ACHighlights23). Here you will also find a photo gallery of the event and a wrap-up of news.

Speaking of outstanding presidents, you have already heard from current SCAC President **Roy Costner** of Pickens County Council about his goals and plans for the year. I also wanted to take this opportunity to thank Immediate Past President **Debbie Summers** of Lexington County Council for her leadership in 2022-23 and overseeing our successful Counties Connect event in February at the State House as well as the Annual Conference. Please take time to look over the 2022-23 President's Report online at [www.scounties.org](https://www.scounties.org) if you have not already. This document highlights successes during the year as well as resources SCAC offers your counties to help you best serve your citizens and operate efficiently.

Looking ahead this season, SCAC has an excellent opportunity for all county officials to engage with our legislative development process at the **Fall Advocacy Meeting** on October 19 in Columbia. As you know, advocating for county government at the State House



SCAC Executive Director Tim Winslow, NACo President Mary Jo McGuire and SCAC Deputy Executive Director/General Counsel Josh Rhodes at the 2023 SCAC Annual Conference.

is one of the Association's key functions, and your input is critical. The SCAC Policy Steering Committees met in September to begin drafting this year's policy positions based on all members' initial ideas and insight.

In the past, the County Council Coalition met in October to provide feedback on draft policy positions, and we are now expanding that opportunity to **all county officials** at the updated Fall Advocacy Meeting. This event also includes a presentation on the economic forecast that will shape next year's state budget by **Frank Rainwater**, executive director of the SC Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office. As we head into the final half of the two-year legislative session, your input is critical. The success of our legislative efforts on behalf of all 46 counties is the result of your voices and contact with legislators in addition to our staff's efforts.

Don't miss this fall's opportunity to engage with the process. Thank you for all you do for your counties, and please let us know how SCAC can continue to assist you.

Reach Tim at [twinslow@scac.sc](mailto:twinslow@scac.sc).

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# County Update

## Counties Reporting in this Issue of County Update:

Abbeville	Greenwood
Aiken	Hampton
Allendale	Horry
Anderson	Jasper
<b>Bamberg</b>	Kershaw
Barnwell	<b>Lancaster</b>
Beaufort	Laurens
Berkeley	Lee
Calhoun	<b>Lexington</b>
<b>Charleston</b>	Marion
Cherokee	Marlboro
Chester	McCormick
Chesterfield	Newberry
Clarendon	Oconee
Colleton	<b>Orangeburg</b>
Darlington	Pickens
Dillon	<b>Richland</b>
Dorchester	<b>Saluda</b>
<b>Edgefield</b>	Spartanburg
Fairfield	Sumter
Florence	Union
Georgetown	Williamsburg
Greenville	York

## Bamberg & Orangeburg counties



**Bamberg County Administrator Joey Preston, Congressman James Clyburn and Bamberg County IT Director Chip Maier.**

Congressman **James Clyburn** of South Carolina's 6th Congressional District, US Department Agriculture (USDA) Rural Utilities Administrator **Andrew Berke** and USDA Rural Development SC Director **Dr. Sandra Glover** held a press conference in September announcing Bamberg and Orangeburg counties as recipients of the federal ReConnect Grant for broadband internet expansion.

The ReConnect Program is funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. This high-speed internet investment is part of the fourth round of the ReConnect Program and will help provide affordable and reliable

internet access, especially to those in rural areas. The event was held at the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex Isaiah Odom Building Gazebo.

## Charleston County

Charleston County is partnering with the SC Sea Grant Consortium and The Citadel on their Charleston Heat Health Research Project. Charleston County Public Works is expanding its use of new pavement technology designed to extend the life of the road, reduce air pollution, help to remove road associated microplastics, and help to limit the "heat island" effect that raises temperatures. The Citadel and SC Sea Grant Consortium will be testing the roads for heat before and after the treatment, PlusTi™, a photocatalytic asphalt rejuvenator treatment is being applied to roads downtown and in North Charleston.

"This technology not only extends the life of our roads at a significantly lower cost, but also has a lot of positive environmental impacts for our community," said Charleston County Pavement Manager **Mackenzie Kelley**. "We're very excited about the results of our first study and eager to partner with The Citadel and SC Sea Grant Consortium to learn more about how we can reduce negative heat impacts as we continue to grow our pavement management program."

In 2021, Charleston County used this treatment in the Rosemont and Union Heights neighborhoods. Testing by the Texas A&M Transportation Institute on the roads found the treatment extended the life of the road by five years, eliminated nearly all roadway microplastic debris, reduced harmful vehicle pollution by 39% and created a surface that is four times more emissive than untreated roads. More details on Charleston County's Pavement Management Program can be found at [www.charlestonctc.org/pavement.php](http://www.charlestonctc.org/pavement.php).

## Edgefield & Saluda counties

On August 14, 2023, Edgefield County hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the opening of the new Edgefield County Animal Care and Control Facility. The

event took place at the property located at 76 Rabbit Trail in Edgefield.



**The ribbon cutting ceremony at the new Edgefield County Animal Care and Control facility was attended by the public from a tri-county area.**

The opening of the new facility marked a joint venture between Edgefield and Saluda counties. Both counties county councils and the county sheriffs were there to share words of excitement in this momentous event. Citizens from Edgefield, McCormick, and Saluda counties enjoyed light refreshments as they toured the new facility which opened for business the following day.

In attendance were Edgefield County Council Chairman **Dean Campbell**, Vice Chairman **Albert Talbert**, Councilman **Jerry Moody**, Councilwoman **Tiffani Ireland**, Councilwoman **Dr. Jackie Kennion**, Sheriff **Jody Rowland**, Clerk to Council **Aretha Eubanks**, and **Donna Livingston** and **Jenni Stevens** from the Edgefield Chamber of Commerce. Saluda County Council Chairman **James Moore**, Councilman **Frank Daniel Sr.**, Councilman **Carey Bedenbaugh**, Sheriff **Josh Price**, and Developers **David and Stewart Thompson** also joined the event.

## Lancaster County

Lancaster County Council in August voted to adopt a new strategic plan. It's an action-oriented blueprint for the county, designed to focus and align the organization's resources toward the long-term vision for the county. This plan is a culmination of months of preparation, citizen engagement, creative thinking, and documentation of the structure and methods the county will use to guide its future decisions.

*(Continued on next page)*

Lancaster County Administrator **Dennis Marstall** said he is thankful to the county council, staff, stakeholders, and the entire community for their roles in developing the plan.

"I am thrilled that council invested the time and set a path for the county to focus on defined goals to enhance the quality of life and make Lancaster County the best place to live, work, worship, and play in the Carolinas," Marstall said. "This strategic plan lays out our vision and will serve as Lancaster County's roadmap over the next five years, particularly as we continue to address the ongoing growth."

The entire strategic plan is on [mylancaster-sc.org](http://mylancaster-sc.org) under the "About Us" tab.

Lancaster County Council celebrated the Lancaster Dixie 6U boys during a recent council meeting for their win at the Dixie Baseball World Series. Congratulations to the Lancaster Dixie 6U boys!



Lancaster County kicked off its Civics 101 Course with an introduction to Lancaster County government. Participants learned about the council, local government, the recently adopted 23/24 budget, and the voting process. The county is excited to engage with and educate citizens through this program over the next nine weeks.



Lancaster County Council recognized **Sheron Adams** during the council meeting on August 28 for being named the 2023 Jerry D. McDaniel Detention Officer of

the Year by the SC Sheriff's Association. This honor is awarded to one detention officer each year who shows exemplary performance, high personal integrity, and overall dedication to the law enforcement profession. Adams has been in law enforcement for 26 years. In Sheriff **Barry Faile's** nomination letter, he said Adams excels in her interaction with inmates and always maintains a calm and professional approach.

## Lexington County

Engineer **Zachary Pfentner** of the Lexington County Fire Service (LCFS) was awarded the 2023 Jeffrey Vaden Chavis Medal of Valor by the SC State Firefighters' Association. The award was presented to Pfentner in June at the State Firefighters' conference in Myrtle Beach. The award is one of the SCSFFA's highest awards to be presented to an individual for their actions in the face of danger. Pfentner is the first member of the LCFS to be awarded this prestigious honor, which is named in honor of fallen Lexington County Firefighter Chavis, who was critically injured in the line of duty in 2001.

Lexington County's Land Development Division released the 2023 Floodplain Management Plan report which lists 19 action items identified by county officials and residents as important steps in addressing how the county will prepare for future potential flooding events, like the one experienced in October 2015.

"Lexington County is one of the fastest growing counties in South Carolina and we continue our efforts to protect our county from all potential disasters," Lexington County Council Chairwoman **Beth Carrigg** said. "The 2015 floods and the catastrophic damage they left behind is a constant

reminder that we are not immune from natural disasters in Lexington County. Partnering with all stakeholders, investing in state-of-the-art equipment, rapid response times, and a fully educated community is the best defense against the unexpected."

Through the Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program, Lexington County has acquired six of the 19 FEMA-identified Repetitive Loss Properties and returned the land to its natural state. This allows the floodplain area to reduce flood damage and dissipate waters to downstream properties. Additionally, three of the repetitive loss properties were part of the CDBG-Mitigation Program (CDBG-MIT) grant and have also been returned to their natural state.

Also, through the CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT programs, Lexington County embarked on improvements to five roadways within the county that are constantly impacted by flooding events. The improvements, which are currently in the planning and design stages, will address drainage is-





sues to ensure the roadways are passible by emergency services and the general public during and following storm events. View the full 2023 Floodplain Management Plan Progress Report, as well as the county's Floodplain Management Plan at [www.lex-co.sc.gov](http://www.lex-co.sc.gov).

Lexington County EMS has promoted four employees to the rank of Operations Lieutenant: **Jason Hentz**, **Josh Ledbetter**, **Danielle Strickland** and **Taylor Vance**.

Congratulations to Staff Sergeant **Terri Bushman** of Lexington County EMS, who was chosen as the Lexington County Employee of the Second Quarter for 2023.

Lexington County hosted an awards and recognition ceremony celebrating staff, teachers and students that have encouraged and furthered environmental education and stewardship in Lexington County schools.

Several schools have joined the SC Green Step Schools Program (GSS), designed to help South Carolina schools earn awards for establishing sustainability projects where students learn and teach others. The program connects community mentors and professionals with schools to guide and evaluate these projects. The county recognized schools that achieved GSS recertification for 2023, as well as schools actively working toward their initial certification and schools starting out in their environmental education efforts.

The county also recognized several Future Farmers of America (FFA) students for their accomplishments. **Emma McCaffrey**, a Batesburg-Leesville student was recognized for earning the Environmental Education Association of South Carolina 2023 Outstanding Youth Award. Five Gilbert High School students competed in April at the SC State Envirothon and won third place in the FFA section. In addition, three

students competed in May at the State FFA Horse Evaluation competition in Camden and won first place. A member of the Horse Evaluation team, **Kaitlyn DeCarlis**, was awarded high individual for the state.

**Jay Keck** from the South Carolina Wildlife Federation served as a valuable mentor for students and teachers involved in the GSS program, earning him the title of 2023 Green Steps Mentor of the Year. His dedication and expertise in wildlife education have made a significant impact on the program.

## Richland County

Richland County has been enhancing county roadways and reshaping communities with funding generated by the Richland County Transportation Penny. In 2012, the residents of Richland County voted to approve the 1% penny tax to drive road

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and other transportation improvements throughout the county. That vote has generated more than \$1.07 billion for much-needed projects including street widenings, the redesign of intersections in urban and rural areas, paving of dirt roads, expansion of greenways, and development of safer byways for pedestrians and cyclists.

Richland County Government has expanded the public education campaign to

magnify the positive impact of the Transportation Penny Program for residents. The campaign, developed by the Richland County Office of Communications, includes the recent launch of new branding for the program, a new website and social media presence on Facebook. The website provides a portal to a brief history of the Penny Tax, current and completed construction projects, monthly progress reports, upcoming events and the latest news

from the County's Department of Public Works. Get a look at the new campaign at [richlandpenny.com](http://richlandpenny.com).

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