

COUNTY FOCUS

SOUTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
FALL 2021

2021 Annual Conference

Paul A. Cain
Elected SCAC President



S.C. legislators provide legislative update at annual conference's Opening Session.



**Connie N. Portee Receives
President's Cup**



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ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES**

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First Vice President

Debra B. Summers
Lexington County Council

Second Vice President

Roy Costner III
Pickens County
Council Vice Chairman

Third Vice President

William E. Robinson
Allendale County
Council Member

Immediate Past President

Johnnie Wright Sr.
Orangeburg County
Council Chairman

Secretary

Steve Willis
Lancaster County Administrator

Treasurer

Belinda D. Copeland
Darlington County

**SCAC Board of Directors
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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

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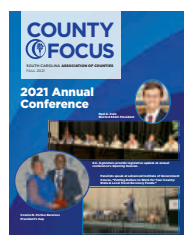
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COVER



COVER: Highlights of SCAC's 2021 Annual Conference and Institute of Government for County Officials

SCAC Elects Paul A. Cain President

SCAC elected officers for 2021–22 and re-elected board members at its 2021 Annual Conference, held July 30 – Aug. 3.

Elected PRESIDENT was Oconee County Council Vice Chairman Paul A. Cain. He succeeds Orangeburg County Council Chairman Johnnie Wright Sr., who served as 2020–21 SCAC President.

“I am deeply honored and grateful to have the opportunity to serve as president of SCAC this year,” said SCAC President Paul A. Cain. “The past 18 months have been the most challenging of my political career, and I’m sure the same goes for my colleagues in South Carolina. Throughout these difficult times, the wonderful people of SCAC have stood beside us and at the ready to assist all counties with scores of novel issues that we have been forced to deal with. I look forward to working with each of you as we continue to build on the solid foundation that has been laid by SCAC.

“Thanks to your support, the hard work of the SCAC staff, and our friends in the General Assembly, we have enjoyed success in driving policy in South Carolina for more than 54 years,” Cain added. “Once again, in order for SCAC to be the most effective advocate for our counties’ interests, we need all hands on deck to assist with the development of our policy positions. Please do not discount the huge impact that our relationships and positive communication with our legislators can make. Please do take a few minutes to read SCAC’s *Friday Reports* and *Legislative Alerts*, and, when called up, please reach out to our friends in the General Assembly.”

SCAC’s newly elected president offered some advice to anyone who has not been vaccinated.

“I strongly encourage everyone to get vaccinated,” Cain said, noting that he and his wife, Amy, were vaccinated mid-April against COVID-19. “As we see the rise in the highly-contagious Delta variant of the COVID-19, we also see serious illnesses and deaths rise throughout South Carolina. At this point in the pandemic, almost all of the people who are dying are unvaccinated.



Paul A. Cain
SCAC President

“If you don’t want to get vaccinated for your own safety,” he pleaded, “please at least think about your family and friends who would be devastated if you passed away from COVID-19, and get vaccinated for them.”

Cain, who has practiced law since 2011, is managing attorney for the Cain Law Firm LLC (formerly Cain & Williams, Ltd. Co.) in Seneca. He is also co-owner of Magnetic South Brewery, located in Anderson, Clemson and Greenville.

He was first elected to Oconee County Council (District III) in 2014. He served as council vice chair in 2015 and as council chair in 2016, and has served as council vice chair since 2019.

Cain has served on the following Oconee County Council committees: Budget, Finance & Administration (Chair in 2016); Planning & Economic Development (Chair in 2015, and since 2017); and Real Estate, Facilities & Land Management (Chair in 2014).

He received his Bachelor of Science in Retail Management in 2006 from the University of South Carolina in Columbia, and his Juris Doctor in 2010 from the Charleston School of Law.

“Paul Cain brings an energetic and intelligent approach to leadership. His enthusiasm is contagious,” said SCAC Executive Director Tim Winslow. “Oconee County has been fortunate to have Paul as a county

leader for many years. SCAC staff cannot wait to have Paul lead us into 2022.”

SCAC Elects Other Officers

SCAC elected other officers as follows: FIRST VICE PRESIDENT—Debra B. Summers, Lexington County Council; SECOND VICE PRESIDENT—Roy Costner III, Pickens County Council Vice Chairman; THIRD VICE PRESIDENT—William E. Robinson, Allendale County Council; SECRETARY—Steve Willis, Lancaster County Administrator; and TREASURER—Belinda D. Copeland, Darlington County.

SCAC Elects Other Officers

**First
Vice President**



Debra B. Summers
*Lexington County
Council Member*

**Second
Vice President**



Roy Costner III
*Pickens County
Council Chairman*

**Third
Vice President**



William E. Robinson
*Allendale County
Council Member*

**Immediate
Past President**



Johnnie Wright Sr.
*Orangeburg County
Council Chairman*

Secretary



Steve Willis
*Lancaster County
Administrator*


Treasurer



Belinda D. Copeland
Darlington County

SCAC Elects Board Members

SCAC elected five board members to four-year terms (to expire 2025): Julie J. Armstrong, Charleston County Clerk of Court; Steven J. Brown, Greenwood County Council Chairman; D. Paul Sommerville, Beaufort County Council Vice Chairman; Cecil M. Thornton Jr., Calhoun County Council; and Robert Winkler, York County Council Vice Chairman. SCAC voted for Dwight L. Stewart Jr. (Clarendon County Council Chairman), SCAC's Immediate Past President for 2020–21,

to serve the unexpired term (to expire in 2023) of SCAC Third Vice President William E. Robinson (Allendale County Council). 

SOCIAL MEDIA



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Follow SCAC on social media to learn what's happening at the State House and how SCAC's programs and services can benefit your county. Share what's happening in your county. Let's promote the many ways our counties are making a positive difference for our citizens across the state.

SCAC's 2021 Awards Competition and COVID-19 Response and Resiliency Showcase

SCAC hosted its 2021 Awards Competition and COVID-19 Response and Resiliency Showcase on Tuesday, June 8 at the S.C. Educational Television (SCETV) in Columbia. The competition was livestreamed on Facebook and on SCAC's website at [SCCounties.org/livestream](https://www.sccounties.org/livestream). Eight counties competed in the J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award competition, and three competed in the Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award competition. Four counties also participated in the COVID-19 Response and Resiliency Showcase, which was not adjudicated.

All entrants were recognized and winners for each competition were announced at the Association's annual conference banquet on August 2. In addition, COVID-19 Showcase participants received special acknowledgment with a video tribute, which may be viewed online at [SCCounties.org/awards/video-library](https://www.sccounties.org/awards/video-library).

J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award Entries

Counties competing for the J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award were grouped in the following population categories:

- Under 50,000
- 50,000 to 150,000 and
- Over 150,000.

The J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award recognizes counties that address community challenges, implement operational improvements, or enhance their citizens' quality of life in a unique way. The award, first presented in 1972, honors the memory of J. Mitchell Graham who served as SCAC's president from 1969 to 1970.

The following entries were presented:

Berkeley County

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

Charleston County

Honorable Mention Recipient (Over 150,000 Population Category)
The Satellite Voting Unit (SVU) brings the Board of Elections and Voter Registration Office to voters within Charleston County. Citizens can now cast their absentee vote close to where they live. The SVU also serves as a traveling billboard that allows citizens to learn more about voter registration and elections services, and puts a face on the county elections office within the community.



GREENWOOD COUNTY WINS 2021 J. MITCHELL GRAHAM MEMORIAL AWARD—SCAC President Johnnie Wright Sr. presents the Association's J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award to Greenwood County Council Member Theo Lane (right) and County Manager Toby Chappell (left) on August 2 at SCAC's 2021 Annual Conference.

Clarendon County

Honorable Mention Recipient

(Under 50,000 Population Category)

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

Greenwood County

Winner

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

Kershaw County

Honorable Mention Recipient

(50,000 – 150,000 Population Category)

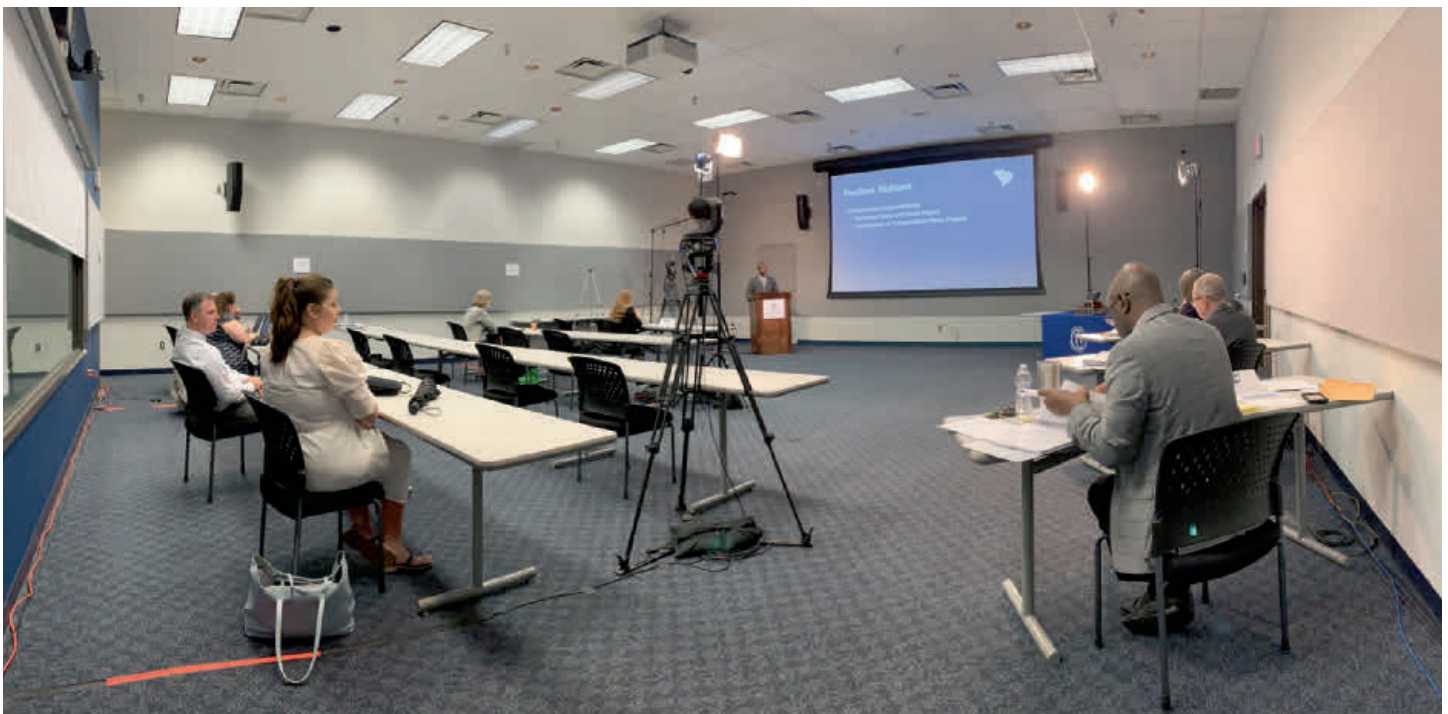
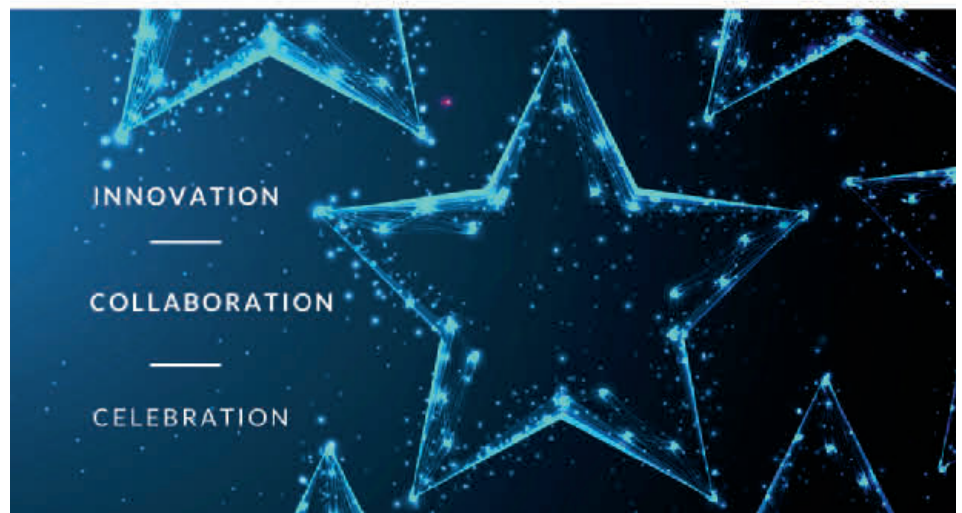
The Enhance U Program improves and better utilizes Kershaw County's greatest talent – its employees. The county implemented a radical culture change by mapping talent, devising individualized development plans, and invest-

ing in comprehensive learning solutions. The initiative can easily be replicated by other counties seeking to comprehensively manage talent and create an agile workforce.

(Continued on next page)

2021 AWARDS COMPETITION

J. Mitchell Graham Award + Barrett Lawrimore Award
COVID-19 Response and Resiliency Showcase



SCAC's 2021 Awards Competition, SCETV, June 8

Lancaster County

During the COVID-19 pandemic, local governments quickly implemented protocols to limit exposure; however, protection after a death occurs was not widely considered. Immediately after a death, infectious diseases can continue to be released through bodily fluids and

air escaping the body. The Lancaster County Coroner's Office developed a protection protocol after death, which rendered the spread of infection non-existent.



CHARLESTON COUNTY RECEIVES HONORABLE MENTION—Accepting Charleston County's Honorable Mention Award in the Over 150,000 Population Category are (left to right) Michael Miller, Charleston County Register of Deeds; Dan Martin, Vice Chair, Charleston County Board of Elections and Voter Registration; Jim Armstrong, Charleston County Deputy Administrator for Public Service; SCAC President Johnnie Wright Sr. (presenting the award); Isaac Cramer, Executive Director, Charleston County Board of Elections and Voter Registration; Jenny Costa Honeycutt, Councilwoman; Anna B. Johnson, Council Vice Chairwoman; and Bill Tuten, County Administrator.



KERSHAW COUNTY RECEIVES HONORABLE MENTION—Accepting Kershaw County's Honorable Mention Award in the 50,000 to 150,000 Population Category are (left to right) Stewart Kidd, Kershaw County Training and Development Coordinator; Victor J. Carpenter, County Administrator; SCAC President Johnnie Wright Sr. (presenting award); S.C. Sen. Penry Gustafson (District 27); and Michael Conley, Kershaw County Assistant Administrator for Public Services.

Pickens County

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

Richland County

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

Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award Entries

The Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award highlights the critical need for regional partnerships, strategies and solutions. Competition for this award is open to two or more political subdivisions (counties or county partnerships formed with city, town, district or regional government organizations) that work together to complete an innovative project. The award is named in memory of Barrett S. Lawrimore who served as SCAC's president in 2004. The following entries were presented:

Berkeley County

Berkeley County took exceptional measures to safely and effectively execute an essential and popular annual event—the Delinquent Tax Sale. Through unique partnerships among county departments and a creative collaboration between local government and local business, Berkeley County was the only county in the state to offer both online

and in-person options for the annual tax sale. The tax sale set a surprisingly strong and successful standard for all future sales.

Lancaster County and the City of Lancaster

Winner

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

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

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

COVID-19 Response and Resiliency Showcase Entries

For the second year, the COVID-19 Response and Resiliency Showcase was included in the awards program. This non-adjudicated category allowed counties to showcase their response to the Coronavirus Pandemic that has affected every county in South Carolina. The on-going pandemic requires continual mitigation of its impacts and new ways of conducting county business. The following entries were presented:

Berkeley County

Berkeley County adjusted and prioritized safety over all else in light

(Continued on next page)



CLARENDON COUNTY RECEIVES HONORABLE MENTION—Accepting Clarendon County's Honorable Mention Award in the Under 50,000 Population Category are (left to right) David W. Epperson, Clarendon County Administrator/Attorney; SCAC President Johnnie Wright Sr. (presenting award); Jason L. Dennis, Deputy Chief of Operations; Bradley C. Gerfin, EMS Deputy Chief; Dr. Robert L. Ridgeway III, Assistant Chief Medical Control Officer; Michael A. Johnson Jr., Fire Chief; Dwight L. Stewart Jr., Clarendon County Council Chairman; and Theodore B. Felder, Deputy County Administrator.

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

Lexington County


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

Pickens County

Pickens County was able to enhance safety protocols to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission without interrupting essential government services. The county sought innovative ways to ensure that public services were not interrupted during the pandemic. A Temporary Information Pod was deployed, which served as a drive-

thru and makeshift front desk where citizens were assisted from their vehicles by knowledgeable staff.

Richland County

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



LANCASTER COUNTY WINS 2021 BARRETT LAWRIEMORE MEMORIAL REGIONAL COOPERATION AWARD—SCAC President Johnnie Wright Sr. presents the Association's 2021 Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award to Lancaster County Administrator Steve Willis (left) and Council Vice Chairman W. Brian Caranes (right) on August 2 at SCAC's 2021 Annual Conference.



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Connie N. Portee Receives President's Cup

SCAC President Johnnie Wright Sr. (Orangeburg County Council Chairman) presented the President's Cup—one of the Association's highest honors—to Orangeburg County Clerk to Council Connie N. Portee at the Association's 2021 Annual Conference, held July 30 – Aug. 3.

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

"This year's recipient of the 2021 President's Cup has contrib-


uted countless hours to Orangeburg County serving county officials, employees, and those in the community," said SCAC President Johnnie Wright when presenting the prestigious award to Portee at the conference's annual banquet on August 2. "Described by many as a conscientious, competent, humble, and trustworthy servant, Connie (Portee) is a critical member of the Orangeburg County Team."

Prior to joining Orangeburg County in 2016, Portee served her alma mater of South Carolina State University for 13 years working in various capacities supporting students, faculty, and staff. She received

her bachelor's degree from Claflin University, master's degree from South Carolina State University, and completed advanced studies in human behavior at Capella University.

"This year's recipient of the President's Cup," Wright said, "is a woman of great character and faith."

Portee has served in ministry as associate pastor of Solid Rock International Outreach Ministries and as pastor at He Restoreth My Soul Ministries. She is a 2017 graduate of Leadership Orangeburg, a member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Inc. and the American Business Women's Association.

Portee serves as South Carolina State University chapter president of the International Association of Administrative Professionals and as a board member of the Bootstraps Mentoring Foundation. 



SCAC President Johnnie Wright Sr. (Orangeburg County Council Chairman) presents the Association's President's Cup to Orangeburg County Clerk to Council Connie N. Portee on August 2 at SCAC's 2021 Annual Conference.



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Twenty-Five County Officials Graduate from Institute of Government for County Officials

Twenty-five county officials graduated on August 2 from Levels I and II of the Institute of Government for County Officials at SCAC's 2021 Annual Conference, held July 30 – Aug. 3.

"It is an honor for me to recognize members of the class of 2021," said 2020-21 SCAC President Johnnie Wright Sr. (Orangeburg County Council Chairman) when recognizing graduates at the conference's opening session on August 2. "Thank you for your dedication to county government, as demonstrated by your graduation today. Congratulations!"

LEVEL I

Graduating from Level I were: AIKEN COUNTY—**Danny Feagin, County Council**; CHARLESTON COUNTY—**Michael**

Miller, Register of Deeds; CHESTER COUNTY—**Michael Vaughn, County Council**; CLARENDON COUNTY—**Terry Ridgeway, Senior Secretary**; DARLINGTON COUNTY—**Sherman Dibble, Finance Director**; EDGEFIELD COUNTY—**Albert Talbert, Council Vice Chairman**; LAURENS COUNTY—**Walter Patterson Jr., County Council**; LEXINGTON COUNTY—**Glen Conwell, Council Vice Chairman**; KELLY POOLE, **Library Director**; OCONEE COUNTY—**John Elliott, Council Chairman**; ORANGEBURG COUNTY—**De-loris Frazier, County Council**; **Connie Portee, Clerk to Council**; RICHLAND COUNTY—**Allison Terracio, County Council**; **Leonardo Brown, County Administrator**; and YORK COUNTY—**Karen Brogdon, Clerk to Council**.



Pictured are county officials who were available for a group photo when graduates of the Institute of Government for County Officials were recognized on August 2: (Level I) Albert Talbert, Edgefield County Council Vice Chairman; Glen Conwell, Lexington County Council Vice Chairman; Leonardo Brown, Richland County Administrator; (Levels I and II) Connie Portee, Orangeburg County Clerk to Council; Joseph Passiment, Beaufort County Council Chairman; Moses Bell, Fairfield County Council Chairman; and Daniel Prentice, Dorchester County Deputy Administrator.

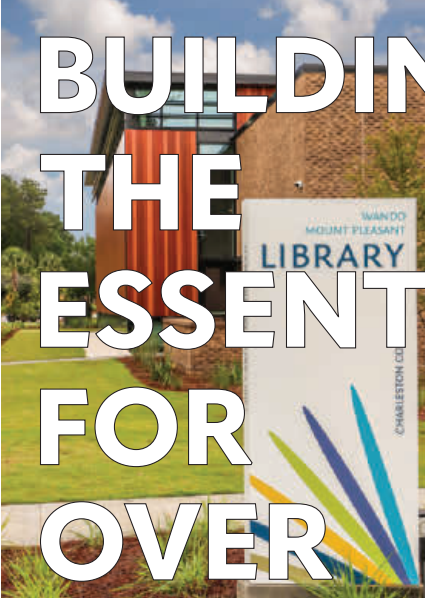

LEVEL II

Graduating from Level II were: **BAMBERG COUNTY**—**Sharon Hammond, County Council**; **BEAUFORT COUNTY**—**Joseph Passiment, Council Chairman**; **CHESTER COUNTY**—**Michael Vaughn, County Council**; **DARLINGTON COUNTY**—**Albert Davis, Council Member**; **DORCHESTER COUNTY**—**Daniel Prentice, Deputy County Administrator/Chief Financial Officer**; **EDGEFIELD COUNTY**—**Tricia Butler, Registration & Elections Director**; **FAIRFIELD COUNTY**—**Moses Bell, Council Chairman**; **GREENWOOD COUNTY**—**Theo Lane, County Council**; **LEXINGTON COUNTY**—**Kelly Poole, Library Director**; **ORANGEBURG COUNTY**—**Connie Portee, Clerk to Council**; **PICKENS COUNTY**—**Ralph Guarino, Finance Director**; and **YORK COUNTY**—**Robert Winkler, Council Vice Chairman**.


The Institute of Government for County Officials provides county officials the opportunity to enhance their skills and abilities to function more effectively. SCAC partners with the Joseph P. Riley Jr. Center for Livable Communities, College of Charleston, to offer the Institute of Government three times per year. Clemson University's Master of Public Administration program sponsors the Institute.

County officials must complete 27 hours of instruction to graduate from Level I, and 18 hours of instruction to graduate from Level II.







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PalmettoPride Presents 2021 Leaders Against Litter Awards

PalmettoPride presented 2021 Leaders Against Litter awards to elected officials of Williamsburg, Barnwell, Laurens and Richland counties on August 3 at SCAC's 2021 Annual Conference, held July 30 – August 3.


Each year, PalmettoPride presents Leaders Against Litter awards to honor elected officials who seek to change the environmental landscape in their communities by working with their administrations, employees and citizens on litter prevention. Such leaders lead the charge to make important changes in how their counties address litter, specifically following what PalmettoPride believes are the basic tenets for change: education, enforcement, awareness, and litter pickup.

Sarah Lyles, Executive Director for PalmettoPride, presented Leaders Against Litter awards to:

- Dr. Tiffany Wright, Williamsburg County Supervisor, for implementing administrative changes through litter control and pickup, including applying for and receiving a Litter Task Force grant;
- Ben Kinlaw, Barnwell County Council, for coordinating efforts with state and local agencies to increase litter pickup, and coordinating the Adopt-a-Highway and Barnwell County Highway Pickup social media campaign;
- Chakisse Newton, Richland County Council, for working with the administration to respond to the needs of increased pickup after COVID and organizing and participating in community litter pickup events;
- Gretchen Barron, Richland County Council, for leading her district in community cleanup and prevention efforts using community in-action methods; and
- Laurens County Council for working to create a cohesive countywide litter prevention program including applying for and receiving the Litter Task Force grant and a Keep SC Beautiful affiliate.

"Litter is not unique in South Carolina, but how we address litter in our communities is," Lyles said. "These leaders have come up with

solutions for their communities' needs and resources. Litter prevention does not have to carry a heavy price tag, but ignoring the problem will always cost your county its quality of life."

PalmettoPride is working toward a litter-free South Carolina. Created as a legislative initiative to fight litter and help beautify South Carolina by engaging citizens to take action in their communities through education, enforcement, awareness and litter pickup. PalmettoPride has the experience and national network-base to help local governments plan and implement litter prevention programs to fit the needs of communities, municipalities and counties, with a wide-range of solutions and price points. 



PalmettoPride Executive Director Sarah Lyles (right) presents a Leaders Against Litter Award to Chakisse Newton, Richland County Council Member.



Laurens County Council Chairman Walter Brown Patterson Jr. accepts a Leaders Against Litter Award for Laurens County Council.

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Highlights of SCAC's 2021 Annual Conference

SCAC hosted its 2021 Annual Conference and Institute of Government for County Officials from July 30 to August 3 at the Hilton Head Marriott Hotel.

This year's conference featured first-ever rural and urban caucus meetings and more educational and networking opportunities for county officials.

SCAC's Nominating Committee, and Constitution, Resolutions and Bylaws Committee met Sunday.

Many meetings followed on Sunday and Monday, including: S.C. Coalition of Black County Officials; County Managers, Administrators & Supervisors; Clerks to Council; Councils of Governments Executive Directors; and Probate Judges. Exhibitors also operated their booths,



NACo President Larry Johnson

providing conference attendees opportunities to learn about their products and services.

A President's/Exhibitors Reception was held Sunday evening. Kershaw County also hosted a reception for county officials to share information on efforts regarding fire millage and user fees.

Monday morning's Opening Session featured a legislative panel discussion. NACo's newly elected president, Larry Johnson (Commissioner for DeKalb County, Ga.) also spoke. Twenty-five county officials were recognized for graduating from Levels I and II of the Institute of Government for County Officials.

Winners of SCAC's 2021 Annual Awards Program were recognized Monday evening at the Association's Annual Conference Banquet. Greenwood County won this year's J. Mitchell Graham



Opening Session, SCAC's 2021 Annual Conference



Members of the S.C. General Assembly address conference delegates.

Memorial Award, and Lancaster County won this year's Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award. Clarendon, Charleston and Kershaw counties won Honorable Mention awards. Articles on this year's award winners will be published in the winter issue of *County Focus Magazine*.

Entities participating in the COVID-19 Response and Resiliency Showcase, which was not adjudicated, also received special recognition for participating.

SCAC President Johnnie Wright Sr. presented the President's Cup, one of the Association's highest honors, to Orangeburg County Clerk to Council Connie N. Portee.

At the General Session Tuesday morning, PalmettoPride, South Carolina's legislative initiative to fight litter and beautify the state, presented Leaders Against Litter awards to: Dr. Tiffany Wright, Wil-



The advanced Institute of Government course, **Building Resiliency for Your Community**, (above) included a panel discussion (right)



Valerie Lemmie
Charles F. Kettering Foundation



Jeff Black
Black Sheep, Inc.

liamsburg County Supervisor; Ben Kinlaw, Barnwell County Council; Chakisse Newton, Richland County Council; Gretchen Barron, Richland County Council; and Laurens County Council.

Valerie Lemmie, Director of Exploratory Research, Charles F. Kettering Foundation, shared information on the Foundation's work helping local governments and citizens engage in the democratic process.

The General Session's keynote speaker, Jeff Black, Founder/CEO, Black Sheep, Inc., provided a humorous and inspiring message on how our county leaders are leading their communities in a world experiencing a pandemic.

Oconee County Council Vice Chairman Paul A. Cain was elected president for 2021-22, replacing Orangeburg County Council Chairman Johnnie Wright Sr., who served as last year's president. New SCAC Officers and five new board members were also elected.



County officials visit exhibits.



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2020-2021 PRESIDENT'S REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LOCAL LEADERS. STATEWIDE STRENGTH.®



SOUTH CAROLINA
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

JOHNNIE WRIGHT SR., PRESIDENT

A Letter from the 2020-2021 President

Dear County Officials,

I am honored to share this year's *President's Report* highlighting the Association's stellar programs and services and exceptional accomplishments during the past year. These achievements would not be possible without the active involvement of our county officials across our state. Your commitment to working with your local delegation members throughout the year, your county's adoption of sound risk management principles, and your participation in SCAC's educational and networking sessions are what make our Association strong and profoundly successful.

As our counties have continued to address challenges associated with the health pandemic for our citizens, businesses, and employees, SCAC has worked diligently to share timely information on the American Rescue Plan Act as it is released, including the U.S. Treasury Department's official guidance.

On a local level, our lobbying team and county officials worked together to achieve full funding to the Local Government Fund—a significant victory for all 46 counties! This truly would not have been possible without the full support of the leadership of the S.C. General Assembly.

As you read this year's report, I encourage you to learn more about SCAC's diverse service package and ways you can access these resources. Our Association stands ready to assist you.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude for your support this past year. It has truly been a privilege to serve and work side by side with you. Together, we will continue to make great progress for our counties and our state.

Sincerely,

Johnnie Wright Sr., President
South Carolina Association of Counties
Orangeburg County Council Chairman



SCAC 2020-2021 President's Report - Executive Summary

JOHNNIE WRIGHT SR., PRESIDENT

For more than 50 years, the South Carolina Association of Counties (SCAC) has worked to empower county officials through advocacy, education, and collaboration.

The Association's commitment to serving our counties during the COVID-19 pandemic is unwavering. From guidance on the Governor's Executive Orders to virtual briefings on federal relief packages, the Association strives to share real-time information to assist county leaders in making informed decisions to help employees, residents, and the business community.

Understanding the growing threat of cyber breaches, the Association is dedicated to sharing cybersecurity news and resources. Local leaders committed to risk management must invest in cybersecurity to protect county operations and employee and citizen data.

One of the ways SCAC has demonstrated this commitment is through its partnership with the National Association of Counties (NACo) on the NACo Enterprise Cybersecurity Leadership Academy and cyber simulations. More information regarding these opportunities is available in this report.



The Association has a rich history of working with county and state leaders to safeguard Home Rule. By partnering with county leaders who are committed to working with local delegation members throughout the year, SCAC staff successfully amplifies the voices and concerns of county government.

As the legal advocate for South Carolina's counties, Association staff conducts research, provides sound advice to county attorneys and county leaders, and appears as an *amicus curiae* (friend of the court) in cases with statewide impact.

SCAC's educational programs foster close connections between newcomers and seasoned county leaders and sharpen skills needed to make sound, ethical decisions. The Association's research and publications keep county officials and employees abreast of trends and emerging issues.

SCAC's insurance trusts and risk management services are unparalleled and offer significant resources to help counties protect their human and financial resources. The Association's debt collection programs have been highly successful in returning monies for county operations that would otherwise go uncollected.

By bringing together **Local Leaders**, the Association and county officials create **Statewide Strength**. SCAC is honored to be of service to South Carolina's 46 counties. Please explore the pages of this report, which covers the period from August 2020 to August 2021, to learn more about the Association's programs and progress.



Advocate for County Government

Legislative Advocacy

In December 2020, SCAC's Legislative Committee adopted 69 policy positions to set the course for the 2021 legislative year. These positions were published in *Policy Positions for the 2021 Session of the South Carolina General Assembly*.

The Association provides resources to involve county officials in the legislative process and keep them informed of the General Assembly's actions. The *Friday Report* is distributed weekly during the legislative session to ensure county officials are aware of all legislation that affects their operations.

SCAC staff members attend numerous subcommittee and committee meetings in order to report on legislative action. The actions of the House and Senate are monitored each day the General Assembly is in session. This includes reviewing each bill or amendment introduced and requesting input from county officials. Association staff monitored 576 bills during the 2021 session.

SCAC's 2020-2021 Legislative Highlights

While much of the 2021 session of the S.C. General Assembly centered around addressing Santee Cooper, gun control, schools, and matters relating to COVID-19, it has been remarkably successful for SCAC and county

government, both as it relates to policy positions that were achieved and harmful legislation that was amended or defeated.

This is the first year of a two-year session, and any legislation introduced that did not pass this year has an opportunity to pass next year. Following are some of the legislative victories and policy positions for which SCAC advocated throughout the legislative session.



Abbeville County Director David Garner, Senators Penry Gustafson and Mike Gambrell, and Kershaw County Administrator Vic Carpenter discuss legislation before a Senate Finance subcommittee meeting during the 2021 legislative session.

Local Government Fund (LGF) and State Appropriations Bill (H. 4100).

Under the budget adopted by the General Assembly, the LGF is funded with an increase of \$17.92 million statewide. This represents full funding to the LGF, including all back funding that was imperiled because of the state operating under a Continuing Resolution in 2020 in light of the ongoing pandemic.

The budget also earmarks \$10 million for the Rural County Stabilization Fund. Any county that has a population growth, as determined by the 2020 Census, of less than 5.35 percent since the 2010 Census is eligible to receive monies from the fund. This will help make our rural counties whole in the LGF.

The budget also includes a 2.5 percent base pay increase for all state employees; a raise in library per capita funding from \$2 to \$2.25, an SCAC policy position; a \$32 million allocation that covers the approximate 1 percent credit for the local government employers' increase that has been in the budget since the employer contribution rate began to increase annually in 2017; \$500,000 for post traumatic stress disorder treatment for first responders, an SCAC policy position; \$3.784 million for firefighter cancer benefit plan; \$50 million to County Transportation Commissions for road improvement projects; and \$50 million to the Office of Resiliency for Disaster Relief.

Property Tax Installment Payment Flexibility (Act No. 69).

This legislation, an SCAC policy position, gives the treasurer, tax collector, or other officials charged with the collection of ad valorem property taxes in a county discretion in the scheduling and collection of installment payments from taxpayers.

Legally Separated Assessment Ratio (Act No. 56).

This legislation defines "legally separated" for purposes of the certificate contained in the application for the special 4 percent assessment ratio for owner-occupied residential property, an SCAC policy position.

Manufacturing Property Tax Exemption Exclusion (Act No. 39).

At least one major utility is paying its property taxes under protest claiming it is eligible for the manufacturing property tax exemption, which the state fully funds. This legislation clarifies that the manufacturing property tax exemption does not apply to utilities, which was the original intent of the exemption.

Electronic Waste (E-Waste) Sunset Extension (Act No. 82).

This legislation extends the sunset on the South Carolina Manufacturer Responsibility and Consumer Convenience Information Technology Equipment Collection and Recovery Act and applicable regulations until December 31, 2023. This is an SCAC policy position. It also allows a stakeholder working group, including SCAC staff, to continue pursuing efforts to reform the current program and to alleviate the financial burden faced by many counties in storing e-waste.

The success of the legislative program is the result of the relentless efforts of SCAC staff and the work of hundreds of county officials who remain informed and make timely contact with members of the General Assembly.





Legal Advocacy

SCAC's legal staff, working through the county attorney, spends hundreds of hours each year conducting in-depth research on pertinent statutes, case law, and attorney general opinions, and preparing written advisory opinions or informal telephone consultations. This past year legal staff regularly provided county officials with vital information on emergency powers, electronic public meeting procedures, and federal pandemic financial assistance issues. The Association also assists counties involved in litigation of statewide interest, including appearing as *amicus curiae* (friend of the court).

Legal staff assisted with legal research and filed an amicus brief before the state Supreme Court in support of Calhoun County in the case *S.C. Public Interest Foundation et al. v. Calhoun County Council*. This case involved an appeal from the circuit court's dismissal of the Foundation's efforts to halt the county's imposition of a capital project sales tax (CPST). State law limits actions related to CPST referendums to 30 days after the certification of the referendum. The Foundation filed its action more than three months after the certification. The circuit court dismissed the case as outside of the

statute of limitations, and thus did not consider the merits of the case. The Supreme Court upheld the circuit court's dismissal based on the issue of timeliness. The court held that the 30-day statute of limitations extended to issues involving both election procedure, as well as specific questions concerning disputed projects listed in the required sales tax ordinance. The court subsequently refused to consider the Foundation's remaining dispute.

Another service SCAC legal staff provides is a monthly update of state regulations and appellate court decisions of interest to counties. The updates are sent to county chief administrative officers and county attorneys for distribution to county departments. SCAC staff ensures that counties are aware of certain regulations as they are proposed and drafted, giving counties an opportunity for input in the development of regulations. Association staff reviews each court opinion and proposed state regulation to provide an overview of decisions that will impact county or other local governments.

Legal Training

SCAC legal staff is called upon regularly to provide presentations and training for county officials and employees on topics such as the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA); legislative updates; and duties and functions of council and the county chief administrative officer in the various forms of government. This training is provided free-of-charge and can be provided at county sites or the SCAC Office in Columbia.

Each year, SCAC hosts the Local Government Attorneys' Institute (the Institute). The Institute provides local and state government attorneys with timely and important legal information. Due to the pandemic, the 2020 Institute was held virtually. More than 200 public sector attorneys participated. Topics included: Ethics and Discipline Update; Ethics Around the Country; HR Considerations During a Pandemic; Conducting Court Proceedings During a Pandemic; FOIA and Virtual Meetings; and Diversity in the Workplace.

Build Knowledge and Competencies for County Leaders

SCAC strives to develop skillful and informed county leaders through advocacy, education, and collaboration. The Association offers a strong portfolio of educational programs with opportunities for orientation, certification, e-learning, and collaboration. The Association hosts training via webinars and offers online courses that provide Institute of Government for County Officials credit. Webinar sessions are recorded and made available online via SCAC's online educational library and are available at no cost to the counties.

Institute of Government for County Officials

SCAC's Institute of Government for County Officials (Institute of Government) provides the knowledge and skills policymakers and executive staff need to address critical issues, meet the daily needs of their communities, and monitor the county's performance.

The educational program is offered in cooperation with the Joseph P. Riley Jr. Center for Livable Communities at the College of Charleston. Clemson University's Master of Public Administration Program is a program sponsor. As a result of these partnerships, the Association is able to make enhancements to the Institute of Government curriculum and the pool of instructors used to teach the courses.

The primary curriculum includes two levels of certification and offers advanced courses to permit

graduates to stay apprised of current issues impacting county government. Twenty-seven hours are required for Level I certification and an additional 18 hours are required for Level II certification.

This past year, several Institute of Government classes were recorded and made available for online viewing on the Association's Learning Portal. Nearly 180 county officials and employees completed Institute of Government courses either virtually or in-person.

Four of the Institute of Government courses provide continuing education credit for local planning/zoning officials and employees. Institute of Government courses are also a component of the S.C. Clerks to Council Certification Program.

Orientation for Newly Elected Council Members

The Association hosts an orientation program for newly elected council members in even-numbered years. Due to COVID-19, the orientation planned for 2020 was postponed. On Jan. 5 and 7, 2021, SCAC welcomed 55 newly elected county council members to the virtual orientation program.

Designed to provide a thorough insight into their new roles and responsibilities, the event also highlights how Association programs and services will be a valuable resource for them. The training is provided free-of-charge, and participants earn six hours of Institute of Government credit toward Level I certification.

Additional Leadership Development Opportunities



SCAC partners with the National Association of Counties (NACo) to build strong county leaders in South Carolina.

The NACo High Performance Leadership Academy is an online 12-week program empowering 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, IT, and risk management.

Through the SCAC/NACo partnership, South Carolina counties are eligible for a significantly reduced registration fee.

To learn more about the High Performance Leadership Academy and to register, visit NACo's website at naco.org.



Training for Planning and Zoning Officials and Employees

Act 39 of 2003 requires appointed officials who serve on a planning commission, board of zoning appeals, or board of architectural review to attend at least six hours of orientation training within the first year of serving.

Three hours of continuing education each year are required thereafter. The requirements also apply to planning professionals, zoning administrators, zoning officials, and deputies and assistants to these positions.

All of the Association's planning and zoning training programs are approved by the S.C. Planning Education Advisory Committee (SCPEAC). The Association provides orientation training and continuing education that addresses current issues and changes in state law.

One course fulfills the annual planning and zoning continuing education requirement. Local planning and zoning officials and employees may also earn continuing education credit from four courses offered by the Institute of Government.

SCAC is developing an online planning and zoning orientation course which will meet the requirements set forth by the SCPEAC. This online course will be composed of four one-and-a-half hour modules to meet the six-hour orientation requirement. The training will cover topics such as land use planning, the zoning process, land development regulations, and procedural and educational requirements.

Continuing Education Programs

SCAC conducted multiple webinars this year. Because of the pandemic, many in-person meetings were replaced with virtual training sessions. This year's webinars include the Setoff Debt Workshops, the Local Government Attorneys' Institute, Property and Liability Claims

Investigations, OSHA Recordkeeping, Risk Management Awards Presentation, and a Virtual Legislative Update. Collectively, more than 620 local government officials participated in these webinars.

“

I will share the valuable information I learned with our government leaders.
Thank you! — Institute of Government Participant

The comments on legal issues were very pertinent to questions that have been raised regarding the use of virtual meeting technologies in public forums.
— Planning and Zoning Webinar Participant

”

Collaborative Learning

SCAC's Annual Awards Program

The Association's awards program provides a unique opportunity for county officials to learn about innovative practices, technology, and trends; to strengthen their professional network; and to share ideas and expertise.

The J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award recognizes counties that address community challenges in a unique way. The Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award highlights the critical need for regional partnerships, strategies, and solutions.

For the second year, SCAC hosted The COVID-19 Response and Resiliency Showcase as a way to honor the ways our counties have responded to the unprecedented health pandemic.

The Association hosts an online video library of award competition presentations and written entries. SCAC also highlights the projects and summarizes all entries in *County Focus* magazine and on social media.

Cyber Leadership

SCAC is committed to helping counties develop cyber leadership and has partnered with NACo on the NACo Enterprise Cybersecurity Leadership Academy. This online 12-week program is designed for county staff and leaders who are dedicated to cybersecurity, IT, and risk management. Through the SCAC/NACo partnership, South Carolina counties are eligible for a significantly reduced registration fee. To learn more visit SCAC's website at sccounties.org/education-and-training.

The Association also encourages counties to tap into NACo's cyberattack simulations and County Tech Xchange that are offered free-of-charge to NACo member counties. For more information on these resources, visit NACo's website at naco.org/naco-cyberattack-simulation and naco.org/resources/signature-projects/county-tech-xchange.

Another valuable cyber resource is the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure and Security Agency (CISA). Counties are able to tap into many of the federal agency's resources for free. To learn more, visit cisa.gov/.

Connect Counties to Resources & Information

Each year, the Association's staff responds to hundreds of inquiries from county and state officials ranging from simple document requests to more complex questions requiring considerable research. The research staff stays abreast of topics and data resources to help county and state officials make informed decisions.

Research and Technical Assistance

Online Research Resources

County officials and employees are able to access an abundance of information and resources via SCAC's website. Last year, the Association enhanced its search tool to allow users to quickly and easily access documents and publications by title, topic, and resource type. This search function connects county officials and

employees to county statistics, financial documents, council rules of procedure, personnel policies, planning and zoning documents, and county codes of ordinances. Millage rate caps and estimated Local Government Fund allocations are also available.

Surveys

Association staff conducts statewide surveys and gathers information on policies and practices of individual counties. The results help inform county policymakers and practitioners. The information is also used by the Association's legislative staff, state agencies, and the S.C. General Assembly. A sample of recent surveys includes county mask ordinances, jail capacity and expansion, stormwater fees on agricultural property, creation of fire districts, and The American Rescue Plan State and Local Government Fiscal Recovery Fund Allocations.

Online Discussion Forums

SCAC administers online discussion forums for five distinct groups of county officials, allowing them to post questions and share county-related information. The Association hosts listservs for county chief administrative officers; the S.C. Association of Auditors, Treasurers and Tax Collectors; the S.C. Association of Assessing Officials; county finance officers; county personnel directors; and county risk managers.

Communications and Outreach

What's New Monthly Email

The *What's New* monthly email message informs county officials on new or updated information available via SCAC's website. Links are provided to upcoming events and training opportunities, new and updated publications, and timely topics of interest.

Social Media

SCAC launched its social media presence last year. The Association is focused on three platforms to help develop new connections with counties: Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Social media is an effective tool for reaching county officials, county employees, members of the S.C. General Assembly, and the general public on legislative issues, highlighting award winning county programs, and boosting the signal for organizations like NACo and the U.S. Census Bureau. Follow SCAC on Facebook and Twitter: @SCCounties. Or, visit the Association's LinkedIn page: [linkedin.com/company/south-carolina-association-of-counties](https://www.linkedin.com/company/south-carolina-association-of-counties).



PROPERTY TAX REPORT

SCAC publishes *Property Tax Rates by County* annually. This report is the most comprehensive, up-to-date listing of county property tax millage rates. *Property Tax Rates by County* is the primary source of statewide county property taxes and, as such, is widely used by local and state officials, the legislature, developers, and the public.

WAGE AND SALARY REPORT

The *Wage and Salary Report* is published biennially and contains the results of SCAC's survey of more than 200 county government positions. In addition to detailed salary data by county and position, the report includes information on annual and sick leave benefits, holidays, budgets, payrolls, employee totals, and classification systems. The *FY2022 Wage and Salary Report*, as well as the companion online searchable wage and salary database, will be available in November.

COUNTY PROFILES

County Profiles consists of county statistical information gathered from a variety of state and federal sources. Each county is represented by a one-page profile containing a brief county history, recent population trends, economic data, tax data, and county financial and employment data. *County Profiles* tables are available on the SCAC website.

Publications

SCAC publishes three award-winning publications: *County Focus* magazine; *Carolina Counties* newsletter; and *South Carolina's Directory of County Officials*. Over the years, these publications have received numerous awards from the National Association of County Information Officers, S.C. Society of Association Executives, and S.C. Chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators.

County Focus Magazine

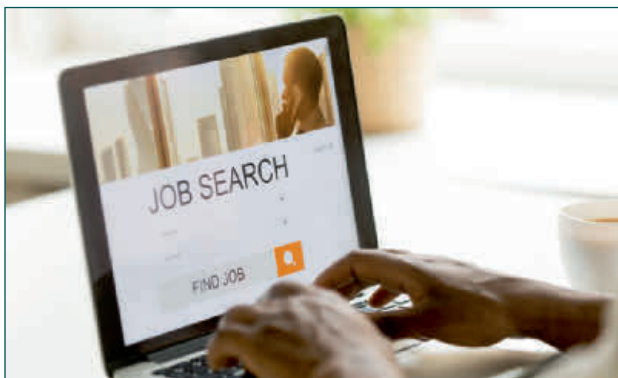
SCAC's quarterly magazine focuses on legislative issues, successful county programs and projects, and a broad range of other issues affecting county governments, for example, the Coronavirus Pandemic, since 2000. *County Focus* also publishes local news submitted by counties and calendars for SCAC and NACo events. The publication is distributed to more than 1,300 county officials and employees, Councils of Governments (COGs), members of the S.C. General Assembly, other state officials, and SCAC's Corporate Partners.

Carolina Counties Newsletter

The Association's newsletter educates local leaders on important issues affecting county government. The newsletter also covers current issues, past events, and announces upcoming events. This publication's distribution is similar to *County Focus* magazine's.

Directory of County Officials

SCAC's annual directory provides contact information for elected and appointed county officials, COGs, members of the S.C. General Assembly, and other state and federal officials. The directory also identifies SCAC's officers, board of directors, past presidents, and Corporate Partners. Copies are distributed to all officials and organizations listed in the directory, and to all state associations representing counties, boroughs, and parishes nationwide.



Career Center

The Association's Career Center is the first place job seekers should visit when looking for local government positions in South Carolina. Job openings are categorized and easily searchable. This is a complimentary service provided to all counties. Over the past year, 47 counties, COGs, and governmental entities took advantage of this employment advertising tool by posting more than 200 positions, which garnered nearly 16,000 views.

SCAC Scholarship Program

SCAC has awarded more than \$180,000 in scholarships to 78 students since establishing its scholarship program in 1998. This year, the Association proudly awarded \$2,500 scholarships to five outstanding high school seniors who will attend an in-state college, university, or technical school in the fall.

Each year, SCAC awards a Presidential Scholarship to a graduating high school senior who resides in the same county as the Association's current president. This year's scholarship was awarded to a student from Orangeburg County. The Association also awarded four Board of Directors Scholarships to graduating high school seniors who are residents of counties chosen by lot. Dorchester, Richland, Saluda, and Spartanburg counties were selected for these awards.

Assist Counties as Stewards of Public Resources

Self Funded Insurance Programs

The Association sponsors the S.C. Counties Workers' Compensation Trust and the S.C. Counties Property & Liability Trust. The key to the success of both trusts is the implementation of strong risk management programs by participating member counties. The SCAC insurance staff, comprised of 20 highly experienced insurance professionals, provides trust management, risk management, and claims management services.

Risk Management Education and Training

The insurance staff provides a variety of customized risk management services including on-site training and surveys. Because motor vehicle accidents far outweigh all other types of claims, Association staff encourages members to focus on motor vehicle accidents, which have the potential to reduce three types of claims—auto liability, auto physical damage, and workers' compensation claims.

SCAC has developed several training classes to address the unique exposures of law enforcement including "Law Enforcement Risk Management and Liability Issues", "Detention Center Risk Management and Liability Issues", and "Inmate Supervision Issues."

Funding has been provided for online training for law enforcement and detention center officers through the "In the Line of Duty" program. This complimentary training saves members money through reduced training and travel costs as well as through a reduction in officer injuries and litigation. More than 5,000 officers are registered to receive this training.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions many counties were unable to conduct on site training. To assist these members with their training needs, SCAC staff conducted the following webinars, which are available at sccounties.org/insurance-trusts/webinars:

- Effective Property and Liability Claims Reporting and Investigation
- OSHA 300 Recordkeeping and Injury & Illness Reporting Requirements
- Workers' Compensation: Basic Principles Lead to Big Success
- Vehicle Accident Mitigation Program (VAMP)

Staff conducted a Risk Management Awards webinar on January 28, 2021, to recognize counties that made significant achievements in their risk management and safety programs. These awards are a great way to recognize counties for their hard work and commitment to safety. The streaming webinar is available at vimeo.com/507100797.

SCAC has recognized the significant emergence of cyber threats to local governments. Two webinars were sponsored this year designed to improve awareness of cyber threats and to encourage members to improve their risk management practices related to cyber threats. SCAC staff will continue to emphasize this critical exposure facing all counties. We also encourage counties to take part in the training offered through the National Association of Counties (NACo) Enterprise Cybersecurity Leadership Academy.



SCAC Risk Manager Van Henson presented Dorchester County the Outstanding Safety Achievement Award in 2021. Shown are (front row) Dorchester County Council Vice Chairman Jay Byars; Claims Assistant Audrey Holzhausen; Director of RMS Nancy Johnson; SCAC Risk Manager Van Henson; Safety Officer Harvey Taylor; (back row) County Administrator Jason Ward; Council Member David Chinnis; Council Chairman Bill Hearn; and Council Members Todd Friddle, Eddie Crosby, and George Bailey.



Debt Collection Programs

SCAC assists county entities in two debt collection programs administered by the S.C. Department of Revenue (DOR): the Setoff Debt Collection Program and the Government Enterprise Accounts Receivable Program (GEAR). These programs help county entities recover unpaid liabilities which would likely otherwise go uncollected.

Owed funds are collected by redirecting an individual debtor's state income tax refund to a county entity as payment for the previously uncollected debt. The GEAR program allows DOR to use additional methods, such as payment plans and wage garnishments, to collect the unpaid debt.

SCAC's debt collection programs have proven highly successful in returning monies for county operations such as emergency medical services, court fines and fees, delinquent taxes, hospitals, alcohol and drug treatment centers, business license fees, water and sewer services, and housing services.

Tools for 21st Century Leaders

SCAC has a rich history of providing quality programs and services to counties and county officials. As members of the Association, all 46 counties, county elected officials, and employees have access to SCAC's programs designed to help counties serve their citizens.

As counties continue to face challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic and changing demographics, SCAC remains committed to building knowledge and competency for county officials and employees. SCAC will continue to provide research and educational tools related to emerging issues and enhance its educational offerings through e-learning.

The collections for counties have grown significantly from \$29 million in 2002 to more than \$100 million in 2020. The number of participating entities has increased from 81 in 2002 to more than 300 in 2020. Since the Association's debt collection programs began in 1992, SCAC has returned more than \$1.5 billion to program participants.

SCAC provides numerous services to assist program participants, including free software to help counties manage their data; data searches for potential errors; and error reports and verification totals for all submitted data files. SCAC provides current addresses from state income tax returns to counties, and sends all data electronically using stringent security controls. Participants may choose to receive funds via electronic transfer, allowing counties to receive funds more quickly. Additional information on the debt collection programs can be found on [sccounties.org](https://www.sccounties.org).

The Association will also continue to offer innovative, affordable solutions to help counties serve their citizens—including self-insurance pools, risk management services, debt collection programs, and cooperative service programs.

Local leaders must anticipate and adapt to emerging issues to keep counties safe, healthy, prosperous, and resilient. SCAC will continue to work with state and county officials to improve South Carolina's strength by delivering essential programs and services for 21st century counties and county leaders.



**SOUTH CAROLINA
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES**

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TOP 5 Reasons to Join GFOASC!

The Government Finance Officers Association of South Carolina (GFOASC) seeks to promote the development, skills, and knowledge of finance professionals. GFOASC is affiliated with the National GFOA through our State GFOA Representative. Our members represent state, counties, municipalities, special purpose and school districts, public institutions of higher education, private businesses and corporations. We are proud of our accomplishments in addressing the professional development of finance directors, budget officers, and accounting managers of more than 600 members. Join today! GFOASC committees are always seeking volunteers to become involved. Learn more at gfoasc.org!

#1

Continuing Education

Continuing education and CPE opportunities for financial officers are offered throughout the year. More than 50 CE opportunities are provided.

#2

Certification Program

Certified Governmental Finance Officers program is administered and offered for the GFOASC by USC.

#3

Fall and Spring Conferences

GFOASC Conferences provide opportunities for members to receive information from expert speakers as well as networking opportunities.

#4

Scholarship Opportunities

The Katherine Zook Certification Program Scholarship is awarded to a GFOASC member to cover the costs for the certification courses.

#5

Member Communication

Receive ongoing communication. Visit GFOASC's website for conference details, CPE class schedule, job board and a member only member center.

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Join SCAC's 2022 Corporate Partner Program!



OPPORTUNITIES ...

The South Carolina Association of Counties (SCAC) offers a way to market your company—both efficiently and cost-effectively—to South Carolina's 46 counties! SCAC's Corporate Partner Program provides a comprehensive marketing opportunity to showcase products and services directly to county leaders. The program also offers year-round exposure to county officials and employees at multiple SCAC events, and opportunities to advertise in the Association's quarterly magazine and annual directory. It is never too late to join the 40 other companies that made this investment during the inaugural year, 2021.

ACCESS ...

If you are looking for ways to build and strengthen relationships with county governments, this new program is for you. As an SCAC Corporate Partner, you will be able to maintain contact with county officials throughout the year. You will also be updated on trends in county government and legislative initiatives.

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- Advertising in *County Focus Magazine* and annual *Directory of County Officials* will be included in the top levels and discounted advertising may be purchased at the lower levels.
- Complimentary/discounted rates to attend and exhibit at SCAC's Annual Conference available to partners only.
- Complimentary promotion on SCAC's website and Annual Conference app.
- Exclusive benefits and exposure at the top levels.
- Complimentary subscription(s) to *County Focus Magazine* and copies of the annual *Directory of County Officials*.
- Benefits will be available on a calendar year basis, and
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To learn more about SCAC's Corporate Partner Program, please visit:

SCCounties.org/corporate-partner-program

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For more information regarding SCAC's Corporate Partner Program, please visit sccounties.org/corporate-partner-program or contact Tish Anderson at tanderson@scac.sc. Participation as an SCAC Corporate Partner shall not imply, nor be considered or presented as, an endorsement by SCAC of any service or product provided by the company.



SOUTH CAROLINA
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES



SCCOUNTIES.ORG



TIMELY NEWS &
INFORMATION



ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS



COUNTY JOB POSTINGS

SCAC'S PURPOSE

- To promote more efficient county governments;
- To study, discuss, and recommend improvements in government;
- To investigate and provide a means for the exchange of ideas and experiences between county officials;
- To promote and encourage education of county officials;
- To collect, analyze, and distribute information about county government;
- To cooperate with other organizations; and
- To promote legislation that supports efficient administration of local government in South Carolina.

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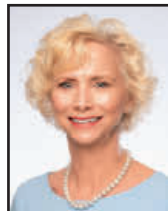


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What is the SCAC?

Local Leaders. Statewide Strength.®



South Carolina Association of Counties, chartered on June 22, 1967, is the only organization dedicated to statewide representation of county government in South Carolina. A nonpartisan, nonprofit organization with a full-time staff in Columbia, SCAC is governed by a 29-member Board of Directors selected by county officials at the Association's Annual Conference.

Counties have made tremendous progress since the enactment of the Home Rule Act in 1975. County government has also become more diverse in order to meet the increasing needs of its citizens. SCAC is dedicated to providing programs and services that equip county officials with the tools to govern effectively.

Conferences

SCAC provides many opportunities for county officials to meet and learn, among them:

- Mid-Year Conference—Held in late winter in Columbia, this conference enables all county officials to become better informed about the Association's legislative program. The Association also hosts a reception for all members of the S.C. General Assembly during this conference.
- Annual Conference—Held in August, this conference is open to all elected and appointed officials. The conference includes a business session, general session, workshops, group meetings, and exhibits of county products and services.
- Legislative Conference—Held in December, this conference allows members of the Legislative Committee to discuss and adopt a legislative program for the upcoming year. The committee is composed of each council chairman along with the Association's Board of Directors.

Education

The Association, in cooperation with the Joseph P. Riley Jr. Center for Livable Communities at the College of Charleston, conducts the Institute of Government for County Officials (Level I, Level II, and Advanced levels). Clemson University's Master of Public Administration program is a sponsor of the Institute.

This certificate program helps county officials enhance their skills and abilities. Courses are offered at the Annual and Mid-Year Conferences and at the County Council Coalition Meeting in the fall.

SCAC also sponsors a number of webinars on a variety of topics for county officials and employees throughout the year at no charge to counties. Recordings of the webinars are made available in the Association's online educational library via SCCounties.org/webcasts-and-webinars.

Financial Services

SCAC offers a number of financial services to its member counties. The Association sponsors two self-funded insurance trusts to provide workers' compensation and property and liability coverage. The trusts are designed specifically to meet the unique needs of local governments.

SCAC also offers the following services through affiliate organizations: GovDeals internet auction of surplus assets; and competitive purchasing discounts through Forms and Supply, Inc. and the U.S. Communities purchasing cooperative.

Legal Assistance

SCAC provides legal assistance to county governments by rendering legal opinions, preparing *amicus curiae* briefs, drafting ordinances, and consulting with other county officials.

The Association provides support to counties involved in litigation that might affect other counties. It also sponsors the Local Government Attorneys' Institute, which provides six hours of continuing legal education for local government attorneys.

Setoff Debt Program

South Carolina counties are able to collect delinquent emergency medical services debts, magistrate and family court fines, hospital debts, as well as other fees owed to the counties through SCAC's Setoff Debt Collection Program.

Debts are submitted through the Association to the S.C. Department of Revenue to be matched with income tax refunds. The debt is deducted from a refund and returned through SCAC to the claimant.

Legislative Information

The S.C. General Assembly convenes each January in Columbia and adjourns *sine die* in May. One in every four bills introduced affects county governments.

SCAC monitors each bill as it is introduced and keeps its members up-to-date on all legislative activity with a weekly *Friday Report*. The Association also dispatches *Legislative Alerts* and publishes *Acts That Affect Counties* each year.

Public Information

SCAC publishes an annual *Directory of County Officials* listing addresses and telephone numbers of county offices and their elected and appointed officials. The Association also publishes *Carolina Counties Newsletter* five times a year to keep the Association's membership informed about legislation and various county news. *County Focus Magazine* is published four times a year and features articles on county trends, innovations, and other subjects of interest to county officials—including a "County Update" section.

Research and Technical Assistance

SCAC provides research and technical assistance in many areas to those counties that request it. The Association staff annually responds to hundreds of inquiries from county officials ranging from simple requests for a sample ordinance to more complex questions requiring considerable research. The Association also develops technical research bulletins and conducts surveys on a variety of subjects. Regular publications such as the *Wage and Salary Report*, *Home Rule Handbook*, *A Handbook for County Government in South Carolina*, and *Case Law Affecting Local Government* are made available to county officials.

SCAC's website address is:

SCCounties.org

The site provides county officials with the latest information on SCAC programs, services, and meetings as well as legislative information, research and survey results, and links to other local government resources.



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SCAC-Sponsored Insurance Trusts

SCCWCT

South Carolina Counties Workers' Compensation Trust

SCCP<

South Carolina Counties Property & Liability Trust

History of the Trusts

The S.C. 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 S.C. Workers' Compensation Commission in accordance with South Carolina statutes. It provides statutory workers' compensation coverage for its members.

The S.C. Counties Property & Liability Trust (SCCP<) was formed in 1995 due largely to the success of the Workers' Compensation Trust. SCCP< started with only four members and now has 24 members, including 16 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 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 S.C. Counties Workers' Compensation Trust and S.C. Counties Property & Liability Trust.

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South Carolina Counties
Workers' Compensation Trust
and
Property & Liability Trust**



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*Chester County
Council Vice Chairman*

Heavy Machinery Fires Create Heavy Financial Burdens

By Van Henson, CPM
SCAC Risk Manager

Heavy machinery such as bulldozers, front end loaders and compactors can cost upwards of \$1,000,000 or more each. This equipment is likely critical to your county operations in many areas, but especially at your landfills. How long can you be without this equipment before it begins to create a dire situation that impacts your entire operation? Do you know that current wait lists for new equipment from manufacturers can exceed 12 months? Do you know that repair and rebuild times can exceed six to eight months? Do you know that rental rates can exceed \$20,000 per month?

The most common reason for loss of heavy machinery is fire. Would you be interested if I told you how a vast majority of these fires could be prevented and how the ones that couldn't be prevented could be minimized to the point of only having a few days of downtime instead of several months? If not, you should stop reading now! Otherwise follow along on our journey of low-cost fire prevention and fire mitigation strategies.

Daily preventive maintenance is the number one strategy to preventing fires on your heavy machinery. As simple as it may sound;

keeping the machinery clean and not allowing the buildup of debris is step one. Areas to focus on are: the engine compartment, electronics bay, exhaust components, hydraulic pumps and manifolds. These areas should be checked at the end of each shift and cleaned when buildup is detected. Failure of hydraulic hoses are a leading cause of



fires on heavy machinery. Hoses should be replaced according to the manufacture's schedule and specifications. Hoses should also be inspected regularly for damage or signs of a developing leak. Ensure the hoses are not rubbing against one another or other objects that will abrade, cut or puncture them. Hydraulic hose failures due to improper assembly and incompatible fittings are also common, therefore replacement hoses should be OEM parts or made, assembled and installed to the manufacture's specifications by a qualified technician.

If a fire does occur, the best mitigation strategy is a well maintained onboard automatic fire suppression system. These systems can quickly extinguish a fire before major damage occurs. The machine will still incur downtime for repairs, but the timeframe will be signifi-

(Continued on next page)



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Lexington County
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Steve Willis
Lancaster County
Administrator




**SECRETARY/
TREASURER**
Timothy C. Winslow
Executive Director, SCAC



cantly less and the costs savings will be substantial for your county. The costs to install one of the systems is less than one month's rental fee for a compactor and \$600 to \$800 annually when maintained by a professional. These extinguishing systems are a worthwhile and cost-effective way to protect these valuable county assets.

Heavy machinery fires can be quite costly to your county. Prevention methods listed above are the best ways to avoid these costly fires. Extinguishing systems are by far the best way to minimize the damage caused by a fire and get your equipment back up and operating quickly. This two-prong approach is the best way to protect your investment. There is a local South Carolina company available to install and service your extinguishing systems.

Contact Vhenson@scac.sc for more information regarding the extinguishing systems and vendors that can assist you in protecting your heavy machinery. Don't let heavy machinery fires be a heavy financial burden to your county. 

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Sumter Public Safety Complex

Burns v. Greenville County Council: What the S.C. Supreme Court's Ruling Means to South Carolina's Counties

By C.D. Rhodes, Public Finance Attorney, Pope Flynn

In the 2020-21 fiscal year all but 10 South Carolina counties imposed a county-wide fee of one type or another, collecting more than \$100 million. These counties were undoubtedly relying on this revenue to fund specific services and capital needs in the 2021-22 fiscal year. The day before the start of the fiscal year, however, the Supreme Court of South Carolina issued its opinion in *Burns v. Greenville County Council*, Op. No. 28041, invalidating two county-wide fees imposed by Greenville County: a road maintenance fee and a public safety telecommunications fee. This opinion has caused counties across the state to reevaluate the fees and charges that they impose and has created disarray in some county budgets.

Authorization to Impose Fees

Counties are authorized under Section 4-9-30(5)(a) of the South Carolina Code to impose “uniform service charges,” and by Section 6-1-330 of the Code to “charge and collect a service or user fee.” Under South Carolina law, these terms have the same meaning. The definition of a “service or user fee” or “uniform service charge” has evolved over the years. The Supreme Court first considered the validity of local fees in *Brown v. Horry County*, 308 S.C. 180 (1992). *Brown* established a four-factor test to determine the validity of a local fee imposed under a county’s Home Rule powers. As summarized by the Court five years later in, *C.R. Campbell Const. Co. v. City of Charleston*, 325 S.C. 235 (1997), a fee is valid if: “(1) the revenue generated is used to the benefit of the payers, even if the general public also benefits, (2) the revenue generated is used only for the specific improvement contemplated, (3) the revenue generated by the fee does not exceed the cost of the improvement, and (4) the fee is uniformly imposed on all the payers.”

Five years after *Brown*, a definition of “service or user fee” was codified at Section 6-1-300(6) of the Code. This definition further defines a fee as “a charge required to be paid in return for a particular government service or program made available to the payer that benefits the payer in some manner different from the members of the general public not paying the fee.” (*emphasis added*)

As was the case in *Burns*, legal challenges to local fees are typically based on a claim that the fee is in fact a tax. Counties are restricted from imposing any new tax “unless specifically authorized to do so by the General Assembly.” If a charge does not qualify as a fee it is by default a tax, and therefore unauthorized, unless a tax of that type has been permitted by the General Assembly. In most cases, such a ruling spells the demise of the charge.



Historically, counties assumed that by satisfying the 1992 *Brown* factors, a fee would also meet the statutory definition of a fee at Section 6-1-300(6). Counties took justifiable comfort in enacting fees similar to those that had previously been upheld by the courts. In *Brown*, the Court upheld a road maintenance fee on the grounds that the payers benefited from driving on improved roads funded by proceeds of the fee. In *C.R. Campbell Const. Co.*, where the Court clarified *Brown*, the Court upheld a fee to improve recreation facilities based on legislative findings that these facilities would increase property values, thereby benefiting the payers.

The Burns Ruling

The Supreme Court’s ruling in *Burns* upended these assumptions by discounting the value of *Brown* and explaining that its analysis “begins and ends” with the definition of a service or user fee at Section 6-1-300(6).

At trial, Greenville County claimed that the telecommunications system funded by the public safety fee would enhance property values, as in *C.R. Campbell Const. Co.* However, the Court took issue with the fact that the ordinance enacting the fee “did not address the factual question of whether an improved telecommunications system will enhance property values.” The Court acknowledged that in *C.R. Campbell Const. Co.* it had recognized enhanced property values as

a unique benefit but noted that the ordinance examined in that case included specific findings that the recreational facilities would “add to the value of real estate within the City.” There were no such findings in the ordinance at issue in *Burns*. The Court was clear in its objection to Greenville County’s public safety fee, stating: “[w]e hold that simply declaring a fee will enhance property value does not make the property owner paying the fee the beneficiary of some unique benefit, as required by Section 6-1-300(6).”

Given the prior ruling in *Brown*, the Court’s ruling concerning Greenville County’s road maintenance fee was perhaps more surprising. In *Brown*, the Court had explicitly acknowledged that a charge could still qualify as a valid fee even if the members of the general public enjoyed in some measure the same benefit as the payers of the fee—in that case improved roads. In *Burns*, however, the Court again focused on the language of Section 6-1-300(6) requiring that the payer receive a benefit “in some manner different” from those not paying the fee. The Court also noted that Section 6-1-300(6) was enacted five years after *Brown* was decided and therefore superseded *Brown*. In essence, the Court rejected the notion that Section 6-1-300(6) is satisfied if the payers of the fee receive a benefit in a greater degree than those who do not pay the fee. Driving the point home, the Court noted “[w]hile Greenville County residents who use roads every day may derive more benefit from having roads maintained in good condition, it is still the same benefit every driver gets”

Responding to *Burns*

Counties across the State are now reconsidering many existing fees, especially road maintenance fees. However, not all fees are equally at risk. Pursuant to Sections 6-1-310 and 6-1-330(A) of the Code, fees or taxes imposed prior to December 31, 1996, are grandfathered in, though any subsequent increase in the fee could be at risk. Fees for direct services—solid waste fees, landfill fees, and the like—are also unlikely to be affected by *Burns*, as are any fees that are expressly authorized by statute.

In light of *Burns*, counties should:

- **Critically review county-wide fees.** Counties should pay particular attention to those fees that support emergency services and other services typically funded from the county’s general fund and those that fund capital improvements that generally benefit county residents as a whole.
- **Assess legislative findings.** Any review should assess whether the fee is supported by specific legislative findings of fact that identify the ways in which the service or capital improvement funded by the fee benefits those who pay it. Ideally, counties will also be able to identify research, reports, testimony, or other information from reliable sources that has been made available to county council to support any legislative findings.
- **Identify how the payers and others may benefit.** Assuming benefits are identified, the next consideration should be whether the payers receive a benefit of a different type, rather than a difference of degree, when compared to those who do not pay the fee.

If the county encounters an existing fee of questionable validity, or wishes to enact a new fee, it should do so with *Burns* in mind. An

ordinance enacting a fee should include extensive legislative findings identifying the benefits of the service or capital improvement funded by the fee and explaining how these benefits will be unique to the payers of the fee. Findings should be supported by a robust record containing information that has been provided to county council. Counties may consider retaining consultants to prepare an analysis of the particular benefits to be derived from the fee.

Notably, the Court’s opinion in *Burns* contained a concurrence in which Justice John Kittredge emphasized that the ruling in *Burns* should “deter the politically expedient penchant for imposing taxes disguised as ‘service or user fees.’ More importantly, he warned that in the future, courts will “carefully scrutinize” fees to ensure that they comply with Section 6-1-300(6). Regardless of one’s opinion of the *Burns* decision, Justice Kittredge’s warning will undoubtedly hold true.



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Pickens County Shares Good News: Recent ARPA Ruling Could Help Other County Anti-Litter Programs

By W. Stuart Morgan III

Pickens County Council Vice Chairman Roy Costner III wants to share some good news with other counties that have anti-litter programs: His county's newest anti-litter program, Pick Up Pickens (PUP)—and, as a result, other county anti-litter programs like it—could qualify for funding under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA)!

U.S. Department of Treasury Issues Interim Final Rule

The U.S. Department of the Treasury issued an Interim Final Rule on May 10, 2021, explaining how \$65.1 billion in federal ARPA funding could be used when such funds are provided this year in two tranches across the United States. South Carolina's 46 counties have already received their first tranche of funds, and each will receive a second tranche 365 days after receiving its first.

Costner said Pickens County's anti-litter programs—and possibly other county anti-litter programs as well—could qualify to receive federal aid three ways because ARPA provides:

- Grants to nonprofits to mitigate the adverse economic impact of COVID-19 on fundraising, membership, and/or events being severely limited during the pandemic;
- Funding to mitigate the adverse effects of COVID-19 on a community's health and well being, specifically in litter abatement programs that existed prior to the onset of the pandemic that were limited or canceled because of necessary COVID-19 protocols; and
- Funding to assist local tourism efforts that were severely stressed

by COVID 19 by maintaining tourism destinations and transportation corridors at pre-pandemic condition.

Costner said anti-litter programs could also qualify under another section of ARPA relating to revenue losses. If a county could show "revenue loss" under the ARPA formula, for example, the county could use the applicable amount of qualifying funds for general government uses that are free from some ARPA restrictions. (For more information, visit: <https://bit.ly/3tTetS2>)

Key Deadlines

The deadline for counties to submit first Interim Report to Treasury to request Recovery Funds has already passed.

But Treasury's portal is now open for counties to submit the various administrative and spending reports that are required by ARPA, as follows:

Oct. 31, 2021: Deadline for counties to submit first Quarterly Project and Expenditure Report. Not all counties are required to submit this type of report quarterly. However, it will be the first time ALL COUNTIES MUST submit a Project and Expenditure Report.

Counties with populations over 250,000 or under 250,000 that received more than \$5 million in State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) must file this report **quarterly** after the first report on Oct. 31, 2021.

Counties with populations under 250,000 that received less than \$5 million in SLRF must file this report **annually** after the first

report on Oct. 31, 2021.

Dec. 31, 2024: Funds must be incurred and obligated

Dec. 31, 2026: Funds must be expended to cover obligations and



Pickens County's Pick Up Pickens program, one of many such anti-litter programs the county has launched since 2018, creates opportunities for county employees and local residents to cleanup the county.

all work must be completed.

Pickens County's Anti-Litter Programs

Pickens County's PUP program operates under Keep Pickens County Beautiful, an affiliate of the Keep America Beautiful program which focuses on litter reduction, education and recycling. PUP 2021, developed to clean up 25 percent (250 miles) of Pickens County's roads during 2021, is underway.

"Our Pick Up Pickens anti-litter program creates grant partnerships with various organizations across the county," Costner said. "The program was conceived and designed to accomplish two things: first, to clean up the most traveled roads in the county, and second, to offer a way for local 501C3 organizations to raise funds."

Pickens County Council voted unanimously earlier this year to use the county's General Fund to create its PUP program before receiving ARPA money.

"Over the past five years, our county council has wanted to do all we could to solve our litter problem in Pickens County," Costner said.

"This is why we voted unanimously to take money from our General Fund to create this program for 2021," he explained. "We believed it might be possible to use ARPA funding recoup some or all of the costs associated with our Pick Up Pickens program, and important enough to make the commitment before we new our anti-litter program qualified."

The *Greenville News* reported on May 10, the day Treasury issued its interim final ruling, that Pickens County planned to pay charities and civic groups \$250 per mile to clean up litter.

Now, the county plans to keep its word.

Pickens County sponsored its first PUP anti-litter effort, beginning June 1. Organizations are required to have existed for at least a year, and not to represent or be affiliated with any political party to qualify. They were originally required to complete online applications at pickenscountysc.com by June 4, 2021, but the application deadline was extended to August 1, and again, beyond August 1. The county plans to continue scheduling litter pick ups as long as possible to meet its year-end goal.

The application requires each organization to indicate the number of miles they plan to clean, the number of participants they expect to participate, and the dates they will be available to pick up litter. This information is needed to coordinate the delivery of clean up supplies, including litter bags, and to help protect everyone picking up litter along county roads.

Pickens County is on schedule to meet the first key deadline of Oct. 31, 2021, that Treasury set for counties to submit their first Project and Expenditure Report. So far, as of August 27, more than 28 organizations have picked up litter on almost 100 miles of roads.

As reported in May by The *Greenville News*, Pickens County plans to pay all of the organizations that participated in the county's first PUP program once the county is reimbursed by ARPA. Participating organizations will be paid \$250 per mile they cleaned up to a maximum of 10 miles.

Costner referenced an article published in the May 21st Issue of *Time Magazine*, as the weather improved and coronavirus lockdowns were lifted, that described how Americans across the nation ventured outside and noticed their neighborhoods looked a little different—a

(Continued on next page)

'Persuasive Marketing Campaigns Are Very Powerful'

"Persuasive marketing campaigns are very powerful," said Pickens County Council Vice Chairman Roy Costner III, who has led Pickens County's anti-litter efforts since he was first elected to county council in 2016.

"As a kid growing up in the 1970s, the Keep America Beautiful Campaign with Iron Eyes Cody shedding a tear had a huge impact on me," Costner recalled. "So, I suppose my motivation to lead my county's anti-litter efforts goes back to that advertising campaign and the influences I had serving and growing up in the Boy Scouts."

"As a councilman, I have a responsibility to do all I can to help keep our county extraordinary," he added. "Fortunately, our entire council is passionate about our county's anti-litter efforts. We seem to have a lot on our plate month to month with varying degrees of projects and priorities. However, keeping our county beautiful and clean definitely ties into many of our efforts ranging from economic development to tourism. I was fortunate enough to be voted in as council chairman for my first four years, which afforded me the opportunity to keep our anti-litter efforts at the forefront of our conversations."

If, as the saying goes, "Imitation is the best form of flattery," then Pickens County's anti-litter efforts must be working.

After all, several 501C3 organizations in the county have created their own anti-litter programs since Pickens County held its first countywide Five on Friday Anti-Litter Blitz to launch its Team Up

And Clean Up initiative on March 23, 2018. The county's Five on Friday Anti-Litter blitzes focus on motivating citizens to pick up five pieces of trash every Friday, and Team Up And Cleanup incentivizes county employees to participate in a countywide litter pick up twice per year.

"It's humbling when others want to copy what we're doing," Costner responded when asked about his county's anti-litter efforts since 2018. "Not only is healthy competition beginning to develop between other local organizations and our county's Pick Up Pickens Program, but more importantly, other organizations are beginning to take a sense of ownership in the roads they're helping to clean."

Pickens County has sponsored 10 major anti-litter efforts countywide since 2018. The Coronavirus Pandemic has hampered the county's anti-litter efforts since 2020, but the county has continued to operate its Five on Friday program. Coincidentally, social media posts focusing on the county's local litter pick-up efforts are growing.

Why is it important to support anti-litter efforts?

Costner quoted the late Nkosi Johnson, a boy who was thrust onto the international stage many years ago and died of HIV at the age of 12, who said: "Do all you can, with what you have, in the time you have, in the place you are."

SCAC's 2022 Directory of County Officials

SCAC's 2022 *Directory of County Officials* will be published and distributed in February. So, order a copy if you want to know "Who's Who" in South Carolina county government.

The *Directory* identifies all elected and appointed county officials in the state. This popular, award-winning publication also identifies SCAC's Officers, Board of Directors and Corporate Partners; Regional Councils of Government; Federal and State Officials; and State Senators and Representatives. Addresses and telephone numbers are included for all county officials, state officials and members of the S.C. General Assembly.

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little dirtier.

"I believe that the residual effects of our county's anti-litter efforts will continue well past the one time each organization participates in this year's Pick Up Pickens clean up effort," Costner said. "My hope is that other counties will be able to emulate our Pick Up Pickens program and use COVID funding to do something for all of the organizations that missed opportunities to raise money and make their neighborhoods beautiful again." 



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How Counties Can Protect Themselves Against Cyber Attacks

By W. Stuart Morgan III

Counties are attractive targets for hackers, and they are under attack!

After Georgetown County sustained a ransomware attack on January 20, the county worked hard to recover until receiving a clean bill of health 52 days later. Threatened by a growing number of cyber attacks in recent years, Lexington County continues to work hard to avoid one.

Both counties have learned lessons worth sharing.

Lessons Georgetown County Has Learned

“Our county’s cyber intrusion event occurred over the weekend when someone opened an email attachment,” recalled Seth Housand, IT Director, Georgetown County. “The email itself did not set off any red flags within the email security filter at the time nor did it have any key indicators such as misspelled words, a strange email address or sense of urgency that you often look for in phishing emails.

“The only exception to that email was its attachment,” Housand added. “Once that attachment was opened, its malicious payload was delivered. We became aware of the intrusion three days after the attack when alerts began and red flags went up because a server was rebooted off schedule and its services stopped. Upon investigation, we found a ransom note and all data had been encrypted.”

That cyber attack destroyed all of Georgetown County’s computer systems, and halted all of the county’s virtual operations requiring Wi-Fi. The county paid a \$10,000 deductible on its cyber attack insurance policy, which helped replace computer equipment. County Council also voted to approve a general fund increase of \$140,000 to help pay for necessary network upgrades.



“Our county’s cyber intrusion occurred over the weekend when someone opened an email attachment. The email itself did not set off any red flags The only exception to that email was its attachment. Once that attachment was opened, its malicious payload was delivered.”

Seth Housand, IT Director, Georgetown County

“The wide-ranging media interest in the days, weeks and months following the attack was more than a little surprising. Media interest was immediate, and the public had questions about how this could impact them and whether any of their private information was compromised.”

Jackie Broach, Georgetown County PIO

Jackie Broach, Georgetown County Public Information Officer (PIO), said hackers tried to gain access to county records, most of which were already public record. But they did access the social security numbers of about 50 county employees in one department that were stored on a computer, and some of the county’s bank account

information that was outdated and no longer used. Georgetown County’s leaders recognized that the attack would affect the public and county employees, and the importance of messaging immediately after the attack.

“Our initial media statement went out early Monday morning, January 25, once initial stages of the investigation were conducted over the weekend,” Broach said. “The wide-ranging media interest in the days, weeks and months following the attack was more than a little surprising. Media interest was immediate, and the public had questions about how this could impact them and whether any of their private information was compromised.

"My primary responsibility was to answer questions on how the cyber attack would affect the public, and to respond to the concerns of the public and media," she added. "After notifying county leadership, law enforcement and our county's cyber insurance company, I needed to tell the public what I could and be as honest and as transparent as I could about it."

Communicating externally with the public was one thing, but communicating internally with county staff was another, according to Broach.

Communication internally was significantly more difficult.

The county's administrative services/HR director set up regular virtual conferences on GoToMeeting every Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning to update departments on the latest developments. Communication was conducted virtually with department heads and other key county personnel until the county's computer systems were up and running again. Gmail accounts were set up and used for two weeks immediately after the cyber attack while the county's email system was inaccessible.

"The most difficult part about messaging following a cyber attack is figuring out how to answer questions when you are still trying to determine exactly what has been compromised," Broach said. "Because a huge part of my job is to be ready to communicate during disasters, such as hurricanes, and our county's cyber attack was very similar to that, my files were backed up, and all my equipment was mobile. So, I was able to grab my stuff,

move to the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) and keep working.

"The biggest issue for me was that I couldn't access my email," she added. "But I used the gmail address, which was set up for county use, and used that account to send out the initial news release to let people know that they could use my gmail address to contact me for the foreseeable future."

Brandon Ellis, Director of Emergency Services, Georgetown County, facilitated the operation of the county's EOC after the cyber attack, and coordinated with emergency services agencies operating under the EOC umbrella. He also helped allocate emergency/disaster resources and coordinate with county leaders as they dealt with the attack.

Georgetown County's experience and approach to managing events like major floods, hurricanes and COVID-19 helped the county respond effectively and efficiently to the cyber attack.

"... after the cyber attack, our IT staff served as the operational lead and other departments were forced to step back into more of a support role."

Brandon Ellis, Director of Emergency Services, Georgetown County

"The all-hazards approach to our planning process allows our emergency response plans to be applicable to any and all emergency situations," Ellis explained. "In addition to our comprehensive emergency operations plan, which has a detailed appendix specifically for

cyber incidents, we were also able to leverage our continuity of operations plan and our logistics plan to ensure that government operations continued while our county network was basically unavailable.

"Typically, during an emergency," he added, "our county's IT" *(Continued on next page)*

How to Prepare for a Cyber Attack

There is nothing quite like suffering a cyber attack to make you rethink your county's plans and procedures for handling one.

Just ask Brandon Ellis, Director of Emergency Services, Georgetown County. He learned some lessons after his county sustained a cyber attack earlier this year that he believes could help other counties prepare for a cyber attack as well as any other catastrophic emergency or disaster.

Ellis emphasized that it is important to:

"Be Flexible. Staff members get in a routine and they enjoy technology when it is working. When it's not, they don't handle the situation as well. We were constantly preaching to our staff to be patient and be flexible. As we worked through the process we had to identify alternative methods to accomplish normally simple tasks. As systems came back online, they did not operate as fast as they may have previously due to added protection and scanning mecha-

nisms.

"Have a Backup Plan in Place and Know What It Is. We have a very comprehensive continuity of operations plan (COOP) that each department reviews, updates, and contributes to annually. The first option was to activate this plan to continue operations but it was quickly identified that the information therein was not completely up to date for all departments. As we waded through this information and encountered challenges along the way, we successfully worked through them but our efficiency in navigating these issues and deficiencies would have been much better had we been provided the right information in the plan. The point: Review your plans and update them when requested. We do this so that the guesswork is out of the picture when an emergency occurs.

"Have Backup or Alternative Systems. We quickly learned that our emergency management department housed the majority of available surplus laptops, mifi devices, and

cradlepoints within the county. We were able to manage the distribution of these resources to other departments using our resource allocation and tracking processes that we utilize for every other major emergency situation, and with great success.

"Build Relationships. From our emergency planning and coordination initiatives, we were fortunate enough to have some of our partner agencies from outside of county government immediately reaching out to provide assistance and resources. These relationships are based on years of great coordination and team building, and is a true testament to our whole community approach to emergency planning and response.

"We must approach every situation with an open mind and be willing to learn from it," Ellis said. "As a county, I think that we successfully did that after we discovered holes in our plans and procedures for handling a cyber attack when we suffered one earlier this year."

department is present in our EOC for activations but serves in a support capacity by fixing computer problems, resetting passwords, etc. But after the cyber attack, our IT staff served as the operational lead and other departments were forced to step back into more of a support role.”

Ellis admitted that the cyber attack exposed holes in his county’s plans and procedures for handling such an incident, but noted that it also provided an opportunity for Georgetown County to take steps to be better prepared to handle future incidents. To prepare for a cyber attack, he emphasized the importance of being flexible, having a backup plan and knowing that plan, having backup or alternative systems and building relationships before an emergency or a disaster. (See *How to Prepare for a Cyber Attack*, P. 53)

Angela Christian, Georgetown County Administrator, said counties across South Carolina are particularly vulnerable to cyber attacks because technology is integrated into the fabric of county operations.

“We have targets on our backs, and cyber attacks threaten everything, from collecting money and reporting to state and federal agencies to paying bills and providing library services,” Christian warned.

“The cyber attack we suffered disrupted the basic services that

we provide citizens every day,” she added. “Our buildings were not closed, however we had to do everything manually which required more time. Fortunately, services in public safety, personnel and financial records escaped with minimum problems. Once we were ready to go back online, we had to check and recheck every system to make sure we had clean data to restore.”

Christian recommended that counties spend money now to protect their computer networks from cyber attacks. She also recommended contacting law enforcement and seeking legal assistance as quickly as possible after sustaining a cyber attack.

“Remember, it’s a crime for someone to invade someone’s computer systems,” Christian emphasized. “So, bring in law enforcement and legal assistance early in the process so you can protect yourself and your citizens.”

“Communicate often with your staff after a cyber attack,” she added, “and update them on the status of the attack to let them know what’s going on. Be diligent and educate county staff on the importance of security.”

“In today’s world, it is not an option to have safe guards in place to protect against cyber attacks. It is a must.”

Debra Summers, Lexington County Council Member

Lessons Lexington County Has Learned

Debra Summers, a Lexington County Council Member, said her county is blessed not to have suffered a cyber attack, and that she is convinced that it is worth whatever it costs to protect a county’s data against a cyber attack.

“In today’s world, it is not an option to have safeguards in place to protect against cyber attacks. It is a must,” Summers emphasized. “Updating equipment and software is expensive, but it is a necessary part of doing business, and it always will be.”

She recommended attending SCAC workshops and taking advantage of opportunities to learn about technologies that could protect your county against cyber attacks and make them more secure.

“I can’t stress enough the opportunities that the SCAC affords counties, as far as building relationships that provide you resources to reach out to,” Summers added. “Cyber attacks are real. Lexington County’s Information Technology Department knows this and protects our computer system as best it can. But we are also aware that there are things that are beyond our control. So, we must constantly test our system and watch for unusual activity.”

Lexington County is unique because the county’s former IT director, Lynn Sturkie, now serves as county administrator. He has more than 30 years of computer and technical experience, including the eight years he previously served as the county’s IT director.

“Much of the information gathered and used in government is considered public data,” Sturkie noted. “However, we need to ensure the overall accuracy, completeness and consistency of data. In order to do so, we maintain processes, rules and standards to keep this data accurate and reliable. These levels of protection instill confidence in all users of government services.”

Lexington County’s cyber security has been threatened in recent

“We have targets on our backs, and cyber attacks threaten everything from collecting money and reporting to state and federal agencies to paying bills and providing library services.”

Angela Christian, Georgetown County Administrator

“In today’s world, it is not an option to have safe guards in place to protect against cyber attacks. It is a must.”

Debra Summers, Lexington County Council Member

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years, and it continues to be threatened despite the county's best efforts to protect itself against cyber attacks.

But Lexington County is not alone.

"More and more, county governments are becoming targets of ransomware and other threats," Sturkie said. "If you have email, Internet or utilize cloud services, there are constant risks of threats from both outside and inside your organization. So, it is important to remain vigilant about security, and to train your staff members how to recognize suspicious activity and how to prevent cyber attacks. Your staff is your best alert system, and security awareness is best fought with education and awareness."

Lexington County provides structured training for all county employees to heighten their awareness of threats, and the appropriate actions they need to take to guard against them. Employees are required to take this training and retake it whenever necessary, and new employees are encouraged to take the training within the first week after they begin working.

Sturkie said counties need to be protected against external and internal threats. Staff members must also be able to access their information freely, but unauthorized persons should not be able to review, change or delete county information.

Lexington County has a Technology Services team that uses a number of approaches to secure data and systems from cyber attacks, including:

- Staff education and training to prevent breaches and reduce the number of computer viruses;
- Deployment of software and hardware to detect and eliminate viruses and malware while allowing and monitoring authorized access;
- Vulnerability scanning;
- Internal and external penetration testing by a third-party provider; and
- Annual testing of recovery procedures ensuring our capabilities to restore systems and data.

Sturkie recommended that county administrators support their technology teams if they have one, or create and support one if they

do not. He also recommended that they use resources and services offered by other government organizations, and understand that they are not alone. There are many resources available to help protect county computer systems and data.

For a county to be sufficiently protected against cyber attacks, Sturkie said that it is important that:

1. Every employee be required to complete security awareness training
2. System access be authorized through an individual user ID and password
3. Third-Party security testing must include vulnerability scanning, external and internal penetration testing, web application penetration testing, wireless penetration testing, network database assessments, physical penetration testing and

password audits.

4. An intrusion detection system must be used to monitor the network at all times
5. Security software patches must be applied weekly to user devices and monthly to servers, and procedures must be in place to make immediate security patches if a vulnerability is identified.
6. A full system backup must be performed weekly, retained per agreed upon user schedules, with incremental backups daily, and routine restore and recovery processes must be tested and verified annually.
7. Databases and portable devices must be encrypted.
8. Security policies and procedures must be defined for acceptable use, access control, internet use monitoring, and filtering, password security, wireless security, mobile computing and storage to name a few.

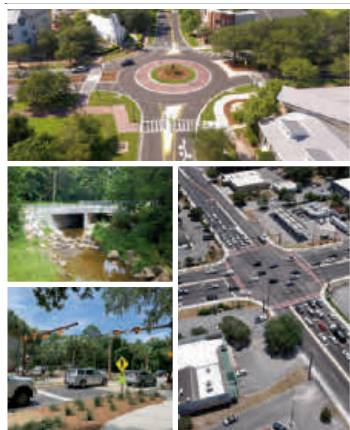
Sturkie offered one final piece of advice:

"Have a cyber security plan in place, exercise and test the plan often and make the necessary adjustments. Treat cyber security threats similar to other threats and have standard operating procedures in place and staff trained to address a cybersecurity threat.

"The threat," he emphasized, "is real." 

"If you have email, Internet or utilize cloud services, there are constant risks of threats from both outside and inside your organizations. It is important to remain vigilant about security, and to train your staff members how to recognize suspicious activity and how to prevent cyber attacks."

Lynn Sturkie, Lexington County Administrator



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FEMA Announces Notice of Funding Opportunity for 2021 BRIC Grant Program

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recently released the Notice Of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the 2021 Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant program. BRIC will provide access to potentially millions of dollars in federal assistance to fund projects and activities to reduce risk and/or damage in future hazard occurrences.

BRIC can fund up to 75 percent of future mitigation projects, mitigation planning, mitigation project scoping, mitigation capability and capacity building, and other eligible mitigation measures. Examples include drainage improvements, housing acquisitions or elevations, and projects that reduce risk to public infrastructure. The state has \$1 million in state set-aside funds; projects, especially large projects, also can be submitted into the national competition, in which a total of \$919 million is available (\$50 million max/project). Non-financial technical assistance also is available.

If you believe your county (or public utilities, etc.) may be interested, SCEMD will offer BRIC applicant briefings this fall to review the application process, BRIC criteria, and documentation needs. For more information or for help with questions, email mitigation@emd.sc.gov.

BRIC 2021 applications are due for SCEMD review by November 19, 2021, and will be submitted in the FEMAGO system.

Additionally, the federal government has added Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) assistance to South Carolina's existing disaster declaration for COVID-19 (DR-4492), which will make available as much as \$32.5 million

in federal share for hazard mitigation programs. The application window will be longer than that for BRIC; information about application



BRIC AND HMGP BASICS AT A GLANCE

Grant	Amount Available	Eligible Applicants	Cost Share	Application Timeline
Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) 2021	\$1 million state aside plus \$919 million in nationwide competition	State, local, and tribal governments with a FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan	75% federal/25% non-federal; 90%/10% for economically disadvantaged rural communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 11/19/2021: application due in FEMAGO system for SCEMD review• 12/10/2021: feedback/info request from SCEMD to applicant• 1/14/2022: additional info to SCEMD• 1/26/2022: final application submission in FEMAGO
Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), DR-4492	\$32.5 million	State, local, and tribal governments with a FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan and certain private non-profit organizations	75% federal/25% non-federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preapplications will likely be due to SCEMD via SCRecoverygrants.org in late 2021• Full application deadline: TBA in late winter/early spring 2022

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deadlines, review criteria, and schedule of applicant briefings will be provided in the future.

NOTE: There also are other federal mitigation grant programs that may be of interest (each with its own eligibility requirements, and application deadlines) managed by other state agencies:

Program	State Agency that Manages	Application Timeline
Flood Management Assistance (FMA)	South Carolina Department of Natural Resources; email artzj@dnr.sc.gov	TBA; final application date similar to BRIC 2021
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)-Mitigation – Infrastructure and Buyouts	South Carolina Office of Resilience Disaster Recovery Office; email ransford.reinhard@scor.sc.gov	8/4/2021-10/6/2021
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)-Mitigation – Plans, Studies, and Match	South Carolina Office of Resilience Disaster Recovery Office; email ransford.reinhard@scor.sc.gov	Year-round
Rehabilitation of High Hazard Potential Dam (HHPD)	South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC); email mccainjm@dhec.sc.gov	TBA

For more information, email: mitigation@emd.sc.gov.



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A Roadside Guide to Edgefield County

The County's Role in the American War for Independence

By Alexia Jones Helsley
www.historyismybag.com

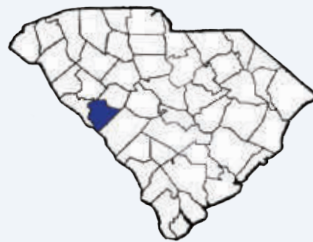
During the American Revolution, modern Edgefield County was the southern part of Old Ninety-Six District. Its strategic location between the Cherokee Nation and the colonial capital of Charlestown made it a magnet for settlement beginning in the 1750s. With the fall of Charlestown to the British in 1780, the area became a critical and essential link between occupation forces in the capital and British-held Ninety-Six and Augusta. Logistics and communication became more essential for these frontier outposts as the tide of war shifted from the occupiers to the Patriots. Consequently, Patriot and Loyalist forces frequently clashed in Edgefield. Given the strong Scots Irish element in Edgefield, not only did tempers flare between competing allegiances, but also, men from Edgefield fought in engagements beyond the county's boundaries. For example, Captain John Ryan of the Lower Ninety-Six District Regiment fought for the Patriot cause in the Siege of Augusta and Eutaw Springs.

While the major identified engagements occurred in the year 1781, J. D. Lewis, an historian of the Revolution in South Carolina, also includes, in his list of battles and skirmishes in South Carolina, an altercation between members of the Sons of Liberty and Thomas Brown on August 2, 1775 in New Richmond. According to Lewis, the Sons of Liberty were aggressively recruiting signers for this Association. In the aftermath of the Battles of Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts, Patriots in South Carolina drew up Articles of Association. The use of associations to oppose British actions began in 1774 when the First Continental Congress called for a non-importation agreement, the Continental Association. Signers of the association agreed to boycott British goods.

According to the 1775 association, written in response to the Battles of Lexington & Concord in April 1775, men in South Carolina pledged their readiness, if called to do so by their "Continental or Provincial" governments, to defend their "Country" and even "to sacrifice our Lives and Fortunes to secure [the colonies'] Freedom and Safety." While the associators hoped for reconciliation, they would, if necessary, consider "the use of Arms." While few of these articles of association survive, the South Carolina Department of Archives and History holds a signed copy of the Articles of Association for the District East of the Wateree, 1775. These articles represent an early stage in the development of a sense of colonial unity and opposition



Edgefield County



See South Carolina County Map, P. 71

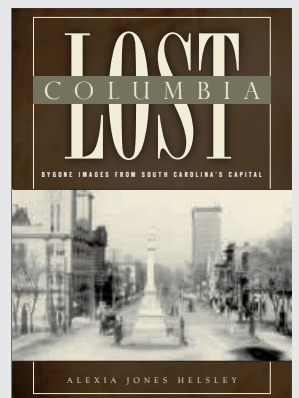
to the Crown. At times, these recruitment efforts turned violent. This is the case with Thomas Brown. Brown refused to sign, and in the scuffle shot one of the Patriots. Patriots then overwhelmed Brown and reported tied him to a tree and set fire to kindling at his feet. The ramifications were deadly as Brown survived the ordeal and became an ardent Loyalist who worked to involve the Cherokee and other Indian groups in supporting the British cause. Later, on June 3, 1775,

the South Carolina Provincial Congress unanimously voted "to unite and support the colonies in their efforts to secure their constitutional rights from Great Britain." At that time, Henry Laurens was president
(Continued on next page)

Lost Columbia: Bygone Images of South Carolina's Capital City (Charleston: the History Press, 2008)

Lost Columbia combines an overview of the turbulent history of Columbia with rare and little seen images of the city's destruction in 1865, the Assembly Street farmers' market, the changing face of Main Street and lost institutions and neighborhoods.

Lost Columbia is available in bookstores such as Barnes & Noble, from Amazon.com, or by mail from AJH Historical Enterprises, P.O. Box 3683, Irmo, SC 29063.



of the South Carolina Provincial Congress.

This Loyalist/Patriot antagonism was replayed across Ninety-Six District during the war years. These antagonisms strengthened after Major General Benjamin Lincoln surrendered Charlestown to the British in May 1780. Family traditions recount harrowing tales of ambushes and murders, summary executions, and a scorched earth policy that deprived women and children of needed food. According to Bettis Rainsford, at one point Loyalists threatened to kill a local minister because they wanted to steal his horses. In the waning years of the war in South Carolina, Edgefield was a dangerous place.

Edgefield County in 1781

Several major skirmishes occurred in Edgefield during 1781, a year not only of great disappointment, but also of great hope for the future. Edgefield was the site of several of those turnaround Patriot victories.

Horn's Creek

For example, on April 3, 1781, Captain Thomas Kee (McKee) of Colonel Leroy Hammond's regiment clashed with a Loyalist contingent led by Captain Clark on Horn's Creek. Horn's Creek is a tributary of Steven's Creek. According to Bettis Rainsford, Captain Clark may have been John Clark. Captain Clark was killed, and the Patriots captured and paroled three Loyalists.

This significant engagement on Horn's Creek was part of Major General Nathanael Greene's campaign to drive the British from South

Carolina. After the Battle of Guilford Courthouse, according to the pension application of Samuel Hammond, Greene dispatched troops to South Carolina. Commanding one of these troop detachments was Lt. Colonel Samuel Hammond. Colonel Samuel Hammond led his troops into Ninety-Six District and reached the Savannah River near Pace's Ferry. There, Hammond met Captain Key and Captain Henry Grabill. Hammond then sent Kee and Grabill to attack "a British post on Horn's Creek." It is possible that this British post was Laurence Rambo's blockhouse. Rambo was a leading Loyalist in the area. At some point, the Patriots took control of the blockhouse until Loyalists burned it.

Rogers' Plantation

A few months later, Loyalists and Patriots again battled in Edgefield County. On June 18, 1781, a significant skirmish occurred at Rogers' Plantation, reportedly near the town of Edgefield. As Lord Rawdon was advancing to relieve the beleaguered garrison at Ninety-Six, Lt. Colonel Samuel Hammond monitored the British movement and detached a troop of 24 under the command of Captain Thomas Harvey to protect Patriot interests. Richard Jones of Edgefield according to his Revolutionary records was serving with Harvey at the time of his death.

Harvey's company clashed with a much larger Loyalist force at Roger's Plantation. According to J. D. Lewis, these Loyalists were probably members of the Stevens Creek Regiment under the command of Colonel John Cotton. While the Patriots prevailed, Captain Harvey was killed. Harvey served in the Continental Line prior to the fall of Charlestown and at the time of his death was part of Hammond's Regiment.

Steven's Creek

The date and location of this conflict are debated. Nevertheless, in the fall of 1781, probably early September, Patriots under the command of Lt. Colonel Hugh Middleton skirmished with Loyalists under the command of Colonel Hezekiah Williams. Williams was enroute from Orangeburg District to Ninety-Six when he encountered the Patriot force near Steven's Creek. Steven's Creek flows into the Savannah River and probably bears the name of John Stevens who had a cowpen there in 1715.

After heavy fighting and casualties on both sides, Williams withdrew his troops, possibly due to Patriot reinforcements in the vicinity.

The Revolution in Edgefield was a bloody, personal conflict. The cost of independence is high. 

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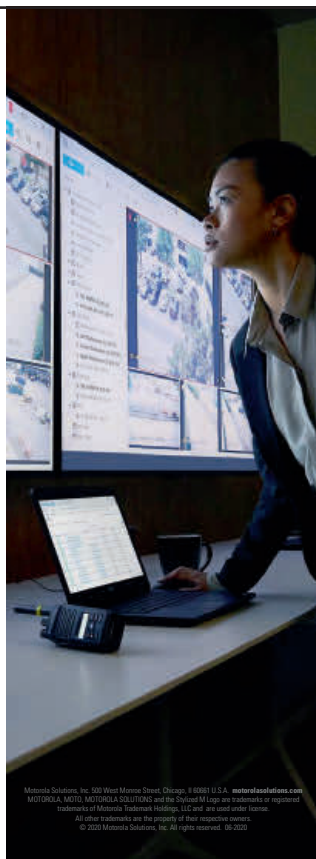


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A New SCAC and NACo Partnership: Take Your Leadership Skills to the Next Level by Attending NACo's Leadership Academies

SCAC is pleased to announce a new partnership 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 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.



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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.

\$1,545 per enrollee for South Carolina counties. The retail price is \$2,495.

To enroll visit the [NACo High Performance Leadership Academy](#) and [NACo Enterprise Cybersecurity Leadership Academy](#) webpages at naco.org/skills. For questions and assistance in enrolling please contact Luke Afeman at 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."

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*

County Update

Counties Reporting in this Issue of County Update:

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

Charleston County

● Your Crawlspace, Inc. (YCS), a patented crawlspace encapsulation manufacturing and distribution company, announced plans on July 22 to expand operations in Charleston County. The more than \$3.6 million investment is expected to create 40 new jobs over the next five years. Headquartered in Charleston County, YCS is a family-owned company that creates vapor barrier systems that provide a damage-free seal throughout treated areas. YCS' expansion includes the purchasing and upfitting of a new facility at 1056 Hunley Sullivan's Road in Awendaw to accommodate the company's growth. The new facility will serve as a distribution facility space with additional office space. The expansion is expected to be completed by Fall 2021.

● Cummins Turbo Technologies, a business segment of global power leader Cummins Inc., recently announced plans to expand turbocharger manufacturing operations in Charleston County. The more than \$10.7 million investment will create 252 new jobs. Founded in 1919, Cummins Inc. specializes in designing, manufacturing and distributing a broad portfolio of power solutions. The

(Continued on next page)

Now Available Online – Level I: Strategic Planning [E] and Advanced: Putting Dollars to Work for Your County

SCAC has now made **Level I: Strategic Planning [E] and Advanced: Putting Dollars to Work for Your County – State & Local Coronavirus Fiscal Recovery Funds Institute** classes available online! Both courses were recorded at the in-person classes conducted at the August 2021 Institute of Government held in conjunction with the SCAC Annual Conference. Upon completion, participants will receive credit in the Institute of Government for County Officials. There is an \$80 registration fee for each course matching the amount for the in-person version of the course.

Strategic Planning is a Level I Elective that focuses on the importance of planning and goal setting within the policy-making process. Participants will be introduced to models of annual and strategic planning; goal development and prioritization; and methods for determining goal progress and accomplishment. The importance of a shared county vision and mission and linking the plan with the budget will be stressed.

Putting Dollars to Work for Your County is a panel discussion on the American Rescue Plan Act's (ARPA) Fiscal Recovery Fund and Treasury's guidance in addition to the Government Finance Officer's Association's recommended principles for local governments to consider when deciding how to use the money. Information is also covered on the General Assembly budgetary plan and on the state's investment and grant opportunities for broadband.

In order to access the courses on SCAC's Learning Portal, officials will need to first have an account with SCAC. For assistance, please contact Ryan Tooley at rttooley@scac.sc or (803) 252-7255.



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company's products include diesel, natural gas, electric and hybrid powertrains and powertrain-related components. Operating out of two locations on Palmetto Commerce Parkway in North Charleston, Cummins Turbo Technologies' expansion will allow the company the flexibility to optimize its network between remanufactured and new turbocharger products; leverage manufacturing capabilities and capital in one geographic location; and improve cost competitiveness of both remanufactured and new turbos. The expansion is expected to be completed by the end of 2021. The Coordinating Council for Economic Development awarded Charleston County a \$500,000 Set-Aside grant for costs related to the project.

- Charleston Coffee Roasters, a craft coffee roasting company, announced on June 9 plans

to expand operations in Charleston County. The \$2.2 million investment is expected to create 28 new jobs. Founded in 2005, the company sources premium coffees from around the world, slow roasts each batch to perfection, and delivers a uniquely rich "Charleston" coffee experience in every cup. Located at 7246 Stall Road in North Charleston, Charleston Coffee Roasters' expansion will increase the company's capacity to meet growing demand. The growth plan includes adding 21,600 square feet of production space to house new roasters, grinders, and packaging equipment. The expansion is expected to be completed by the summer of 2022.

- TELUS International, a customer experience innovator that designs, builds and delivers digital solutions for global brands, recently announced plans to establish operations in

Charleston County. The \$3.4 million initial investment will create approximately 1,200 new jobs by 2022.

Cherokee County

- Cherokee County Auditor **Merv Bishop** started his new duties as the county's assistant administrator on August 16. **Gov. Henry McMaster** appointed former Cherokee County Treasurer **Ryan Thomas** to auditor to fulfill the remainder of Bishop's term as county auditor, which ends on June 30, 2023. The governor also appointed Cherokee County Deputy Treasurer **Sheila Carpenter** as county treasurer to fill the remainder of Ryan Thomas's term as treasurer, which ends on June 30, 2023.

SCAC's 2022 Directory of County Officials

SCAC's 2022 *Directory of County Officials* will be published and distributed in February. So, order a copy if you want to know "Who's Who" in South Carolina county government.

The *Directory* identifies all elected and appointed county officials in the state. This popular, award-winning publication also identifies SCAC's Officers, Board of Directors and Corporate Partners; Regional Councils of Government; Federal and State Officials; and State Senators and Representatives. Addresses and telephone numbers are included for all county officials, state officials and members of the S.C. General Assembly.

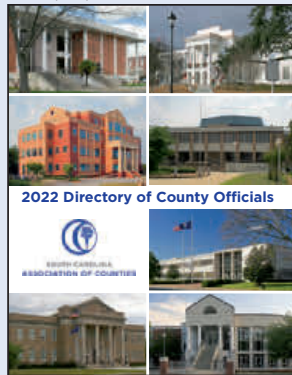
Cost: \$25.00 per copy (including tax, postage, shipping and handling).

- To order your copy of the 2022 *Directory of County Officials*, please contact:

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MatchBoardSM

SCAC is partnering with South Carolina Women in Leadership on MatchBoard, a new web-based platform through which counties can manage their boards and commissions. This dynamic application will digitize and streamline your boards and commissions management allowing you to post information about boards, recruit diverse qualified applicants, review applications, communicate directly with citizens, and more. MatchBoard is launching November 1st and will be free for a year for the first 30 counties and municipalities to sign up. Learn more and sign up today at MatchBoard.Tech.

"I think MatchBoard will be a great tool for Orangeburg when trying to recruit qualified applicants for our boards and commissions. It will let citizens know that the appointment process is impartial and not political."

— Johnny Wright, Orangeburg County Council Chairman

"Beaufort County currently has 29 agencies, boards, and commissions consisting of 211 members. The clerk's office has the daunting task of keeping up with applications, appointments, reappointments, resignations, rosters, meeting schedules, agendas, and minutes while also serving the needs of the 11-member county council. I am incredibly excited to move away from the antiquated excel spreadsheet tracking method and into MatchBoard, a program that will streamline the clerk's operations and better serve our agencies, boards, and commissions, while saving us time and creating consistency expected in 2021."

— Sarah Brock, Beaufort County Clerk to Council

Georgetown County

● Georgetown County Economic Development, in partnership with Horry Georgetown Technical College, held a job fair on July 22 at the college's Advanced Manufacturing Center, located on the Georgetown campus. The free job fair was designed to connect potential employees with industrial jobs.

● **Maya Morant**, marketing director for Georgetown County's Economic Development Department, recently completed courses at the S.C. Economic Development Institute. The Institute is hosted by the S.C. Economic Developers Association.

● The Georgetown County Finance Department recently received the International Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), the highest form of recognition available in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting.

The department received the award for the county's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2020. This is the fifth consecutive year the department has received this honor for its work on the comprehensive report. The Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting program was established in 1945 to encourage state and local governments to go beyond the minimum requirements of generally accepted accounting principles in preparing their reports.

● Georgetown County's two newest elected officials took their oaths of office on June 30 in a small ceremony in the historic county courthouse. **Miriam Mace** was sworn in as the new county treasurer, and **Kenneth Baker** as the new county auditor. Elected in November 2020, both took office on the first day of the new fiscal year (July 1). Prior to beginning their new four-year terms, both were employed by the Georgetown County Finance Department.

● **Sheriff Carter Weaver** and the Georgetown County Sheriff's Office hosted the 36th annual National Night Out event on August 3 at Pawleys Island Community Church. The event, free and open to the public, was held to heighten crime prevention awareness, generate support and participation in anti-crime programs, strengthen neighborhood spirit and community-police partnerships, and
(Continued on P. 71)



Webinars & Online Training

SCAC has now made available online Level I: Strategic Planning [E] and Advanced: Putting Dollars to Work for Your County – State & Local Coronavirus Fiscal Recover Funds. Both courses provide credit in the Institute of Government upon completion and have an \$80 registration fee. For more information, see page 67.

For assistance, please contact **Ryan Tooley** at rtooley@scac.sc or (803) 252-7255.



**SOUTH CAROLINA
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Conference Calendar

2021

Nov. 19 S.C. Local Government Attorneys' Institute
Virtual, Columbia

Dec. 2 - 3 Legislative Conference
Renaissance, Charleston

2022

Jan. 26 - 27 S.C. Insurance Trusts Membership Meeting
Marriott, Myrtle Beach

Feb. 23 Mid-Year Conference
Feb. 24 & 25 Institute of Government
Embassy Suites, Columbia



NACo's 2022 Conference Calendar

Legislative Conference
Washington Hilton, Washington, D.C.
Feb. 12 - 16

Annual Conference
Adams County, Colorado
July 21 - 24

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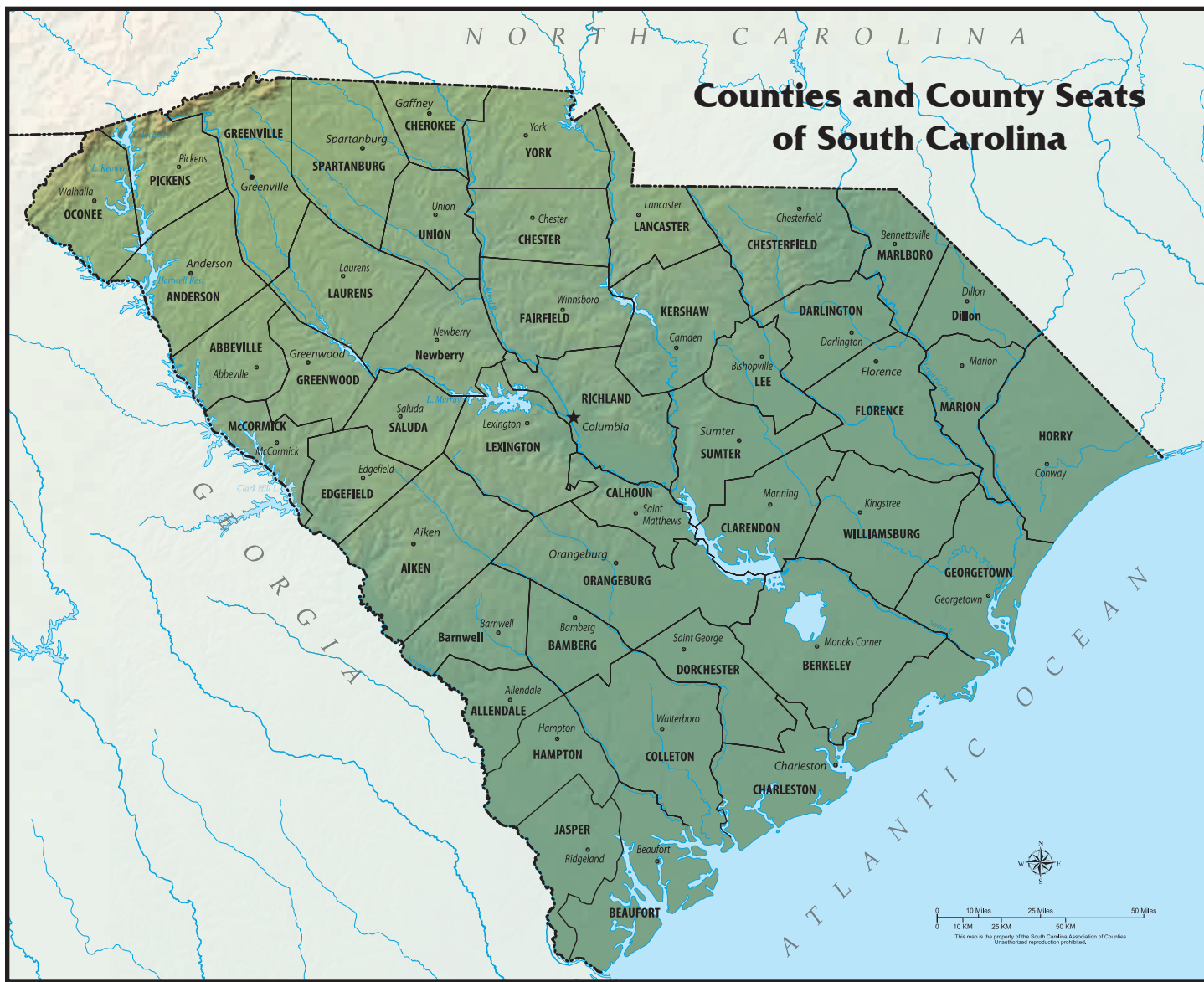
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- **Seth Housand**, a longtime employee of Georgetown County's MIS Department, was promoted to department director in July. Housand joined the county's IT team in January 2012 and distinguished himself as a leader in recent years, particularly in the aftermath of a ransomware attack the county suffered in January. Prior to joining the county team, Housand was an intelligence analyst for the S.C. Army National Guard.

- **Sheriff Carter Weaver** in July presented quarterly awards to employees of the Georgetown County Sheriff's Office, as follows:

- **Cpl. Antonio Mitchum** and **Deputy Cody Thompson** as Deputies of the Quarter.

- **Cpl. Jason Flint** as Correctional Officer of the Year.

- **Joseph Williamson** and **Sheila Felder** as Communications Officers of the Quarter. Williamson was also recognized by Georgetown County Public Safety for his service.

- **Jason Lesley** as the department's Employee of the Quarter.

- **Sherpa 6, Inc.**, and **Sherpa Air** announced in August plans to open new facilities at the Georgetown County Airport on Airport Road. The business will invest an estimated \$19 million over a five-year period and create 43 high-paying, specialized jobs in the same time frame.

Sherpa 6, a technology company, is a service-disabled veteran-owned small

business that operates with a diverse team of veterans and engineers to analyze and develop solutions for the battlefield at every level of command and control. It designs and develops emerging technologies for assessing and integrating technological efficiencies to enhance soldiers' performance on the battlefield.

- **Sheriff Carter Weaver** honored the following four employees retiring from the Georgetown County Sheriff's Office at a special luncheon in August:

- **Bob Medlin**, who worked in a number of capacities during his 41 years of service. He joined the Sheriff's Office in 1980 as an investigator and served as a captain, chief investigator and major.

(Continued on next page)


Since 2002, he has been systems manager.

- **T.L. Staub** and **Mandy Glover**, who each retired after more than 25-plus years of service. Glover will continue her service as a School Resource Officer, and Staub will assume analyst duties.

- **Vince Weaver**, who retired after 17 years of civil process duties.

Horry County

- Horry County held a Job Fair on July 27 at Carolina Forest Recreation Center. County

employees were on site to discuss current and future employment opportunities within their department. 

SCAC/NACo Partnership Offers New Online Leadership Academy

SCAC recently announced a new partnership with NACo to build strong county leaders. The NACo High Performance Leadership Academy is an online 12-week program that empowers 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, IT, and risk management. Through the SCAC/NACo partnership, South Carolina counties are eligible for a registration fee of \$1,545 (instead of the \$2,495 retail price).

For more information about High Performance Leadership Academy, visit: naco.org/resources/education-and-training/naco-high-performance-leadership-academy.



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