



Excellence in Training County of Prince George

June 2014
VACo Achievement Awards

Recognizing the Best in County Government Programs!



Virginia Association of Counties

2014 Achievement Awards

Call for Entries



2014 VACo Achievement Awards

Deadline: June 2, 2014

Application Form

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 2, 2014.**

Program Information

Locality County of Prince George

Program Title Excellence in Training

Program Category Organizational Development

Contact Information

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Signature of county administrator or chief administrative officer

Name Percy C. Ashcraft

Title County Administrator

Signature

Organizational Development

In September 2013, the Richmond Times Dispatch (RTD) published articles and advertisements encouraging employees in the region to nominate their companies as top workplaces. The RTD partnered with Workplace Dynamics, a research firm that conducts surveys for newspapers to facilitate an anonymous employee based survey. Workplace Dynamics invited private, public, government and nonprofit employers to participate.

In total, 82 employers were surveyed and 50 of them were ranked. Prince George County was selected as one of the Top 50 Workplaces and was the only local government agency to receive that designation. The employers were then categorized into size bands. The large band included 500 plus employees, midsize included 150 – 499 employees and the small included 149 or fewer employees. Prince George ranked as a midsize employer with 150 – 499 employees. Ranking is based solely on the employee responses to the survey statements.

The employee survey included 22 questions covering seven factors, concentrated in two parts. The first section pertained to the “OrgHealth” or the organization’s health. To determine the organization’s health, or the long term success, it was measured by three factors: (a) direction – where the County is headed, its values and leadership; (b) execution – how the County is getting to where it aims to go; and (c) connection – feeling appreciated and the work is meaningful. The second section pertained to “My Job” or how the employees feel about their job. The factors used to measure each employee’s satisfaction were: (a) my work – training, work-life balance; (b) manager – cares about employees, helps learn and grow; and (c) pay and benefits – how the employee feels their benefits and pay compared to other organizations.

The survey was sent to 227 employees. Of the 227 employees, 174 submitted a response - a phenomenal 77% response rate. The survey prompted an additional 230 comments and/or ideas for improvement.

Prince George County's highest rated factor in comparison to the "local government benchmark 2013" was in the "OrgHealth" factor for execution. What this means for Prince George County is our employees expressed that senior managers understand the dynamics of working for local government, the employees themselves are kept well-informed about all important decisions concerning Prince George County and new ideas are encouraged by the senior leaders of the County.

Workplace Dynamics also presented a group of special awards based on standout scores on specific survey questions. Of the 50 Top Workplaces in the Richmond region, only 12 received these awards. Prince George County received the Excellence in Training Award. This is a comment submitted by a County employee that was quoted in the RTD, "I simply appreciate that Prince George County finds training important. Other entities where I have worked have cut training out of the budget, but this County understands that in order to grow, we must continue to learn. I am grateful for the opportunity to continue to enhance my knowledge and appreciate that the county understands the value in training."

Ways in which Prince George County Supports Staff Development

The County Administrator demonstrates his commitment and allegiance to the employees through supporting staff development, recognizing employee accomplishments and presenting items to the Board of Supervisors that are in the employees' best interest. Two Department Directors have completed the LEAD VIRGINIA program with a third currently

participating. This program develops their understanding of leadership challenges, broadens the perspectives of participants and expands their capacity to collaborate and lead in changing environments, thereby enhancing their ability to lead the County into the future.

In the past three years, the County Administrator has supported a rigorous training program available to all employees. When the program was first developed, employees were given the time and resources to complete six hours of training per year. During the second year, the number of hours increased to twelve annually; hours are increasing exponentially as need arises.

Not only does the County allow the employee to participate in training throughout the year, the County also brings a variety of training opportunities to the employees. Some examples of this include Meyers Briggs Personality Indicator assessments administered by the Community College Workforce Alliance, compliance training such as, Freedom of Information Act training presented by the Advisory Council and Records Retention facilitated by the Library of Virginia.

Prince George County is excited about the future training opportunities for its employees, such as Red Cross and Disaster Preparedness training. This County empowers employees to become leaders in their fields by providing the resources that allow employees to pursue certifications and other educational opportunities.

In summary, Prince George County was the only local government named one of Richmond's Top Workplaces by the Richmond Times Dispatch and Workplace Dynamics in 2014. It also has the distinction of being recognized as one of only twelve organizations who received special recognition for Excellence in Employee Training!