



News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Virginia Counties Recognized for Model Programs

The Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2011 Achievement Awards recognizing model local government programs.

The winning counties, program titles and categories are:

- **Botetourt County:** “Upper James River Water Trail” (Parks & Recreation)
- **Chesterfield County:** “Build-A-House” (Health/Human Services)
- **Chesterfield County:** “My Business Starts Here” (Community/Economic Development)
- **Hanover County:** “Organic Waste Diversion” (Environmental)
- **Isle of Wight County:** “Isle Pre-Pay” (Customer Service) (**Best Achievement Winner**)
- **James City County, York County and City of Williamsburg:** “Outstanding Customer Service for Prospective Employees” (Customer Service)
- **Louisa County:** “Louisa County Parks and Recreation VIEW Partnership” (Health/Human Services)
- **Prince George County:** “‘iGotcha’ Anonymous Tip Text” (Criminal Justice/Public Safety)
- **Prince William County:** “Air Track Management/Advanced Fire Behavior” (Criminal Justice/Public Safety)
- **Roanoke County:** “Crisis Management and Communication—Critical Steps Localities Need to Take During and In Advance of an Emergency” (Communications)
- **Washington County:** “MERG: Mountain Empire Regional Geographic Information System” (Regional Collaboration)
- **York County:** “Automatic External Defibrillators in the Parks” (Criminal Justice/Public Safety)

VACo received 33 entries. Tedd Povar, associate director of the Virginia Institute of Government; Barbara Rose, former Hanover County deputy county attorney; and Pete Stith, former Chesterfield County deputy county administrator for community

development, served as judges for this year's statewide competitive awards program.

"After a combined record of 132 entries in 2009 and 2010, we received fewer submissions in 2011," said James Campbell, VACo executive director. "But despite a drop in quantity, the quality remained at the same high level. Our judges had a tough time choosing winners from our competitive pool. All 33 entries were deserving of an award."

The judges selected one submission as the "Best Achievement." The winner of this year's distinction is Isle of Wight County. Here's what Stith had to say about Isle of Wight County's entry titled "Isle Pre-Pay."

"I worked in local government for nearly 30 years," said Stith, who retired from Chesterfield County in April 2010 after 26 years. "I thought I'd seen it all. But Isle of Wight County's entry was fresh, simple and very effective. It just blew me away. Their program definitely can be replicated by other counties at very little cost, and I encourage other counties to closely examine what Isle of Wight is doing."

This was the seventh consecutive year Povar has served as judge. "I continue to be amazed at the quality and creativity of programs generated by Virginia's counties," Povar said. "Despite the tough economy and budget constraints, all the applicants seemed undaunted and developed programs that are truly impressive. To me this reflects strong leadership in our county governments."

Rose, who retired from Hanover County in 2005 after serving 15 years, also raved about the quality of the entries. "As judges, we fully appreciate the time taken by the counties to prepare and submit award nominations," Rose said. "Many of these submissions required hours of detailed preparation to fully describe the project and its surrounding context. The professionalism, ingenuity and creativity displayed are very encouraging. We congratulate all the applicants on a job well done, and, in particular, those that received award recognition."

The VACo Achievement Awards is a competitive program open to local government members of the association. For more information, visit VACo's Achievement Awards website (www.vaco.org/achievementawards.html) where you can view all 2011 entries (www.vaco.org/achievementawards2011.html).

Visit [here for past winners](#) and [here for past judges](#).

Representatives from each of the award-winning counties will receive a certificate at an official ceremony during VACo's 2011 Annual Conference in November. Also, VACo will present awards at Board of Supervisors meetings.

VACo exists to support county officials and to effectively represent, promote and protect the interests of counties to better serve the people of Virginia.

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