

by Lindsey Maggard

NACo will host county leaders from across the country virtually for the Annual Business Meeting July 20, and a virtual membership town hall July 13.

The conference is being held online this year due to the global coronavirus pandemic.

- The membership town hall meeting, which begins July 13 at 4 p.m. ET, will include the second vice presidential candidate forum, an overview of proposed bylaws amendments, a status report on voting delegate credentials totals and a federal policy update.

- The Annual Business Meeting, which begins July 20 at 2 p.m. ET, will include the election for second vice president and other officers, consideration of bylaws amendments and the latest updates on NACo programs and NACo's collective accomplishments. The Annual Business Meeting is open to anyone who wishes to register, though voting is restricted to designated delegates.

- These events are free to all NACo members. Visit www.naco.org/annual to register.

Lindsey Maggard is the senior public affairs coordinator at NACo.



In a sign of the times, Broward County, Fla. Mayor Dale V.C. Holness announces the closure of county beaches the weekend before the 4th of July holiday to help stop the spread of coronavirus, at a news conference at Anglin's Pier in Lauderdale-by-the-Sea. After seeing a surge of new cases, some county leaders and others across the country are making difficult decisions to roll back reentry programs during the height of the summer tourism season. Photo courtesy of Broward County, Fla.

Counties make use of coronavirus funding

by **Charlie Ban**
senior writer

The news that Ocean County, N.J. was receiving nearly \$106 million from the Coronavirus Relief Fund was indeed a relief, but with the county in a safe financial position, county officials' thoughts turned to where it could do the most good.

Counties with populations of more than 500,000 received direct allocations from the Coronavirus Relief Fund, which totaled \$150 billion among state and local governments. That

money can cover expenses from the last 10 months of 2020 resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic that had not been budgeted for when the CARES Act passed March 27.

"Ocean County is very fortunate — we have a good surplus, so we were able to deal with the costs," said Julie Tarrant, the county's CFO. "If some of our revenues do not meet what we anticipate, I think we'll be OK, so from that standpoint, we were able to handle it."

Ocean County had covered \$9.3 million in debris removal costs in 2012 after Superstorm Sandy, and the county is again looking inward to fortify its small businesses.

Though the state is distributing \$45 million among the 21 counties to assist small businesses, that won't go nearly

What a Year!

EACH YEAR, *COUNTY NEWS* INTERVIEWS THE OUTGOING NACo PRESIDENT FOR A LOOK BACK ON THEIR TERM. DOUGLAS COUNTY, NEB. COMMISSIONER MARY ANN BORGESON OFFERS HER REFLECTIONS HERE.

How would you describe your year as NACo president?

My presidency has been quite unusual to say the least. From personal family issues, to a public health pandemic to civil unrest, I can honestly say this year has been challenging, exciting and sad. But I am so proud of NACo because everyone stood tall and never missed a beat through all of these circumstances. This year, I have grown a deeper admiration and appreciation for our NACo staff and county leaders. We continued our important work for counties across America despite the many obstacles. I am so impressed with the dedication, leadership, innovation, toughness and compas-



Borgeson

sion of our NACo family and proud to have been able to lead our family this year. While this has been an unprecedented presidency, I would not trade it in for anything. It truly has been one of the greatest honors

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See **BORGESON** page 2

'Proud to have been able to lead'

From BORGESON page 1

during my tenure as a county commissioner.

What was the most challenging part of your role?

The most challenging was not being able to see everyone in person. Not being able to travel and experience your counties in person.

What did you find most interesting or exciting?

The most interesting was my visit to Great Falls, Mont. and seeing a live mermaid swimming in a pool behind a bar. Most exciting was traveling to Lake Placid and flying in a crop plane for the first time. Also, our Legislative Conference — it was the best ever. So many outstanding sessions, speakers and, of course, having the President of the United States and bipartisan members of Congress address our members.

What are you most proud of?

I am most proud of all of you! Proud to have been given the opportunity to lead our association that is made up of so many amazing leaders and staff.

What advice would you give your successor?

The advice I would give my successor is "enjoy" your year! Absorb all you can because it comes and goes in a blink of an eye.

What's next for you?

I will continue to work on my initiative that focuses on our precious older Americans and caregivers. I will continue to be involved in our Association and continue our work on making America's counties stronger and more relevant.



SNAP/STATS

JULY IS NATIONAL ICE CREAM MONTH

Gallons consumed per person each year:.....**23**

Jobs supported by industry:.....**26,000**

Contribution to U.S. economy:**\$11 billion**

Gallons produced each year:**1.4 billion gallons**

Americans favorite ice cream flavor:**Vanilla**

Source: International Dairy Foods Association

NACo members set to vote July 20

by Lauren Wilson
membership associate

At NACo's virtual Annual Business Meeting set for July 20 at 2 p.m. ET, NACo members will elect their 2020-2021 officers, consider bylaws amendments, review NACo's year of collective achievements and conduct other association business. Registration for the Annual Business Meeting is free to all NACo members.

The deadline to register and determine your county's voting delegate is Friday, July 17 by noon ET. Voting credentials attest to a county's eligibility to vote and verify the number of votes they have for NACo elections.

In order to vote, each county/parish/borough is required to:

- Pay 2020 NACo membership dues, and
- Register a voting delegate by noon ET Friday, July 17

Registrants from NACo member counties can designate themselves as a voting delegate when registering as an individual for the virtual Annual Business Meeting. For the authorized voting delegates, individual registration to the Annual Business Meeting is mandatory. Voting credentials information cannot be accessed through group registration to the Annual Business Meeting.

Credentials information was shared with Annual Business Meeting registrants in June and



Greg Chilcott, Ravalli County, Mont. commissioner and WIR president, takes the microphone at a past Annual Business Meeting.

can be accessed online at www.naco.org/governance.

To facilitate the virtual voting process, NACo encourages each member county to authorize one voting delegate.

During the election for NACo second vice president at the Annual Business Meeting, voting delegates and those designated as proxies (most commonly state associations), will vote simultaneously via a secure online platform.

NACo's Reading Clerk, Tally Clerk, Credentials Committee and Parliamentarian, as needed, will monitor and verify votes as they are cast.

The 2020 Credentials Committee members are:

- Riki Hokama, Councilmember, Maui County, Hawaii — Chair
- Cindy Bulloch, County Assessor, Iron County, Utah — Member
- Kurt Gibbs, Board Chair, Marathon County, Wis. — Member

- Chris Rodgers, Commissioner, Douglas County, Neb. — Parliamentarian


- Merceria Ludgood, Commissioner, Mobile County, Ala. — Reading Clerk

- Batina Dodge, County Clerk, Scotland County, Mo. — Tally Clerk

After voting delegates and alternates cast their votes, the Reading Clerk will announce state vote totals (e.g. State 1 casts X votes for Candidate).

The vote totals will appear for everyone to see, and the Reading Clerk will announce all state totals, even after a candidate has reached a majority.

For more information, see NACo's Voting Credentials Frequently Asked Questions at www.NACo.org/annual/voting-faq.

Questions? Email credentials@NACo.org. 

Lauren Wilson is the membership associate in NACo's Public Affairs Department.

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How are counties spending from CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund?

From RELIEF page 1

far enough. Ocean County is putting \$10 million of its CRF money into the New Jersey Economic Development Authority's Small Business Emergency Assistance Grant Program. That will aid businesses with fewer than 25 employees that had to close because they were deemed non-essential during the shutdown.

"You're looking at a lot of restaurants and clothing stores, employing local people," Tarrant said. "The profits are staying in the community."

The program had already been designed to meet the CRF reporting requirements, which accelerated the process.

"It's all thanks to having a healthy rainy-day fund," Tarrant said. "Without that, we'd be trying to save ourselves and our businesses."

Additional guidance from the U.S. Department of Treasury has elaborated that any capital expenditures funded by the CRF must be completed by Dec. 30, 2020 — deliveries should be in hand and new construction should be close to completion. Funding can, however, be used to satisfy non-federal matching requirements of the Stafford Act, and that public health salaries can be paid for completely by the CRF.

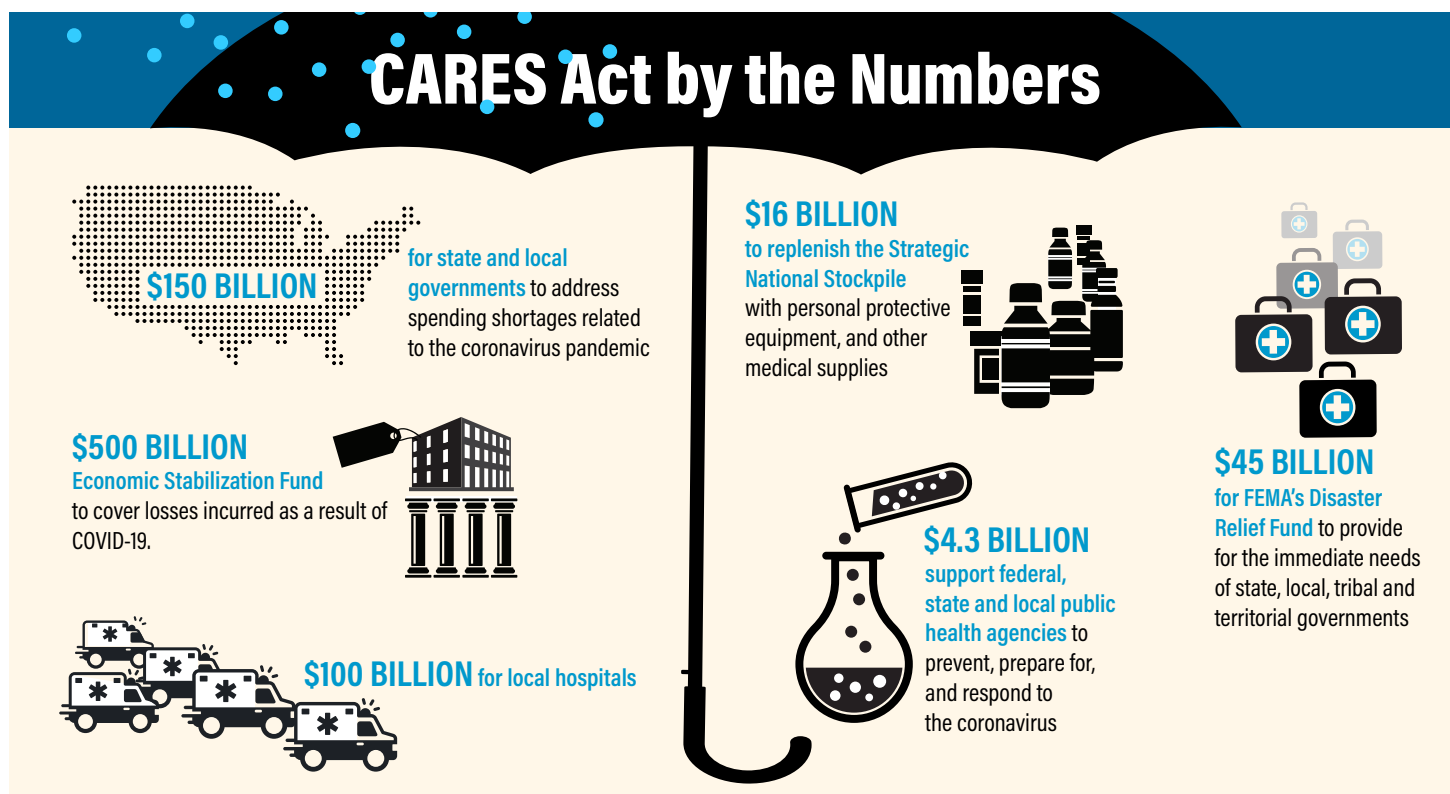
Other staff expenses are trickier. Staff already on the payroll, who are simply doing more work as a result of COVID-19, are not covered, but staff hired to supplement workflows are.

The perspective different county workers take also figures in: While corrections officers provide public safety services, because they don't face the general public, their expenses generally aren't eligible unless their duties change significantly.

Williamson County, Texas

Shortly after Williamson County, Texas saw its first four positive COVID-19 cases on March 18, County Judge Bill Gravell Jr. called for a task force to get a grip on how the shutdowns would affect small businesses.

"If we could help our small



businesses survive in this situation, we could also help with many of the other related situations that would occur with unemployment, with needs for housing and food," said Treasurer Scott Heselmeyer. "We take some pride from how we rolled this out."

What the county rolled out was the Wilco Forward grant program, allocating up to \$30,000 to businesses located in Williamson County with fewer than 100 employees, based on the extent to which restrictions from the pandemic affected operations. Businesses that had to close completely could receive all of their grant amounts, businesses that had to close partially could receive 75 percent and businesses that didn't have to close could receive half.

"We knew every business was going to be affected one way or another," Heselmeyer said. "We had 500 applications in the first 30 minutes."

Grants could cover one month of labor costs using the same paperwork as the Paycheck Protection Plan, or two months' worth of fixed costs.

"Those are easy things to lay out — the actual enforcement for that was a little more challenging," he said, noting the reporting requirement on the back end of the grants is comprehensive.

With a few days to go before applications closed, the county had received nearly 3,800 applications and denied fewer

than 400, mostly because they were duplicates.

"People either forgot their application had gone through or they got impatient and sent another," Heselmeyer said. "What we wanted to place a priority on was getting things put in the right buckets, and then we could work on the details in those buckets."

He said he also expects the school systems will have some needs by the end of the year.

Lee County, Fla.

The Gulf coastline of Lee County, Fla. is a beacon to vacationers, either to relax or attend spring training. COVID-19 cut down on all of that. Now, with roughly 40,000 businesses and nonprofits with 25 or fewer employees, the Lee Cares program is aiming to help them make comebacks from the closures or curtailed business operations.

Assistant County Manager Glen Salyer estimates one-third of those operations will be eligible for \$5,000 grants to cover reopening expenses.

"We knew we couldn't make nonviable entities successful, so we're trying to provide stop-gap funding," he said.

The call center the county set up at the start of the pandemic can help business owners apply for the \$25 million, out of a total \$134.5 million allocated by the Coronavirus Relief Fund. The rest of that funding will be split among human services costs (\$45 million), government di-

rect expenditures (\$20 million) \$20.5 million for unforeseen costs and with hurricane season on the way, the \$24 million for public safety funding looms large, with the prospect of funding isolation shelters for displaced COVID-symptomatic residents.

The county will also begin taking applications July 6 for business rehire grants, offering up to \$5,000 for each full-time equivalent employee brought back from COVID-caused furlough to a local business with 250 or fewer employees.

"The vast majority of our companies have not been able to access PPP loans for one reason or another, so we're trying to fill a gap," Salyer said.

A lot of the non-commercial funding will go toward additional COVID testing, contact tracing and quarantine housing costs.

"We're anticipating that if there is a second wave, rather than shutting down, we'd rather keep our economy open," Salyer said, "so we do anticipate some additional testing, contact tracing and quarantine housing costs."

Lee County received input from other counties and the Florida Association of Counties in determining eligibility criteria for its Lee Cares programs.

With childcare at a premium, the county worked with the United Way to provide \$1,250 scholarships per eligible child and for personal protective

equipment and cleaning supplies for childcare providers.

Kern County, Calif.

Like it or not, Kern County, Calif. is in the driver's seat right now. It is the only entity within its borders to receive any federal Coronavirus Relief Fund money (\$157 million), and without any allocations yet from the state, that \$157 million will have to be enough for everyone.

With an eye on a second wave, the county has funded six months of operations for an alternative care site at its fairgrounds, capable of supporting 1,000 people. In addition, coupled with trailer donations, the county is funding wraparound human services for homeless residents in addition to sheltering them.

A total of \$20 million has been put aside to reimburse direct costs to cities. Chief Operations Officer Jim Zervis said given the scope of Kern County's responsibility dispersing CRF funds, it has contracted with two banks and two credit unions to handle the grants.

"We tried to maintain as much flexibility for those businesses as possible," he said.

The county has also been distributing \$10 million worth of personal protective equipment for small businesses. In lieu of renting storage space, the county is using 16 of its buildings that have been vacant during the pandemic. **CN**

Counties put racism in a public health spotlight

by **Charlie Ban**
senior writer

When Milwaukee County declared racism a public health crisis in the spring of 2019, that action was the first of its kind. Now, as the COVID-19 pandemic brings into relief the stark differences in health outcomes among African Americans and public pressure for systemic change mounts following high profile deaths in the minority community at the hands of police, nearly two dozen other counties have followed suit with resolutions of their own. They have plans to back up those words with action, looking into every aspect of how systems of government affect the health of minorities.

Milwaukee County's declaration kicked off internal changes among county personnel and progressed with the signing of an ordinance committing the county to advancing racial equity and eliminating health disparities in late April 2020.

Studies have found racism to be a social determinant of



Milwaukee County, Wis. Executive David Crowley Photo courtesy of David Crowley

health resulting from structural disadvantages minorities face in housing, education, employment and, what has shown to be the most immediate determinant of health, criminal justice. David Crowley, the county's

first African American executive, acknowledged reversing hundreds of years of disadvantage won't be easy, but the county is looking inward to start the process.

"We are using racial equity

as a key guiding principle on making decisions on where we invest or digest as a county," he said.

"We're making intentional connections between our strategic plan and our budget and

using a people-focused design in building a diverse and inclusive county workforce."

Crowley hopes that as the largest county government in

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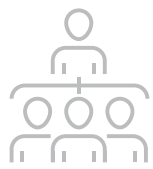



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Efforts aim to advance racial equity, eliminate health disparities

From RACISM page 4

Wisconsin, not only can Milwaukee's policies directly improve outcomes for the county's personnel, 4,000 of whom received racial equity training in the last year, but that example can send a message to the private sector.

"Hopefully when our external partners see what we're doing, they'll notice it and it will catch like wildfire," he said.

Ultimately, the county hopes to improve the health outcomes throughout the community. The 2020 County Health Rankings placed Milwaukee 71 out of 72 in the state. This effort started years before, with steps like the formation of the county's Office on African American Affairs in 2017.

Crowley stressed the COVID-19's disparate impact on minorities when justifying the county's universal face mask policy, noting that many members of minority groups have felt targeted and profiled while wearing a mask previously, and that has driven resistance. Though the African American population of Milwaukee is less than half of the Caucasian population, the raw numbers show three-quarters as many positive tests and nearly as many deaths, as of June 29.

"And ultimately, we want to protect those communities, so it's important that people who come in contact with them are wearing masks too," he said.

Though Milwaukee County plans to address systemic racism in each of its departments, it doesn't have its own public health department — those functions are carried out by the county's 11 municipalities.

"We're left to act as a conveyor, but in this case that could help us communicate our message," he said.

Durham County, N.C., passed a similar resolution June 8, and recently hired a racial equity officer, who will coordinate efforts to integrate equity principles into county government functions.

Joanne Pierce, the county's general manager of health and well-being, who oversees that position, has been addressing equity in the county's operations for several years, but

knows that even with investment in time and staff, making a difference will be difficult.

"We're imagining racial equity in our society because we've never had it," she said. "Every single system without exception, in Durham County, and in our nation, was built on white supremacy because those institutions were created when there was whites-only access. There were explicit laws, and we're still just a few decades away from Jim Crow laws."

While police brutality gets the most attention, Pierce said that, and the rush to reform, can obscure from the long haul ahead. Diabetes and low birth weight stick out in Durham County's African American community.

"People will talk about law enforcement, but that's just one cog. It's in public health, it's in education, in health outcomes," she said. "I may never live to see the thing that I hope will happen, but I'm just as energized and hopeful, that will not stop me because I want people who I will never meet to have that opportunity, that access."

So often, the narrative is "Wow, they really need to work on their health, they need more responsibility, they need a service," Pierce said. "My conversation is, we can't just take a snapshot because it doesn't include historical insult, it doesn't include exclusion, lack of opportunity. We've often become ahistorical, looked at windshield assessments and come up with a lot of solutions that don't work. We put the onus on the people carrying the burden of disease and mortality but not on the systems they live in."

Pierce compared the examination of racism as a public health crisis to diagnosing problems with fish in an aquarium.

"If one or two fish go belly up, you'll write that off as the natural life cycle, but if half or three-quarters start getting sick and dying, it's time to start looking at the water," she said. "You're not going to design a midnight basketball program for the fish. You're not going to design a self-esteem program for the fish. There's enough in the environment that is causing them harm, which means changing their health outcomes

COUNTIES THAT HAVE PASSED RESOLUTIONS DECLARING RACISM A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS:

Allegheny County, Pa.
Anne Arundel County, Md.
Cook County, Ill.
Dallas County, Texas
Douglas County, Neb.
Durham County, N.C.
Eau Claire County, Wis.
Franklin County, Ohio
Hennepin County, Minn.
Ingham County, Mich.
Jefferson County, Colo.

Kalamazoo County, Mich.
King County, Wash.
Marion County, Ind.
Mecklenburg County, N.C.
Milwaukee County, Wis.
Montgomery County, Md.
Pierce County, Wash.
San Bernardino County, Calif.
Santa Clara County, Calif.
Shelby County, Tenn.
Summit County, Ohio

means fixing the environment."

That starts with setting goals and shared language through which the county can target change.

"Where you place this lead position will help advance the work of this position," Pierce said. "We need to look at our practices and policies and develop our champions and leaders within each department who are grounded, have racial clarity and can help with their departments."

Even if counties aren't a few years into efforts similar to Milwaukee and Durham, putting their intentions in writing can set an agenda.

"Talk around systemic racism often got collapsed into a discussion around civility because the discussions would be impassioned, the tenor in someone's voice could distract from the message," said Veronica Sims, a Summit County, Ohio councilwoman.

Summit County followed nearby Franklin County's declaration. "We had a unanimous vote on our council saying that racism is a problem that we intend to address, and that's powerful language."

Sims will help lead a task force, which is still finding structure, but she said that that's already a step toward bet-

ter representation for a county boasting a 17 percent population of African Americans but only one representative elected to county office.

"Municipalities in the county are starting to pass their own declarations, and we're seeing little bridges being built all around," she said. "We want people to understand this isn't a sit-down feast and we'll eat until we're full and then go away. What we can't afford to do is leave the work for the next generation."

For Crowley, the pandemic may provide a catalyst for the community as a whole to see the scope of the problem, rather than just the county government itself.

Milwaukee County has segregated its COVID-19 statistics to show the disparate effect on different groups.

"We're in two pandemics. An acute emergency with COVID-19 and one deeply rooted in racism," he said. "How do we bring more people together to address the racial inequities that we see? Counties have the opportunity to be a leader in this work. We have to build back better. Everybody is in a tough spot, and we still don't know the economic fallout. But we are seeing how it is affecting people health-wise." **CN**



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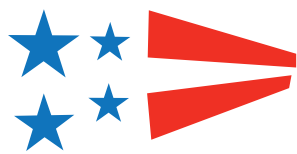
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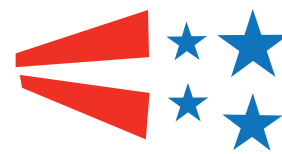
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email us at cnews@naco.org
and we'll be in touch.

Looking forward to hearing from you, }
Mary Ann, Charlie and Rachel }



MEET THE CANDIDATE



NACo Second Vice President Candidate Platform

Denise Winfrey County Executive, Will County, Ill.

Inclusion makes counties stronger.

I'm Denise Winfrey, county executive of Will County, Ill. I'm running for second vice president of NACo and I want your vote.

Some of you may have talked with me at the Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C., or seen me speak during the General Session. My plan was to spend time talking and networking with you during the National Organization of Black County Officials (NOBCO) Economic Development Conference in Atlanta. I was scheduled to attend the Western Interstate Region Conference (WIR), and Board of Director's meeting in Yosemite and would have spent time with you there, and of course I would have talked with as many of you as possible during the Annual Conference in Orange County so that you could get to know me firsthand.

I have just celebrated 11 years as a county board member. During that time, I was chair of a significant county building campaign which includes a new courthouse which will open this fall; a county health department which opened this spring; an animal control facility and emergency management facility which also opened this spring. We have also built a new law enforcement complex

which includes a 911 dispatch center. My time in county government has helped me to gain knowledge about and a more comprehensive understanding of the needs of counties. Being the speaker (chair in some counties) has provided me with many opportunities to network with mayors and village presidents across our county of 700,000.

Will County is in the heart of the Midwest and is home to the largest inland port in North America. We have rail, truck and waterway traffic. This increased business brings revenues, but also issues. Like many of you, we are dealing with infrastructure that wasn't intended for the level of use that we are seeing today; housing has not kept up with the demands of increased population; and even though we now have drug, mental health and veterans courts, we still struggle with social issues and with how to fund ever increasing needs.

My county is rural, with generational farmlands where a small group of taxpayers carry the full load of schools in the area. Our farmers are fearful that our growth as an inland port coupled with increased infrastructure needs will cause the decline of local agriculture. We are also suburban, with villages and commuter communities who enjoy being close to our larger cities, but still want



Winfrey

to live separate from them. We also have urban, heavily metropolitan areas, many being multinational and multilingual. We are dealing with insensitivity and intolerance in our county, just like many of you. In other words, my county is a microcosm not only of the country, but also of NACo with respect to the issues the membership must address in their counties.

I am also celebrating 11 years as a NACo member. That membership has been one of action and involvement. My NACo work includes Community and Economic Development (CEWD) Steering Committee, Vice-Chair; NACo ambassador; Membership Committee; Large Urban Counties Caucus (LUCC); Women of NACo (WON); National Association of Black County Officials (NABCO); International Economic Development Task Force; NACo's High Performance Leadership Academy (HPLA), and NACo Board of Directors. Each of these responsibilities has allowed me an opportunity to grow and develop as a county board member and as a NACo member. I have been able to use my experiences at NACo to improve myself; improve the way I interact with my colleagues, and bring new ideas

and resources to my county.

I'm running because I believe in the value of NACo to counties. I want to help NACo promote and increase diversity and inclusion among its members and officers.

Now, more than ever, there is a need for counties to be united across the country for the common good. Our strength as an organization comes from inclusion. It is imperative that we ensure our organization is one that actively works for and with all members of the community.

I want to be the person who helps our organization to foster an increased focus on inclusion. Together, we can connect those who have previously been unconnected; we can and should join in support of the elderly and infirm among us; we should become stronger allies to our LGBTQ+ family; we need to embrace our Latinx population; we need to help counties create programs that lift our children from lives of poverty, and we must continue to promote increased criminal justice reform.

Like many of you, our county is dealing with the COVID-19 crisis, trying to provide health-care access and supplies, and worrying about the possibility of another outbreak.

This pandemic has also made clear the disparities in health care, the disproportionate number of poor people deemed essential, and the myriad ways the continued disenfranchisement of those living at or below the poverty line are allowed to continue.

This is just one of many facets of inclusion where I believe as NACo members, we can make our voices heard more strongly.

With inclusion as our mind-

set, we can be a support for communities of color when we lobby for housing, transportation, economic development, waterways, and agriculture. By using inclusion as the proving ground for our decisions, programs and policies, we will consider not only the issue itself, but other ramifications and unintended consequences that might work to defeat the goals we set. We can be a greater resource to our counties in their struggle to achieve parity for their residents by modeling the behaviors and best practices they seek. We can help our counties do even greater things and provide more resources to their communities.

NACo is a great value to our counties, and I want to help the organization be even more relevant going forward.

I want to help lead NACo as it continues to grow, continues to reach out to all parts of the community and continues to provide timely, useful resources. I want to partner with each of you to help NACo poll counties to see where we can do more to gather information that better reflects the needs of communities that have historically been left out of the planning of programs. I want to hear from those who have traditionally and sometimes systemically been overlooked.

We have the opportunity before us to change in ways that can be impactful for all counties, and through them, impact our country.

I'm asking for your vote, and your help to further the mission of continually making NACo a more formidable, respected and effective association for all county officials.

Inclusion makes stronger counties — stronger communities!

COUNTIES HELP GUIDE FALL SCHOOL REOPENINGS



by **Rachel Looker**
staff writer

The back-to-school season will look different this year.

When many schools across the country transitioned to virtual classrooms in mid-March as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to spread, it remained unclear what in-person learning would look like this fall.

In addition to considerations provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), county health departments are providing additional guidelines to help school districts form strategies for reopening to keep students, teachers and staff safe.

In Bucks County, Pa., county Health Department Director Dr. David Damsker released guidelines for the 13 school districts throughout the county.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education is requiring each school district to create a health and safety plan before reopening. School districts are advised to consult with local health agencies when forming reopening plans.

While each school district makes the ultimate decisions regarding reopening procedures, Damsker said the coun-

ty health department provided general guidelines for each district to choose to follow.

"They are educators," he said. "They are not public health officials and they need some guidance from the local health agency to steer them along even if they're making the final decision."

The Bucks County Health Department guidelines include at-home symptom screening of students and staff, mandatory mask-wearing on buses and for staff who are unable to social distance, disinfecting high-touch surfaces and staggering seating arrangements with possible assigned seating in cafeterias.

"It's all part of a continuum of things that we're doing to keep kids safe, but still have the pragmatic ability to operate schools," Damsker said.

When it comes to the CDC's recommendation of students-remaining at least six feet apart, he explained that it may not be possible in some classrooms to keep that distance.

"We knew right off the bat that the CDC guidelines saying 'you must be six feet away from everybody else' is not actually tenable or practical to open up a school using those guidelines," he said.

Damsker explained that stu-

dents and teachers have the option to wear masks all day, but it is not mandatory based on the county's recommendations. He emphasized that mask-wearing is often difficult for young children.

If a student were to test positive, Damsker said the county's guidelines do not currently recommend shutting down schools. The health department would contact trace to identify students who may have been exposed and take appropriate measures depending on each case.

"The virus is not going to go away by shutting down a school," he said. "We need to work with the disease and figure out ways of handling it without going to the extreme every time."

Damsker said the department's guidelines may become more or less restrictive depending on case counts this fall.

He said the most important aspect for schools to reopen is that parents not send their children to school if they're sick. For students or parents who do not feel comfortable returning to the classroom this fall, Damsker said it is up to each school district to offer virtual options.

"We believe we can send the

kids back safely," he said. "We can't eliminate all the risk, but we can minimize it. We want to start treating this virus like other communicable diseases that we have in our society."

In Sacramento County, Calif., Health Services Director Dr. Peter Beilenson said the county health department has worked collaboratively with the Sacramento County Office of Education, which oversees 13 school districts throughout the county that range from 2,000 to 100,000 students.

The guidance, as of June 2, focuses on "cohorting" students by alternating the days and times groups of students are in class.

"The idea being, of course, to space out the kids and to allow them to have some kind of social distancing," Beilenson said.

The county's recommendations include masking for students in third grade and above, cleaning desks between classes and maintaining six feet of distance between students.

The guidelines recommend not playing contact sports, but allowing for individual sports such as track, cross country and tennis.

For other extracurricular activities, the guidelines recommend students are socially

distanced and masked, and advise against holding band and drama.

Beilenson said school districts will be mildly challenged in finding resources to enact these guidelines, but because of the rapidly growing city of Sacramento, many newer buildings have more space.

"That being said, I don't think there's any school in the country, particularly a public school, that will be able to perfectly match with their current everyday stuff," he said.

If a student tests positive, the department will contact trace and notify those individuals who had close contact, requiring them to isolate for up to two weeks.

Similar to protocols in place during the flu season, if a certain percentage of students test positive for COVID-19, the county health department's guidelines recommend potentially closing a classroom.

Beilenson said the department will work collaboratively with the school districts as the school year approaches to evaluate the current situation surrounding the virus, but he does not anticipate major changes to the guidelines because of the recent increase in the number of cases in the Sacramento area. **CN**

PROFILES IN SERVICE

JIMMY ODOM, SR.

Board Member
Associate County Commissioner
Cass County, Mo.

Number of years involved in NACo: Seven

Years in public service: 17

Occupation: Politician

Education: High school
The hardest thing I've ever done: Training and competing in cross country races.
Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: Ronald Reagan, Billy Graham and Patrick Mahomes.
A dream I have is to: See New Zealand and Australia on an extended vacation.
You'd be surprised to learn that: I used to be a hired killer (owned a pest control business for 22 years).

My favorite way to relax is: A hot tub or a full-body massage.
I'm most proud of: Starting and growing a business and passing it on to my son as well as serving as mayor and now commissioner.
Every morning I read: The Bible and *The Kansas City Star* newspaper
My favorite meal is: Fried chicken.
My pet peeve is: People who are chronically late.

My motto is: "It only takes a little bit more to go first class."
The last book I read was: *It Worked for Me: In Life and Leadership* by Colin Powell.
My favorite music is: Rock 'n' roll
My favorite U.S. president: Ronald Reagan
My county is a NACo member because: The most important reason is the advocacy that NACo does for all counties in representing our needs to the nation and on Capitol Hill.



ODOM

A photograph showing a team of husky-like dogs pulling a sled across a vast, flat, snow-covered landscape. In the background, there are snow-capped mountains under a clear blue sky. The sled is being pulled away from the viewer into the distance.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:

Hunting caribou and ice fishing in Selawik, Alaska where the high for the day was 18 degrees below zero. I spent a week roughing it in the Alaskan bush where you get around only by snowmobile or dog sled.

A graphic consisting of several thick, wavy lines in red, green, and blue that overlap and flow from the left side of the frame towards the right, where they converge into a single red arrow pointing towards the Standards Connect logo.

The logo for Standards Connect, featuring three overlapping squares in green, blue, and red, followed by the text "STANDARDS CONNECT" in a clean, sans-serif font.

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The logo for the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), featuring a stylized blue arc above the word "ANSI" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT [WEBSTORE.ANSI.ORG](https://webstore.ansi.org)

GET TO KNOW...

Mahaska County, Iowa

Welcome, Mahaska County, Iowa

Located in southeastern Iowa, Mahaska County was organized in 1844, two years prior to when Iowa achieved statehood.

The 573-square-mile county is named for Chief Mahaska of the Ioways tribe. The county was the first in the state to have a sheriff and justice of the peace. Its current population is around 22,000.

A commission of three men selected the location between the Des Moines and Skunk rivers for the county seat. Commissioners chose the name Oskaloosa, meaning "last of the beautiful," after a Creek Indian princess named Ouscaloosa. The county seat is mentioned in Johnny Cash's

song "I've Been Everywhere."

Coal mining drove the county's early economy. In 1883, the county had an annual output of more than one million tons of coal. Now, the county's economy focuses on retail trade, agriculture and an industrial park.

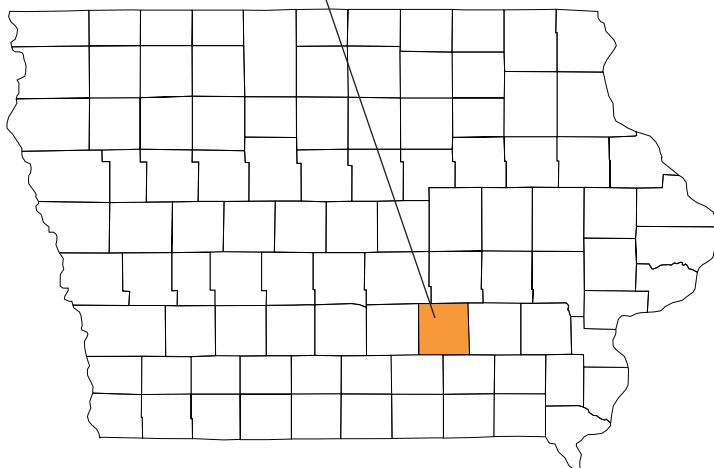
There are 41 sites in Oskaloosa on the National Register of Historic Places

including the Oskaloosa City Park and Band Stand, the city hall and the county courthouse.

The Southern Iowa Fair held in the county is one of the largest in Iowa.

The county boasts two private homes designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

"Get to Know" features new NACo member counties.



BEHIND THE SEAL

RAPPAHANNOCK COUNTY, VA.

The Rappahannock County Board of Supervisors held a competition for county residents to design the seal in the early 1990s. Supervisors held the design contest because "we had 'seal envy,' as we didn't have one," according to former County Administrator John McCarthy.

The board voted unanimously to adopt a design by Stephen Wagner. Supervisors asked Wagner to remove music notes from the clouds in the seal and replace it with the date of 1833 to represent the county's founding. The county began using the seal in February 1992.

Now, the seal can be found on the county's website and official stationery and featured on other county business.



The seal depicts the county's rural and agricultural aspects as well as the mountains that surround the county.

If you would like your county's seal featured in "Behind the Seal," contact Rachel Looker at rlooker@naco.org.

NACo VIRTUAL ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING & MEMBERSHIP TOWN HALL

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Annual Business Meeting

July 20 | 2:00 p.m. EDT

Membership Town Hall

July 13 | 4:00 p.m. EDT



BRIGHT IDEAS | ADAMS COUNTY, Colo.

Resurfacing Program Revitalizes Colorado County's Gravel Roads

PROBLEM:

A significant population growth and changing weather environments cause roadway conditions to decline.

SOLUTION:

Create a mixture of materials that requires less maintenance and uses fewer resources to improve the quality of roads.

by Rachel Looker
staff writer

For the Adams County, Colo. Public Works Department, the eighth time was the charm.

Staff used rock, sand, chlorides, polymers, acrylics and acrylamides in seven different formulas until finding the perfect mixture to help transform gravel roads throughout the county.

"There was just a lot of public outcry because the road conditions were so bad and we needed to quickly develop something," said Public Works Operation Manager Jeremy Reichert.

The Adams County Public Works Department launched the Gravel Roads Resurfacing Program to fund safe, efficient gravel roads that have been identified as hazardous.

With more than 1,600 lane miles and more than 500,000 residents, the county has experienced significant population growth in recent years that has led to declining roadway conditions. One-third of Adams County is urbanized and the rest is very rural, Public Works Director Kristin Sullivan said.

"For a fairly long period of time, the rural part of the county really had not been given sufficient resources in order to maintain the roads at the level that the residents really expected and deserved," Sullivan said.

Roads throughout the county were also impacted by the weather, specifically during



Equipment from the Adams County Public Works Department resurfaces a road through the Gravel Roads Resurfacing Program in Adams County, Colo. Photo by Jeremy Reichert

the spring and winter seasons when moisture caused roads to get muddy and caused vehicles to slide. County residents often saw maintenance teams grading certain stretches of roads as often as three times per week.

The poor conditions of the roads led to safety concerns and limited accessibility for residents, farmers, businesses and emergency service providers. This slowed business development, made service deliveries challenging and limited the ability for emergency responders to respond to calls.

"We struggled with school districts being able to pick up the kids at their designated stops, emergency responders had difficult times tending to calls... so it was definitely a major problem," Reichert said.

The department's new mixture primarily uses a polymer-treated base and creates a better driving experience, greater durability and results in less maintenance. The team found the formula after discarding seven trial mixtures.

"We would strategically test

out sections of road side-by-side to do comparisons and then our assessment of that was based on time, meaning 'How much time could that roadway go before we had to come back and intervene with some form of maintenance?'" Reichert said.

He described the mixture as a bonded gravel with a higher clay content that doesn't "unravel." The department obtains the materials from two companies, mixes it with water, loads it onto a calibrated water truck and applies it to the roads.

Through the program, staff have seen a reduction in the number of times they have to complete surface grading — with a decrease from three times per week to two times per year on some roads. The mixture can last on average between 12 to 14 months, according to Reichert.

"A lot of people sometimes think that the road is paved because we do incorporate recycled products like asphalt and concrete recyclables so you get that coloration," Reichert said.

The department is prioritizing which roads to resurface and

will have treated 820 lane miles by the end of 2020.

The department's budget has increased significantly through the program and now allocates \$3.3 million to cover the cost of gravel material, dust abatement, additives and contract hauling services. It is estimated that spending \$1 on gravel maintenance saves or delays spending by \$6 to \$10 to fix roads in the future.

"What we're doing isn't necessarily the cheapest thing to do, but it fits for us because we have limited staff, we have other responsibilities and so there's that good old saying that 'You pay me now or you pay me later,'" Reichert said.

Sullivan said a culture of innovation within the department led to the growth of the program, adding that the department's staff has been more motivated and engaged because of its success.

"We really have gone from a culture where people do things the same way because that's the way they've always been done to a place where we continue to ask

'How can we do this better? How can we be more efficient with our resources?'" Sullivan said.

She advises other county public works departments to embrace new technologies and find innovative solutions to local problems.

"[Public works departments] can really be a part of the leading edge of how to do maintenance in an environment that's challenging but really has a huge return on investment in the long run," Sullivan said.

Adams County's program has received international attention, specifically from developing countries where entire road networks are unpaved and need long-lasting, sustainable solutions.

To find out more about the Adams County Gravel Roads Resurfacing Program, contact Jeremy Reichert at jreichert@ad-cogov.org.

Adams County's Gravel Roads Resurfacing program is the recipient of a best in category 2020 NACo Achievement Award in the Transportation category. **CN**

Congratulations to the LATEST NACo HIGH PERFORMANCE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY CLASS!

Dozens of county employees and others took part in NACo's most recent High Performance Leadership Academy. The 12-week program empowers front-line government employees with fundamental leadership skills. The curriculum was developed by the Professional Development Academy in partnership with Fortune 1000 executives and others, including Gen. Colin Powell and executive coach and author Marshall Goldsmith. Learn more at naco.org/skills.

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WORD
SEARCH

ULSTER COUNTY, N.Y.

Created by: Mary Ann Barton

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- APPLE:** The county is about 90 minutes north of New York City aka the Big Apple.
- BOND:** Actor Daniel Craig is reportedly a part-time resident of the county.
- CATSKILL:** A state park, it is 700,000 acres and partially located in the county.
- COURTHOUSE:** The Ulster County Courthouse was built in 1789.
- DRUMS:** Sundays are “drum circle days” on the village green in the center of town in Woodstock.
- FALLON:** “Tonight Show” host Jimmy Fallon grew up in the county.
- HISTORIC:** Mohonk Mountain House hotel, built in 1869 on Shawangunk Ridge is a National Historic Landmark.
- HUDSON:** The county is immediately west of the Hudson River.
- IRISH:** The county is named after the Irish province of Ulster.
- KINGSTON:** The county seat and first capital of the state of New York.
- MOUNTAINS:** Much of the county is located in the Catskill Mountains.
- ORIGINAL:** The county was one of the state’s first six original counties, founded in 1683.
- PEAK:** The highest peak in the county is 4,190 feet atop Slide Mountain, part of the Catskill Mountains.
- POPULATION:** The county has nearly 180,000 residents.
- WOODSTOCK:** The concert named for this artist-friendly town in Ulster County actually took place in neighboring Sullivan County.

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NATION

CALIFORNIA

• **ALAMEDA COUNTY** launched a pilot program to send **mobile teams of behavioral health clinicians and EMTs** to respond to individuals suffering from mental health crises or experiencing substance abuse problems, the *East Bay Times* reported. The Community Assessment Treatment and Transport teams are dispatched through 911 calls and work with police and firefighters on scene to assess individuals. This is the first time that EMTs are being paired with clinicians in the county.

FLORIDA

• Some **ALACHUA COUNTY** residents are discussing splitting from the county and **forming a new county government**. Residents who said they feel their concerns are currently being ignored are discussing forming Spring County, which would include the towns of Archer, Newberry, Jonesville, High Springs and Alachua, WCJB-TV reported. The last time a new county formed in Florida was in 1925. Those who want to split from Alachua County would have to appeal the state legislature for approval.

• The tourism department in **FLAGLER COUNTY** launched the **"Pledge to Prevent" campaign** for restaurants and businesses that are popular tourism spots. The program helps convey to customers the efforts businesses are taking to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Restaurants and businesses that take the pledge commit to using protective equipment, routinely disinfecting surfaces, practicing social distancing and sending home sick employees. Those that pledge receive free face masks, disposable placemats, a certificate of commitment and a window cling with the campaign's seal.

GEORGIA

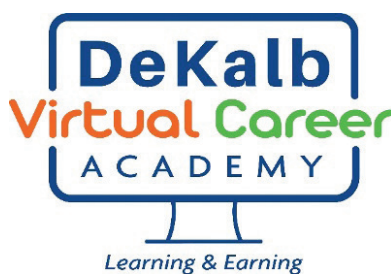
• The **COLUMBIA COUNTY** chamber of commerce launched the "Cards for Caring, You Take Care of Us, Let Us Care of Your Family," program to **give back to healthcare workers** on the frontlines. The program allows members of the community to make donations on the chamber's website, WFXG reported. The chamber will then use the donations to purchase gift cards from restaurants and distribute them to local hospitals. The program aims to help provide for healthcare workers and their families while supporting local restaurants.

• The **DAWSON COUNTY** Public Library launched a new **summer online reading program** to replace the in-person summer events usually held at the library. The new program is held through an app that tracks the progress of readers and provides information on awards and prizes students can earn, *Dawson News* reported. Users can log what books they have read and compete with others for prizes.



CALIFORNIA

• Couples in **SAN DIEGO COUNTY** are saying their "I do's" thanks to an innovative idea from the county clerk's office. Within two days, the office transformed a former concession stand into the **"marriage hut"** to provide wedding services to county residents after the office closed to the public because of the COVID-19 outbreak. The former snack shack is located outside the clerk's office and allows couples to pick up paperwork or even get married while following social distancing requirements. NBC 7/Greg Bledsoe, <https://bit.ly/388AKAs>



• Over 800 youth in **DEKALB COUNTY** will be learning online this summer through the county's **Virtual Career Academy**. The program provides career development, educa-

tion enrichment and summer income to youth who are paid \$9 per hour for up to 20 hours per week. The academy interns will receive credits in industries including business technology, game design, website design, healthcare and education. Youth who are out of school will be provided GED instruction and counseling. The county received over 7,000 applications to join the academy.

MARYLAND

• **MONTGOMERY COUNTY**'s planning department has created an **online pedestrian shortcut map** that allows residents to submit ideas for desired pathways. The department is documenting these paths to make the routes safer for where residents are taking more efficient walking options. Residents have submitted 150 paths in the first week since the map launched, *DCist* reported. The shortcut map is the first step in the county's Pedestrian Master plan.

• The Geographic Information Systems Department in **WASHINGTON COUNTY** launched a **pool tracking tool** to let the public track the capacity level at the Marty Snook Pool. Working with the county parks and recreation department, the pool tracker provides real-time information on the pool's capacity. The tool aims to prevent residents from arriving at the pool only to find it has reached maximum capacity. Users can scan a QR code to view the tracker.

MICHIGAN

OAKLAND COUNTY officials proposed a \$2 million project between the county and Oakland Schools to keep



ILLINOIS

The sheriff's office in **DUPAGE COUNTY** launched the "It Takes a Village" campaign to help **feed county residents** during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through the campaign, which is in collaboration with a local non-profit and DuPage County Commissioner Sheila Rutledge, Sheriff James Mendrick has asked citizens, restaurants and businesses to donate excess food. Deputies who have been redeployed are delivering food items to the non-profit, where staff is dividing and pre-packaging items before deputies make final delivers directly to families in need. Photo courtesy the DuPage County Sheriff's Office

students and staff safe when returning this fall. The **Oakland Together School Nurse Initiative** would employ 68 nurses to develop COVID-19 prevention strategies with schools and work to facilitate health management for students during the day. The initiative follows CDC guidelines which recommend schools have a point of contact to respond to COVID-19 concerns.

NEVADA

At odds with how the Bureau of Land Management should act with regards to wild horses and burros, **NYE COUNTY** Commissioners adopted a resolution opposing the agency's use of **helicopters and motorized vehicles** to round them up for removal from public lands. The *Pahrump Valley Times* reported that the resolution encourages more humane methods for roundups.



NEW YORK

The **SUFFOLK COUNTY** Legislature expanded the county's human rights law to provide protections for **natural hair texture, religious cloth-**

ing and hairstyles such as braids, twists and locks, banning discrimination against hairstyles and religious attire in an effort to limit bias in the workplace.

The measure codifies existing state law and provides for enforcement by the county Human Rights Commission, *Newsday* reported.

NORTH DAKOTA

The **GRAND FORKS COUNTY** Commission approved **letting 2,000 spectators sit in the stands** at River Cities Speedway, an increase from 1,000. The commission is eyeing an increase to 3,100 spectators if COVID-19 numbers do not show an increase, *The Herald* reported.

SOUTH DAKOTA

A proposed state transportation commission would bar residents in **DEWEY, JONES** and **STANLEY counties** from **mowing their ditches** year-round, if they abut state highways. They would have to wait until June 15, a date **GREGORY, LYMAN** and **TRIPP counties** already hold to, *KELO News* reported.

TEXAS

- If you don't wear a mask in government buildings in **TRAVIS COUNTY**, you could be charged with **trespassing**. That COVID-19 prevention measure includes offers of disposable masks at buildings and offers



TENNESSEE

The Orange Mound Arts Council knows it has a home for the next 50 years thanks to a free **"forever lease"** offered by **SHELBY COUNTY** Mayor Lee Harris. The organization will use the property to expand creative art options in the community, one of the first African-American neighborhoods in the United States.

for accommodations for people with disabilities. The penalties include up 180 days in jail and a \$2,000 fine, Austin's CBS affiliate reported.

- **ZAPATA COUNTY** commissioners have sued the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in federal court over the government's attempt to gain access to a small tract of county-owned land to pursue building a **border wall**.

That land, the *Texas Tribune* reports, protect roughly four acres that is home to a bird sanctuary. The Department of Homeland Security filed a complaint against the county in May seeking access to the

tract of land for a one-year period to allow federal agents to "to conduct surveying, testing, and other investigatory work" to plan for the planned construction of a barrier, roads, cameras or other border security infrastructure.

VIRGINIA

- The Board of the **PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY**-Manassas jail declined to renew the facility's **cooperation agreement** with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The 2009 agreement allowed jail officials to check the immigration status of people in the



- As of July 1, counties may remove, relocate or **contextualize Confederate statues and monuments** that they own or maintain, following the General Assembly's passage of a bill in March granting localities that ability. The new law requires 30-day notice ahead of a public hearing for removal, the *Cavalier Daily* reported, or they may hold a local referendum.

WISCONSIN

The **WINNEBAGO COUNTY** Board may give the county health officer **sole authority to enact stay-at-home orders**. That authority has been held by the Board of Supervisors, *WLUK News* reported.

News From Across the Nation is compiled by Charlie Ban and Rachel Looker. Does your county have some news we can use? Contact us at cban@naco.org and rlooker@naco.org.



the HR DOCTOR

with Philpot & Winkeler

The U.S. Supreme Court issued a landmark civil rights ruling June 15 in the case titled *Bostock v. Clayton County*, when it decided that the firing of an employee because of their sexual orientation or because of their transgender status is, in fact, discrimination because of sex. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, originally enacted in 1964, prohibits employment discrimination because of a person's "race, color, religion, sex, or national origin." 42 U.S.C.A. § 2000e-2(a)(1). That language has been in place since the Title VII's passage. Yet the Supreme Court's ruling rests on this 50-plus year-old language. The employers in the case argued that the law neither explicitly protects one from discrimination because of their sexual orientation or transgender status, nor was the intent in 1964 to protect individuals in those protected classes.

In the June ruling, the majority of the Court found that there was no reason to address intent when the plain language of the law resolves the issue. To fire an employee for their sexual orientation or their transgender status is to fire them because of their sex as the dismissal is a result of "traits or actions [the employer] would not have questioned in members of a different sex." Thus, the Court summarizes, "[s]ex plays a necessary and undisguisable role in the decision, exactly what Title VII forbids."

What this means for counties and human resources departments varies. While the Court's decision is momentous, the idea that sexual orientation and transgender status should be considered protected classes is not a new concept. Many counties may already have been operating under state laws that included sexual orientation or transgender status in the list of protected classes covered by their state anti-dis-

Sex Discrimination, Reinterpreted

crimination laws. Many others may have already made decisions to prohibit such discrimination through their personnel policies, even if such discrimination wasn't clearly unlawful.

So how should counties respond to this clarification in the law? First, review your policies. They may track the plain language of Title VII, describing the protected classes as "race, color, religion, sex, or national origin." Or, they may already include sexual orientation and transgender status as required by state law or your governing body's policy decisions. As the Court emphasized, the original language of Title VII is sufficiently clear to protect employees from discrimination because of their sexual orientation or transgender status. But making it explicitly clear that these classes are protected could provide an opportunity to educate employees who may not be aware of the recent decision. Consider and discuss with your legal counsel what, if any, changes should be made to the language of your policies. Also, consider which of your policies should include such language and double check them to ensure your language is consistent across policies. The recent ruling creates an opportune time to update the language in

your policies and educate your employees on what the language means.

Next, think about trainings. Supervisors at all levels should be receiving trainings on your anti-discrimination policies, complaint and investigation procedures, code of ethics, access to services, diversity, recruitment and disciplinary policies, not just about how Title VII language impacts each of these areas specifically, but also to ensure behavior that consistently upholds and reflects your values as an organization. As both staff and the applicable laws and policies change, employees and supervisors should receive regular

"The recent ruling creates opportune time to update language in your policies."

trainings rather than just upon initial employment. It is imperative to consider the content of these trainings and ensure they include a thorough discussion of the law. The Court made clear that this isn't just about adding sexual orientation and transgender status to the list of protected classes because of changing attitudes or modern

policy considerations. Rather, the Court stated that this has always been the law because it has always been unlawful to discriminate against an individual because of their sex.

Thus, trainings should address what "because of sex" means. Would a supervisor's reaction to a situation be different if another employee of a different sex were involved? The Court gives several examples of such unlawful considerations: Refusing to hire women with small children, but hiring similarly situated men because of assumptions about caregiving responsibilities; failing to address sexual harassment of a man by other male employees; and most specifically to the consideration before the Court, firing a male employee for his attraction to men while tolerating such characteristics in female employees. Therefore, the training shouldn't just be revised to add new protected classes to the list but give examples and scenarios for employees to better understand why these classes are protected and where previous actions may not be the actions the organization needs to take in the future. Such training allows supervisors to understand potential scenarios before they occur as well as examine their

own reactions to be sure they could not be said to be "because of sex."

Finally, as always, the best way to avoid and defend claims of discrimination, no matter the basis, is to focus on performance, whether that performance be on the job or in an interview. Addressing performance through documented communications and objective, measurable performance expectations can not only insulate your county from discrimination claims and EEOC charges, but can assure individuals that they will be treated fairly and that the county's goal is to provide the best public service through qualified, high-performing staff.

All employees deserve to be able to bring their full, authentic selves to workplaces in which they are safe, productive, happy and valued. A diverse and vibrant team of public servants is the most effective and meaningful way to mirror and serve the citizens in our communities. The June Supreme Court ruling made that clear for another dedicated group of public servants. **CN**

Erika Philpot is the human resources director and Rose Winkeler is the deputy county attorney for Coconino County, Ariz.

