



BROWNFIELD PROGRAM GRANTS NOW AVAILABLE FROM EPA PG. 3



COUNTIES FACE RISING COSTS FOR INDIGENT BURIALS PG. 4



'CONNECTING THE UNCONNECTED,' LATEST HOT TOPICS PG. H1-H12



Thousands turned out Nov. 13 for the holiday lighting of Licking County, Ohio's 1876 courthouse. The event included a sing-a-long, food drive and a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus. Photo courtesy of Licking County

Vacancies bring in new, sometimes unexpected blood to county Boards

By **Charlie Ban**
senior writer

John Jackson had sold his ranch and was eyeing the motor home he had purchased without telling his wife. She was off in Oregon visiting her mother when Jackson got the news that one of Beaverhead County, Mont.'s three commissioners had died.

He decided to do something else before telling his wife.

"I threw my hat in the ring," he said. "I called her up — she's 900 miles away — and she said 'I thought we'd retired!'"

Jackson told her he probably wouldn't be appointed — there were nine other applicants — but a few weeks later, he was proven wrong. He did two interviews with a panel of county elected officials and staff, but even as the field narrowed to three people, he didn't think

he'd be chosen.

"Then 10 minutes after my last interview, I was sworn in," he said.

Mid-term appointments make up a small fraction of county boards, but they ensure residents don't go unrepresented for long when a vacancy opens. In cases where a majority of the term remains, counties will request a special election such as in Roanoke County, Va., which will be holding state elections a year after Supervisor Joe McNamara was elected to the Legislature. In the meantime, the Board of Supervisors picked former planning commission member David Radford from among 12 applicants to fill the remainder

See **VACANCIES** page 2

Chao touts TIFIA loans for financing rural infrastructure needs

By **Jessica Jennings**

County officials in rural areas should take full advantage of a government program specifically designed to address unique infrastructure requirements in rural communities.

That was the message from Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao, speaking last month to members of the Kentucky Association of Counties' at its 44th Annual Conference.

Chao said the administration has launched an initiative to expand access to a federal loan program and is committed to meeting the needs of rural infrastructure. She specifically highlighted a federal loan

program, geared toward rural infrastructure projects, that has been historically underutilized in rural communities.

She encouraged audience members to apply for funding from the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act Loan Program, better known as TIFIA, in order to tap into federal funding sources that can be used to address special infrastructure needs found in rural areas.

While TIFIA has both rural and non-rural funding components, it is specifically designed to bolster rural infrastructure projects, the

See **TIFIA** page 3

Nevada counties tapped to fill dead candidate's seat

From VACANCIES page 1

of McNamara's term.

In Salt Lake County, Mayor Ben McAdams (D) still has two years left in his mayoral term as he starts his term as the U.S. representative for Utah's Fourth District in January.

Democratic party leaders in Salt Lake County will decide who will fill his term, kicking off with a notice from the Salt Lake County Council that they've accepted McAdams' resignation. That starts a 30-day timer for the county party to return a name to the council. The party gives candidates 10 days to submit their names and about two weeks to campaign and lobby the leaders of the party. The race is open to all county residents.

The Salt Lake County Council

has already filled one seat when their colleague, Sam Granato, died. They chose his wife, Ann, to succeed him.

In Nevada, three counties ended up being involved in nominating the successor for a seat in the Legislature. After candidate Dennis Hof won a seat despite dying a month before, the Boards of Commissioners for Nye, Clark and Lincoln counties voted from among 19 applicants for the seat, which spans the three counties.

With Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle running for mayor of Chicago, the Board updated its rules to allow them to choose her successor from among themselves, rather than to automatically elevate the Board's president pro tempore for the rest of her term, the Chicago Sun-Times reported.

Forty-eight candidates are vying to fill San Bernardino County, Calif. Supervisor James Ra-

mos' seat following his election to the California Assembly. Ramos' four remaining colleagues will evaluate the answers to prompts from those candidates, selecting their top 10, and then interviewing the candidates who appeared on at least two top-10 lists. Meanwhile, in the nearly two years since Jackson's appointment to the Beaverhead County Board, he has immersed himself in the operations of county government

"It was a huge learning curve," he said. "It took me about a year to figure out how the local governments work. I don't think of it as a political job, I think of it as a management job.

"I want to be a problem solver."

The end of his first year coincided with a trip to Washington, D.C. for the 2018 NACo Legislative Conference, a trip he made at the suggestion of colleague Mike McGinley.

Nine months later, he sailed

to reelection with no opposition.

"To run unopposed like that was a big confidence booster,"

he said. "It means I must be doing a good job, learning on the fly like this." **CN**

San Bernardino Candidate Questions

1. Identify the most important priorities facing the county
2. Describe unique policy experiences related to county responsibilities, projects, programs, departments
3. Supply a brief summary of your knowledge and understanding of budget and finance
4. Offer feedback on the current Countywide Vision and how it relates to issues and projects in the third district
5. Share your relationships through the community, district, county and state that can work to the county's advantage
6. Describe plans to address concerns of the district
7. Elaborate on how you think the Endangered Species Act requirements affect development projects in the district
8. Describe your familiarity with issues regarding utility scale solar development and your vision for renewable development within the district
9. Share whether you believe the San Bernardino International Airport is poised to play a strong economic role in the region
10. Describe your thoughts on the City of San Bernardino's recent bankruptcy and the importance of rebuilding its economic base, and
11. Elaborate on any sources of income or gifts that you believe, at this time, would require you to recuse yourself from issues, agenda items or lawsuits currently in this Board's purview.

SNAP/STATS

TOP 5 PET-OWNING STATES*



STATE	PERCENTAGE OF PETS
Vermont	71%
New Mexico	68%
South Dakota	66%
Oregon	64%
Maine	63%

* Percentage of households that own a pet

Source: U.S. Pet Ownership & Demographics Sourcebook 2012, published by the American Veterinary Medical Association

County News staff and contributors wish you a blessed and peaceful holiday season.

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Apply now: EPA announces FY 2019 Brownfields Program grant opportunities

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) officially opened the FY 2019 Brownfields Multipurpose, Assessment and Cleanup competitive grant competition Nov. 28. As part of the announcement, EPA released application guidelines for the three brownfields program grants as authorized by the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development Act of 2018. More than 100 grants and \$50 million in funding is expected to be awarded in FY 2019.

Application deadlines for all grants is Jan. 31, 2019.

Brownfields sites are abandoned or under-utilized industrial and commercial properties, which are contaminated (or perceived to be contaminated) due to past

practices. EPA's brownfields program, originally authorized in 2002 through the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act and reauthorized through the 2018 BUILD ACT, provides technical assistance and grants for local communities, including counties, to undertake brownfields redevelopment projects at old manufacturing and industrial facilities, abandoned mills, mines and areas with leaking underground storage tanks. The grant opportunities include:

Multipurpose Grants

The omnibus created Multipurpose Brownfields Grants for up to \$1 million allowing communities to undertake multiple site brownfields

SPEEDREAD

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency releases application guidelines for three FY 2019 Brownfields Program grants: Multipurpose, Assessment and Cleanup

EPA anticipates awarding 100 grants for an estimated \$50 million to help communities address sites contaminated by hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants

projects under the same grant. EPA anticipates awarding 10 Multipurpose Grants of an estimated \$800,000 per grant. Go here to view FY 2019 Multipurpose Grant Guidelines: <https://bit.ly/2KXrMKO>.

Assessment Grants


Assessment Grants provide

funding for developing and conducting site assessments, cleanup plans and community involvement strategies. However, Assessment Grant funds may not be used to conduct cleanup activities. EPA anticipates awarding 114 Assessment Grants for an estimated \$37 million Com-

munity-wide and site-specific proposals are funded up to \$200,000 over three years per grant and Assessment Coalition proposals are funded up to \$600,000 over three years per grant. Go here to view FY 2019 Assessment Grant Guidelines: <https://bit.ly/2KXrMKO>.

Cleanup Grants

The omnibus increased funding for Brownfields Remediation Cleanup Grants from \$200,000 to \$500,000 per grant and allows the EPA to increase that amount up to \$650,000 based on need. EPA anticipates to awarding 40 Cleanup Grants for an estimated \$11 million. Go here to view FY 2019 Cleanup Grant Guidelines:

<https://bit.ly/2zITExP> 

TIFIA grants can help counties finance road safety projects

From TIFIA page 1

Secretary explained, as these projects can be eligible at \$10 million, as opposed to the \$50 million threshold requirement for non-rural projects. Other benefits of financing rural infrastructure projects through TIFIA include subsidized interest rates, coverage of certain fees and loans at a higher percentage of project cost.

"Rural America has a disproportionately high rate of traffic accidents and fatalities," she noted. "This new initiative will provide yet another resource from the department to address the long-neglected needs of rural America," she said. "It's a matter of fairness and equity."

Any type of project that is eligible for federal assistance through existing surface transportation programs (highway projects and transit capital projects) is eligible for the TIFIA credit program,



(l-r): KACo Executive Director Brian Roy; NACo Second Vice President Gary Moore; Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao; KACo President Elbert Bennett; and KACo Immediate Past President David Nicholson take to the stage at the 44th Annual Conference of the Kentucky Association of Counties, where Chao was a featured speaker. Photo courtesy of the Kentucky Association of Counties


including intelligent transportation systems. In addition, the following types of projects are eligible:

- International bridges and tunnels
- Intercity passenger bus and rail facilities and vehicles

- Publicly owned freight rail facilities
- Private facilities providing public benefit for highway users
- Intermodal freight transfer facilities
- Projects that provide access to such facilities

- Service improvements on or adjacent to the National Highway System, and
- Projects located within the boundary of a port terminal under certain conditions.

See a map with current financed projects here: <https://>

bit.ly/2ErPqiB. Additional information on USDOT's TIFIA program can be found at: <https://bit.ly/2A0IMzk>. 

Jessica Jennings is an associate legislative director at NACo, handling transportation issues.



King County, Wash., holds a memorial service every two years for indigent burials. Photo courtesy of King County

Undertakers of last resort: Indigent burials on the rise, denting county budgets

By **Mary Ann Barton**
editor

Indigent burials are on the rise in many parts of the country, and counties are usually the final stop for the poor, homeless or unclaimed when it comes to paying the bill for cremations, funeral services or burials.

Another costly aspect: When a death is unattended, the cause often must be determined, with coroners deciding whether an autopsy is necessary. In New York, counties are projecting that they will spend more than \$120 million this year on coroner and medical examiner services.

The New York State Association of Counties is urging state lawmakers to add a state-funding match for autopsy services next year. Prior to 2011, counties were reimbursed for about one-third of the tab.

Across the country, indigent burials are handled in patch-

work fashion, at varying funding amounts.

“A few years ago, we made an attempt to gather information on how indigent burial funds are handled,” said Jessica Koth, public relations manager for the National Funeral Directors Association. “What we found was that things varied widely from state to state.

“In some cases, the fund is controlled by the state. In other states, the fund is administered by the county or city. And, yet, in other states, there may be both a state- and locally administered fund. There is no consistency, which makes gathering data a big challenge.”

The association reports that counties bear some responsibility for indigent burials in at least 34 states. Here’s a look at how some counties are handling indigent deaths, when no one comes forward to claim the deceased or if a family is unable to pay for funeral services.

With no cemetery space, Tennessee county turns to body donation, cremation

Several years ago, in a cost-cutting move, Sullivan County, Tenn. declared that it would either donate bodies to science or offer cremation for indigent burials. The county cut back on its indigent funeral budget, going from \$44,200 to \$10,000 a year.

The county also turned to cremations instead of casket burials after it declared its county cemetery out of space. An association of area churches is now trying to find land for indigent burials.

The county is not alone; the Cremation Association of North America projects cremation will bypass casket burials nationwide by the year 2020, at 54.3 percent.

Cremation is actually a second choice for Sullivan County; the county only turns to cremation if a nonprofit called

Restore Life USA will not take delivery of a body. Restore Life provides specimens and whole body donations for research and education from the surrounding area in eastern Tennessee and southwest Virginia.

Other counties also point residents to body donation services. Broward County, Fla., refers residents to the Florida Anatomical Board. Anyone can make their wishes known to the board ahead of time or next-of-kin can make the decision at time of death and most states have similar options.

Even the wealthiest of counties have an indigent burial program, including Fairfax County, Va., just outside the nation’s capital, where the median household income stands at \$116,000.

But in Fairfax County, if a person has not given advance directives or next of kin has not requested cremation, the county chooses a casket burial, paying up to \$4,000 in each sit-

uation, said Barbara Antley, division director of the county’s Adult and Aging Department. The county’s annual budget for the program is about \$91,000. Last year, the county had 37 indigent cases — 26 cremations and 11 burials, she said.

A few years ago, the county purchased a 1.14-acre cemetery and estimates it will accommodate about 800 burials. A previous county cemetery, used since the 1940s, ran out of room by the early 1990s, she noted. The county then contracted with National Memorial Park in nearby Falls Church until the county could find another cemetery.

No services are held at the grave site, Antley said.

King County, Wash. holds burial ceremony every two years for indigent

Some counties, including

See *INDIGENT* page 5

Memorial service honors deceased indigent

From *INDIGENT* page 4

King County in Washington, hold a memorial service every two years at the cemetery where the county buries the indigent, with a ceremony organized by the county medical examiner, who stores the cremated remains until the event. The cremated remains are buried in individual containers in shared plots and records are kept for each one so they can be recovered to fulfill any later requests from family members.

In October 2016, the county held a ceremony for 278 individuals. The memorial service includes burial rites, prayers from clergy from several denominations, a memorial plaque and memories shared by friends.

“We work to represent those who can no longer represent themselves and provide service to those in need”
— Jimmy Sosik

“Today we gather to remember and bury the 278 men and women who died here in King County and mourn for those buried without families to remember them,” King County Council Vice Chair Reagan Dunn said at the service. “We honor those buried today with our presence and remember their lives in our hearts.”

“We work to represent those who can no longer represent themselves and provide service to those in need,” said Jimmy Sosik, lead investigator of the county’s Indigent Remains Program.

In Maricopa County, Ariz., burial services are held for the indigent by a local nun and rotating ministers. They meet at the county’s White Tanks Cemetery with a group of inmates enrolled in the county’s

Last Chance rehabilitation program, as well as a guard.

The inmates volunteer for the program and help lift and bury the coffins of the indigent in a spare ceremony that takes place each Thursday. The cemetery is located on a piece of flat dusty land, surrounded by a chain link fence.

Rising costs

Most counties are paying an “at-cost” fee to funeral homes, crematoriums and cemeteries.

In Cullman County, Ala., county officials there recently increased the amount they will pay funeral directors to handle indigent burials, after the county coroner approached them about it, from \$850 to \$1,500; the last time they raised the amount was 11 years ago. The amount for cremations will remain the same, at \$850. Donated burial plots are available at a local church cemetery.

“I can only speak for Cullman Heritage, but we’ve been losing money because the grave digger costs \$550 right off the top,” Doug Williams, the director of the Cullman Heritage Funeral Home, told the local newspaper, The Cullman Times.

Cullman’s big-city cousin, Mobile County, has seen a 300 percent increase in the annual amount it pays for indigent burials, from about \$30,000 in 2006 to \$112,515 last year, according to AL.com; the county buried or cremated 149 people compared to 42 in 2006.

State attempts to increase vetting process

In West Virginia, where the state is responsible for covering indigent funerals, drug overdoses (870 from opioid overdoses in 2017) are the highest in the country, and they’re driving up the numbers of those applying for indigent burials.

This year, the state exhausted its \$2 million annual fund by the end of February. State lawmakers have introduced

legislation to try to beef up the vetting process for liable parties so the state can request bank statements and income tax information as proof that help is needed.

The state of Illinois paid \$9.5 million in 2014 for about 6,600 indigent funerals and pulled the plug on the program after the following fiscal year due to a budget crunch.

That led to counties picking up the tab. From July 2015 to April 2016, Cook County paid \$77,119 to cremate 471 people, the *State Journal-Register* reported.

Breakdown of county responsibilities

Using Fulton County, Ga., as an example (where about 300 indigent funerals are paid for by the county each year), here’s a breakdown, by county department, of responsibilities for indigent burials:

- **Fulton County:** The county has the legal authority and obligation to bear expenses for the burial of the poor.
- **Clerk of the County Commission:** The clerk prepares and maintains records on all burials and approves invoices submitted for payment from the cemetery.
- **County Chaplain:** The chaplain gives approval for interment to the cemetery.
- **Finance Department:** The finance department authorizes payment of invoices from the clerk.
- **Department of Family and Children Services:** Arranges for the burial and pays expenses to the funeral home.

In Fulton County, the county buries the indigent at Lakeside Memorial Gardens Cemetery, usually in plywood or fiberglass-blend caskets.

The county pays \$600 for adult funeral services and pays a separate contracted amount of \$1,027 for cemetery services.

Although the county does not pay for a marker, the cemetery keeps track of where the deceased are buried. About 20 percent of those buried are homeless. **CN**

PROFILES IN SERVICE

NANCY THRASH

Board Member
County Commissioner
Lamar County, Ga.



THRASH

Number of years involved in NACo: 2.5 years

Years in public service: 10 years

Occupation: Private investigator

Education: Associate’s degree

Three people (living or dead) I’d invite to dinner are: Chris Kyle, Melania Trump and my grandmother.

A dream I have is to: Go skydiving.

The most adventurous thing I’ve ever done is: Drag race.

My favorite way to relax is to: Take a walk.

I’m most proud of: My family.

Every morning I read: The Bible.

My favorite meal is: Steak and potatoes.

My pet peeve is: Seeing children in moving vehicles without seatbelts on.

My motto is: “If you’re waiting for your ship to come in, make sure you sent one out.”

My favorite movie is: *The American President.*

My favorite music is: Country.

My favorite U.S. president is: Ronald Reagan.

My county is a member of NACo because: We realize the strength in numbers. NACo is a strong voice in D.C. The many benefits offered as well! As national issues have a trickle-down effect, we need a strong voice representing counties on a national level — we have that in NACo.



National academy seeks input on 'Grand Challenges'

By **Mary Ann Barton**
editor

What are some of the greatest challenges facing government over the next decade? The National Academy of Public Administration is hoping to explore those issues — and hear from county officials — as they launch Grand Challenges in Public Administration.

The idea to identify and find solutions for the country's Grand Challenges began last year. "We did a series of interactive conversations across the country focusing on governing across the divide," said Teresa Gerton, president and CEO of the academy. "What we learned there about innovation and problem-solving at the state and local level was really informative."

What they also discovered made them rethink how to tackle the big problems facing gov-

ernment at all levels. "What we learned since about new ideas that are out there convinced us that we really needed a new approach," Gerton said. "The field of public administration needed to think differently about how to focus. It was remarkable how states and communities are moving toward solving their governance challenges."

The nonprofit seeks participation from county officials and others to help identify challenges and will narrow down entries by November 2019. Once the challenges are chosen, the academy plans to facilitate solutions.

The two questions they are seeking input on are:

1. What problems must federal, state and local government address over the next decade for American society to reach its full potential?
2. How must management

at all levels of government improve to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of public programs?

"We're very interested in getting solutions for all levels of government," Gerton said. "We aren't coming at this with any preconceived answers of what the grand challenges are. We want to collect everybody's ideas on particular solutions to particular problems and see what emerges out of that."

Input and ideas can be submitted on the Grand Challenges website by April 30, 2019. After that, the Grand Challenges 14-member steering committee, which includes NACo Executive Director Matt Chase, will analyze the ideas and announce a final set of seven to 12 grand challenges at the academy's annual meeting in November.

"If we can come up with that list, then what I think that will do is set an agenda for the field of public administration that will start to focus efforts on everything from basic research all the way to pilots and experimentation and program evaluation," Gerton said.

"We don't just reveal it [the list] and walk away. It becomes a catalyst for a decade of collaboration and focus that results in answers to those grand challenges." **CN**

Visit the Grand Challenges website for more information and to enter: <https://bit.ly/2Qhsicw>.



ON THE MOVE



Fairfax County, Va. Supervisor Penny Gross represented NACo at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's first Recycling Summit, Nov. 15. Supervisor Gross is an Environment, Energy and Land Use Steering Committee vice chair.

NACo COUNTY OFFICIALS

- NACo President **Greg Cox** spoke at the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania's Fall Conference Nov. 18-20 in Dauphin County (Harrisburg).

NACo STAFF

- **Janine Frazier** is NACo's new executive administrative assistant. She served as executive administrator at FTI Consulting Company and as research specialist, research analyst and executive assistant at Promontory Financial Group.
- **Brandon Natsuhara** is now the operations manager for NACo Financial Services. Prior to joining NACo, FSC, he was as an intern for the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board.
- **Brian Namey**, public affairs director, led a media relations and messaging workshop at CCAWV's Basic Training for Newly-Elected and Veteran County Commissioners meeting, Nov. 30 in Harrison County, W.Va.



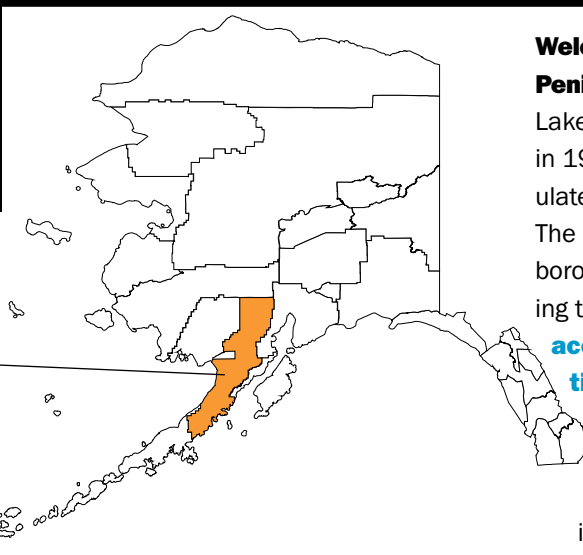
Frazier



Natsuhara

GET TO KNOW...

Lake and Peninsula Borough, Alaska



Welcome, Lake and Peninsula Borough, Alaska

Lake and Peninsula Borough was incorporated in 1989 and is the second least-densely populated county-equivalent in the United States. The borough seat is located in a neighboring borough because there are no roads connecting the borough with the "outside." **It is only accessible by air and water transportation.** Despite its small population (1,620 as of 2017 Census figures), Lake and Peninsula Borough has a land area larger than San Bernardino County, the largest county in the contiguous Lower 48 states.

Photo by Ronald Woan/Flickr



CountyNews

HOT topics

CONNECTING THE UNCONNECTED

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- Data drives connections [pg. H8](#)
- Tackling childhood trauma at its root [pg. H11](#)

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION *of* COUNTIES

DECEMBER 10, 2018

BRIDGING THE GAP

Counties connect people to the help they need



211

KEEPS COUNTY RESIDENTS CONNECTED TO SOCIAL SERVICES

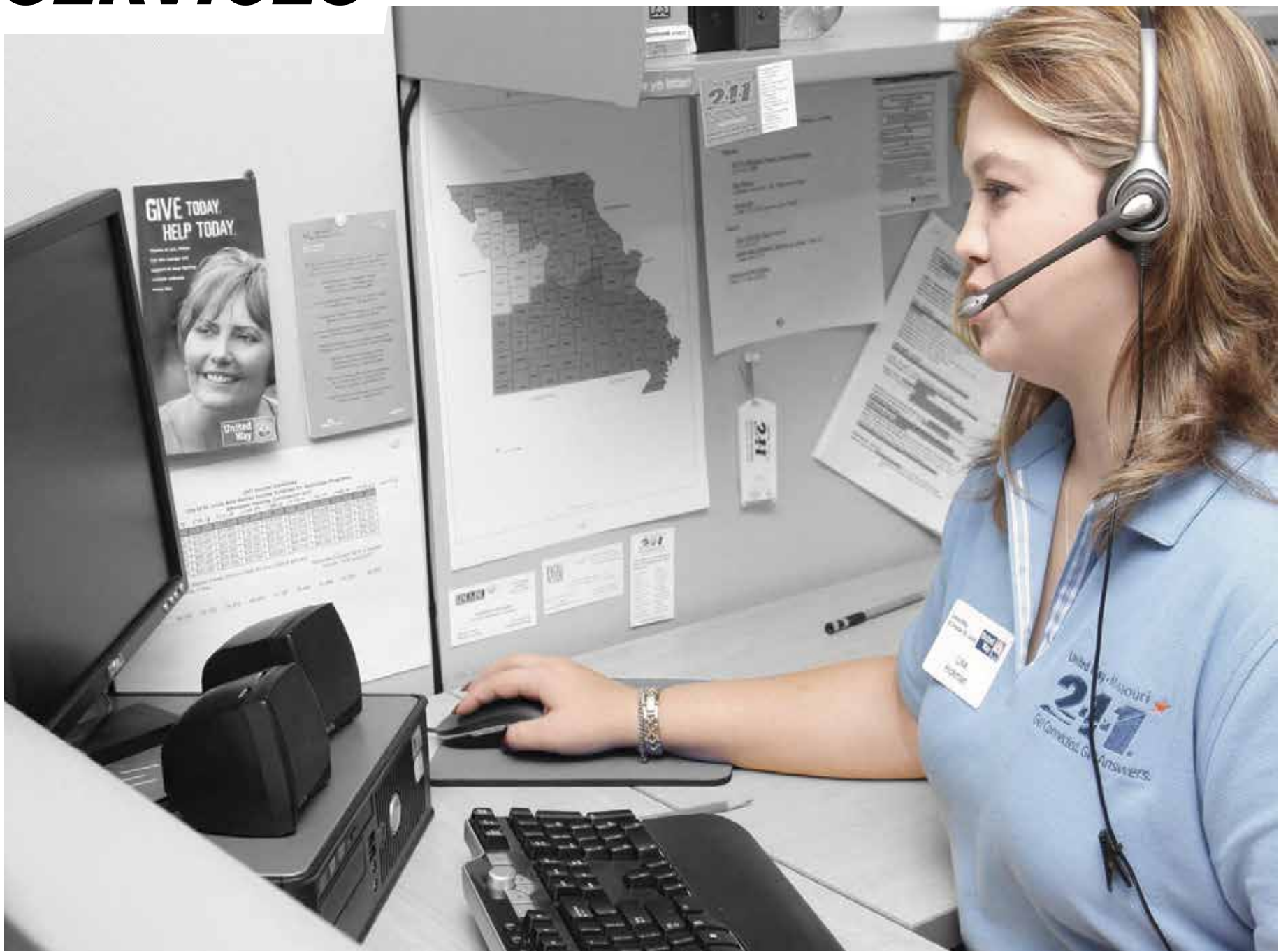
by Mary Ann Barton

Anywhere from 1,000 to 1,500 calls come in each day from the public to 211 San Diego, a call center that helps connect people to housing, food, transportation and other social services.

"It's not just a phone number," said John Ohanian, president and CEO of 211 San Diego, who has worked for the center the past 11 years. "We're assessing their risk and vulnerability – whether it's food insecurity or housing or any of these things that basically allow people to live life."

Last year, across the country, more than 13 million calls were made to 211. The toll-free call connects people to community resource specialists who can help callers find local services and resources. In many states, dialing 211 provides people in need with a shortcut through what can be a confusing network of health and human service agency phone numbers. By just dialing 211, those in need of assistance can be referred, and sometimes connected, to appropriate agencies and community organizations.

The service is available to 94 percent of the U.S. population, according to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).



Eighteen years ago, United Way and other non-profits lobbied the FCC to make 211 a dedicated number for people in need. United Way of Greater Atlanta was the first organization to make information and referral services accessible using 211. Today, United Way operates or provides funding for more than 70 percent of 211 centers.

Joshua Pedersen, 211 director of United Way Worldwide, said that another primary funder of 211 centers is local government. "Each 211 is managed independently — it's very community-based, bottom up," he said. "There isn't a 211 in every county, so they might be region-based."

For county officials who are uncertain about the benefits of helping support a 211 center in their community, "there's obviously a cost savings, because people are getting resources before it gets worse," Pedersen said. "My advice to a county would be to make an investment in the community and pool your resources with a local United Way. That creates a level of sustainability for both." If there isn't a United Way in your county, you can contact the nearest one, he noted.

In San Diego, about one-third of the 211 San Diego's annual \$13 million budget comes from San Diego County. The center also has federal and state contracts, and also depends on grants and fundraising to round out its budget, Ohanian said.

The call center, which is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, features about 140 full-time employees and offers translation services in up to 200 languages.

It also has a department that helps callers enroll in benefits. "We don't make callers eligible for services, but we help them prepare applications," said Ohanian.

Volunteers are brought in to handle even more calls that come in during emergencies such as wildfires. The center also hires veterans and former military to help transition active military personnel and "all the issues that come with that," Ohanian said. The center also hears from the public via email, texting and online chat.

In San Diego, they look for different people with varied backgrounds and expertise when hiring. "They need to know how social services work," Ohanian said. New employees are put through several weeks of training before answering calls.

How do people find out about the 211 service? Many times, "depending on their situation, the agency they're working with says 'You know what? We don't do that here but call 211,'" Ohanian said.

What do most people call about? According to United Way, across the country, the main issues that most people called about in 2017 included:

- Housing or utilities assistance
- Physical or mental health services
- Help finding and obtaining employment,
- Services to address and prevent homelessness.

By calling 211, people might also get information about food and nutrition supplement programs, emergency information and disaster relief, services for veterans, health care, vaccination and health epidemic information, addiction prevention and rehabilitation programs, reentry help for ex-offenders, or a safe and confidential path out of physical or emotional domestic abuse.

At 211 San Diego, Ohanian said that awareness of 211 goes way up during disasters.

Pedersen, with 211 United Way Worldwide, said that is becoming more of a trend for 211 centers. "We're seeing more and more the use of 211 during and after a disaster," he said. "911 plays a crisis role of course, but a day or two later, people are asking 'Where is the food drop? What about FEMA? Disaster food stamps? The foodbank? The cleanup process?'"

Ohanian noted that the 211 center in San Diego is "in a unique position to see emergency needs and trends in our community." One of the trends, he said, includes doing as much as possible virtually to speed up help to residents. "We do telephonic signatures, virtual consent — so a lot of that can happen over the phone," he said.

The center also follows up on high-risk clients and keeps their information, with their permission, so the center can monitor them to see how they're doing. "When we make referrals to agencies, they can report back to let us know if they have been served," he said.

The community information exchange makes the service "more person-centered," he said, so that the center can better coordinate service delivery among agencies. "There's a central record so we're not duplicating efforts," he said. About 50 non-profits are sharing about 65,000 client records.

One 211 call center for 16 counties

In Knoxville, Tenn., a 211 center anchored within the city's 311 service center covers a 16-county region. The 311 center takes calls for things like fixing

THE OTHER '1-1s'

In addition to 211 service and the more widely known 911 service, there are other "1-1s." Here's a look:

- **311:** Non-emergency 311 call systems, used increasingly by local governments, offer a number of advantages. They give residents a quick, convenient way to call in about problems in their neighborhoods, and get a response. They enable local governments to identify patterns and address issues proactively.

- **411:** In addition to the local and long-distance directory services, there is also consumer-choice and privacy-protected "Wireless 411 Service." As specified by the industry, the service will give consumers the choice of including their wireless phone numbers in voice 411.

- **511:** In July 2000, the Federal Communications Commission assigned this number as a nationwide phone number for intelligent transportation system traveler information. Its use is being promoted by the Department of Transportation. Most 511 travel information services are tied into local and state information.

- **611:** This number is for contacting your phone carrier's customer service.

- **711:** The Federal Communi-

cations Commission adopted use of the 711 dialing code for access to Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS). TRS permits persons with a hearing or speech disability to use the telephone system via a text telephone (TTY) or other device to call persons with or without such disabilities.

- **811:** Call 811 from anywhere in the country a few days prior to digging to protect yourself and others from unintentionally hitting underground utility lines and your call will automatically be routed to your local one call center.

- **911:** This number is for emergencies. The Wireless Communications and Public Safety Act took effect Oct. 26, 1999. The purpose of the act is to improve public safety by encouraging and facilitating the prompt deployment of a nationwide communications infrastructure for emergency services. State and local authorities continue to expand 911 coverage and upgrade 911 services. Although there may be some counties that still do not have basic 911 services, wireless carriers can deliver 911 calls to the appropriate local emergency authority.

potholes on city streets. Russ Jensen, currently the director of 311 for the City of Knoxville, had worked with 211 service in the past, when he created the second 211 service in the country back in the late 90s "when east Tennessee went live," he said.

Now he and his staff juggle both 311 and 211 calls under the same roof. "We're unique in that 211 is located in my 311 center," Jensen said. "About four years ago, United Way came to me and said 'Would you guys consider moving 211 into your call center?' He knew I'd had experience with 211 before. We brought it inhouse in 2015."

The 211 center "works with the Community Action Committee and their Office on Aging, which is a city/county agency," he said. The funds for 211 are allocated from United Way of Greater Knoxville and other county United Way affiliates.

"It is ridiculously cost effective," he

said. "All of the 311 employees are cross-trained [on both 211 and 311 calls]. Our cost per call on a 211 call is in the \$3.50 per call range. Most call centers are three and four times that."

The center employs seven people who answer about 1,000 calls a day (from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.) with most being city 311 calls; but about 60 to 100 of those calls are 211 calls from residents in the surrounding 16-county region, Jensen said.

Housing, food and utilities make up the bulk of the 211 calls, Jensen said. "In our area, the majority are people needing help with rent."

The center has access to about 1,500 different agencies, most of which are non-profits. "And that's where most calls are sent," he said. Asked whether they know if they are helping folks or not, Jensen admits that "we struggle with that."

Connecting the Unconnected

By Greg Cox
NACo president

supervisor, San Diego County, Calif.

When I first got involved in NACo more than 15 years ago, I never would have thought that I would be serving years later as NACo's president. As I lead NACo into the future, I have enjoyed partnering with my colleagues in the 3,069 counties, parishes and boroughs across America to determine how best to reach out and serve residents in our communities.

If there's one thing I've seen time and time again during my years of service, it's the importance of local government. We know that local government works. We pursue solutions and achieve results. We are closest to

the people, and they rely on us in both good times and bad.

But how do we connect people in our counties? How do we make sure that residents know about the services we and our many partners provide?

This is an ongoing challenge and the reason for launching NACo's Connecting the Unconnected initiative.



Cox

“Every day, we see that when people are left behind and isolated, it creates unhealthy, negative consequences in our communities.”

This initiative explores the many ways counties connect people in our society. Every day, we see that when people are

left behind and isolated, it creates unhealthy, negative consequences in our communities.

We're building on NACo's previous effort led by NACo Immediate Past President Roy Charles Brooks, "Serving the Underserved," by continuing to inform and illustrate how counties help all of our citizens forge pathways to succeed.

NACo is demonstrating how counties deliver people-centered services, maximize government efficiency and ensure responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

We are focused on achieving these goals and educating policymakers in three key areas:

1. Technology – NACo is showcasing best-in-class technology that helps counties deliver critical services. This includes 211 and other centralized resource centers; telemedicine; broadband and public transportation technologies.

2. Data – NACo is demonstrating the importance of data-driven decision-making in improving resource allocation. We're using data to create targeted de-

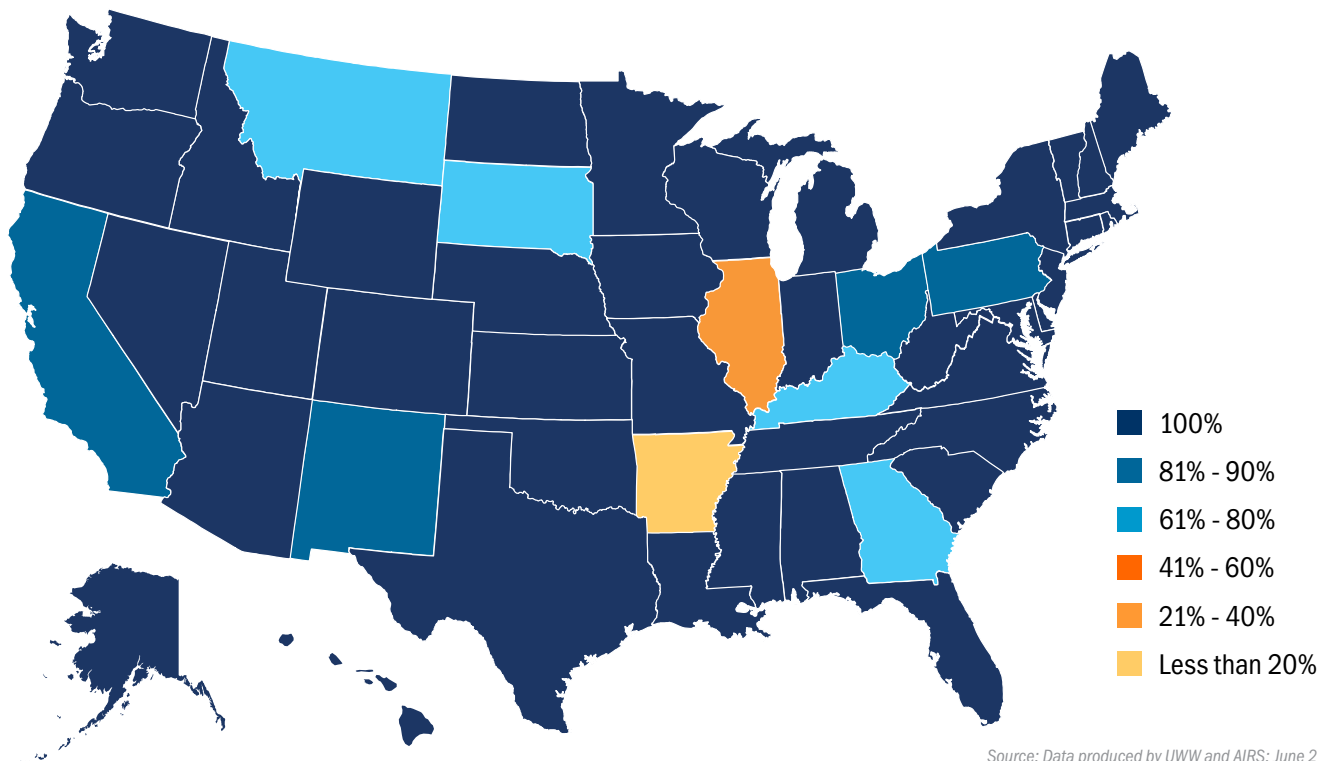
livery models for core county services like mental health programs, substance abuse treatment, justice reform, housing, transportation and veterans' resources.

3. Financing – NACo is illustrating the importance of public-private partnerships to ensure sustainable funding and coordination of services. This includes partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions, community-based organizations and other public and private sector partners to provide long-term resources to support county programs.

"Connecting the Unconnected" is designed for counties of all shapes and sizes. There is no cookie-cutter approach to connecting residents; what works in one county may not work in another. But we share similar challenges and can learn from one another's experiences to be an immense force for the public good.

The promise of public service that inspired me to seek public office remains as vital as ever. I look forward to continuing to work with you to help people live well and thrive.

PERCENT OF POPULATION COVERED BY 211 IN EACH STATE



Source: Data produced by UWW and AIRS: June 2018.
*Coverage is calculated by U.S. Census data.

From 211 pg H3

"We are strictly I&R (information and referral) and not casework," he said. "Aside from sheer volume, it's hard to say. The way we look at the data, in this case, the more the data goes up, the bet-

ter. If we're getting people to call I&R on the front end, they're less likely to end up in crisis mode."

The center keeps in close contact with case workers. "They'll call us up and say 'Hey, here's everything I've done, I'm all out of resources, what else have you got?'"

That's the way it's supposed to work."

Public transportation for medical appointments

The Knoxville 211 center is piloting a one-year "Rides to Wellness" program using a \$250,000 grant from the Knox

Area Transit. Working with Cherokee Health, a "travel trainer," housed in the call center who is also legally blind and an avid bus rider, helps train new riders, those who rely on public transportation for medical appointments, Jensen said.

The grant application for the pilot project was successful because they pointed out that the potential riders weren't the problem, it was the doctors, he noted. "We have focused as much time training our health care providers as our riders. It's not the people who ride the bus that are an issue, it's the doctors. The patients are afraid they're not going to make their appointment on time. We've educated the doctors as much as the patients."

Getting the word out about 211 is important, Jensen said. One way they're doing that? Hosting a legislative breakfast with their healthcare partners for county and state officials to kick off a yearlong information rollout about 211.

"We're saying, 'Here's 211, here are the benefits,'" he said. "People need to be using it."

To find out if there is a 211 service in your area, visit 211.org.

Telemedicine improves healthcare through innovative service delivery

By Blaire Bryant

As part of NACo's 2018-2019 Connecting the Unconnected initiative, a significant opportunity for counties to demonstrate innovative ways to deliver "people-centered" services, maximize government efficiency and ensure responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars, is through the provision of accessible healthcare.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the concept of telemedicine has immense potential to address challenges to providing "accessible, cost-effective, high-quality health care services" on a local, national and global scale. The literal translation of the word telemedicine is "healing at a distance," and it is otherwise defined as the use of information and communication technologies to deliver health care services in areas where distance is a critical factor, for the purposes of diagnosing, treating and preventing disease and injuries, research and evaluation, and for the continuing education of health care providers.

These services may include primary and specialty care, referrals and the remote monitoring of vital signs, and can be provided by videoconference, email, a mobile device, wireless tools or other modalities.

The science of telemedicine is one of constant evolution, as new advancements in technology arise, and communities adapt to the changing health. However, WHO outlines four essential elements associated with the concept of telemedicine:

- Provide support to healthcare practitioners
- Connect users who are not in the same physical location by transcending geographical barriers
- Use of diverse types of information and communication technologies, and

- Aim to improve health outcomes.

Although the use of telemedicine isn't a substitute for an in-person medical examination, it is proving to be an effective and convenient means of supplemental care. Research suggests that telemedicine can effectively increase medication adherence, which is directly linked to improved health outcomes. Additionally, it is associated with increased access to care, particularly for people living with chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes, and heart failure; people living with a mental illness; and those in rural and other traditionally underserved areas.

Providing accessible medical care to rural residents is a definite advantage for counties, given that approximately 70 percent of America's counties are considered rural, having populations of fewer than 50,000. Medicaid serves as the largest source of public health coverage in rural areas, covering nearly a quarter of all rural residents. Counties deliver Medicaid-eligible services, to including those services that can be classified as telemedicine, as an integral part of the federal-state-local Medicaid partnership.

According to the American Telemedicine Association (ATA), all state Medicaid agencies cover some form of telemedicine services. However, the exact services covered can vary from state to state, and there are associated guidelines and restrictions on the type of service provided, the location of the beneficiary, and the type of health-care professional providing the service depending on the state's Medicaid regulations.

The most commonly covered form of telemedicine is live video telemedicine (or video chat). Currently 49 states and Washington, D.C. provide reimbursement for some form of live video in Medicaid fee-for-service. Remote Patient Monitoring

(RPM), which allows physicians to monitor a patient's condition through the collection of physiological parameters such as blood pressure and heart rate, is being held as an up-and-coming telemedicine service, with approximately 20 states now reimbursing for RPM services. Addition-

ally, some states are now covering store-and-forward telemedicine with restriction to certain specialties, and phone consultations. Most states allow any Medicaid beneficiary to be eligible for telemedicine ser-

See **TELEMEDICINE** pg H6



STATE TELEHEALTH LAWS AND REIMBURSEMENT POLICIES FALL 2018

Telehealth policy trends continue to vary from state-to-state, with no two states alike in how telehealth is defined, reimbursed or regulated. A general definition of telehealth used by CCHP is the use of electronic technology to provide health care and services to a patient when the provider is in a different location.

DEFINITION

49 states and the District of Columbia have a definition for telehealth, telemedicine or both

MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT

11 Medicaid programs reimburse for store-and-forward

20 Medicaid programs reimburse for remote patient monitoring

49 states and District of Columbia reimburse for live video

13 states reimburse service to the home

Source: Center for Connected Health Policy.



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GOING THE EXTRA MILE TO FIGHT CRIME

By Todd Schmitz

In September, Macomb County, Ill. Prosecutor Eric J. Smith announced what is likely the nation's first program to use technology developed by ride-hailing pioneer Uber to connect crime victims and witnesses to court appearances.

Under Smith's plan, crime victims get personal chauffeurs as he seeks to reduce delays and dismissals that can occur when crime victims or witnesses lack transportation to get to court.

Dubbed "Uber Central," the technology service was launched in 2016 as a new way for businesses to connect with their customers. Businesses use the service to request, manage and pay for multiple

Uber rides on behalf of their customers. Smith has adapted the ride-hailing tool for government service.

"We are literally going the extra mile to fight crime," Smith said. "Using new technology, my office is helping crime victims get a ride to court. We can monitor their ride progress, and even greet our witnesses when they get dropped off at court. Crime victims deserve respect, and helping them get to court is one way we show that respect."

Smith said a court case can be delayed or even dismissed when a crime victim or witness fails to appear and testify in court, which may happen if a crime victim has no transportation.

Alisha Steward of Macomb Township,



Smith

the victim in an assault case, said the service helped her protect her identity.

"I felt safe getting a ride because I was

worried that if I used my car, someone who knows my car could have followed me home from court."

When a crime victim does not have a ride to court, Smith's Crime Victim Advocate team may now use the Uber Central app to request a ride on the crime victim's behalf.

No smartphone? No problem. The Uber Central service automatically calls crime victims on their home phone when their ride is coming, and lets the prosecutor's office know witnesses are on the way to court on time.

Sometimes a police department will give a crime victim or witness a ride to

See RIDE pg H7

States can help support county-based telemedicine programs

From TELEMEDICINE pg H5

vices given that the provider and patient work within the guidelines outlined above.

Federal guidance prompts states to use the inherent flexibility around telemedicine policies to create innovative payment methodologies for services that incorporate this type of technology. States have responded accordingly, with the Center for Connected Health Policy reporting that approximately 160 telehealth-related bills were introduced in 44 states during the 2018 legislative session. Given room for innovation, counties within states like Tennessee, which require reimbursement for telehealth services at rates comparable to in-person

care, have started to set up telehealth networks in their area.

Earlier this year, clinics in McKenzie and Tipton counties in Tennessee installed audio-visual digital health technology to enable rural and remote residents to have virtual meetings with specialists from University Clinical Health, a Memphis-based physician group affiliated with the University of Tennessee's College of Medicine. County residents in the area now have access to specialty physicians such as dermatologists and rheumatologists without ever leaving their community.

Recently, the issue of telehealth has been elevated to the federal level as the nation continues to look for new solutions to combat the opioid crisis. The epidemic

shed an urgent light on not only the importance of integrating addiction control with behavioral and psychiatric care, but also the need for connected health platforms that allow providers to work with the patient at any time and place. This has resulted in a number of bills being drafted around addressing individuals with substance use disorders, specifically through the use of telemedicine.

In October, President Donald Trump signed legislation on opioids into law: the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act. The legislation contains dozens of measures aimed at improving the federal response to the opioid epidemic, and included key telehealth-related bills that allow for the following provisions:


- Eliminate restrictions on sites at which beneficiaries with substance use disorders can reach telehealth services

- Prompts CMS to provide guidance to states on options for providing telehealth services that address SUD through Medicaid, and

- Incentivizes the use of electronic health records technology by behavioral health providers.

In addition to this piece of legislation, federal agency regulations around the use of telemedicine expands the list of qualified providers.

Those that are able to use telemedicine include community mental health and addiction treatment centers; the legislation also allows for greater flexibility for health-care providers to administer Medication Assisted Treatment to individuals with SUD in remote areas.

Emerging legislation and regulations around the use of telehealth services for Medicaid beneficiaries with SUD is indicative of a broader understanding of the benefits of telehealth and telemedicine technologies. Additionally, increased adoption of telemedicine by state lawmakers and Medicaid agencies signifies the recognition of telemedicine and other digital health platforms as affordable and convenient solutions, creating an opportunity to bridge gaps in accessibility and enhance access to quality health care services for local residents. 

TELEMEDICINE TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Telehealth: Telehealth covers services provided by other allied health professionals including community workers, nurses and pharmacists.

Distant/Hub Site: Site at which the physician or other licensed practitioner delivering the services is located at the time the services is provided via telecommunication.

Originating/Spoke Site: Location of the Medicaid patient at the time the service is being furnished via a telecommunications system.

Store-and-forward: The exchange of pre-recorded data between two or more individuals at different times (i.e. patient/physician email exchange).

Real Time: Requires the involved individuals to be simultaneously present for immediate exchange of information (i.e. video conferencing).

mHealth: A general term for the use of mobile phones and other wireless technology in medical care.

Blair Bryant is an associate legislative director concentrating on health issues at NACo.

Ride service frees police

From RIDE pg H6

court to testify.

Smith's new service is helping police spend more time keeping the community safe, by reducing the need for police to spend time transporting witnesses to court. Some witnesses do not want neighbors seeing a police car coming to their house to take them to court, and Smith's service helps crime victims with that concern.

“Using new technology, my office is helping crime victims get a ride to court.”

Smith said his office started testing the new Uber Central service in April of last year.

For court hearings on days when Smith's crime victim ride service was used, none of the cases involved were adjourned or dismissed due to a crime victim failing to appear in court.


Since April 2017, crime victims and witnesses have used the service to make 110 trips to or from their homes and the various district courts in Macomb County, and the circuit court, at a cost of \$2,516, which includes some trips where witnesses were picked up from Detroit Metropolitan Airport to testify. Criminals pay the costs.

For future cases, Smith said his office will seek reimbursement as part of court-ordered restitution costs paid by convicted defendants.

On cases where a defendant cannot pay, trips will be paid for from forfeiture funds seized from criminal activity. Smith said it's a small cost for a big benefit in the fight against crime.

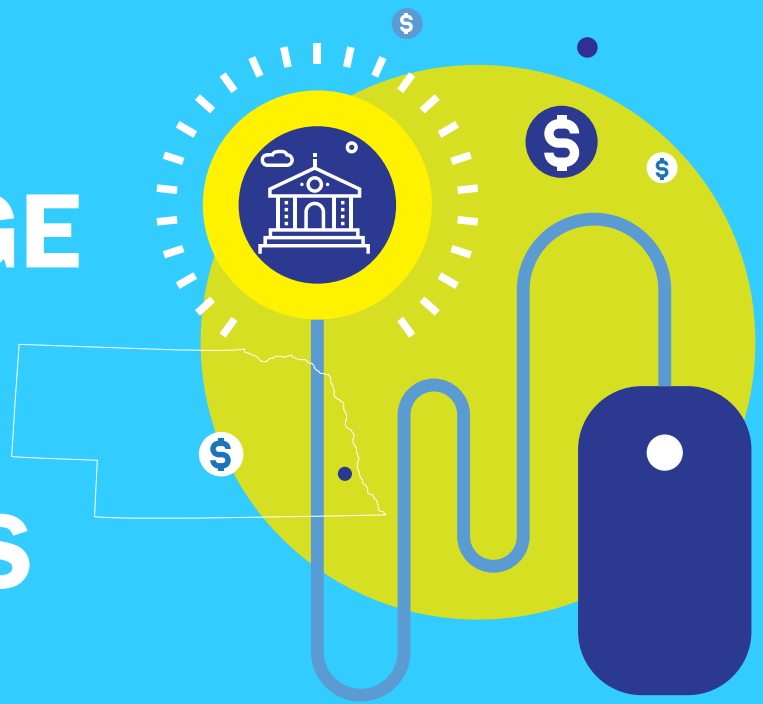
“It worked great!” said Gary Laight of Warren. He did not have transportation, and last year used the new service to get to court with his son, who was the victim of a robbery and suffered a fractured leg.

“We got a text a message when our ride was on the way. We were picked up at home and dropped off on time at the courthouse. It was convenient and helpful.”

Had his son been unable to appear in court, it's possible the case, alleging unarmed robbery, a 15-year felony, might have been dismissed. 

Todd Schmitz is an assistant prosecuting attorney for Macomb County, Ill.

LEADING THE CHARGE TOWARD DIGITAL PAYMENTS



by Aaron Ridings

In 2019, the Lancaster County, Neb. Treasurer's Office will lead a Future of Digital Payments Pilot Project in consultation with the Visa Government Solutions and Innovations Department. The purpose of the project is to identify ways the county can save time and money when collecting revenue, such as fees and taxes. The NACo Counties Futures Lab (CFL) will work closely with both organizations to measure the impact of transitioning from cash and check payments to more often using digital payment options.

“Lancaster County recognizes the potential cost savings and efficiencies by increasing our digital acceptance,” said Candace Meredith, chief deputy treasurer, Lancaster County. “Being involved in this project, we will be able to measure the financial impact to our county offices as well as explore new digital options and processes that we can share with counties across America.”

Members of the National Association of County Collectors, Treasurers and Finance Officers (NACCTFO) have identified the practice of increasing the usage of digital payments rather than cash and checks as a promising trend that has the potential to benefit county governments.

During the 2018 NACo Annual Conference, NACCTFO members, including Laura Montoya, county treasurer in Sandoval County, N.M., spoke at a Future of Digital Payments workshop about her experience offering credit card payment options to residents in her county. The amount of revenue collected increased, the number of delinquent accounts

shrunk and the need to hire additional staff during peak collection season was eliminated once the new digital payment options were in place.

County governments are increasingly examining ways to better coordinate and modernize revenue collection practices that lead to cost savings and increased efficiency.

NACo's Counties Futures Lab conducted a survey and convened a focus group of NACCTFO members earlier in 2018, who outlined parameters for the project and provided baseline guidance for selecting a county to lead the effort.

Lancaster County was selected as the pilot county in August 2018. Representatives from Visa and CFL conducted a site visit in October 2018 to better understand opportunities for increasing usage of digital payments. Agency staff shared current practices and areas where their departments might benefit from innovative new solutions.

For example, the county recently began implementation of a “p-card” (purchasing card) system that replaced the previous system for buying materials and supplies using purchase orders. Additional enhancements might include the use of more interdepartmental electronic fund transfers, kiosks for residents to use credit and debit cards to make payments and more convenient internet portals that can be used to process payments remotely.


Implementation of digital payment solutions is scheduled to begin in early 2019. Studies conducted in other local jurisdictions indicate that these services will benefit the county. Visa conducted an international study of the impact of

increasing the usage of digital payments in cities, *Cashless Cities: Realizing the Benefits of Digital Payments*. Study participants reported digital payments were more convenient for residents, and reduced costs, labor and time.

“Visa is excited to be partnering with the National Association of Counties and Lancaster County, Nebraska during this project,” said Bobby Thomson, senior vice president and head of U.S. Government Relations, Visa, Inc. “Over the course of the next year, we will be able to target inefficient and costly processes on the county related to acceptance, purchasing and disbursement through cash and check. We have a real opportunity here to measure exactly what those costs are and the opportunities that can be realized through digital, ultimately sharing with counties across the country.”

Through quantitative and qualitative analysis, CFL will measure the impact of the project on Lancaster County's revenue collection and management practices. The team will conduct surveys of employees and residents who use the new systems.

They will also work closely with the treasurer's department and with other agency officials to obtain baseline data that can be used to measure changes in the amount of time, labor and expense before and after project implementation.

At the conclusion of the project, CFL will, along with colleagues from Lancaster County and Visa, evaluate the potential benefits of creating similar initiatives in counties across the country. 

Aaron Ridings is a program manager in NACo's Counties Futures Lab.

Performance measures warn of service delivery disconnects



By **Charlie Ban**

Arapahoe County, Colo. doesn't contain any mountains, but for the last five years, it's had a warning system for an avalanche of human service delivery problems. Before then, if things weren't going smoothly, nobody knew it until it was a major problem. Now, the county has enough data to not only avoid disaster, but to also diagnose problems and point to solutions and improvements.

"You would get surprised," said Cheryl Ternes, director of Arapahoe County Human Services, about the days before the new system was in place. "Oh my gosh we've got this huge backlog of applications.' Well, why do we have it? It's because we had a shortage of staff, or we're just not getting the work done. Those things wouldn't come to light until it was a dire situation. That's not how it should be."

ArapaSTAT, the county's performance measure system, has been keeping track of how well services reach people in need and has been preventing systemic problems from developing. Before, even people who had been connected to the county sometimes weren't getting the help they needed, or they faced delays in getting it. And for a long time, nobody knew exactly how to fix it.

"When you have a child in foster care, you need progress to get them a placement in a matter of days, not weeks," Ternes said.

ArapaSTAT's introduction followed the debut of the state's statistical program, C-STAT.

"We knew it would be very important for our county Department of Human Services

to have a similar performance measurement program," Ternes said.

ArapaSTAT includes 25 different measures, mostly in childhood and adult protection and assistance payments programs, a few measures beyond what the state's system monitors. Many measures are aligned with federal and state expectations for programs administered at the county level. The county's primary investment has been in personnel — hiring a single program manager who had experience measuring performance data — to the tune of roughly \$90,000 a year.

It took about six months to develop formulas and build databases and two years of analysis before the numbers started making a difference for county programs.

"It's allowed us to dive into the data and if we're not meeting a measure, we can look at the data, do some analysis and try

to figure out how to improve," Ternes said.

The analysis links data points to specific case files for further examination.

"You can see exactly what happened," and where there's room for improvement.

Results

Chief among ArapaSTAT's positive results have been findings, trends and tendencies that provoke systemic change. For example, the county revised how it treated applications for food assistance after analyzing that process' results.

The examination showed that county staff spent a lot of time following up with applicants to gather more information, often learning in the process that the applicants were eligible for expedited benefits, something applicants didn't realize. But there's a seven-day timeframe to complete applications for expedited benefits, and

during the supplemental investigation process, the deadline for receiving expedited benefits would pass.

"We could examine each case and determine what transpired during the processing of the application that caused us to be overdue," Ternes said.

Now the county requires all applicants to provide all information that would be asked of expedited beneficiaries.

"Now we treat all applicants like they are expedited," she added. "We changed the whole business process."

Not all measures lead to the overhaul of business processes, but they do give the county a barometer of how it's doing.

For children in foster care, the county wants 99.68 percent of children in out-of-home placement to complete their foster

See DATA pg H9

MAPPING TOOL CONNECTS PROVIDERS TO RESIDENTS

With human service providers located all over Arapahoe County, the Human Services Department has organized nearly 300 of them in an interactive online mapping tool. ArapaSOURCE helps residents connect directly with 18 different types of service providers in a single place.

Centering on an address, the map offers up to 15 nearby providers for the 18 different categories at one time. They range from childcare assistance to aging services, with more of a dozen options in between, including job training, transportation clothing assistance and legal services.

By consolidating information on human service providers in one place ArapaSOURCE, offers some relief across the board. For residents who are eager to access services, they can now get that process into their own hands with

more ease than ever before, and without the need for assistance by county staff. For county caseworkers, not only can they view provider offerings, but they have access to internal "maps" of human service clients.

"That helps us determine where we need to invest more resources, make more connections," said Cheryl Ternes, director of human services. "It helps us keep an eye on where the most need is."

Compiling a comprehensive and current list of service providers took county staff six months, but the county already had the GIS software on which the map was built. Arapahoe County is developing what will be a free smartphone app, but in the meantime, ArapaSOURCE can be viewed here: <https://gis.arapahoe.gov.com/arapasource/>.

From DATA pg H8

care without experiencing institutional abuse. Though the ultimate goal remains 100 percent, Ternes said the county measures how it has performed for particular measures, then raises the bar.

“We look at past performance and try to improve to a higher level,” she said. “Now we were able to home in on more issues and target them, since everything is measured and indexed to case files.”

Statistics and the staff

The shift to focus on data wasn't met with universal acclaim by county staff, but the results it has yielded have given ArapaSTAT credibility that has led to buy-in. The introduction of performance measures can provoke fear from front-line staff who may see data tracking as a way to penalize them.


“We had a pretty extensive communications plan around rolling it out to staff, but the key was trying to ease the fear about it being punitive,” Ternes said. “The key is being clear that our goal is to figure out how to move the needle in the right direction for families, children and other vulnerable people.”

The Human Services Department holds meetings on ArapaSTAT measures three times a month, and Ternes said her most visible indicator that staff members have embraced the program is the growing attendance at those meetings.

“More and more people started coming out once they realized this is the kind of thing that helps them do their jobs better,” she said, noting that staff members who deal with child abuse and neglect have taken a particular interest. “Because we've been successful, staff see the benefits. We stress that we don't want to advertise when a department is falling short, we just want to get into the data and figure out how to fix it.”

Over the past five years, most of the county's 25 measures have remained constant, and Ternes does not anticipate retiring them.

“Maybe if we are consistently exceeding our goals and could shift our focus elsewhere, but what we monitor is what is crucial to good human service delivery for our county,” she said.

The state of Colorado has awarded Arapahoe County the Distinguished Performance Award the last two years, after the county met 21 of its county-facing C-STAT measure goals 75 percent of the time. Arapahoe County is the only one of the state's 10 largest counties to earn that honor twice in a row. 

WHAT'S NEXT?

Federal human services policy in the 116th Congress

By Eryn Hurley

Counties play a pivotal role when it comes to connecting residents to critical human services. When it comes to breaking the cycles of poverty, counties provide and administer federal, state and local systems of services from early childhood development and nutrition assistance programs to workforce and economic development. In fact, counties invest \$58 billion annually in human services while serving as the front-line social safety net.

The 2018 midterm elections resulted in a divided 116th Congress in which both parties could struggle to advance legislative priorities, but on some issues — including reauthorization of both the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps) — alignment of the parties' priorities could re-

sult in bipartisan agreement on major pieces of legislation.

As counties are administrators, in many cases, of these federal programs, NACo will continue to advocate for increased funding and local flexibility. Of the following, TANF and SNAP still await reauthorization, as of *County News* press time:

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program:

In May 2018, the House Ways and Means Committee advanced a TANF reauthorization that would extend the program through FY 2023 and enact changes to its structure.

On the other side of the Capitol, the U.S. Senate is in the beginning stages of developing its own version of a TANF reauthorization bill.

With Democrats taking control of the House and Republicans maintaining control in the Senate, bipartisan consensus on the next TANF reauthorization bill

will be necessary.

The TANF program has operated on a series of short-term extensions since the last major reauthorization expired in 2010. The program provides funds to states to operate cash assistance, child care and other programs for individuals and families. The FY 2017 omnibus bill provided \$16.5 billion for TANF, which was consistent with FY 2016 funding levels.

Like Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), TANF is county-administered in 10 states. TANF is a federal cash assistance program for low-income families with children that is designed to produce better outcomes for kids and help adults move from welfare to work.

TANF is due for reauthorization at the end of FY 2018.

The 10 states where counties administer TANF make up more than half of the total population covered by the program. Changes in program funding or structure

See FEDS HELP pg H10



U.S. HOUSEHOLDS BY FOOD SECURITY STATUS

Food-insecure households

11.8%

Households with low food security

7.3%

Households with very low food security

4.5%

Block grant funding outlined

From FEDS HELP pg H9

could impose increased administrative requirements on county agencies.

Counties support better streamlining of federal assistance programs to allow county agencies to work in tandem to produce results for individuals and communities.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

In June 2018, both the House of Representatives and Senate developed and passed their respective farm bill reauthorizations. Since then, lawmakers have been at odds for months on whether to overhaul work requirements for SNAP recipients and other provisions as they work to reconcile differences between the House- and Senate-approved bills.

The previous farm bill expired at the end of September 2018.

SNAP, which is also county-administered in 10 states, is a public assistance program that offers nutrition support to eligible low-income individuals and families.

The program currently serves approximately 42 million residents across the nation and accounts for 80 percent of spending in the omnibus food and agriculture legislation known as the farm bill.

The county role in administering SNAP is one of the many ways in which counties serve as the front-line social safety-net for the nation's communities.

Counties operate healthy eating, school nutrition and senior nutrition programs across the country.

In every county, SNAP is an important aspect for healthy eating, especially in areas lacking access to sustainable and fresh food supplies.

NACo supports a long-term reauthorization of the farm bill to help counties provide critical investments in our nation's most underserved communities.

Additionally, while NACo supports the goal of enabling individuals to find and secure long-term employment, more stringent work requirements may both negatively impact residents and unintentionally increase administrative costs for counties in county-administered states.

Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)

SSBG received \$1.7 billion in the FY

2019 Labor-HHS-Education and Defense spending package, which is level with FY 2018 funding. SSBG is county-administered in 10 states and provides funds for activities serving vulnerable populations, including adults and children at risk of abuse and neglect. NACo strongly supports SSBG.

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

CSBG received \$742 million in the FY 2019 Labor-HHS-Education and Defense spending package, which is level with FY 2018 funding. CSBG is a NACo-supported program, which allows counties to design and implement anti-poverty programs tailored to an individual community's needs.

Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)

CCDBG, which is the primary federal funding source supporting child care for low-income families, received \$5.2 billion for FY 2019, consistent with funding for the previous year.


Because of CCDBG, counties connect families to safe, reliable and affordable child care that allows parents to work, and promotes children's health growth and development.

Head Start

The FY 2019 Labor-HHS-Education and Defense spending package builds on increased funding outlined in the FY 2018 omnibus bill to make further investments in Head Start and would allocate \$10.1 billion for the program in FY 2019.

NACo supports increased investments in Head Start and other county-run early childhood programs, which connect preschool children to education, nutritional and social services.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

LIHEAP was funded at \$3.6 billion in FY 2019 Labor-HHS-Education and Defense package. LIHEAP delivers critical short-term aid and helps pay for home heating and cooling for the nation's most vulnerable populations, including those with low incomes, the disabled and the elderly. 

Eryn Hurley is an associate legislative director at NACo, concentrating on humanservices and education.

A SOUTH DAKOTA COUNTY CLOSES THE CULTURAL GAP

By Jessica Perez and Kathy Rowings

In Pennington County, S.D., which abuts three Native American reservations, county leaders and local law enforcement are working to create trust and cooperation between the county, city and the nearby tribes to ensure public safety and a fair and equal justice system for all members of its diverse community.

It's an exercise in building trust and cultural awareness toward any niche community that can be used in any county.

Pennington County's general population is 10 percent Native American. But 60 percent of individuals in the juvenile detention center population, 70 percent of people in the detox center and 51 percent of the daily jail population are Native American, explained Pennington County Sheriff Kevin Thom. The county also acknowledges that, historically, the relationship between law enforcement and the Native American population lacks trust and understanding.

To address these issues, the county has put into place several efforts to reduce the overrepresentation of Native Americans in the justice system and improve relations between county government and the reservations. The county is undertaking much of this work as part of its efforts in the Safety and Justice Challenge. The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation is providing support to 52 jurisdictions across the country — including \$1.75 million to Pennington County — to reduce over-incarceration in America.

One facet of this effort that has seen an immediate impact is the county's warrant resolution initiative, spearheaded by the county state's attorney's office. The county has found that Native Americans often can't make it from the reservation to their court dates, and when someone misses a court date, a warrant is often issued for their arrest.

"There are a lot of people from tribal jurisdictions that have active warrants out and that becomes problematic for us when they become afraid to visit state land within South Dakota," Thom said. "So when they do [come onto state land] for commerce or other things, they are avoiding law enforcement at all costs ... Basically, what the state's attorney's office is trying to do is if you have a minor warrant out, they are trying to work with you to clear it so you don't have to live a lifestyle where you're in fear of law enforcement interactions."

Between January 2018 and August

2018, the program reviewed 471 warrants and 402 warrants were completely resolved. A state's attorney's office (SAO) liaison and the county's community outreach coordinator travel to neighboring reservations to make tribal leaders and community members aware of the assistance Pennington County can provide to help individuals resolve outstanding warrants.

In many cases, low-level misdemeanors and traffic offenses can be resolved fairly easily and the SAO attorney liaison can get the warrant resolved without the community member having to travel to the courthouse. The SAO has also created a toll-free number for individuals to call anonymously so they can receive assistance and advice on resolving their active warrants. The toll-free number resulted in 178 warrant reduction referrals between January 2018 and August 2018.

The county sheriff's office works closely with the Rapid City Police Department (RCPD) in its efforts to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the justice system.

For example, the RCPD secured a grant from the International Association of Chiefs of Police through the Collective Healing Initiative, which is helping the county and city generate more comprehensive cultural awareness training that provides historical context of the surrounding community and effective strategies for interacting with members of the Native American community.

The Pennington County Sheriff's Office also currently conducts biannual cultural awareness trainings and hopes to work with local service providers to build and foster a collaborative relationship among various service organizations in the community to help engage the Native American community.

In addition to teaching non-Native American officers about cultural awareness, Pennington County and Rapid City are focused on hiring more Native Americans. The local college, Western Dakota Tech has created mentorship and advising programs that focus on recruiting and retaining Native Americans in higher education.

Pennington County's Community Advisory Committee is another piece in its effort to cultivate a more compassionate and understanding community. Made up of a diverse group of individuals including members of the Native American commu-

See CULTURE pg H12

HELPING CHILDREN LEFT BEHIND

By Beverly A Schlotterbeck

The father of four died from a drug overdose, so the story from Leslie Horton went. His oldest child found him when she returned home from school, followed — one by one — by the next three children, as they also returned from school.

The situation they encountered is a straightforward example of what developmental experts call an adverse childhood event, the type of trauma that, down the line, can lead to a host of problem behaviors in school, suicide or quite possibly drug addiction or incarceration later in life as well, said Horton, who heads the Yavapai County, Ariz. Community Health Services public health agency.

Yavapai County's Trauma Lens Care program, or TLC, seeks to sidestep the cycle of failure and anti-social behavior before it even begins, Horton said, by intervening in the child's life with counseling and other social services as soon as possible.

It's a simple, yet elegant concept: Local law enforcement notifies the TLC

program — usually by email, but sometimes by phone — when a child is at the scene of a law enforcement intervention such as a drug bust or a violent crime. Officers provide TLC with the child's name, age, a brief description of what happened and the name of the school the child attends. In turn, TLC staff provides the school or daycare center with a heads-up.

"We actually bridge that information to the school," she said. In most cases, the schools have counselors who can immediately intervene. If not, they have people that will periodically check in on the child.

What they found before was that schools combed newspapers and crime reports for news about children's parents, whether they had been arrested or had died from a drug overdose, Horton explained.

The information, however, might have taken awhile to circulate to the school. In the meantime, "the child may be struggling. They might have been disciplined because the teacher doesn't know what went on," Horton said, "and a lot of times, the kids won't say. The TLC pro-

gram hopefully gets the kids resources right away and a little extra attention in the classroom, too."

Although only a few months old, TLC has enjoyed an overwhelmingly positive response, Horton said. One recent two-day period saw six reports forwarded from the police, she said. "Law enforcement wants to know if something happens to the kid."

Connections formed 15 years ago at the height of the meth epidemic among dozens of social service agencies throughout the county, as well as law enforcement and school systems, provide the backbone of the program.

"Within Yavapai County, we have this huge network of partner agencies we can all upon," she said.


The network came in handy when public health nurses conducting parenting classes in the county jail heard stories from inmate parents about the children they left behind: the kids who were having to deal with the aftermath of their parent's illegal activity.

It was one of those nurses, Stacey Gagnon, Horton said, who got the program going.

On the school side, Yavapai County's public health officials offer trauma-informed training for teachers to help them recognize the behavioral indications of trauma and how they can help students develop a greater sense of safety at school.

The program is not unusual, Horton said. There are similar programs across the country, "probably back East where you are. What we've done is tweak it and tailor it for our community. And it keeps changing as we learn new things, like we can't work with EMS because of HIPPA regulations."

Horton is on something of a crusade about TLC. She made a presentation recently at a National Governors Association meeting, which sparked some interest, and maybe, she hopes some funding, from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"We're looking for ways to not only build the program but to expand it — to make it a practice other counties can take on." 

To learn more, you can contact Horton at Leslie.Horton@yavapai.us

INTERVIEW WITH STACEY GAGNON, YAVAPAI COUNTY, ARIZ. TLC PROGRAM

CN: We understand you began to see the need for a TLC-like program in the course of your work offering parenting classes to inmates of the county jail? Is that correct and could you elaborate a little more?

I wrote about this recently. Here are my reflections.

I taught a class at the jail today and there was this beautiful moment.

I was sharing the picture below and talking about how our children often present with behaviors that look like the shark, but if we look below the surface, we will realize they are really just scared goldfish trying to have a need met. Their behaviors might communicate anger and hostility, but below the surface is fear and a hurting child.

The shark-like behavior that shows looks to be what we might call "unacceptable" as the child reaches out to try to satisfy unmet needs. It's our job as parents to stop parenting the shark fin, and look below the surface to parent and meet the needs of the goldfish.

One of the inmates raised her hand and said, "I'm a lot like that picture. I act

all tough and mean, but I'm really just a scared fish. I wish when I was a kid, someone would have thought to look for the goldfish, instead of just seeing me as a shark"

Here is where I saw the absolute need for teachers to see what was happening outside the classroom walls. I started doing some research and found a similar program back East that did something on a much smaller scale. As a former school teacher, I knew the role that I had played in many children's lives and also how blind I was to the actual trauma many of my students had experienced at home (this is why I called it Trauma Lens Care). There were many times that I would learn weeks or months later about traumatic events



and by then I would have responded to the shark fin instead of understanding the goldfish.

CN: What were your first steps in getting the program off the ground?

My first steps were having an amazing boss that lets me run with ideas. I obtained a secure email - tlc@yavapai.us and Leslie started putting me in front of all her contacts. It has spread like wildfire.

CN: How long did it take?

From initial idea to first TLC email was weeks.

CN: What were some initial obstacles?

Schools have been the biggest obstacle. There is fear in such big and scary information. It's hard to hear about what our children go through because with knowledge comes responsibility to act. Many schools feel ill-equipped to respond.

CN: How did you overcome them?

I am working on trauma-informed classroom trainings for teachers. I

have already presented on this topic and it is a complete shift in how you run your classroom. I am a mother of seven, with five adopted children. This dramatic shift in responding to behaviors is what I have had to learn over the past 12 years. It helps that I taught in the public-school system before I went back for my nursing degree. This gives me a bit of leverage because I know how a classroom runs.

CN: How long has the program been operating?

About three months.


CN: What are the next steps?

I am expanding to parenting classes in the community because evidence shows that when we look at ACEs (adverse childhood events), our biggest impact is teaching parents. I am also looking to expand the jail program to continue with familial support and classes once an inmate is released. TLC should be more than just the spread of information. It needs to have the trainings to support the teachers, the officers and parents.

Goal is two-way communication

From CULTURE pg H10

nity, the committee aims to build a better working relationship between law enforcement and the community at large, by creating a two-way communication avenue between law enforcement and the Native American population and providing an official forum for community members to discuss ideas, issues and solutions.

In some cases, members from the Native American community feel more comfortable reaching out to individual members of this committee to share their concerns and issues they may have, and then those concerns get passed along to law enforcement who quickly act to address those grievances to ensure that the county is working to “connect with the unconnected,” said Karl Jegeris, RCPD Chief of Police. 

Jessica Perez is a justice associate and Kathy Rowings is an associate program director for justice in NACo's County Solutions and Innovation Department.

CONNECTING THE UNCONNECTED RESOURCES

211: The 211 service is available throughout the United States by phone, text and web. A toll-free call to 2-1-1 connects people to a community resource specialist who can help find services and resources that are available locally that can improve and save lives. Visit 211.org.

211counts.org: Click on any states in green and you can see what their call volume looks like and what their top calls are about.

Affordable housing: Privately owned subsidized housing: HUD helps apartment owners offer reduced rents to low-income tenants. Search for an apartment at: <https://apps.hud.gov/apps/section8/index.cfm>.

Alliance of Information & Referral Systems: The accreditation agency for 211s and professional membership association for Community Information and Referral as well as Information and Referral/Assistance providers. Membership consists of individuals, agencies, community organizations, governmental departments and others who help connect people to services they require. AIRS.org

American Telemedicine Association: The American Telemedicine Association, established in 1993, is a non-profit organization with a goal to promote access to medical care for consumers and health professionals via telecommunications technology.

Center for Connected Health Policy: CCHP keeps abreast of telehealth-related laws, regulations and Medicaid programs.

Health coverage for homeless and at-risk youth: This demographic is likely to be eligible for health care coverage under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The ACA vastly simplifies and expands access to affordable health care, including for low income and homeless youths and allows states to expand eligibility for Medicaid, a health care program for low-income individuals. Find local help by ZIP code: <https://localhelp.healthcare.gov/#/>.

Nutrition.gov: Find information here on the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

United Way: About 50 percent of 211 call centers are internal to United Way and 75 percent of 211 centers receive funding from United Way.



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- SUBMISSIONS DEADLINE: **MARCH 25, 2019 AT 11:59 P.M. EDT**
- NOTIFICATIONS OF ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS: **WEEK OF APRIL 22, 2019**
- NACO ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXPOSITION: **JULY 11 – 15, 2019 CLARK COUNTY/LAS VEGAS, NEVADA**

MONEY MATTERS

The Hidden Costs of Not Staying Current

By Mike Mucha

Well-run governments promote financial transparency, accountability and decision-making that's based on good data. Finance staff are often in charge of supplying that data in a timely manner — whether it is for the budget process, program analysis, budget control or satisfying routine requests for information.

If you could take a look behind the scenes, you'd see the extraordinary efforts that go into processing, tracking, managing, manipulating and ultimately reporting that information.

More and more governments are now completing these tasks using tools offered by modern enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, yet many still rely on antiquated software technology from 15, 20 or even 25 years ago.

Meeting modern public-sector needs with decades-old technology isn't easy. Systems must be flexible and able to handle an increasing amount of work so they can respond to changes in accounting rules, expectations for service delivery and the sophisticated operations that most governments run.

Managers, executives, elected officials and even the public also expects data to be readily available and usable. Overcoming outdated technology's substandard functionality and shortcomings requires government staff to maintain and support a patchwork of old databases, legacy code and hundreds or even thousands of Excel spreadsheets, held together by the technological equivalent of tooth picks and duct tape.

Today, in a world where cell phones are discarded after two years and the computing power in everyday devices can outperform just about anything available a decade ago, it is remarkable that many organizations

still rely on "green-screen technology" from the early 1990s to process payroll, manage their budgets and perform the thousands of other routine transactions that power local government.

Even organizations with up-to-date maintenance and support for their ERP systems wrestle with the challenges of time. For example, many governments stick with the original scope of the implementation of their system, seldom activating or implementing new functionality.

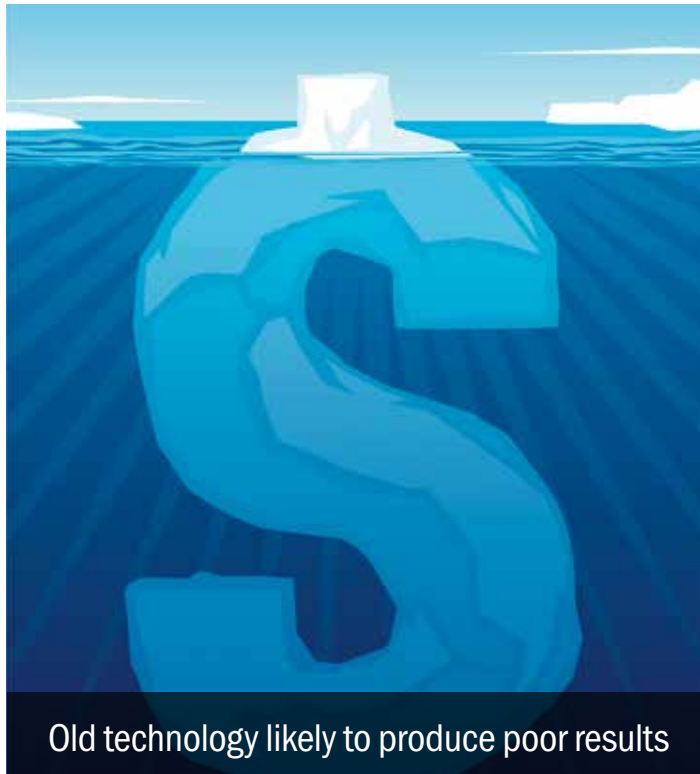
Similarly, some governments struggle with decisions that were made during the initial implementation or with being trapped by sub-optimum configuration decisions that restricted the full use of the system.

Just as a 20-year-old car that has been maintained to the manufacturer's recommendation is not the same as a new car, a 20-year-old system with all the regular maintenance packs and upgrades is not the same as a new system.

A modern, well-run organization requires a modern ERP system to provide a solid foundation for integrated functions, efficient processing of transactions, improved service levels, automated business processes, strong internal controls and the use of data across the organization.

Implementing such a system is a large undertaking that requires commitment and effort from across the entire organization. While the most visible outcome is a new system, no ERP system implementation is primarily about the software. It's about the policies and business process that the system supports.

Over the past 20 years, GFOA has been involved in more than 500 ERP readiness and implementation projects, and we have seen both the good and bad.



Old technology likely to produce poor results

A government that operates an old, outdated technology is probably experiencing some or all of the following inefficiencies behind the scenes, as staff works to satisfy the information needs of department heads, executives, elected officials and the public:

- Redundant entry of data and duplication of effort
- Unnecessary paper-based processes that require significant manual intervention
- Excessive use of shadow systems to track critical data
- Significant time spent reconciling errors
- Inconsistent application of policies and controls
- Inconsistent, fragmented, or incomplete data
- A high number of interfaces or customizations, and
- Outdated processes that fail to take advantage of new standards and expectations.

A simple Internet search on "ERP implementation failures" will provide more than enough examples to clearly demonstrate the challenges involved in these projects, but they don't all end with delays, cost overruns, missing scope, unmet needs, burnt-out employees or lawsuits.

The fact is that many organizations have been extremely successful in using the ERP projects as an opportunity to transform their organizations, adopt best practices, improve efficiency, provide more effective services, and better promote financial management outcomes.

When correctly managed with effective service-level agreements, deploying an ERP system in the "cloud" can de-

crease ongoing costs, reduce the technical staffing effort, and mitigate technical and security risks.

Officials who are supporting or overseeing an ERP project need to understand that modernizing an ERP system is a significant investment in the organization's financial management infrastructure. The benefits you'll receive from the project are directly related to the work that goes into it.

To be successful, focus on best practices in change management, process improvement, project management and organizational governance. Based on our experience with ERP systems, GFOA has also identified a few critical lessons:


- **Analyze business processes and define requirements.** All projects should start out with clearly defined goals and requirements that are based on the individual government's processes, well understood by both the government and the vendor, and continuously tracked throughout the project.

It's also critical that requirements, processes, and decisions are documented. The project team should be held responsible for demonstrating that all requirements and project goals have been completed.

- **Ensure proper staffing.** Vendors that claim to have uncovered the secrets to an "easy" ERP project are selling a fantasy. All ERP projects should clearly identify sufficient staffing levels, and organizations must be prepared to commit staff and potentially back-fill existing positions.

- **Ask difficult questions.** To avoid repeating bad processes in a new system, organizations must be prepared to bring in new ideas, to challenge the status quo, and to engage in discussion and debate about future policies and business process.

- **Hold the vendor accountable.** Vendors that sell the benefits of an ERP system need to be held accountable for delivering their products and services. This includes milestone-based pricing, a warranty on the project requirements, clear criteria for system and deliverable acceptance, and service-level agreements.

If you have any questions on the business case for an ERP system, best practices in procurement or implementation, or additional information, examples, or guidance, please do not hesitate to contact GFOA at 312.977.9700 or at research@ghfoa.org. 

Mike Mucha is the deputy executive director for the Government Finance Officers Association.

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BRIGHT IDEAS UNION COUNTY, N.J.

New signage builds momentum for historic village

PROBLEM:

A mostly abandoned village sat in a county park, in need of restoration.

SOLUTION:

An interpretive signage program is educating the public about the village and helping raise awareness of the need to raise preservation funding



The restored church/store in Feltville, N.J. is one of the featured stops in a walking tour of a Union County, N.J. park.

By Charlie Ban senior writer

Ghost towns aren't just in the Old West

A short distance from Staten Island, Union County, N.J. is home to the "Deserted Village" of Feltville, the remnants of a company town, and later a resort area, deep in the woods of the Watchung Reservation.

It's not exactly deserted — two county employees live there — but the county is working to make sure the estimated 100,000 visitors to the site every year aren't left wondering what it all meant. The site has some fame, however, as a chapter in the anthology *Weird N.J.* It was not the kind of lasting impression Parks Director Ron Zuber hoped for.

"I don't want for it to be known solely because of *Weird N.J.*," he said. "We really wanted to bring back the history of the area. People looking in windows and making up ghost stories is all well and good, but we want to be able to give people a better idea of what this village was really like."

The county parks department recently decided to prioritize the village's maintenance, focusing first on the rehabilitation and renovation of a carriage house that can be rented out and now plays host to more than 150 events per year.

With even more visitors headed to the preserve, now with the specific intent of visit-

ing the village, it became even more important to give them something to take home with them.

That something ended up being knowledge. Brochures had been available, but the information they contained was often unsubstantiated and incomplete.

"There was literature regarding the village, when you read it, you had a empty feeling at the end of your visit," Zuber said. "I felt like we were cheating the public. For safety reasons,

for historical reasons, for sheer joy of people going through the Watchung Reservation, we had to do something."

If the county hoped to vie for more funding for preservation, it first had to grow its fan base of interested visitors.

"Now that we could rent out the carriage house and people were coming to the village specifically to be there and not just as a stop on a trail, we had a chance to show them something more than some old houses with no real expla-

nation," Zuber said. "We just weren't happy with the way it looked, and the carriage house is really at a dead end, so you have to pass all of these buildings on your way there."

Interpretive signage is the first step in what will be a comprehensive strategic plan for the site, a plan that the county hopes to complete early in 2019. Initial estimates for the research, production and installation of the signage came in at \$65,000, far beyond the parks department's budget for the project. A \$7,500 grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission helped pay for a consultant to oversee the project, and county employees were able to defray \$30,000 by doing most of the work gathering information and artwork and installing the signs.

The result was 15 full-color interpretive panels that include more than 50 images of photographs, maps, letters, newspaper advertisements, articles and paintings related to the

village's history. They can be viewed in any particular order.

The county is awaiting the consultant's plan for full restoration of the village, which will include stabilization of the remaining houses and the restoration of a mural inside one of the houses.

A carpenter's union had been awarding credits for apprentices doing work.

"But we don't have to piece-meal this any further," Zuber said. "We can't do band-aids any more."

"We know it won't be historic Williamsburg, but we want to bring it back to a certain area of its original splendor, make it safe, make it a destination," Zuber said.

The Feltville Interpretation Program won a 2018 NACo Achievement Award in the Arts, Culture and Historic Preservation category. Does your county have an innovative program? Apply for a 2019 Achievement Award at www.naco.org/achievementawards.

WORD SEARCH

SAN DIEGO COUNTY, Calif.

Created by: Mary Ann Barton

J N Z W P Q P A I D Z N F U G S R M N V
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 O G N P V O P E O E Q T I C V A M F K N
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AVOCADOS: San Diego County is the leading producer of avocados in the United States.

COASTLINE: The county has more than 70 miles of coastline along the Pacific Ocean.

CORONADO: The Hotel del Coronado, a National Historic Landmark that opened in 1888, is the second largest wood structure in the country.

COURTHOUSE: The county has had four county courthouses; the first downtown courthouse opened in 1872 on land donated by Alonzo Horton.

ORIGINAL: San Diego County was one of the original counties of California, which became a state in 1850.

NAVY: The U.S. Navy is the largest employer in the county.

PADRES: The San Diego Padres is a Major League Baseball team founded in 1969.

POPULATION: San Diego County is California's second most populous county (after Los Angeles County), counting more than 3.3 million residents. The county ranks as the fifth largest county in population.

SEUSS: Author Dr. Seuss, aka Theodore Geisel, adopted San Diego County as his hometown and wrote more than 40 of his children's books there.

SOUTHWESTERN: The county is the southwestern-most county in the 48 contiguous United States.

TOURISM: The county saw 35 million visitors last year who spent more than \$10.8 billion.

TREATY: The county became part of the United States in 1848, as a result of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, ending the Mexican-American War.

VETERANS: The county is home to more than 230,000 veterans.

WPA: The Works Progress Administration funded the construction of the County Administration Center, completed in 1938. The Beaux-Arts Spanish Revival-style building fronts San Diego Bay and is nicknamed the Jewel on the Bay.

ZOO: The county is home to the most popular zoo in the United States. San Diego Zoo, which draws more than 3 million visitors a year, features more than 3,700 animals from 650 species showcased in naturalized enclosures over 100 acres in Balboa Park.

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NATION

ARIZONA

COCHISE COUNTY recently launched Volunteer Cochise, a new initiative designed to encourage residents to volunteer in their communities, according to KOLD-TV. Sponsored by the county's health and social services department, the county is also asking its own employees to give back to the communities they serve and plans to track the impact of the effort. The initiative includes a public resource page on the county's website. "We believe having active communities with a sense of purpose and improvement leads to healthier lifestyles for all our citizens," said Carrie Langley, director of Cochise Health & Social Services. "Our staff are being encouraged to consider ways they can volunteer across this diverse region we serve as local government workers in our professional lives. And we are also encouraging our friends, neighbors, and other community members to join us."

CALIFORNIA

• After 20 years in office, **ORANGE COUNTY** District Attorney Tony Rackauckas may have

lost his race for another term in November, but he leaves behind an impressive legacy: an unusual **DNA collection** amassed over the past 20 years, the *Orange County Register* reported. The collection of 176,000 samples, independent of the county Crime Lab, is mainly from non-violent suspects, collected with the notion that "today's misdemeanor is tomorrow's felon," the newspaper wrote. Facing possible jailtime, people charged with a misdemeanor could go home in exchange for paying a \$75 processing fee and giving a genetic sample, an offer that local defense attorneys dubbed "spit and acquit."

Rackauckas has provided more than 725 investigative leads over the years, including playing a part in the recent capture of the Golden State Killer, a serial killer, rapist and burglar.

INDIANA

The manager of the **JASPER COUNTY** Airport is visiting local schools to discuss starting an **aviation education program** for the 2019-2020 school year, the *Rensselaer Republican* reported. It's a field that needs



workers and pays starting salaries between \$50,000 to \$60,000. Airport Manager Ray Seif said there has been a shortage of pilots and mechanics. Other positions include jobs in aeronautical engineering, aircraft manufacturing, airlift ambulances, military aviation and crop dusting.

IOWA

O'BRIEN COUNTY supervisors recently approved a resolution that created a subfund in the county's general fund for Caring for Kindergarten, an educational program that promotes **healthy eating habits**, the *NorthwestIowa.com* reported.

The program, spearheaded by county public health nurse Judy Nieuwenhuis, helps purchase healthy snacks for kindergarten students. The fund also accepts private donations. Nieuwenhuis also gives presentations to students on the benefits of healthy eating.

MARYLAND

• **BALTIMORE COUNTY COUNCIL** members voted to extend the county's **traffic camera program**. Members approved a contract with American Traffic Solutions to take over the county's red light and

speed camera programs. The contract could be worth more than \$21 million over 11 years if all of the renewals are exercised, *The Baltimore Sun* reported.

• **HOWARD COUNTY** officials recently kicked off construction of the Howard County Innovation Center, which will serve as a **resource center for entrepreneurs and small businesses**. "The opening of this Innovation Center is our latest commitment to attracting high-tech and innovative businesses to Howard County," said Howard County Executive Allan Kittleman. "This facility will help growing businesses develop as well as allow us to take the next steps in developing the Gateway Innovation District, the county's next great economic center."

MICHIGAN

Residents in **LEELANAU COUNTY** can now **text 911**. The county emergency manager, Matt Ansorge, said it opens opportunities for the deaf community and citizens that need 911 under sensitive circumstances like domestic violence or an intruder in the house, *UpNorthLive.com* reported.

The new system did not cost the county anything, because it was part of the dispatch system the county currently has. It just took some time to set up. "On the horizon, there will be the ability to send videos and pictures and whatnot, and we'll

be able to send those out to our responders in the field," he said.

NEVADA

NFL's **Raiders** may get a nearly half-million-dollar rebate from **CLARK COUNTY** if commissioners cut developer fees for expedited building and zoning reviews. The ordinance would reduce charges for future projects and repay developers that purchased expedited services this year, including \$460,000 to the football team that is relocating from **ALEMEDA COUNTY**, Calif. Also benefiting from the fee cuts would be The Palms resort, which would get \$194,000 in connection with a remodeling project and the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority would be repaid \$2,300 for an expansion project, according to the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*.

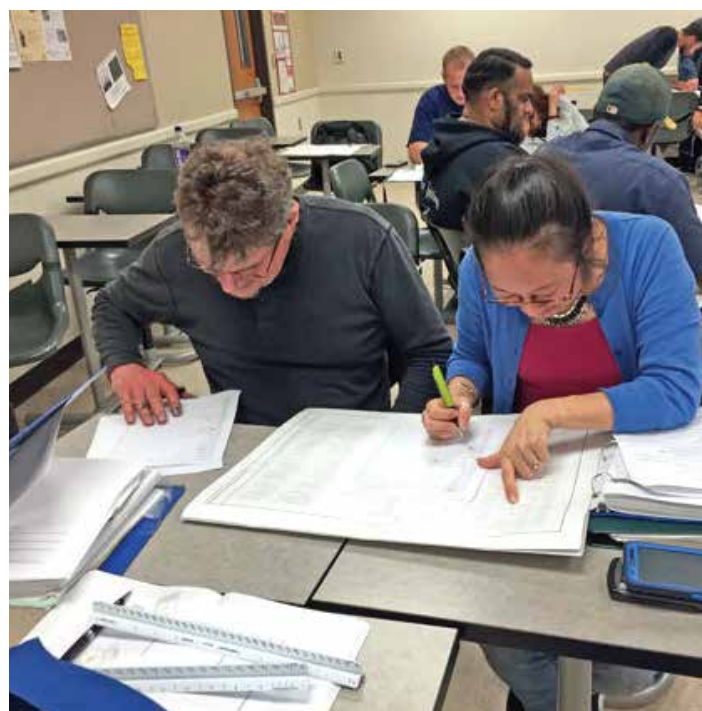
• **DOUGLAS COUNTY** now has a 24/7 telephone hotline and online reporting platform for neighbors to report issues with **vacation home rentals**. Operators will assess the situations and address problems in real time to ensure the accountability of hosts and guests while conserving law enforcement resources.

OHIO

The state's **medical marijuana** legalization in 2016 left it up to employers to determine their own policies, and **SUMMIT COUNTY** is taking that up. The County Council is considering just such a policy. It would allow employees to use medical marijuana, but forbid them from working under the influence, have medical marijuana or paraphernalia on county property or in a county vehicle. They would need to report it to the county executive's designee and provide evidence of being registered with the state patient registry.

They would also have to present a recommendation from a medical doctor certified to recommend its use and evidence of it being obtained from a licensed marijuana dispensary.

Any employee testing positive

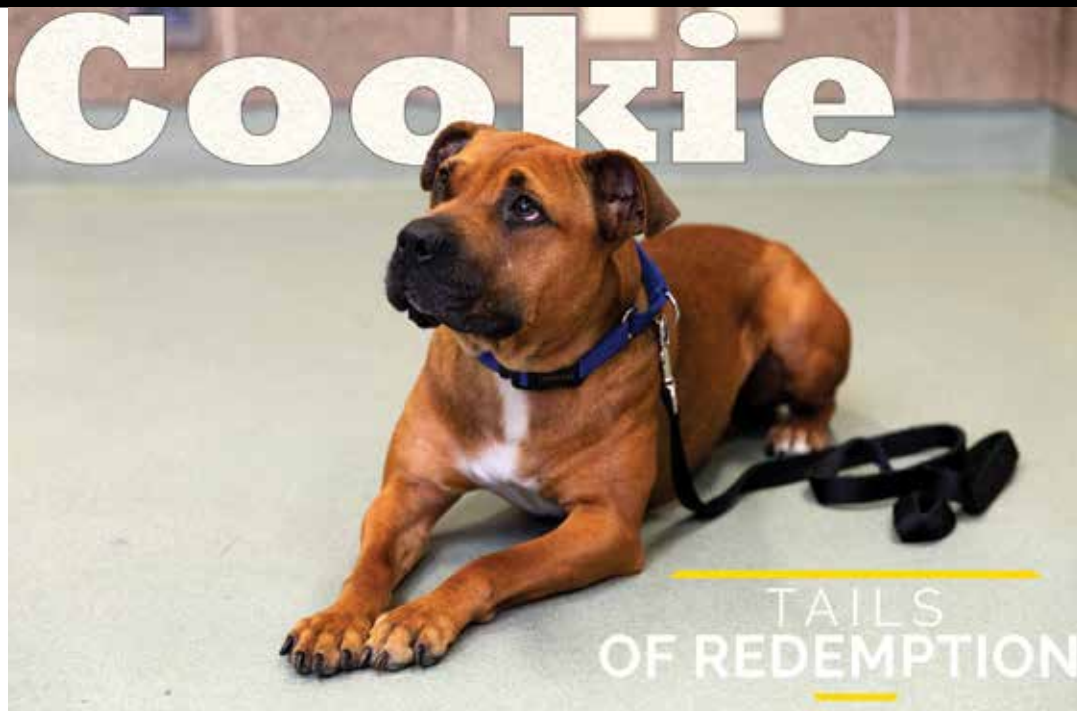


CALIFORNIA

• **SAN MATEO COUNTY's Trades Introduction Program**, a partnership with the College of San Mateo, is helping residents get a leg up on jobs with a future, the *San Mateo Daily Journal* reported. Students in the 120-hour program are preparing for apprenticeship programs as plumbers, electricians, plasterers, painters or sprinkler fitters, among other trades. County supervisors recently approved up to \$100,000 in half-cent sales tax funds toward the program, which is also supported with state and federal funds. The program is preparing new workers because many current union workers are preparing for retirement and demand for skilled workers is expected to increase because of many new construction projects.

Dawn Togami (r) learns how to read construction blueprints in the Trades Introduction Program, aimed at helping those interested in the trades prepare for apprenticeship programs. Photo

courtesy of the Trades Introduction Program



Cook County has started a program dubbed "Tails of Redemption," where jail detainees help train "unadoptable" dogs. The program is beneficial for everyone involved. Photo courtesy of Cook County Program

ILLINOIS

COOK COUNTY has discovered an innovative approach to helping "unadoptable" dogs, the *Daily Herald* reported. Earlier this year, the county Sheriff's Office and Chicago Animal Care and Control started "Tails of Redemption," an eight-week program that teams up "difficult" dogs and county jail detainees. The detainees (none of those selected are charged with violent crimes) train the dogs with the goal of making them adoptable.

One dog, Cookie, proved to be so smart and trainable that the sheriff's office decided to train her as a drug-detection dog. "It is such an incredible program, when you think these dogs were unadoptable," said Cara Smith, the sheriff's chief policy officer. "I could not believe the transformation in these dogs." Sheriff Tom Dart said he hoped detainees would also realize after changing the future for the dogs that they "have the power to change their own future as well."

for medical marijuana after an accident would be ineligible for workers' compensation, according to the *Akron Beacon Journal*.

Employees who perform "safety sensitive duties" would not be able to use medical marijuana. That includes having a commercial driver's license or carrying a firearm for their jobs.

TENNESSEE

All SHELBY COUNTY employees, including temporary workers, will earn at least \$15 starting Jan. 1 after the County Commission passed a resolution to that effect first proposed by Mayor Lee Harris. *The Commercial Appeal* reports that the county's living wage is set at \$14.48 an hour and will be in effect until Dec. 31, 2019, or when the county's living wage equals or exceeds \$15 an hour, whichever is sooner.

TEXAS

HARRIS COUNTY has begun purchasing homes in a floodplain that were damaged by

Hurricane Harvey, homes that are so susceptible to flooding that engineers have concluded the cost to protect them cannot be justified. The county's flood control district has used \$53 million from the \$2.5 billion flood infrastructure bond approved by voters over the summer, and \$159 million from FEMA.

Twelve homes have been purchased so far, the *Houston Chronicle* reported, and another 512 homes are in the buyout process. Up to 400 more could be purchased using this funding source.

The 10-year bond is fueling a plan that would combine \$180 million in local funding and \$550 million in federal money

to buy a total of 3,600 buildings, double the number of homes the flood control district's buyout program has purchased in its 33-year history.

UTAH

In what could be considered election overtime, SALT LAKE COUNTY Mayor Ben McAdams (D) won the race for Utah's 4th Congressional District, Nov. 20. McAdams's race pitted him against incumbent Rep. Mia Love (R), who was in office for two terms.

VIRGINIA

Residents in BOTETOURT COUNTY may now raise poultry, rabbits and honey bees in

their backyards. The Board of Supervisors approved amendments to the county's land use plan to that effect, stemming from a request from a local beekeeper at the beginning of the year. Residents will need a minimum of 12,000 square feet to have honeybees and a minimum of 15,000 square feet for any poultry or rabbits. Budding chicken owners initially filed an application for an amendment in 2012, but withdrew it when the planning committee was cool to the idea, the *Roanoke Times* reported.

WISCONSIN

DANE COUNTY Executive Joe Parisi has asked local government leaders to accelerate their efforts to reduce carbon emissions. The county has converted 70 percent of its vehicles to run on cleaner-burning, compressed natural gas generated by rotting trash at the county landfill. By the end of 2019, nearly half of its entire fleet of snowplows will have been converted.

WYOMING

The public will retain complete access for a 657-acre plot of state land after PARK COUNTY Commissioners decided against making changes to the area known as Beartooth Ranch.

The state Legislature Joint Agricultural Committee asked the commissioners for feedback regarding a draft letter it was considering sending to the state's U.S. congressional delegation, to assemble stakeholders to address the legal status, permissible uses and future of Beartooth Ranch.

Residents worried federal involvement might not only loosen but even eliminate all protections in the current memorandum of understanding (MOU) from the public piece of land, including preventing the land from being sold.

The MOU designates that the area be used "solely as a public area reserved for recreational or historic purposes or for the preservation of natural conditions," the *Jackson Hole News and Guide* reported.



CN
JOB MARKET

CHIEF LEGAL COUNSEL

KING COUNTY, WASH
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Application deadline:
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The Metropolitan King County Council is seeking an experienced, enthusiastic attorney with a passion for Public Policy, Leadership and Professionalism to join our team. The Chief Legal Counsel serves as a legal advisor to the Council and staff on a variety of matters dealing with public policy, legislation, and Council actions. The ideal candidate will be adept at municipal law, and the powers and duties of public officials and agencies. The Chief Legal Counsel is a senior level professional position and supervises the work of the Senior Deputy Legal Counsel.

This position operates with considerable latitude in providing legal advice and proposed solutions for consideration by decision makers to support the Council in fulfilling its mission. The most competitive candidates will have an in-depth knowledge of County government and the theories and practices of civil and administrative law as they relate to local government. This is an exciting opportunity to join the King County Council staff and help provide excellent regional services to county residents.

The position requires effective collaboration with Councilmembers, staff, the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney the County Executive and departments, other units of governments, and members of the public.

HOW TO APPLY: To apply and view a complete job announcement and apply, go to www.kingcounty.gov/jobs A King County application is required to be considered for this opportunity. Interested applicants must complete the supplemental questions and submit a resume and letter of interest with your application.

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Pay Equity: The Million Dollar Question

The reference checks have just been completed on Penny's top candidate, and Penny is excited to make an offer. The position has been tough to fill, and in fact has been open for several months due to a lack of qualified candidates.

The skill sets for this position are specific and Penny has finally found a candidate, William, with five years of experience, an advanced certification, and maybe most importantly, knowledge of a software program in an area where the department has been paying a consultant to fill the void.

If this applicant accepts the position, it will not only strengthen the team, but also create an in-house expert and lessen reliance on external consultants. Penny considers the pay range and looks over a spreadsheet of her existing staff's salaries. Then Penny asks herself the million-dollar question: What salary will she offer this outstanding candidate?

All departments have their own vacancies like Penny's, whether it is a commercial appraiser, an accountant with a CPA, a diesel mechanic, a nurse, a chief building official or a systems administrator. Some positions have a specific combination of knowledge, skills, abilities, certifications and experience that can be difficult to find.

The county's pay ranges have a certain level in the market, when compared to external competitors. Maybe the pay ranges are in alignment with the market, or maybe the pay ranges slightly or even dramatically lag below the market.

The history of the pay practices, particularly during recessionary years, is often reflected in the salaries of the existing employees. Internal equity is

the fairness of compensation of current employees doing comparable work, perhaps in the same job titles or same pay grades. Recruitment and retention of strong, diverse and well-qualified employees requires internal equity as well as market competitiveness.

On the other end of the interview table, William saw the excitement on the faces of the recruitment panel when he described his depth of experience using the software they implemented just over two years ago. He saw the furious scribbling of interview notes when he detailed his experience training others on the system. So, when Penny offers William the salary figure Penny labored over and repeatedly calculated, William is ready with a counteroffer.

William knows the value he brings to the position. Penny respects William's counter, but is concerned that his salary demand will place William higher in the range than two very experienced members of Penny's team with the same title, Sharon

and Juanita.

Sharon has 10 years of experience, seven of which are with the county, but she lacks the certification and the software experience William would bring to the position. Juanita has two certifications and handles the most complicated cases in the office. She has four years of experience. Penny knows that potentially bringing in William with a salary higher than her two other experienced and well-trained employees, both female, one of whom is Hispanic, is not equitable. Penny needs to calculate a reasonable response to William's counteroffer while ensuring equity with Sharon and Juanita.

Pay equity is not simply a matter of being a fair employer, it is also required by several federal laws including the Equal Pay Act of 1963, Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2007, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act. Importantly, many states have passed their

own pay equity laws that may be more restrictive on employers to ensure equal pay for comparable or substantially similar work. These laws are the latest efforts to combat historical pay discrepancies between men and women, and between whites and racial or ethnic minorities.

In mid-January of each year, the Bureau of Labor Statistics releases fourth quarter data of the Usual Weekly Earnings of Wage and Salary Workers. The third quarter of 2018 was released on October 16 and may be found at <https://www.bls.gov/bls/news-release/wkyeng.htm>. The third quarter data reminds hiring managers that earnings ratio varies by gender race and ethnicity, showing the following:

- The median weekly earnings of women are 81.8 percent of that earned by their male counterparts.
- The median weekly earnings of black and Hispanic men are less than white men.
- The median weekly earnings of Hispanic women are 75.3 percent of white women.

Penny made her initial offer expecting William to counter and as such is prepared for his ask. Additionally, she spoke to human resources to ensure that her offer to William will not create a pay inequity in the same pay grade in another department. She makes a final counter offer, which he accepts.

Penny's county has a policy that allows Penny to give Sharon or Juanita an equity adjustment to their pay if a new hire would create an inconsistency.

This policy was created to prevent losing top candidates while avoiding inequitable pay situations. As Penny completes the required recruitment and new hire paperwork, she documents and explains the job-related factors she used when calculating William's pay rate, including education, experience, and certifications.

The county policy Penny used allowing her the flexibility to offer a competitive salary to William while adjusting Sharon and Juanita's salaries to maintain equity, is not the only way to ensure equity in county pay. To address inequity among existing employees, some counties have implemented policies allowing employees to ask for a "personal pay study" and a subsequent pay adjustment if inequity is found.

Rather than allowing fears of pay inequity to create stagnation or restrain hiring managers from making competitive offers, developing compensation policies from meaningful pay analyses with flexibility to correct existing inequities can be highly effective to ensure our employees are being compensated appropriately in a competitive market. **CN**



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