Cochise County earns national achievement award for Legacy Project

Cochise County’s Legacy Project has been recognized with an Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo). The awards honor innovative, effective county government programs that enhance services for residents.

This is the second award received for this employee driven program, having been awarded a Summit Award in Civic Engagement and Public Information from the Arizona Association of Counties (AACo) late last year.

The purpose of the Legacy Project, created in 2014, is to memorialize the history of a group, continue its legacy, instill pride, and envision the future. As part of the Legacy Project, each month employees of a County department (or group of departments) outlined the department’s history, services, staff, and hosted some type of community outreach event designed to help citizens and other employees learn more about what their department does and why. Departments focused on their part in supporting the County’s vision, mission and goals for the future.

“Over the last two years County departments, both elected and appointed, came together as one to keep our County history and traditions moving forward. As a local government organization it has always been a challenge to communicate all the varied services we provide to our citizens and why we provide them. Along the way employees learned about their individual departments, became more knowledgeable about other County services, shared stories with residents and former employees, and developed another level of trust, teamwork and leadership. All of these factors work together to create a culture of professional and experienced staff to guarantee excellent service, which is a cornerstone of our Countywide Strategic Plan” said Richard Searle, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors when this program was developed.

Searle went on to say, “Our citizens play a huge role in memorializing our legacy back to territorial days and creating our future. Together, we really demonstrate how the services local government provides positively impacts the quality of life our citizens enjoy in our county every day. Through continued effort we educate each other with Public Programs and Personal Service because county government matters in our State.”

NACo President Bryan Desloge said, “Counties overcome complex challenges, provide essential services and constantly do more with less. We applaud these Achievement Award-winning counties for outstanding efforts to improve residents’ quality of life.”
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Nationally, awards are given in 18 different categories that reflect the vast, comprehensive services counties provide. The categories include children and youth, criminal justice, county administration, information technology, health, civic engagement and many more.

NACo will recognize award-winning counties at its 2017 Annual Conference and Exposition July 21-24 in Franklin County, Ohio. Started in 1970, NACo’s annual Achievement Award Program is designed to recognize innovative county government programs.

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Cochise County, established in 1881, is located in the Southeastern part of Arizona at the International border of Mexico and spans more than 4 million acres. It is home to 130,000 residents and nearly 300,000 visitors each year. It includes the historic cities of Bisbee, Benson, Douglas, Tombstone and Willcox. The City of Sierra Vista is home to historic Fort Huachuca, an active Army military installation. The County has jurisdiction over tax assessments, health and social services, solid waste, elections, and floodplain issues throughout the County. It also has responsibility for courts, highway improvements, law enforcement, schools, libraries, and planning and zoning in the unincorporated areas. Visit www.cochise.az.gov for more information.

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The National Association of Counties (NACo) unites America’s 3,069 county governments. Founded in 1935, NACo brings county officials together to advocate with a collective voice on national policy, exchange ideas and build new leadership skills, pursue transformational county solutions, enrich the public’s understanding of county government and exercise exemplary leadership in public service. Learn more at www.naco.org