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To acquire an article idea submittal form for CCAP's *Pennsylvania County News* please email Ken Kroski at kkroski@pacounties.org.

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summer
2019

PENNSYLVANIA county news

BROADBAND

There is a digital divide in Pennsylvania. Connecting with the world around us means having access to high-speed, quality broadband for all residents.

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■ The **CENSUS** matters for all Pennsylvanians. It directly impacts funding for a decade.

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KATHI COZZONE

President, County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania
Chester County Commissioner

Because I am a procrastinator, I'm writing this column the day it is due—the day after the Primary Election of 2019. I wasn't successful this time around which has me doing a lot of pondering and reflecting on my nearly 12 years in office. There are a couple of things I keep coming back to. I would never have had any success were it not for the people who supported me, and those who didn't; the people I work with and the people that work for the county; my colleagues at home and around the commonwealth; and most importantly my family.

While we do our best every day to work for the people we serve, very often it is our families that sacrifice the most. It's harder on our spouses,

partners and significant others to deal with the inevitable negativity that comes with the required campaigning to be elected. We've missed family events and sometimes our kids don't get the time they should from us. In my first year, my son was six and about a week before Christmas he told me that Santa was never going to find our house because we had no tree, no gifts and no decorations. It took probably 24 hours straight, but my husband and I solved that problem. I learned from that experience that I had to figure out a better work-life balance. Being an elected official provided me an opportunity to do things with and for my son that I wouldn't have been able to do if I had a 9 to 5 job, and for that I'm grateful.

When it comes to our colleagues, regardless of party, respect is the key to success—whether it is in our home counties, or our work together through CCAP. In these days of endless sound bites and social media death spirals, that can be difficult. I encourage you all to continue to do that work—and it can be hard sometimes—to find common ground and respect for one another.

County employees—and I include CCAP staff in this category—are the bedrock of county government. They work every single day to serve the citizens of our communities and they do that because they care. None of us would be successful without their dedication and compassion. We should take every opportunity to thank them—the unseen heroes; the boots on the ground, the folks who make us look good.

Let's always remember it is a privilege to serve. Let's always remember to thank those who make our service possible. Let's always remember the people we serve are counting on us to be the best we can be. It's been my honor to serve with all of you and I thank you for inspiring me to do my best. 🍷

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For more information about our vendor opportunities, please contact Mandi Glantz, director of member and vendor relations, at (717) 736-4739 or mglantz@pacounties.org.

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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. NACo's Programs and Services offer counties unique opportunities to help your residents, your employees and your county meet the needs of the future. CCAP has a long standing relationship with NACo and their sponsoring programs. As a CCAP member you have the opportunity to participate in the following endorsed programs: NACo Live Healthy-Dental and Health Discount Program (www.naco.org/health) and NACo 457 Deferred Compensation administered by Nationwide Retirement Solutions (www.nationwide.com).

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The Pennsylvania Counties Health Insurance Purchasing Cooperative (PCHIPC) was launched in October 2005 with three counties. Today there are 22 counties that represent 9,094 county employees.

Membership is open to any Pennsylvania county as well as any county agency created under the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act. It is governed by a Board of Directors made up of a representative from each of the member counties. Each member has a vote in governing PCHIPC.

The program has been successful due to total transparency of claim data and surplus returns that have generated cost savings to member counties.



High Speed
Broadband
and Rural
Pennsylvania:

Challenge vs. Opportunity

Barry L. Denk
Director
The Center for Rural Pennsylvania



Have you ever tried to solve a Rubik's cube? It's hard to perfectly line up all of those blocks to form the solid walls of red, yellow, blue, orange, green and white. For many people, it can be frustrating, and maybe even a bit overwhelming. But for those with patience and determination, and a mindset for solving a challenge, the end result is very rewarding.

Now, think of the challenge that faces Pennsylvania in expanding high-speed, quality broadband service as a Rubik's cube. How do many hands work together to connect Pennsylvania's large and diverse landscape so that all residents have the opportunity to access high-speed, quality broadband and connect with the world around them?

WANTS AND NEEDS

Think of each color-block in the cube as all of the people who want, and need, that connection. One block is those who want access to expanded entertainment, and the latest news. Other blocks represent those in the health care industry needing reliable connectivity for transmitting patient information from a home health care visitor to a hospital or providing tele-psychiatry services because the patient lives 50 miles away from the nearest provider, or those small manufacturing companies wanting to expand marketing, sales and customer service over the internet.

And what about agriculture and the farm family needing to access remote diagnostic services because their robotic milking equipment has stopped functioning, or the local farmers' market vendors who want to be able to accept credit card payment. For other blocks, it's parents who need access at home so they're not driving a child to the school parking lot an hour before school starts to finish the online lesson she started in class yesterday, or the campground owner when the first question asked by potential weekend visitors is, "Does your campground have Wi-Fi?" One block alone could be focused solely on accessing government programs, services, and forms, or paying your taxes. These are some of the real challenges that rural Pennsylvania residents face every day because they don't have access to quality broadband.

As advances in technology have resulted in many urbanized communities having four and five Gigabit levels of connectivity, and as the world expands its reliance on



Think of each color-block in the cube as all of the people who want, and need, that connection.

high-speed broadband to conduct business and financial transactions, provide education, and access health care, government services and more, a valid question remains: what must be done to provide rural Pennsylvanians with high-speed quality broadband availability and access and how can it be achieved?

RESEARCH

To learn more about broadband challenges and the opportunities, the Center for Rural Pennsylvania held a public hearing in Wellsboro, Tioga County in 2018. The information provided furthered the Center board of directors' commitment to supporting research that would determine the level of broadband availability and access in rural Pennsylvania. The research, led by Professor Sascha Meinrath, the Palmer Chair in Telecommunications at Penn State University, was extensive and was recently completed.

The researchers used the latest available Federal Communications Commission (FCC) broadband data—which are collected from Internet Service Providers (ISPs) from a mandatory bi-yearly data collection effort using FCC Form 477—to map

the ISPs' self-reported broadband speeds in all 67 counties. According to the FCC's official broadband maps from December 2017, there was 100% availability of broadband, which the FCC defines as 25 megabits per second download and three megabits per second upload, across every county of Pennsylvania.

In submitting their data to the FCC, ISPs are permitted to state that a census block has broadband availability at the 25/3Mbps level if part of the area, or limited customers, have that service. Generally, census blocks contain between 600 and 3,000 people, with an optimum size of 1,500 people. The accuracy of declaring that a rural census block has 25/3Mbps broadband service, if only a few customers out of potentially 1,500 actually have broadband, is questionable.

SPEED TESTS

To verify the speeds from the FCC maps, the Penn State research team used a broadband speed test to determine what the actual on-the-ground broadband speeds were throughout Pennsylvania in locations that have confirmed access. The test was strictly voluntary for participants who simply logged onto the test website that then recorded their speed of connectivity.

The research team collected more than 11 million broadband speed tests from across Pennsylvania in 2018. According to the test results, there isn't a single Pennsylvania county where at least 50 percent of the population has broadband connectivity at the 25/3 Mbps level. That's a big difference from the FCC Form 477 maps. The test results also

indicated that connectivity speeds are substantially slower in our rural counties than in our urban counties.

The researchers rightly pointed out that ISPs have numerous challenges in deploying broadband in rural areas, including geography, population density, and access to infrastructure. Questions remain for some as to the level of demand for high-speed broadband within un- and underserved areas, and whether the customer's willingness to pay is sufficient to warrant major investments. ISPs are continually supporting research and development to find advanced ways and technologies to deploy broadband.

The team's archival research documents that broadband connectivity has been successfully deployed in previously underserved areas, both within Pennsylvania and across the country, using a diverse array of business models. These examples can provide policy makers with ideas on how they can help improve broadband availability in those areas where adequate facilities and services do not yet exist, while recognizing that one solution may not work for the entire commonwealth.

FUNDING

One recent initiative is Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative, a member-owned utility. Tri-County provides electricity to over 16,000 members residing in seven rural counties. It will use federal Connect America II funds in the amount of \$3.2 million annually, for 10 years, along with a \$1.5 million grant from the state's Redevelopment Assistance Capital Project program to construct 103 miles of above-ground, fiber-to-the-home in Potter County.



Yet, a lingering question in the debate about broadband connectivity is cost. It's the proverbial elephant in the room. The cost factor is not only for installation, but ongoing maintenance and upgrades. These are very legitimate concerns that elected officials must consider. There is, however, another cost that should also be brought into the discussion to help inform both public and private investment decisions. What is the ongoing cost that Pennsylvania incurs by not expanding high-speed broadband availability and access to all its communities and residents?

According to a US News and World Report article, titled, *Best States 2019*, Pennsylvania ranks 29th for Internet Access. That ranking comes at a cost in the form of continuing outmigration

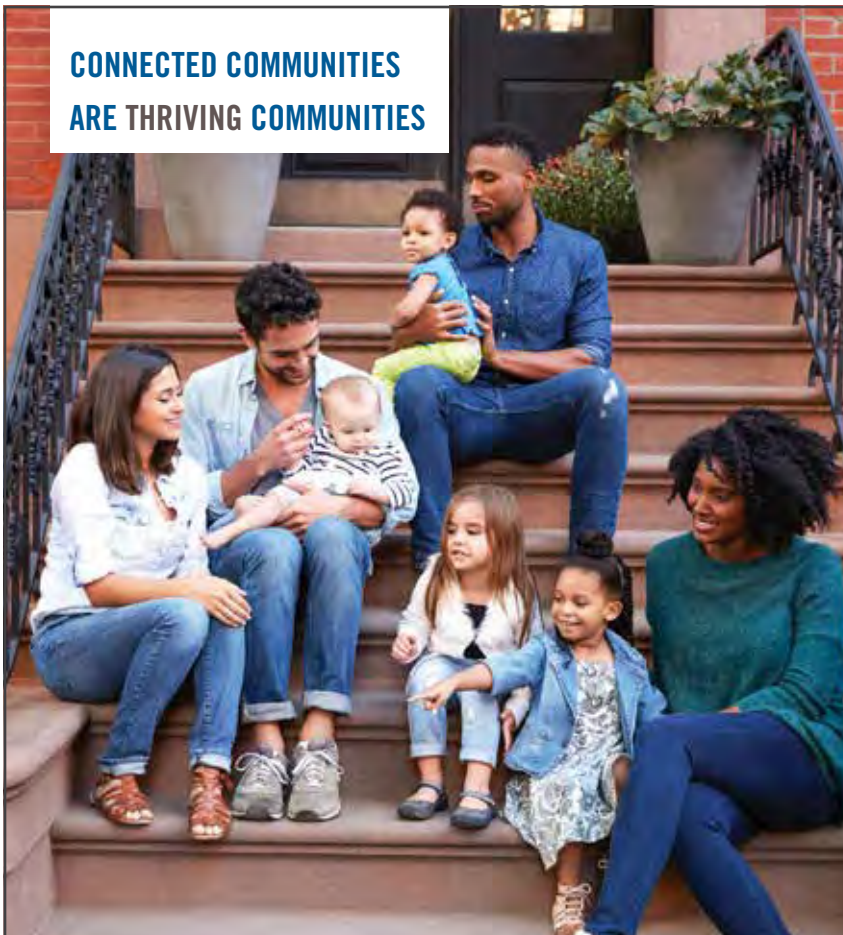
of our rural youth to pursue educational and career goals. It's lost revenue for small rural businesses that cannot connect with a potential customer base located far beyond their Main Street location. It's lost cost savings for a patient or a payer when the lack of telemedicine means a visit to an emergency room is the only option. And while a dollars and cents figure may be difficult to calculate, there is a cost for rural Pennsylvania when access to government programs and services is increasingly becoming only a mouse click away.

There is so much at stake for our Pennsylvania communities that do not have high-speed, quality broadband. But just as there are multiple ways to solve a Rubik's cube, the Center for Rural Pennsylvania's

sponsored research suggests there are multiple ways to bring high speed quality broadband service to all of Pennsylvania. By focusing on the possibilities, rather than the challenges, the end result will be very rewarding. 🍷

The full research report, "Broadband Access and Availability in Rural Pennsylvania," is available at https://www.rural.palegislature.us/publications_broadband.html. The Center for Rural Pennsylvania's website at <https://www.rural.palegislature.us> also includes infographics by county, showing the FCC Form 477 data on broadband service availability and the results of the PA broadband speed test. For the live data, visit <https://pa.broadbandtest.us>.

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**Lack of
Broadband
Access
Is Hurting
Pennsylvania**

**RESTORE
PENNSYLVANIA
OFFERS A
SOLUTION**





Imagine a world without access to high-speed internet. How would you perform the necessary functions of your job, connect with business associates, or run a business? How would educators teach, and students learn? How would doctors and medical professionals utilize technology to care for the sick or injured? How would you stay in touch with your loved ones? Many of us simply can't imagine it.

And yet across Pennsylvania, hundreds of thousands—perhaps millions—of people do not have access to high speed internet, and it's holding us back as a commonwealth. This problem isn't exclusive to our rural areas either. In fact, more than a quarter of a million of Pennsylvanians living in urban or suburban areas can't get a fast, reliable connection. While we recognize the importance of having access to broadband, we continue to accept the ever-present and glaring digital divide that exists in our most rural communities.

Governor Wolf's Pennsylvania Broadband Initiative is working to change that. Launched last year, the Pennsylvania Broadband Initiative is working to reach the governor's goal of providing high-speed internet access to every Pennsylvanian by 2022.

APPLYING FOR FUNDING

Under the Restore Pennsylvania plan, providers, commonwealth agencies and political subdivisions, nonprofit entities and rural electric cooperatives

would be eligible to apply for loans, grants and other forms of funding to assist with broadband expansion. Our priority is to focus on unserved and underserved regions. For communities that have not yet formally studied their broadband accessibility and possible solutions to expand it, Restore Pennsylvania funding could be used for feasibility studies that can help them identify an inventory of existing broadband assets. Additionally, these studies can conduct a systematic assessment and prioritization of broadband needs; secure professional consultants; assess financing options; identify an anchor tenant with enough demand to spur infrastructure investment; and develop a comprehensive strategic plan for deploying broadband.

For areas that have already completed a feasibility study, Restore Pennsylvania funding could be used for build-out of infrastructure. Applicants could use these funds for middle mile and last mile connections, purchasing and installing new broadband tech-

nologies like fiber optic equipment, and expanding or developing new networks. And the governor's Restore Pennsylvania proposal calls for \$4.5 billion to fix Pennsylvania's most critical infrastructure issues, including the expansion of broadband access.

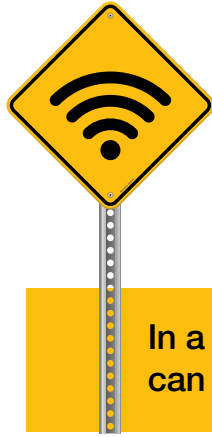
RELIABILITY REQUIRED

Access to high-speed internet is essential to growing our economy and enhancing the lives of our citizens. Businesses need a fast, reliable connection to process their day-to-day transactions, adopt new technologies, and reach new markets. Medical professional and first responders require reliable broadband infrastructure to provide the best possible care to their patients and respond to emergency situations. And if we want our commonwealth to be home to the best-educated and strongest workforce in the nation, then we need to equip our educators and their students with access to high speed internet not only at school but at home.

You need not travel far outside of our office here in Harrisburg to witness the frustration our rural communities experience daily. On a recent visit with an emergency medical services crew, I learned that EMS personnel have come to learn where coverage is and isn't available in their community. If they respond to an emergency call in what is a known "non-covered area," they drive to a known "covered area" so they can transmit critical patient data to the responding medical facility. In a field in which every second matters, this delay in transmission can mean the difference between life and death.

At Penns Valley School District in Centre County, which is less than 20 miles from Penn State University, nearly eight percent of students have dial-up internet access. These students struggle to complete online homework assignments, download textbooks, communicate with teachers and classmates, and conduct research. With an increasing emphasis on a flipped classroom teaching model, limited access at home jeopardizes not only the student's ability to learn but the school's ability to compete with other schools across the state. And it's not just the students who are impacted. Educators are forced to stay at school to complete lesson plans, enter grades, and participate in mandatory on-line professional development courses because access at home either doesn't exist or it isn't fast enough or reliable to be of use.

On a recent visit to Monroe County, approximately 40 residents shared the challenges they face in getting faster and reliable internet to their small rural community. Situated in a densely populated area, the residents of this small community expressed their frustration with a situation that has been in existence for more than 15



If EMS personnel respond to an emergency in what is a known "non-covered area," they drive to a known "covered area" so they can transmit critical patient data to the responding medical facility.

In a field in which every second matters, this delay can mean the difference between life and death.

years. They are small business owners who came to Pennsylvania from a neighboring state to launch their business; parents of young and school aged children; life-long learners who want to do on-line schooling; and community leaders who feel neglected. They are frustrated. And, this is just one example of the many visits I have been on over the past eight months. The communities and faces change, but the stories remain the same.

JUST LIKE WATER AND ELECTRICITY

Deploying a robust, reliable broadband infrastructure isn't cheap nor is it easy. Pennsylvania's mountains, valleys and wide-open spaces prove to be a challenge in the deployment of broadband. While solutions exist to what appears to be a never-ending problem, it comes with a hefty price tag. But in an era in which communities have to do more with less, they simply don't have the resources needed to expand broadband access to every resident, business, and organization. They need financial support. In fact, achieving full broadband deployment is projected to require between \$480 and \$715 million of commonwealth funding. Right now, Pennsylvania does not have a designated state fund for broadband projects.

Hampered by his own ability to connect while on a tour of rural Pennsylvania and armed with stories like those outlined above, Governor Wolf recognized the challenges that rural Pennsylvania is facing as it relates to broadband connectivity. Committed to addressing the multiple issues largely facing rural Pennsylvania, Governor Wolf proposed Restore Pennsylvania to amass the necessary financial resources needed to address Pennsylvania's most critical infrastructure deficiencies, especially broadband. Access to high speed internet should be available to all Pennsylvanians—just like water and electricity.

The Restore Pennsylvania legislation calls for raising \$4.5 billion during the next four years by applying a severance tax on the natural gas industry. Pennsylvania remains the only gas-producing state in the country without a severance tax—yet we are the second largest producer of natural gas. With every passing year, we lose the opportunity to reinvest the benefits of those resources that will help to stimulate our economy and move Pennsylvania forward. Our goal is to put the citizens of Pennsylvania first. It's time to let the people of Pennsylvania know that they matter, regardless of their zip code.

By providing broadband connectivity to these areas of Pennsylvania, we're

helping to close a technology gap that puts rural areas—and certain suburban and urban neighborhoods—at an educational and economic disadvantage.

COLLABORATION

Building relationships between municipal and county government, nonprofit organizations and private businesses is essential in reaching our goal of full broadband deployment. For instance, in Montour County, DRIVE—an economic development organization in the region—partnered with Geisinger to implement a pilot program to improve access to significant portions of the county while also providing a secure network for its county government offices. Geisinger invested in the project

because they understood it wasn't just an investment in the region's economy, but in the region's public health.

Public-private partnerships are vital for expanding broadband access because many private businesses and organizations understand that it will help everyone in the community, both residents and businesses. The DRIVE/Geisinger project is one that can be used as a model for many communities across Pennsylvania.

Yet, the biggest obstacle still comes back to funding. Communities may be able to implement projects that help take small bites out of the problem, but if we want to tackle this issue at a comprehensive level, it's clear that we need to do something different. We owe it to our communities, our

businesses, our health care providers, and our educators and students. We owe it to families that struggle to stay in touch with one another simply because of the broadband access where they live.

To address this issue, we must work together and pass the Restore Pennsylvania legislation. It will take a great deal of coordination and collaboration and the willingness to put personal and political agendas aside, but this isn't a Republican or Democratic issue. This is a human issue. The future of Pennsylvania rests squarely on what steps we take today to address this issue and position Pennsylvania for future growth and opportunity. ▮



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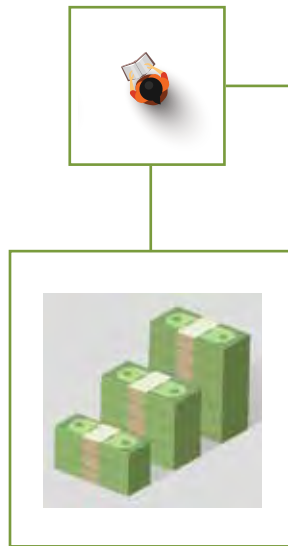
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**67 COUNTIES
1 STATE**



PENNSYLVANIA COUNTS IN 2020



The census matters for all Pennsylvanians. Each person counted in rural, urban and suburban areas contributes \$2,093 in federal funds annually. **In a period of ten years, that equals \$20,930 per individual** independently of age, gender, address, or immigration status.

Norman Bristol Colón

Executive Director

Pennsylvania Governor's Census 2020 Complete Count Commission

Pennsylvania is getting ready to join all other 49 states and U.S. territories to comply with the constitutionally-mandated decennial census. The census 2020 is the first high-tech census with the questionnaire available online, but responses can still be submitted in paper and by phone.

Governor Tom Wolf established the Governor's Census 2020 Complete Count Commission by executive order in September 2018. The commission is tasked with recommending methods and policies to facilitate the most complete and accurate census count, including implementing strategies to reach hard-to-count populations (HTCs).

HTCs are groups that have historically been less likely to respond to the census immediately. These groups can be found in both rural and

urban areas. They include young children, racial and ethnic minorities, people who do not speak fluent English, the poor and the homeless, undocumented immigrants, refugees, mobile individuals such as college students, LGBTQ people, and individuals who are angry at or distrustful of the government. Children aged zero to four comprise the most undercounted age category.

THOROUGH REPRESENTATION

The 41-member commission consists of individuals representing business, academia, community and nonprofit organizations, religious communities, health care communities, elected and appointed officials, and employees from all levels of government. All agencies under the governor's jurisdiction are represented through

the Pennsylvania Census 2020 Interagency Workgroup to provide assistance and cooperation for a complete and accurate count.

The census is an essential policy tool for state government, county government, and local municipalities. The federal government depends on census data to allocate resources. State governments use it to draw legislative districts and to direct spending. Academics, nonprofits, and businesses rely on it to inform and direct their work. Almost everything we know about our population and our communities comes from information collected during the decennial census and its related surveys.

The census also directly impacts the funding that municipalities will receive over the next decade. According to the National Conference of State

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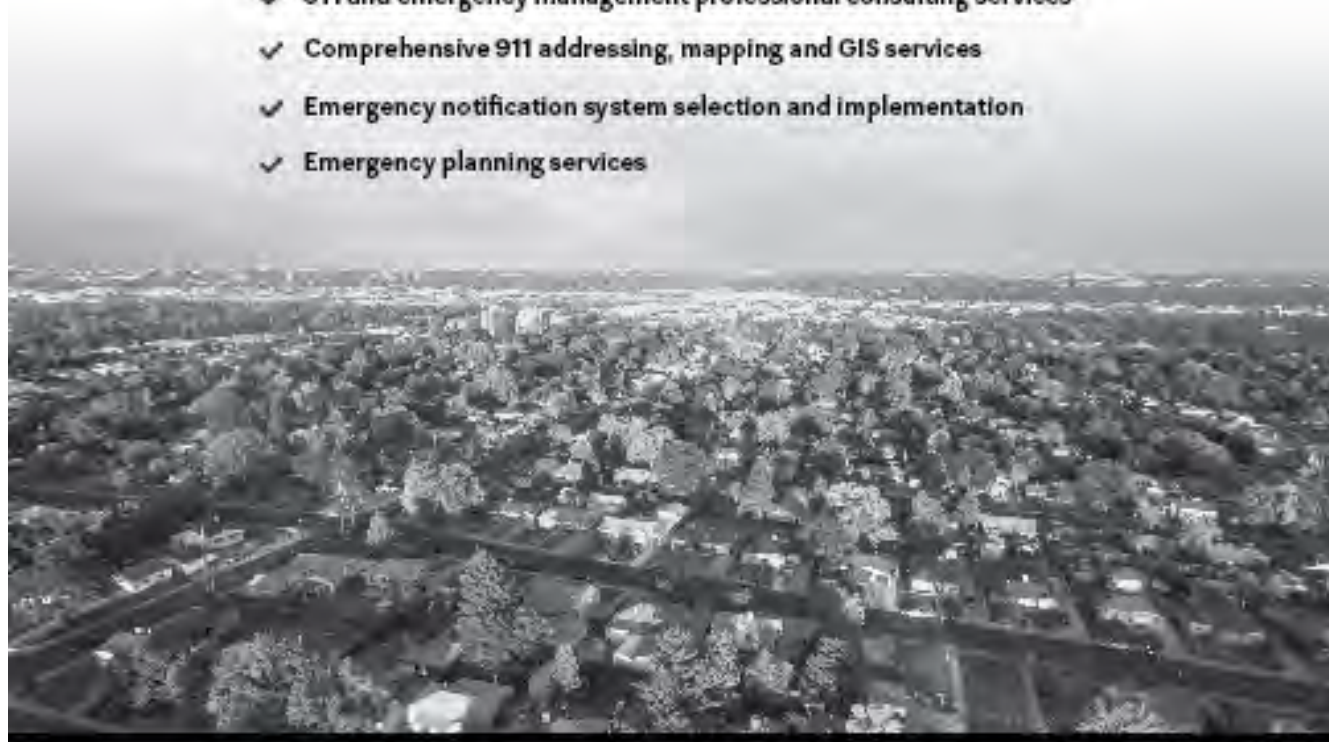
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Legislatures, from the 16 largest federal programs that allocate funds based primarily on census data, Pennsylvania receives \$26.8 billion annually—the fifth largest allocation in the nation. This funding goes toward critical infrastructure, roads and bridges, Medicare, education, senior citizens' programs, human services support, and rural development.

That is equal to more than \$2,000 per citizen in Pennsylvania. A complete census determines funding vital to our commonwealth and our future. When Pennsylvanians respond to the census, our commonwealth and communities get a fair share of federal funds to spend on schools, hospitals, roads, public works, and other programs. It is in every Pennsylvanian's best interest to ensure an accurate census 2020 count.

The importance of the census extends to several key areas:

Fair Political Representation

An accurate census helps ensure fair representation at all levels of government.

The primary constitutional purpose for the decennial census is to determine how many congressional representatives each state will have for the next decade and to ensure equal representation in the redistricting process. For instance, congressional districts and the boundaries of your city ward are determined by census numbers. Today, Pennsylvania has half of the representatives it did from 1913 to 1933. Despite a modest increase in population from 2000 to 2010, the state lost its 19th seat in the U.S. House of Representatives and is on track to lose at least one more in 2020.

Housing and Infrastructure Development

Many communities in Pennsylvania rely on the kinds of programs financed by Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), including the construction of affordable housing and public facilities, infrastructure enhancements, and job creation initiatives. In fiscal year (FY) 2016-17, thanks to census data, communities across Pennsylvania were awarded more than \$196 million in CDBG funds.

Federal-aid Highway Program

Pennsylvania's geographic size and large population means there are thousands of miles of road to maintain. In FY 2017-18, census data helped Pennsylvania receive more than \$1.68 billion in funding for maintenance of national highways, as well as the construction and repair of bridges.

Nutritional Assistance for the Elderly

Pennsylvania has a large elderly population. Many seniors rely on federal assistance for food, shelter, and medical care. An example of a program that provides critical assistance to older Pennsylvanians in need is the Nutrition Services component of the Older Americans Act. In FY 2016-17, census data directed more than \$31 million for nutrition services to the state.

Programs Targeting Rural Communities

Fifty-five programs targeting rural communities were identified in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance for FY 2016-17 for a total fund distribution of \$30.7 billion nationally. Expenditures of six rural

assistance federal programs for Pennsylvania in FY 2016-17 was \$760,728,267. That funding was allocated to assist with housing and electrification loans and loan guarantees, water systems for rural communities, rural rental assistance programs, business and industry loans, and other initiatives.

The Most Reliable Data

The census provides the most reliable and complete data for research, decision-making, and planning for the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. While it only asks a few basic questions, the population counts and demographic data that it produces serve as a benchmark for most other current statistics that help us gain deeper insights into our communities.

Academic institutions use census data to craft educational curricula. Medical facilities and health institutions use it to track the well-being of communities and to control diseases. Businesses of all sizes use the data as a tool to determine new markets and develop expansion plans, to forecast sales and growth projections, for supply chain and logistics management, and even to provide workforce development initiatives to surrounding communities.

All levels of government also rely on census data to inform their research, decision-making, and planning from the basic demographic composition of a community to infrastructure and transportation planning. Census data is used for emergency preparedness, disaster relief, and resiliency planning. It is also used for zoning and permitting processes and to measure the success and outcomes of local programs or initiatives.



The total loss for programs such as Medicaid, Medicare, CHIP, and several others due to a **one percent undercount** in the 2010 census for Pennsylvania was **\$221,762,564**.

The importance of the census extends to several key areas:



Fair Political Representation



Housing and Infrastructure Development



Federal-aid Highway Program



Nutritional Assistance for the Elderly



Programs Targeting Rural Communities



The Most Reliable Data

UNDERCOUNTING IS COSTLY

According to the George Washington University's Institute of Public Policy, the fiscal costs of a census undercount to Pennsylvania would strike a strong blow to the state's fiscal stability.

The projected fiscal loss in federal medical assistance programs per person missed in the 2010 census in Pennsylvania was \$1,746—the second-highest loss in the country. The total loss for programs such as Medicaid, Medicare, CHIP, and several others due to a one percent undercount in the 2010 census for Pennsylvania was \$221,762,564.

An accurate and complete census is, therefore, essential to ensuring that government monies are distributed to areas where they are needed most and will have the greatest impact. We need significant investments in schools, infrastructure, public health, public institutions, and services.

Workers and businesses pay their fair share of taxes. They should receive a fair share from the benefits government offers in return. And the fairness of this exchange between the government, communities, and their constituents depends on the accuracy of the census.

The Governor's Census 2020 Complete Count Commission is working closely with the U.S. Census Bureau, the Pennsylvania State Data Center, Philly Counts, the Allegheny County/ City of Pittsburgh Complete Count Committee, and other partners to develop the infrastructure to "get out the count."

The census matters for all Pennsylvanians. Each person counted in rural, urban and suburban areas contributes \$2,093 in federal funds annually. In a period of ten years, that equals \$20,930 per individual independently of age, gender, address, or immigration status.

We have only one chance to get a complete and accurate count. There are no recounts. The Pennsylvania population number submitted to the president in 2020 will dictate the federal funding and representation for our state until we get the opportunity to update it in 10 years through census 2030. 🍷

Census Day is April 1, 2020

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Making it Count

How Counties Can Help Ensure a Fair and Accurate Census

Jayant Kairam

Director of Program Strategy
National Association of Counties

Amidst all debate about what will be included on the Census 2020 questionnaire, the main constant is that the decennial census is a hugely important civic exercise with important consequences for counties. For the past year, the National Association of Counties has provided information and guidance to our members on strategies that can help ensure a fair and accurate count, while also emphasizing what's at stake. Through these efforts, we have been able to identify how counties can lead and support an effective Census 2020 administration effort.

The Constitution mandates that a census of the U.S. be conducted every 10 years. The first census was taken in 1790, and the 2020 Census will be the first to lean on a large-scale online completion. Census data drive the allocation of more than \$900 billion in annual funding across hundreds of federal programs. These include core safety net programs like the Children's Health Insurance Program and Medicaid, Title 1 grants to Local Education Agencies and Head Start, and determinations on eligibility for

new initiatives like Opportunity Zones. Various predictions suggest that the census will cause major changes in the U.S. House of Representatives, shifting the 435 seats with potential gains in the West, South and Southwest and losses in the Midwest.

INCREASED COMPLEXITIES

The Census and the related American Community Survey also paint critical portraits of the population and unmatched data sets that inform private business decision-making and siting, independent research and countless state and local programmatic and policy determinations on services covering transportation, schools, emergency response and law enforcement. In truth, local officials are well-versed in the centrality of the census to how government and citizens interact, but many Americans fail to see that connection. It is important for local governments to highlight this for our residents.

The census is often characterized as the largest civilian mobilization

undertaken by the government, and with this year's digital transition, the complexities have increased. A host of cybersecurity concerns were highlighted in a recent GAO study. Budget challenges have resulted in the Census Bureau's plans to reduce the number of enumerators and local offices. Further, there is concern that printing delays could result from the determination on the citizenship question. While the Census Bureau maintains it is on track and on time, it's hard to ignore the difficult landscape they are navigating. An all-hands-on-deck approach to achieving a full and accurate count is more necessary than ever.

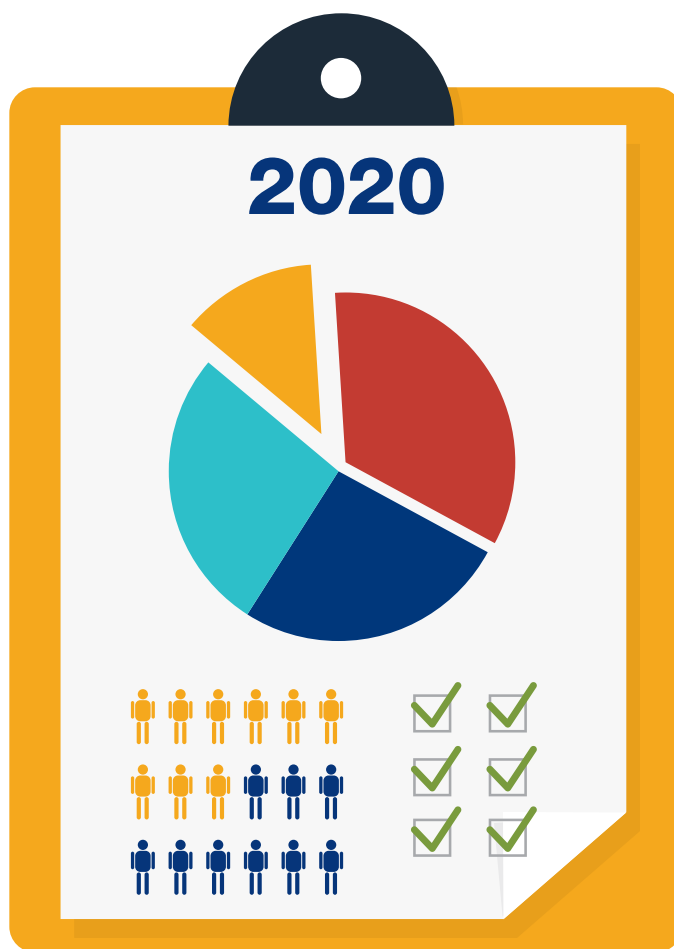
COUNTY STRATEGIES

Counties are key ambassadors and beneficiaries of a full count. These are some key strategies we are encouraging counties deploy to support Census 2020.

Complete Count Committees

Many counties are developing local campaigns that bring together representatives from all critical demographic groups such as children,

Census data drive the allocation of more than \$900 billion in annual funding across hundreds of federal programs.



The decennial census is a hugely important civic exercise with important consequences for counties.

season in spring 2020 and into the summer, with a focus on hard to reach populations such as post-disaster communities, homeless, seasonal turnover and group homes. There will be around 500,000 field staff positions ranging from administrative to recruitment to enumeration.

Access & Marketing

Next year's digital census comes with a new set of administrative challenges, and counties have an important role in helping overcome access barriers. Counties must step up to help enable online submission for residents with limited internet access. Fortunately, counties either manage or have close relationships with libraries, school systems, community centers, hospitals, health clinics and job training sites that can host kiosks and information booths with internet and engage those hard to reach populations. Many counties are getting creative. In Miami-Dade County, for example, officials used 2010 response rates to target areas, called "census tracts," with low participation with customized messaging from trusted community partners.

Throughout 2019 the National Association of Counties will continue to provide counties with resources and insights on what is working in the field and how to connect with advocates and technical assistance providers looking to ensure a fair and accurate count. Visit www.naco.org to learn more. 📌

teens, millennials and ethnic groups and stakeholders like local chambers of commerce, civic associations and religious entities. These stakeholders can help develop messaging and outreach strategies, translation needs and partnerships to ensure that trusted messengers communicate with traditionally undercounted populations. While some states like California are providing funding for regional and local committees, others are leveraging general fund dollars or community, business and philanthropic contributions and partnerships to mobilize these volunteer coalitions, such as San Antonio and Bexar County, Texas.

Counties have a chance to focus on young children in particular in this effort. In the 2010 census, one in 10 young children was not counted.

Including kids as a priority for complete count committees is critical, and resources like the Count All Kids initiative can help with materials, outreach strategies and tools to locate where kids are being undercounted.

Employment Opportunities

Census 2020 is creating jobs. Leading up to the official start of counting operations in Alaska in 2020, there will be significant opportunity for counties to promote jobs and help facilitate placements around key quality control measures like address checks and regional operations. Local talent will be key in supporting canvassing in late summer 2019. Recruitment is underway for staffing of 200 Area Census Offices and general field staff. Field staff will provide operational support, particularly through the peak



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The CCAP/PCNTV *Pennsylvania's Historic County Courthouses* videos will again air this year on PCNTV and feature **Blair County**, Thursday, August 15 at 7 p.m. and Saturday, August 17 at 2 p.m.; **Bedford County**, Thursday, August 22 at 7 p.m. and Saturday, August 24 at 2 p.m.; and **Carbon County**, Thursday, August 29 at 7 p.m. and Saturday, August 31 at 2 p.m. After airing, the videos will be placed on the CCAP website. 📺



IT'S A RUFF JOB



Counties throughout Pennsylvania employ therapy and service pets to comfort individuals in many sensitive settings and perform tasks that mere humans just can't quite accomplish. Enjoy a few of our furry friends on the following pages.



Top:
Boone, Allegheny County

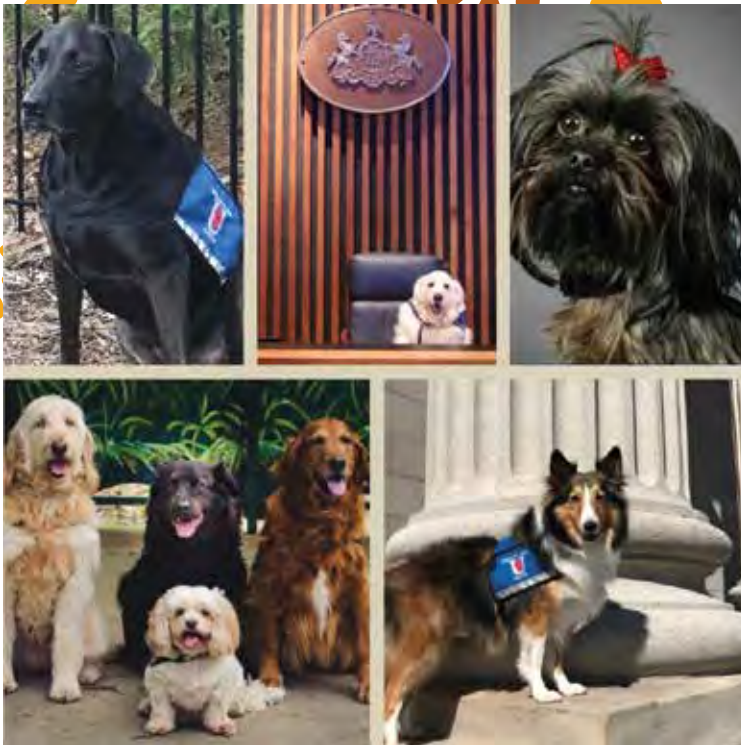
Left:
Keisel, Cumberland County



Lucie, Allegheny County



Oakley and Lexi, Clinton County



Top, left to right: **Molly, Sadie, Mariah**
 Bottom, left to right: **Caoimhe, Malkin, Lilly, Ellie, Stewie**
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05/18

County Leaders Graduate

from CCAP Center for Excellence



Left to right: Rick Mirabito, Lycoming County commissioner; Ed Heasley, Clarion County commissioner; Chad Schnee, Berks County first assistant county solicitor; Deanna Giorno, Bucks County chief clerk; Steve Nevada, Franklin County assistant county administrator; Robert Kagel, Chester County administrator; and, Pat Fabian, Armstrong County commissioner.

For two and a half days they gathered at the CCAP offices in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania for intense and in-depth, high level training by a team of experts, some hands-on practice and exploration during CCAP's Center for Excellence in County Leadership (CEL) program, a premier professional development program for county officials. At the end of those long and often thought-provoking days, seven county officials became the program's fifth set of graduates.

CEL training focuses on fostering individual growth through interactive and high-level classroom training aimed at improving participants' communication, management and leadership skills. CEL includes intense classes in

styles of leadership, managerial versatility, interpersonal dynamics; crisis communication, media management, daily communication problem solving, decision making and other areas.

Participation is available to one eligible person per county per year, with a maximum of 12 participants annually. An application is required for admittance to the program, with final selection being made by a standing CCAP committee. Eligible participants are the CCAP voting members in each county: county commissioners, council members, chief clerks, county administrators, and solicitors. Key county leaders and department heads also may be eligible with a written letter of support from their county official. The 2020

program will be held June 17 -19 at the CCAP Office in Harrisburg. Please see our website, www.pacounties.org/ME/Pages/CELProgram.aspx, for more information; applications will be posted in September.

The 2019 program was produced by The Professional Edge, Inc. (www.theprofessionaledgeinc.com). Program sponsors include the Pennsylvania Counties Risk Pool (PCoRP), the Pennsylvania Counties Workers' Compensation Trust (PComp), the Unemployment Compensation Trust (UC Trust), Cafardi Ferguson Wyrick Weis + Stotler LLC (CFWW+S), and Campbell Durrant Beatty Palombo & Miller, P.C. 🍷



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- Founded in 2006, PTG and its software technologists have maintained a 100% success rate in implementing PensionPro. Implementations have been on time, within budget, and within 8 - 14 months.
- PTG is the leading provider of web-based pension administration software systems serving the public employee retirement community.
- PTG PensionPro is currently being utilized by over 100 public employee pension funds to assist in serving the needs of their membership.

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- Fully functional web based pension administration software suite.
- Easily configurable to meet all pension fund requirements such as DROP and Share Plans.
- PensionPro is hosted by Rackspace Inc., the #1 managed cloud provider. Rackspace monitors all data and web traffic against foreign and domestic intrusions as well as providing collocation redundancy.

The PTG team is looking forward to becoming a trusted technology partner to the Pennsylvania community.

For more information or to request a demonstration of the PTG PensionPro, please contact: Stephan Georgacopoulos at Stephan@PTGMA.com or 617-977-8408 x15

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YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID:

Working to Prevent Youth Suicide

IN CHESTER COUNTY



Dana M. Heiman
Chief Impact Officer
Brandywine Health Foundation

Alyson Ferguson, MPH
Director of Grantmaking
Thomas Scattergood Behavioral
Health Foundation

Stacie M. Metz, PhD, MSW, MPH, MA
Professor, Department of
Graduate Social Work
West Chester University

“Every single day I tell people about the Youth Mental Health First Aid program and how it’s changed my life. My mom, along with other community members, would like to partake in the program themselves!”

Diamond Marrow, Coatesville Area Senior High School student, Youth Mental Health First Aider

Located in the western suburbs of Philadelphia, Coatesville is one of Pennsylvania’s poorest communities. The City of Coatesville is very typical of small former industrial mid-Atlantic towns that once had the steel industry for local employment but have been in the throes of rapid decline. The City of Coatesville’s 1.9 square miles are home to about 13,164 people, with more than 30% of them living in poverty according to the most recent Census estimates.

In the fall of 2013, when this program was initiated the estimated income per capita for Coatesville residents was just \$17,702. At that time the Brandywine Health Foundation and key area leaders learned from the Pennsylvania Youth Survey about the high rates of depression among Coatesville-area youth compared to their peers in the remainder of Chester County and the state as a whole. In addition, children in the Coatesville

Area School District (CASD) had been disproportionately affected by neglect, abuse, delinquency issues, and low graduation rates.

These statistics demonstrated not only the need for a strong behavioral health system of care, but also the critical importance of prevention and early intervention for the ongoing success of Coatesville youth. Building on their existing momentum of funding two key behavioral health agencies, the Brandywine Health Foundation decided to further prioritize behavioral health issues in Coatesville and turned to colleagues at the Thomas Scattergood Behavioral Health Foundation in Philadelphia for ideas and evidence-based practices. After several meetings, the Brandywine Health Foundation’s staff and board of directors decided to move forward with a plan to bring the Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) curriculum to Coatesville.

IDENTIFY, UNDERSTAND, RESPOND

Youth Mental Health First Aid teaches the knowledge and skills needed to identify, understand, and respond to signs and symptoms of behavioral health challenges or crises. The curriculum provides an overview of the signs and symptoms of various behavioral health challenges such as depression, anxiety, suicide, and substance-use disorders. The course content also teaches a five-step action plan using the mnemonic “ALGEE,” which stands for: **A**ssess for risk of suicide or harm, **L**isten nonjudgmentally, **G**ive reassurance and information, **E**ncourage appropriate professional help, and **E**ncourage self-help and other support strategies. ALGEE is the cornerstone of the curriculum.

Though the Brandywine Health Foundation and its partners were confident that bringing YMHFA to

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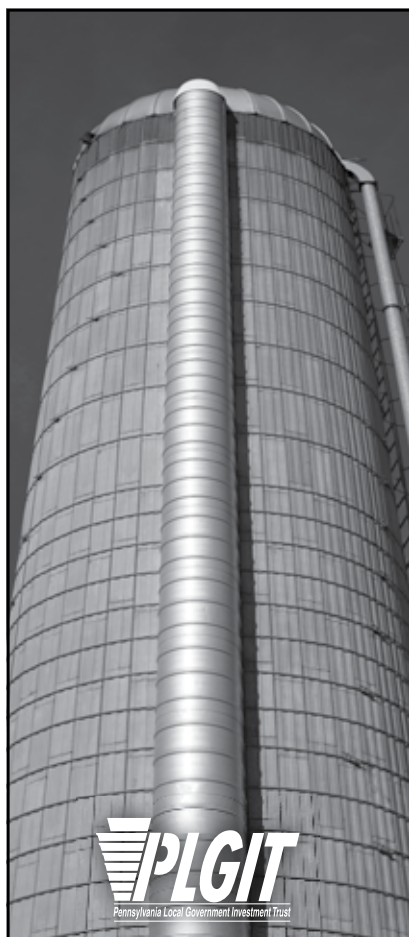
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All facts and figures are as of December 31, 2018.



Coatesville would have a significant impact, the group was committed to having an independent evaluation of the program. Results from pre- and post-training surveys were developed and analyzed by West Chester University, and show the training significantly raises awareness about the proper way to respond to youth in need, and the confidence to do so.

The Coatesville program garnered national attention resulting in a two-year federal grant to the Coatesville Area School District (CASD) to implement YMHFA, one of just 105 U.S. school districts to receive such recognition. The Coatesville YMHFA planning team had the opportunity to share this work at conferences held by a number of organizations, including the National Council for Behavioral Health, Penn State Public Health Symposium, Society for Public Health Education, Pennsylvania National Association of Social Workers, American Public Health Association, Substance Abuse Mental Health Service Administration, Grantmakers In Health's annual conference and conducted a webinar for The County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) on behalf of its Comprehensive Behavioral Health Task Force.

The program's success was also largely made possible because of the remarkable generosity of the funding collaborative, which included: Aegon Transamerica Foundation; The Applestone Foundation; CCRES; Coatesville Community Health Foundation, a fund of the Chester County Community Foundation; County of Chester Department of Human Services; The Dansko Foundation; Genuardi Family Foundation; The Gunard Berry Carlson Memorial Foundation Inc.; Marshall-

Reynolds Foundation; Philadelphia Health Partnership; Rotary Club of Coatesville; Mr. Samuel Slater and Ms. Eleanor Forbes; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; the Thomas Scattergood Behavioral Health Foundation; United Way of Chester County; and van Ameringen Foundation Inc.

POSITIVE IMPACT

Several stories emerged of the positive impact of the training and though completing a rigorous evaluation, it is known that countless stories of impact exist but are unable to be captured. For example, counselors at the coed after-school homework program called Backing Our Young Sons & Giving Girls Guidance have twice intervened after hearing youth discussing suicide. So have five cafeteria workers at the North Brandywine Middle School after noticing that a student appeared withdrawn and isolated. Prior to the training, both the counselors and cafeteria workers may not have known what to do but having learned warning signs and proper assessment at the training session, they promptly referred the student to appropriate personnel to receive help.

At a football game, two Coatesville School District administrators noticed a student looked sullen and not like herself. They pulled the student aside and asked how she was doing. "Not well," she replied. They continued to talk to her, discovering that she was contemplating suicide. The administrators stayed with the student until her parents could pick her up and then connected the family with mental health resources. As a result, the student is getting the help she so desperately needs.



ALGEE

Assess for risk of suicide or harm

Listen nonjudgmentally

Give reassurance and information

Encourage appropriate professional help

Encourage self-help and other support strategies





YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

64.1%

of youth with major depression do not receive any mental HEALTH TREATMENT.

Mental Health America

1 in 5

teens & young adults lives with a mental HEALTH CONDITION.

National Alliance for Mental Illness

5.13%

of youth report having a substance use or ALCOHOL PROBLEM.

Mental Health America

Why Youth Mental Health First Aid?

Youth Mental Health First Aid teaches you **how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders**. This 8-hour training gives adults who work with youth the skills they need to reach out and provide initial support to adolescents (ages 12-18) who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem and help connect them to the appropriate care.

WHAT IT COVERS

- Common signs and symptoms of mental illnesses in this age group, including:
 - Anxiety
 - Depression
 - Eating disorders
 - Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Common signs and symptoms of substance use.
- How to interact with an adolescent in crisis.
- How to connect the adolescent with help.

WHO SHOULD TAKE IT

- Teachers
- School staff
- Coaches
- Camp counselors
- Youth group leaders
- Parents
- People who work with youth

The course will teach you how to apply the ALGEE action plan:

- **Assess** for risk of suicide or harm
- **Listen** nonjudgmentally
- **Give** reassurance and information
- **Encourage** appropriate professional help
- **Encourage** self-help and other support strategies

TO FIND A COURSE OR CONTACT AN INSTRUCTOR IN YOUR AREA, VISIT
www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org OR EMAIL Info@MentalHealthFirstAid.org.

"As adults, we sometimes forget how hard it was being an adolescent. When we see a kid who is just miserable at school, we might think they choose to be that way — or that it's just part of adolescence. But in fact, they might be in a mental health crisis, one they certainly did not choose and do not want. When a teacher says, 'How can I be helpful?' that is a powerful question."

—Alyssa Fruchtenicht, School-based Mental Health Counselor



MENTAL
HEALTH
FIRST AID®

Thanks to the Brandywine Health Foundation's Youth Mental Health First Aid Training Program, the school district employees recognized a youth in crisis, and even though they had planned on cheering for their team, they ended up saving a life.

63 SUICIDES

Nearly three times as many people in Pennsylvania die by suicide annually than by homicide. In fact, suicide is the third leading cause of death for Pennsylvanians between the ages of 10 and 24, according to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

In Chester County, 63 suicide deaths were reported by the coroner's office in 2018, which is more than double the number of suicide deaths that were reported 10 years ago.

In response to two recent student deaths by suicide in the Coatesville School District, an eight-hour YMHFA training was conducted for students involved in extracurricular organizations such as Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) and student council. As a result, many felt comfortable referring themselves and their friends to suicide prevention resources. "So many of us are hurting," said a student participant. "I hope this training will help me to help others."

Commissioner Kathi Cozzone noted, "The Chester County commissioners were pleased that the Brandywine Health Foundation along with so many other partners were committed to and had such significant impact with this four-year Youth Mental Health First Aid program in the greater Coatesville community. Depression is a treatable medical condition, but too often, it goes unrecognized and is one of the leading causes of death by suicide.

Thanks to a funding collaborative of 16 private, public and government funders, including the County of Chester's Department of Human Services, this project has helped the greater Coatesville community and Chester County residents as a whole, recognize the signs of depression in themselves and in others and empower them to get help or provide help to an individual in crisis."

HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights of the final evaluation report conducted by West Chester University include:

Tracking of Trainings and Audience

From September 2014 to June 2018, trainers facilitated 81 trainings (21 for CASD employees/high school students, 56 for community, and 5 mixed CASD/community), reaching 1073 persons specifically affiliated with Coatesville and 361 persons not affiliated with Coatesville. CASD employees represented all schools and jobs such as teachers, administrators, custodians, and guidance counselors. The remainder of attendees were community members living, working, and/or volunteering in the Coatesville area. One-hundred and fifty-six individuals were parents or guardians of a CASD student.

Pre-Post Test Mental Health Knowledge Improvement

Using a 15-item mental health knowledge survey developed and validated by the inter-professional YMHFA planning and evaluation committee members (who held expertise in the field), mental health knowledge summary score statistically improved from pretest (average of 10.9 out of 15 correct) to posttest (average of 12.9 out of 15 correct), $p < .05$. Specifically, 13 out of the 15 knowledge items exhibited statistical improvement from pretest to posttest (at $p < .05$ level).

Knowledge items with large statistical improvement included:

- It is not a good idea to ask someone if they are feeling suicidal in case you put the idea in their head. (false) [66% correct at pretest to 93% at posttest]
- A first-aider can distinguish a panic attack from heart attack. (false) [37% to 64% correct]
- Mental health problems often develop during adolescence or young adulthood. (true) [72% to 93% correct]
- Youth are often resilient when they face difficulties. (true) [55% to 82% correct]

PARTICIPANT COMMENT

"I was very impressed because of the very realistic goals they set: opening up human contact with troubled people and giving them someone to speak with."

PARTICIPANT COMMENT

“It’s basic mental health first aid or CPR that gives the general public tools to respond if they see someone in an acute crisis.”

- When a young person tells you they are thinking about suicide, it is important to ask if they have a plan for completing suicide. (true) [50% to 95% correct]

Pretest-Posttest Improvement in Confidence Interacting or Helping Youth Experiencing Mental Health Challenges/Crises

At pretest, participants, on average, reported moderate confidence interacting or helping youth experiencing mental health challenges or crises across the National Council on Behavioral Health’s eight-item scale assessing perceived confidence in implementing ALGEE first aid behaviors. The confidence scale summary score and all eight items demonstrated moderate to large statistical increases from pretest to posttest.

- Recognize the signs and symptoms that a young person may be dealing with a mental health challenge or crisis.
- Ask a young person whether s/he is considering killing her/himself.
- Offer a distressed young person basic “first aid” level information and reassurance about mental health problems.
- Be aware of my own views and feelings about mental health problems and disorders.
- Actively and compassionately listen to a young person in distress.
- Assist a young person who may be dealing with a mental health problem or crisis to seek professional help.

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1,316 COUNTIES PARTICIPATING

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U.S. Counties

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Endorsed by: _____

- Assist a young person who may be dealing with a mental health problem or crisis to connect with appropriate community, peer, and personal supports.
- Reach out to a young person who may be dealing with a mental health challenge.

Satisfaction with Program

In participants who responded to the program satisfaction items, 97% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed the course content was practical/easy-to-understand and 98% would recommend the YMHFA training course to others.

REFERRALS TO LOCAL AGENCIES

Referral data from three local mental health/substance abuse agencies were routinely collected to assist in identifying the YMHFA training impact on youth referrals to providers in the region. These three agencies include: Child Guidance Resource Centers,

Human Services, Inc., and Gaudenzia. Referral data were compiled for clients younger than 20 years of age and who were living in the CASD.

During the first year of implementation the total number of referrals to the three agencies more than doubled as compared to the baseline year (174 to 416). After the initial year of a significant increase the following years slightly decreased and stabilized in subsequent years but remained higher than the baseline.

For more information on the Youth Mental Health First Aid program and/or to receive a copy of the complete evaluation, contact Dana Heiman at dheiman@brandywinefoundation.org, Alyson Ferguson at aferguson@scattergoodfoundation.org, or Dr. Stacie Metz at smetz@wcupa.edu. 📧

Sources: Brandywine Health Foundation's YMHFA Report, September 1, 2014 – June 30, 2018, written by West Chester University.

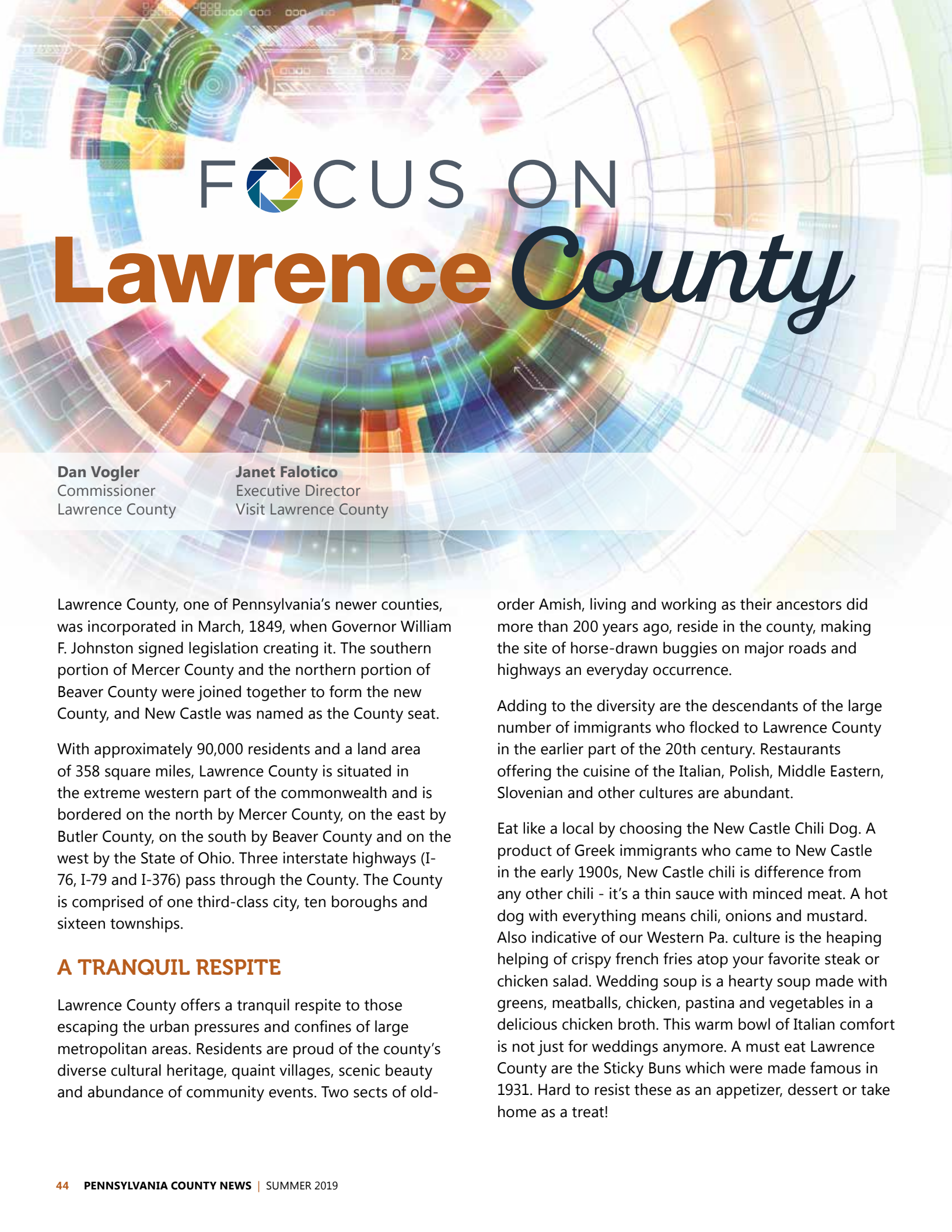
PARTICIPANT COMMENT

“Such a stigma surrounds mental health issues that people often are reluctant to talk about them... this training empowers laypeople to know the signs and symptoms of a mental health crisis, then to act by knowing where to send those in need for help.”

Community Based Provider Referrals during Youth Mental Health First Aid Implementation in Coatesville, PA

	Year of Implementation					
	Pre-Implementation Baseline Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
Child Guidance Resource Center	111	366	338	304	182	1190
Gaudenzia	15	16	7	3	Unavailable Data	26
Health Services Inc.	48	34	37	40	41	152
Total	174	416	382	347	223†	1368

†In Year 4 only two behavioral health providers reported referral data.



FOCUS ON **Lawrence** *County*

Dan Vogler
Commissioner
Lawrence County

Janet Falotico
Executive Director
Visit Lawrence County

Lawrence County, one of Pennsylvania's newer counties, was incorporated in March, 1849, when Governor William F. Johnston signed legislation creating it. The southern portion of Mercer County and the northern portion of Beaver County were joined together to form the new County, and New Castle was named as the County seat.

With approximately 90,000 residents and a land area of 358 square miles, Lawrence County is situated in the extreme western part of the commonwealth and is bordered on the north by Mercer County, on the east by Butler County, on the south by Beaver County and on the west by the State of Ohio. Three interstate highways (I-76, I-79 and I-376) pass through the County. The County is comprised of one third-class city, ten boroughs and sixteen townships.

A TRANQUIL RESPITE

Lawrence County offers a tranquil respite to those escaping the urban pressures and confines of large metropolitan areas. Residents are proud of the county's diverse cultural heritage, quaint villages, scenic beauty and abundance of community events. Two sects of old-

order Amish, living and working as their ancestors did more than 200 years ago, reside in the county, making the site of horse-drawn buggies on major roads and highways an everyday occurrence.

Adding to the diversity are the descendants of the large number of immigrants who flocked to Lawrence County in the earlier part of the 20th century. Restaurants offering the cuisine of the Italian, Polish, Middle Eastern, Slovenian and other cultures are abundant.

Eat like a local by choosing the New Castle Chili Dog. A product of Greek immigrants who came to New Castle in the early 1900s, New Castle chili is different from any other chili - it's a thin sauce with minced meat. A hot dog with everything means chili, onions and mustard. Also indicative of our Western Pa. culture is the heaping helping of crispy french fries atop your favorite steak or chicken salad. Wedding soup is a hearty soup made with greens, meatballs, chicken, pasta and vegetables in a delicious chicken broth. This warm bowl of Italian comfort is not just for weddings anymore. A must eat Lawrence County are the Sticky Buns which were made famous in 1931. Hard to resist these as an appetizer, dessert or take home as a treat!



McConnells Mill covered bridge. Photo credit Michael Fornataro.

FIREWORKS

Several historical museums, plus genealogical research facilities dedicated to helping visitors trace their ancestry, may also be found here. The heritage of the area also contributes to New Castle's title of "Fireworks Capital of America". At one time there were more fireworks manufactured in Lawrence County than in any other part of the United States. Two of the nation's largest fireworks display companies, Zambelli Internationale and Pyrotecnico, are still located in the community.

Quaint villages offering craft, specialty and antique shopping abound. Small town outlets and art galleries, not usually found in larger malls, also dominate the friendly atmosphere. Major shopping center and strip plazas add to the mixture.

OUTDOOR FUN

In addition to shopping, the scenic beauty of the rural countryside provides a relaxation not found in metropolitan communities. Intermingled with lush farmlands are hiking trails, rivers for fishing and canoeing, two historic covered bridges, a world-class whitewater stream, plus the ruggedly beautiful McConnell's Mill State Park.



Lawrence County Amish countryside. Photo credit Visit Lawrence County.

It's all about the trails in Lawrence County; Wine, Craft Beer Hiking, River, Biking, Amish and Burger. Find your inner "trail" and experience it here. With so many "off the wheel" experiences waiting, be sure to stay overnight and relax and recharge. The North Country Trail runs through several townships in the County and passes through McConnell's Mill State Park as well as Pennsylvania's first trail town, Wampum, PA.

Hike on our many greenways or enjoy water activities such as kayaking or paddle boarding on our blue ways. There is also a guided white water experience on the Connoquenessing Creek in Ellwood City. Fishing is at its best, especially for trout, on the Neshannock Creek. Nine boat launches allow many adventures on the waters that surround Lawrence County.

It's all about the trails in Lawrence County; Wine, Craft Beer Hiking, River, Biking, Amish and Burger. Find your inner "trail" and experience it here.

PENNSYLVANIA TO OHIO

Lawrence County also is a bikers dream on the 12 mile paved National Recreation Stavich Bicycle Trail. Scenic views abound. Twelve miles long and eight feet wide, the trail runs parallel to the scenic Mahoning River and the rails of the former Youngstown-New Castle street car line. Originating in New Castle, Pa. the trail begins in Union Township and moves through Mahoning Township and continues onto Struthers, Ohio. Over rolling hills, through farmlands and wooded countryside, the trail unfolds east and west to provide safe, barrier-free recreation all year long. In the spring, summer and fall, the trail is open for riding, hiking, walking and jogging, and in the winter the trail is commonly used for cross country skiing.

And, get down and dirty with Pennsylvania's premiere ATV Park rolling through the underground mines. This is an experience you will never forget. Enthusiasts may travel miles while accepting the challenges that include riding through abandoned limestone mines in New Beaver and Wampum. Lawrence County has much to offer and we welcome you to visit us! 🍷



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County
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Criminal Justice Best Practices Awards

The County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) recently bestowed Criminal Justice System for the 21st Century Best Practices Awards.

Bucks County Prison received **Best Practices Award in the large county jail category** for their educational and treatment **Hope and Hearts Programs** for the offender population. The HOPE (Helping Others Prosper Eternally) program is a voluntary drug and alcohol educations and treatment program for males. It utilizes cognitive behavioral interventions and assists with re-entry into the community and/or community-based treatment. The HEART (Healing, Empowering, and Recovering Together) program incorporates Medication Assisted Treatment, is voluntary and provides intensive substance abuse education for the female population. It was started with grant funds in 2018 and mimics the HOPE program.

Northumberland County received the 2019 **Best Practices Award in the small jail category** for their **County Rehabilitation Center**. After the original county jail was destroyed by a fire in 2015 the county wanted to do more than just build a new prison facility and decided to expand on drug recovery efforts for arrested or incarcerated individuals that are affiliated with drugs. They partnered with Gaudenzia and seven other counties including Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Schuylkill, Snyder and Union to create a rehabilitation facility that would assist individuals from all of the counties suffering from drug addictions. This facility offers arrested individuals that are suffering from drug addictions a more productive alternative than prison.

The **Juvenile Alternatives Program Award** was presented to **Berks County** for their **JusticeWorks YouthCare Program**. The JusticeWorks Reintegration program was developed to provide the “missing link” in intensive long-term treatment and residential programs. Aftercare requires the creation of a seamless set of systems across formal and informal social control networks as well as a continuum of community services to prevent the recurrence of antisocial behavior. This program works with the youth as well as the family to which they will be returning and aims to address family dysfunction.

The **Partner Award**, submitted by Bucks County, was given to **The Central Bucks Family YMCA** (CBFYM-CA). The organization has provided

on-site membership for adjudicated delinquents since 1998. The Central Bucks County YMCA worked with the Bucks County Youth Center to create a grant-funded project to train residents of the youth center to participate in training for and completing the CBFYMCA 'Y Run 5k' using a couch to 5k training program. This program aims to create a sense of normalcy by engaging youth in volunteer activities within the community and to develop and nurture a sense of accomplishment and pride by obtaining a goal.

Berks County also received the newly created **CCAP Re-entry Award** for their **Berks Connections/Pretrial Services**. The program has provided services to the criminal justice population in the county for more than 40 years and are the leading provider of reentry services in the county. It operates

a workforce development program that provides employment readiness, financial literacy, job placement and job retention to individuals returning to the community from incarceration and hosts a Returning Citizens Career Fair which provides them access to employment opportunities second chance employers. The Rebuilding Reentrants and Reading program is a comprehensive pre-apprenticeship program in the construction trades supported through a U.S. Department of Labor Reentry Training grant. To date they have graduated 76 participants. 76 percent of them were employed within six weeks of graduation.

The **Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB) Award** was presented to the **Lycoming County Criminal Justice Advisory Board**. Three CCAP PCCD CJAB Regional Specialists

submitted nominations based on their interaction with this county CJAB in their application of best practices. Over the past few years the Lycoming County Criminal Justice Advisory Board has accomplished many goals including: providing mental health first aid training to court staff, law enforcement professionals, and prison staff; implementing a Crisis Intervention Team; hiring a CIT Coordinator that serves both Lycoming and Clinton counties; and supported the implementation of the Supportive Housing Program, as well as many others.

CCAP salutes everyone involved in these efforts for being innovative pioneers in meeting the challenges facing all county jails and juvenile justice providers. 🍷



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- Overall case management
- And much more!

For more information on PIMCC, please contact Desiree Nauen at dnguyen@pacounties.org or (717) 736-4779.

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Newsworthy

SUMMER 2019

Please join CCAP in welcoming the following new Associate members.

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M&T Bank

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At M&T Bank, we have a dedicated government banking team that provides financial solutions to meet the operating and financial needs of Pennsylvania counties. We offer services such as financing/credit (tax-exempt financing/leasing, lines of credit) depository (interest bearing checking, money market), treasury management (payables/receivables, fraud protection), collection (cash vault, lock-box), merchant (credit card), capital markets financing, and insurance (crime, cyber).

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With over 50 years of experience and many references, Scantek (www.scantek.info), provides document scanning, records management and consulting solutions for counties and municipalities throughout Pennsylvania, with affordable and easy-to-use document management software options. Scantek is a COSTARS-authorized business partner, and we are experts in helping you convert your paper files to secure, searchable electronic images to meet both your backfile and day-forward requirements.



Recently, **Stephen Amos, Chief of the Jails Division of the National Institute of Corrections, Department of Justice** and **Jennie Simpson, Senior Drug Policy Advisor (IPA), Bureau of Justice Assistance**, visited **Franklin County Jail** to tour the facility and learn more about its medication assisted treatment program. Among the many invaluable people who make the program work, the group photo includes **Representative Paul Schemel, Commissioner Bob Thomas, Warden Bill Bechtold, Deputy Warden Michelle Weller, County Administrator Carrie Gray, Assistant County Administrator Steve Nevada, Health Services Administrator of PrimeCare Justin Lensbower, the National Association of Counties' Lindsey Holman and Brett Matson, and CCAP's Ken Kroski.**

Erie County Councilmember Fiore Leone was recognized for exemplary service and dedication to local government at the **2019 Governor's Awards for Local Government Excellence**, held in conjunction with Pennsylvania Local Government Week in April. Fiore currently is the longest serving commissioner in the state, having first taken office in 1978.

Additionally, the **Reading Bridges Workgroup**, led by **Kevin Barnhardt**, won the Innovative Community/Government Initiatives Award. **Mercer, Lawrence, Butler and Venango** counties won the Information Technology Award for their multi-county CAD system for 911.

Rita Reynolds, who served Pennsylvania counties with CCAP for the past 20 years, has joined NACo as its new chief technology officer. Rita will lead NACo's overall technology strategy, including oversight and management of internal IT and member-based technology solutions and program services for county governments across the country.



Erie County Veterans' Support Initiatives program was recognized as Best in Category for the **National Association of Counties' 2019 Achievement Awards**.

Two years ago the manner in which veterans and their families in Erie County could access assistance changed. Beforehand, non-profit organizations and private citizens assisted needy veterans and their families in a rather unorganized manner. Help came only when resources and veterans were connected; largely by word of mouth. Only the local Erie VA Medical Center (VAMC) was connecting veterans with available resources; mostly medical benefits at that time. Worth noting is that not every veteran qualifies for VA provided services and benefits.

Erie County is home to a moderate population of veterans in need of assistance who, according to federal and state regulations do not all qualify.

Shortly after hiring Erie County's Veteran's Affairs Director he learned of a Veteran's Support Initiative created by a very civic minded veteran. This first Veteran's Support Initiative paved the way for others which eventually created a powerful network that connects resources to those veterans in need. Together, the three initiatives serve in different ways to support veterans while not altering the manner in which existing veteran centric organizations have done so for many years.

Six other Erie County programs also received NACo Achievement Awards. They are:

- **911 Dispatch Consolidation** – the Erie County Department of Public Safety's transition of 911 dispatch services from East Erie County Communications to the county's 911 Center. (Criminal Justice and Public Safety category)
- **Bike Around the County** – the county executive's annual public bike ride, designed to inform residents about county services, history and natural assets. (Civic Education and Public Information category)
- **EPIC Outreach** – the Erie County Office of Drug and Alcohol Abuse's innovative approach to engaging youth, families and communities in prevention efforts. (Human Services category)
- **Ice House** – the Erie County Human Resources Department's internal training program that encourages employees to think entrepreneurially about their work. (Personnel Management, Employment and Training category)
- **Rail Safety Plan** – the Erie County Department of Public Safety's emergency management plan designed to protect waterways from hazardous spills, resulting in mobile response trailers deployed around the county. (Risk and Emergency Management category)
- **Up For the Job** – the county executive's efforts to bring together community groups to launch an effort to market the Erie region's skilled workforce. (Community and Economic Development category)



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EMBRACING MEDIA RELATIONS

Lowell A. Briggs

Coordinator of Mass Communications
York College of Pennsylvania

If your county employs a full-time public information officer, consider yourselves lucky. A PIO (communications director or spokesperson) is indeed a luxury across the commonwealth. Some counties embed this strategic person in their emergency management department for quick media contact in a crisis. Other commissioners plant their PIOs in their own offices, ready to produce and send immediate county news to local media.

Without a PIO, who performs your media relations? Your community relations? Internal and external communications? Your issue or

reputation management? You may cross-train administrative assistants to follow a generic template for news releases, fact sheets and backgrounders. Beyond that, your media relations is likely up to YOU!

With proper training and guidance, you can comfortably and consistently affect change in your communities, as well as the public's knowledge of county government by handling your own media relations. Here are a few ways to get started.

Ask anyone in your county what worries them about county government! If they know you are

A photograph of two women, one with curly blonde hair and one with dark hair in a braid, both smiling and looking at a tablet held by the woman on the right. They are in an outdoor setting with a building in the background.

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their commissioner, you may receive polite responses. Others ideally will be brutally honest. Taxes! Potholes! Roads and bridges! Aging programs! Disability services!

Keep a list of these impact points. Direct your department heads in these areas to tell you when improvements are made, services are added or costs are saved. Then, inform media.

WHAT'S NEWS?

News is information that your local media considers important for your voters and their viewing, listening and reading audience to know every day. True! Media decide what news is. But you can help by having story ideas ready.

Tom Olshanski, External Affairs Director, United States Fire Administration, says every elected official should have a handful of stories ready at all times. So what's in a story? It's new information you are the first to tell. It's something new you can direct a news person to go see. News stories have to have the visual, the image or picture that illustrates the text of the story.

A \$250,000 first time grant for your county for expanded office space, is not itself visual. But the visual is showing the current crowded conditions. When the expansion is finished, the new look is 'news', showing how many more people needing county help will be better served by new offices.

News is a product and is tied to services, anything controversial or anyone in prominent positions which concerns the public interest. At times, it may very well be what you offer a reporter who is coming up dry for new stories.



FAKE NEWS

The phenomenon of politicians labeling a story 'fake news' is a national level strategy to discredit journalists and distract attention from the reality of the story. In my opinion, fake news is simply journalistic content the subject of that story doesn't agree with.

However, media have a constitutional right to report it. Avoid publicly disparaging a member of the media for 'fake news'. You never know when your present angst will come full circle and negatively hurt you politically.

In my judgment, the use of 'fake news' has done more to destroy the public's value in democracy-dependent journalism than any other phrase in the last 50 years. Its' use is quite dangerous.

YOUR MEDIA

Media believe they work in the public interest. They are not your press agent and do not exist to make you look good. News reporters, their editors,

news directors, producers do however, want to see you do good work. Tell them of your successes as well as how hard you are working to solve the 'people's problems'.

You also have your own media! Your county website is a source for media to find news that you load to tell your county's stories. Your social media platform, if you have one, is a terrific location for you to post information and pictures showing happy residents, or county workers responding to emergencies fixing the 'people's problems'.

Your county is likely part of a tourism consortium. Tourism social media promotes great aspects of your area. In the comment section, consider writing a thank you response to a visitor who has said nice things about your area. Others who read that thread will be impressed that a county commissioner is monitoring Facebook or Twitter and is eagerly inviting them back to your area.

MEDIA RELATIONSHIPS

Most new reporters and assignment editors will find you and introduce themselves to you when they first start working in your county. This is a great time to promote your county and also share the stressors the county and you are currently managing. This meet-and-greet opens the door for a constructive working relationship. Media will be eager to give you their contact information. You should consider the same.

It should also not be uncommon for you to visit local media yourself. Once a quarter, you might offer to go to the station for an editorial meeting, in which you candidly discuss local issues with news executives. This time together may seem threatening. It is intended to be productive and civil, but also to air differences of opinion, grievances with past coverage, as well as identify upcoming issues, problems, successes and goals. Out of these meetings, your media will have a list of story ideas from you which they will cover in coming months. You will also have a better understanding of the types of stories they are thinking about in your county government.

Some stations will also want to interview you after the meeting on one of the issues you discussed. The meeting on a slow news day may actually make air that night.

On a daily basis, when media call or stop by your office, make time for them. They are under deadline and will not stay long. But time spent to listen to their questions and consider if you want to respond to their news story questions, will serve you well.

You are demonstrating your accommodation and facilitation of media, which is greatly appreciated.

'TRUST BUT VERIFY'

Former President Ronald Reagan used the term 'trust but verify' when dealing with foreign entities. You should too with media. Trust them to the extent they will be professional and generally report your information or soundbite accurately. You will always need to watch, listen or read their reportage of you for accurate, correct context and fairness. Despite any residual skepticism you may have, media, accuracy and fairness are two of several honor-bound tenets of their work.

Three protocols you should never follow include: asking to see their report before air, demanding that they air or report a specific soundbite or quote, and angrily rebuking a reporter for making you look poorly.

Also, there are indeed times when a sound bite or a SOT, (sound-on-tape), is edited into a much shorter span of time than when you actually answered the question. In so doing, the context may have changed inadvertently or purposefully. You may see yourself or listen to your cut (radio's word for soundbite), and think that's not what you wanted to say or said.

When this happens or if you have a run-in with a reporter who dismisses you, your message or attempts to bully their way into or through an interview, or if concerns or objections with a reporter continue despite your best efforts, you may wish to angrily call the reporter with a piece of your mind. This tack is not diplomatically or strategically recommended. You also may think about refusing to talk to that reporter for a period of time, but avoiding a reporter who is your vehicle to the people who elected you, is simply a lost opportunity to use media for your benefit.

EDUCATE THE REPORTER WHEN POSSIBLE

Remember, you serve the people in your county and so does the reporter. If a reporter does not get the story as correctly as you would like, take the time to inform/educate that reporter on the 'facts' or background. While you may say the damage of the story is already done, the reporter will appreciate your care with them and will work to be more accurate next time.

If a negative pattern continues, or if over time, you see a pattern of factual errors or unprofessional treatment, document the history and facts of the story and their specific coverage down to each fact. Then, contact their news director, and calmly present the issues and errors by date and fact. Here you are not challenging the person's journalistic integrity. You are complaining about the manner with which they are doing their jobs. Since 'facts' are that on which they pride themselves journalistically, it's likely the news director will appreciate your insight and counsel the reporter.

SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING

Take a look at who is talking about you! Social media platforms allow users to read then comment on the posted meme, picture, link to an article or video. The unfortunate aspect of this feedback is its anonymity. Anyone can say anything! Too often comments are personal, aggressive, hurtful and embittering. However, once you look past the 'jerks', focus on the issue they are attacking.

Ed Wickenheiser, retired award-winning news director at WGAL, (NBC), Lancaster, Pa., lived by the



Your face and your articulate words represent county government and show you in a positive light. Avoid showing anger or negative emotion at or against a reporter or someone who is your political enemy. Also, resist the urge to be on-air at every opportunity. Only agree to an interview if you have prepared for it and determine both what you will say and what you will not talk about. Despite all reporter attempts to get you to say more than you planned, stay focused on only your key points.

axiom: If one person talks about it, a thousand people are thinking it. So if 20 people are actively arguing about an issue, many more could use more clarity to be persuaded in your favor. Comment positively in a thread with factual information. Forego engaging in name calling or challenging the fear mongers. They are there just to enflame. You are there to offer public information.

ORGANIZING FUTURE STORIES

News assignment editors across all phases of journalism keep futures files. You should, too. A futures file can be produced in your computer by simply listing events, commemorations, public meetings, your appearances, and anniversaries in your weekly or monthly memo area of calendar software. It can also be as basic as written notes on paper in an annual accordion file or a monthly file.

Recall, Olshanski's 'five-ideas in your pocket' concept. Your futures file

which you keep current, serves as your source for ideas. Reporters are creatures of habit. Under deadline, they often need your help if sharing story ideas with them. Overtime, they'll rely on you for stories.

Next, government stories have 'legs'. This term means the story continues over time. Criminal stories have legs with bail and preliminary hearings, arraignments, trials, pre-sentencing hearings and sentencing. Your budget process extends over several months of review and deliberations before annual passage. Open discussion of key positives associated with your budget early-on, along with the deficits and loss of state and federal funding are possible stories.

TREND LINES

Every day all across the country, news people survey national and world news and ask if it could happen here. Challenge your department heads to watch the news with that same question in mind. Next, each should

tell you what systems, strategies or procedures are in place to prevent or mitigate that same crisis or issue from happening in your county. The visual of your story locally is the national video of what occurred. This tactic is an easy one to pitch media. Most will jump at the opportunity of tying a local angle to a national or international story.

This type of story could also benefit your emergency management department, as its director drills for a variety of crises constantly. If a disaster occurs, you can assure media that your county routinely prepares and exercises for that eventuality. You may want to invite media to participate in an actual training scenario. They will learn about how county government incorporates incident command, joint information, and emergency operations centers work. In the exercise 'hotwash' or review/evaluation, you will find out on what cooperative areas both you and media need to improve.

WHEN YOU ARE FINISHED...

As a reporter, news manager, public information officer and educator, I reject the notion that media representatives are 'evil'. It has been my experience that media are predominantly professional. When a bad apple shows up in your county, be patient. Media will police their own. Consider this example. A reporter stopped a news conference from beginning by loudly demanding a written news release. Two weeks, later, that person was no longer on the air.

At an airplane crash, a news photographer circumvented police lines to get a closer shot of the debris. A death investigator on the scene saw the photographer crouching behind a

tree nearby. The PIO on the scene was informed. The photographer's news supervisor was contacted and the photographer was sent home from the scene and terminated on the spot. No news person wants to be the center of a negative story. Their job and career depend on it.

Yet, at the end of your career as a dedicated county politician, I submit that your openness, care and respect of the profession of journalism will reap an equal measure of respect from reporters and their organizations. Of course, media engagement may be rocky at times. However, it has been my experience that the profession of local news remains rooting in media ethics and quality storytelling, despite the 'bruising' fake news moniker. 🍷

Annually, Lowell also works with The Professional Edge, Inc., teaching at CCAP's Center for Excellence in County Leadership (CEL) program.



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GET THE WORD OUT

LOCALLY

The National Association of Counties (NACo) and the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) work year-round to provide information and influence at all levels of government, as well as with the media, the public and other constituents. We cover a wide range of audiences by making thousands of connections and hundreds of media hits but nothing beats your audiences getting information from local sources in your county—in other words—you.

In addition to your media, legislative, publications, public meetings, website and various other methods of reaching your audiences, there are numerous NACo and CCAP materials that make it easier for you to get the word out. Much of it is ready to publish or copy and paste along with your local messaging.

CCAP ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS RESOURCES

County officials and their staffs have important roles to play in advocating for policy changes at the state level and informing the public of important programs and services. CCAP's Government Relations website tab at www.pacounties.org has resources that allow counties to quickly contact their legislators and constituents regarding key issues before the General Assembly.

Among these resources are information about counties' priorities, talking points and sample resolutions on important issues. And, Pennsylvania Counties Are and Pennsylvania County Human Services Are fact sheets offer a quick and easy way to teach audiences about how counties touch the lives of their residents every day. The fact sheets give succinct and valuable summaries on services related to elections, assessments, human services, courts and corrections, planning and land use, emergency services and transportation.

Also on CCAP's Legislative Action Center under the Government Relations tab, you'll find articles on

engaging legislators, working with media representatives, developing influential messaging and speaking skills, and other materials for your use.

NACo RESOURCES

At www.naco.org, NACo's Counties Matter campaign includes data to help you explain the county role in key areas of everyday life, including infrastructure, justice and public safety, health, human services, public lands and other functions like elections, parks and record-keeping. NACo also has launched an enhanced version of its online interactive County Explorer tool, which includes hundreds of data points and printable profiles on every county, parish and borough in America. It's also been upgraded to navigate and use on tablets and mobile devices.

Also, check out NACo's iCivics and Counties Work materials, as well as NACo's Media Relations: A Guide for Counties booklet. And, the National County Government Month's toolkit will help you plan for the annual recognition each April. It also includes prepared materials for use as proclamations and media releases. 🗳️



Simplifying the Sharing of Geospatial Data

Rita D. Reynolds, CGCIO
Chief Technology Officer
National Association of Counties

Eric Jespersen
Business Development Specialist
JMT Technology Group

Act 178 of 2014 establishes the State Geospatial Coordinating Board (GeoBoard) within the Office of Administration to provide advice and recommendations to the Governor and the public on geospatial issues, uniform data standards, coordination and efficiency in geospatial policy and technology across different sectors.

One of the goals from this past year was to facilitate enhanced sharing of GIS data in the commonwealth through the creation of a Multi-Party Geospatial Data-Sharing Agreement. This approach replaces the outdated practice of creating specific agreements between each and every agency and county separately.

One may ask why is signing this Data Sharing Agreement so important? Historically, every time there is a need for geospatial data at the state level, a separate request and sign-off had to be executed by every county. By signing the new Data-Sharing Agreement, this will:

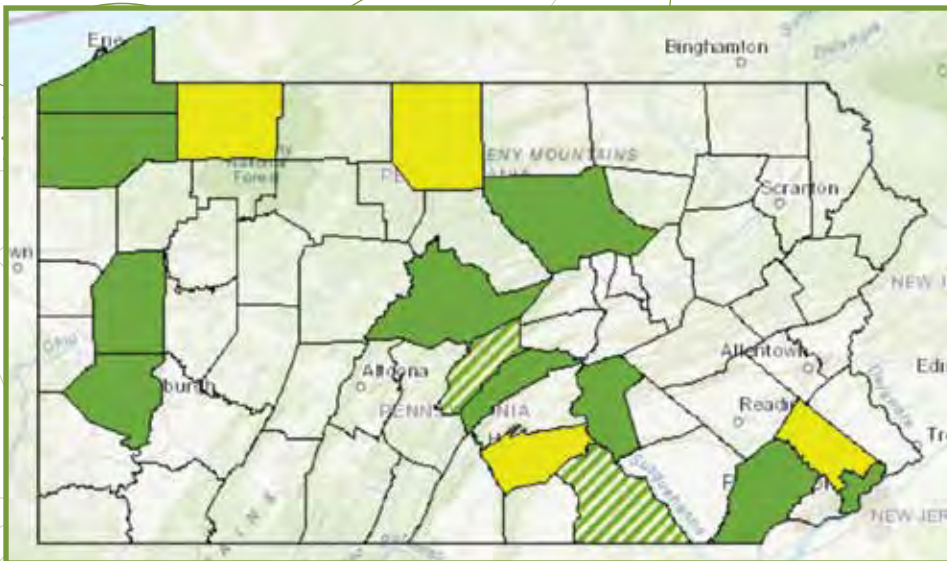
- Reduce the volume of data requests made to the counties for basic information;
- Promote economic development through the awareness and use of this information by stakeholders;
- Reduce risk/hazards to communities through the development of a common operating picture;
- Encourage communication and accuracy at all levels of government through interaction with state,




regional and public sector stakeholders;

- Provide an archive of county data for long term preservation. This will save your staff time and money.

Further, sharing basic data (e.g. - parcel boundaries and identification numbers) will promote counties as the authoritative source for this type of information. Counties can still generate revenue from advanced application services but gain the benefits from promoting the counties as the authoritative source for much of the Pennsylvania Base Map.

To read more about this agreement and to arrange for signing, a copy can be viewed at <https://www.oa.pa.gov/Programs/Information%20Technology/Pages/Data-Sharing.aspx>.



-  Share with PASDA, Data Sharing Agreement Signed
-  Share with PASDA
-  Data Sharing Agreement Signed

The agreement covers purpose, key definitions as well as restrictions and responsibilities, as listed below:

- The data may not be used in any way that misrepresents the integrity, quality, or accuracy of the data;
- The data shall be used and treated as public information, and the parties receiving data under this agreement may not sell, license or otherwise commercialize unaggregated data received from the other parties; provided that this section shall not restrict a party's ability to aggregate or incorporate the data into its own materials, products and services, nor shall it restrict any use by the public;
- Each participating party shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that the data is maintained and used in compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations;
- Each participating party is responsible for its own conduct under this agreement, and retains all defenses, including immunities available under applicable state and federal law. Nothing in this agreement shall be construed

to limit or waive the sovereign immunity of any participating party;

- Each party shall be responsible for its own costs with respect to its participation in this agreement.
- Some key considerations within the agreement include:
- All participants sign the exact same agreement;
 - Participants will share what they want to share;
 - Participation is voluntary;
 - Each participant determines their own signing authority;
 - The words "confidential, protected, and privileged" are as defined by each participant;
 - Each participant retains rights to commercialize their own data if they wish;
 - The agreement has no suspension date, but any signatory can opt out whenever they so choose.

Another benefit of this agreement is that it supports the evolution toward open data. For instance, future public safety applications that

require uniform data statewide will define specific requirements and automatically evaluate data for source, completeness, freshness, and format. If a county signs the statewide Data Sharing Agreement, there will not be a need for separate agreements for each application.

Some counties shared information in open data portals before this agreement was finalized. Six counties have already signed the Multi-party Agreement and the goal is for most, if not all, state agencies and county governments to sign this Data Sharing Agreement by December 31, 2019. ▼

To see a current status of those counties that sign over the course of the year, visit: <https://pasda.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=64d2c828f7254947927e56afa5678772>

For more information, contact Laura Simonetti, GIS Pros board president, at lsimonetti@mifflinco.org; or Sean Crager, co-chair for the Geospatial Coordinating Board, at scrager@pa.gov.



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The Keystone Markers of Pennsylvania

John T. Graham
Keystone Marker Trust

From Abbottstown in Adams County, all the way around to Zion View in neighboring York County, Pennsylvania has unique town names from A to Z. Almost all of the commonwealth's cities, towns, and villages were once marked with cast iron name signs, painted the rich blue and gold colors of Pennsylvania. An elongated keystone shape, thus the name, keystone marker, they imparted a sense of place to their communities, and were the guardians of the gateways, offering greeting to residents and travelers alike.

Far too many of these priceless threads in the fabric of state and local history have been lost over time, most commonly to town growth and road expansion. Simple neglect has also been a cause of the demise of the elegant iron originals. A surprising number still survive, standing tall and proud in their communities, but it will require the continuing interest and action of local community leaders if these too do not fall by the side of the road and disappear forever.

These iron markers date from the 1920s, a program of the former PA Highways Department (now PennDot). The use of these signs to mark the towns of the commonwealth, as well as the crossings of major streams and rivers, was an outgrowth of the "Good Roads" movement then sweeping the nation. The first use of the word "keystone" in connection with the markers is found in the 1926-28 Department report: "The wording is brief and to the point, and the uniform

keystone design makes it easy to find the signs." No earlier specific reference to the markers has been found.

The town name version of the markers were erected at each end of a municipality if it was traversed by what was then "the state road." The typical small community thus had two. Towns at the intersection of more than one state-numbered route, or federally-numbered route (U.S. Route 30 for example), would have had four such

signs. It is a rare situation where more than two survive in any community today, and many towns are fortunate to even have one.

Besides the town name, in the biggest and boldest font, the markers also gave explanation as to the derivation of the town's name. The date the town was founded is often clearly noted at the bottom. Often the name of another town, followed by a number, appears on the top line. This is the name and distance to the "next town" down the road as the viewer travels.

Keystone shaped markers were also found at bridge crossings of significant rivers and streams across the state. These were double-sided so one sign placed on a bridge was readable by traffic in both directions. Few of these still survive, as they were located at more remote out-of-town locations where no one took a possessive interest in them over the years.

KMT

Keystone Marker Trust (KMT) was founded in 2008 by several individuals from across the commonwealth who share an interest in these unique markers. The Trust is a volunteer, very non-profit, organization that has two important goals: documentation of as many still existing or once-existent markers as possible; and restoring existing markers and encouraging and assisting PennDot, local governments, organizations, or individuals to do likewise.

The Trust's website, www.keystonemarkertrust.org, includes entries for more than 700 markers, many of which are no longer extant. It is the most complete index that exists. The database can be accessed via the

"Find a Marker" link. Unfortunately, present status is often unknown, and some photos are old or undated

The state Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) has an excellent, extensive, and well maintained program of placing its own markers to commemorate notable people, places, and events in Pennsylvania history. These signs too are painted the bright blue and gold colors of the commonwealth, and are likely familiar to most readers. These are totally distinct from the town and stream markers, a program in which PHMC had no involvement. Nor does PHMC have the resources today to take the keystone markers under its wing.

62 OF 67 COUNTIES

At least one keystone marker can be found in 62 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties. None exist in Clinton, Elk, Forest, Mifflin or Susquehanna counties, and only one still stands in Blair, Cameron, Carbon, Erie, Lackawanna, McKean and Philadelphia counties. Lancaster County leads the list with 85 markers at least, and Montgomery County is close behind with 73.

Encouragingly, more and more community leaders and individual volunteers are stepping up to meet the challenge, and deserve kudos for taking good care of the markers in their towns. Sadly, those that are badly rusted, in need of a good coat of paint, or that are broken, leaning, or otherwise show the hallmarks of local neglect are far too common. Many show signs of being cared for at some point in time, showing repairs by welding, bolting, or other creativity. Someone cared for them once, but that person is probably gone now so someone new needs to step up and do it today.



Stony Creek Mills

THE FUTURE

Do the towns in your county have one or more of these historic signs still standing? What shape are they in? If they are well cared for, seek out and thank those involved. If they need work, talk to those involved and local officials to urge the adoption and care of the marker, or volunteer to do it yourself. A few hours with a wire brush and a paint brush can work wonders. All of the trust members have worked on restoration projects; one has personally repainted over fifty of the markers in the past two years. They can't do them all though, so if you have some in your counties, don't wait and hope for someone else to do it. Volunteer to adopt and care for this "senior citizen." Contact the Trust via their website for advice and assistance. We are there to help. 🍷

John T. Graham can be reached at Kmtjtg@yahoo.com.



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Healthy

MOMS

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



A program introduced locally in late 2018 intended to help pregnant women take steps toward recovery and deliver a healthy baby. Reflecting an “it-takes-a-village” mindset, the program supports participants as they cope with the dual challenges of pregnancy/child-rearing and taming an addiction.

Gerard M. Hetman
Community Relations Coordinator
Lackawanna County Department
of Community Relations

Barbara Durkin
Director
Lackawanna/Susquehanna Office
of Drug and Alcohol Programs

Jennifer Hetro
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The Wright Center for
Community Health

Mark Jones
Freelance Journalist

Throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and across America, the scourge of opioid use disorder knows no bounds. On average, the epidemic claims 130 lives each day in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Keystone State has been especially hard hit by this social and public health crisis. On average, Pennsylvania loses more than 10 people each day due to drug overdoses, according to a state government webpage titled “Treating Heroin and Opioid Addiction.” In fact, Pennsylvania ranked third among states with the highest rates of death due to a drug overdose in 2017, according to a CDC analysis. Neighboring West Virginia topped the list, and Ohio was second.

Lackawanna County exceeds the national average for opioid overdoses. According to information provided by the Lackawanna County Coroner’s Office and OverdoseFreePA, the county suffered 98 deaths due to a drug overdose in the 2018 calendar year. In December 2018, during a single weeklong span, Lackawanna County’s largest city, Scranton, experienced a rash of 10 apparent overdose deaths.

MANY IMPACTS

Each death represents a tragedy; however, fatal overdose statistics alone do not reveal the full extent of the problem surrounding opioid use disorder. Issues such as lost human potential, poor worker productivity, broken families, strains on the judicial system and the cost of medical care are all part of the harmful impact on communities.



These mothers—in addition to the unique challenges of caring for another human being—often face significant barriers to healthcare and recovery services, including limited financial resources, lack of transportation and inadequate housing.

For instance, a woman coping with opioid use disorder who doesn't have a vehicle and can't consistently get to appointments for ultrasounds, OB-GYN visits, primary care exams, medication-assisted treatment (MAT) sessions, etc., is likely to drop out of recovery. She also is likely to be estranged from family and friends.

With this in mind, Lackawanna County Commissioners Patrick M. O'Malley, Jerry Notarianni, and Laureen A. Cummings have made combating the opioid epidemic a top priority. Much of this work is undertaken by the Lackawanna/Susquehanna Office of Drug & Alcohol Programs, with collaborative partnerships playing a key role.

That brings us to Healthy MOMS—a program introduced locally in late 2018 intended to help pregnant women take steps toward recovery and deliver a healthy baby. Reflecting an “it-takes-a-village” mindset, the program supports participants as they cope with the dual challenges of pregnancy/child-rearing and taming an addiction.

AN ADAPTABLE MODEL

The idea for Healthy MOMS began when Scott Constantini, The Wright Center for Community Health's Director of Behavioral Health, attended a meeting in Harrisburg. The gathering was related to The Wright Center for Community Health's selection as one of Pennsylvania's Opioid Use Disorder Centers of Excellence, a state-led initiative to expand access to medication-assisted treatment and whole-person care throughout the commonwealth. While there, Constantini chose to go to a breakout session led by a physician from the UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital who talked about pregnancy and recovery.

Inspired by the session, Constantini immediately connected with Dr. Linda Thomas-Hemak, The Wright Center for Community Health's CEO, and asked her, “Why can't we do this?” She urged him to pursue it. Representatives from The Wright Center for Community Health (TWCCH) later spent two days

in Pittsburgh learning about the Magee model.

“The power of addiction is unexplainable,” Constantini said. “It's a very vicious and, in the height of it, uncontrollable disease.” Around the same time, Barbara Durkin, Director of the Lackawanna/Susquehanna Office of Drug and Alcohol Programs, had been receiving information about some new state funding initiatives.

The state Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs had previously mandated pregnant and postpartum women as a priority population. In 2018, the department extended grant opportunities to Single County Authorities to aid mothers-to-be struggling with opioid use disorder. Durkin connected with TWCCH in July and quickly submitted a grant application. In September, they learned the project had been awarded state funding.

“I had known that The Wright Center for Community Health had been really interested in doing some work in this area; so, when the funding announcement came out, we knew we were interested in a partnership,” Durkin said. “We reached out. And all the pieces kind of fell together pretty well.”

CONNECTING

Ultimately, the local partners decided not to follow the Magee model. Instead, they chose to create the Healthy MOMS program—patterning it after the Ohio-based MOMS model, a community-based, collaborative that allows moms to connect with the program through any of the multiple entry points: hospitals, social service agencies, the legal system, treatment providers, etc.

“We researched some best practices and we thought the MOMS model was



The Healthy MOMS Group. From left, Yurii Lynn Harden, licensed clinical social worker, Maternal and Family Health Services; Cindy Kennedy, director COC and DSS operations, Maternal and Family Health Services; Barbara Durkin, director, Lackawanna/Susquehanna Office of Drug and Alcohol Programs; Maria Kolcharno, director of addiction services, The Wright Center for Community Health; Dr. Maria Montoro-Edwards, vice president of strategic initiatives, The Wright Center for Community Health; Bette Saxton, chief executive officer, Maternal and Family Health Services.

just spectacular. It became the backbone off of which we developed our Healthy MOMS program.” Constantini said.

“They made everything freely available,” added Maria Montoro-Edwards, PhD, The Wright Center for Community Health’s Vice President of Strategic Initiatives and Grants, when speaking of her Ohio-based colleagues. “Everybody has been very gracious about sharing their information because these initiatives were funded with public funds. It makes sense that we share models and best practices.”

The collaboration began October 1 and accepted its first mother into the program on Oct. 11. Among the early participants were Maternal and

Family Health Services Inc., based in Wilkes-Barre, Moses Taylor Hospital, and Outreach Center for Community Resources, both in Scranton.

RESULTS IN ACTION

Mothers-to-be were identified by the state as a priority population deserving of a focused response. Likewise, employees with TWCCH had been seeing pregnant moms entering the Center of Excellence program and knew they required additional support.

These mothers—in addition to the unique challenges of caring for another human being—often face significant barriers to healthcare and recovery services, including limited

financial resources, lack of transportation and inadequate housing.

For instance, a woman coping with opioid use disorder who doesn’t have a vehicle and can’t consistently get to appointments for ultrasounds, OB-GYN visits, primary care exams, medication-assisted treatment (MAT) sessions, etc., is likely to drop out of recovery. She also is likely to be estranged from family and friends.

To be eligible for the Healthy MOMS program, a woman who is pregnant or who has recently given birth must be intent on recovering. A mother may—and is encouraged to—continue in the program until her child turns two years old.

The Healthy MOMS partners are able to provide MAT and other health services (prenatal care, etc.), as well as behavioral healthcare, counseling and a range of recovery support services. These services include assistance with transportation to and from appointments and even, in some cases, temporary housing. Participants might also receive items such as bassinets, baby formula and infant clothes.

A COLLABORATIVE, GROUND-UP APPROACH

The program naturally expanded into Susquehanna County by virtue of Barbara Durkin's position as a "joiner," overseeing the Single County Authority services for both Lackawanna and Susquehanna counties. According to Durkin, at least one mother (as of early April) who is

a resident of Susquehanna County has connected to the program, with hopes for finding additional mothers through dedicated outreach efforts in the county.

"The challenge with Susquehanna County is it doesn't have any hospitals that deliver," Durkin said of the expanded efforts. "So, we're going to reach out to the hospitals there. I've already had the first conversations about who we are and what we can do. But we're going to expand some of those conversations so that we can have more moms connected to the program. And then we hope to have staff available up there, as opposed to having people come (to Scranton), because transportation is challenging."

The program also benefits from an engaged and growing list of commu-

nity partners, which currently includes the Lackawanna/Susquehanna Office of Drug and Alcohol Programs, Lackawanna County Office of Youth and Family Services, Susquehanna County Children and Youth Services, Alone Foundation, The Wright Center for Community Health, Outreach Center for Community Resources, Catherine McAuley Center, Community Care Behavioral Health Organization, Geisinger Health System, Parker Hill Church, Scranton Primary Health Center, St. Joseph's Center, Marywood University, Maternal and Family Health Services Inc., Moses Taylor Hospital, and United Neighborhood Centers.

New partners are welcomed to join the effort, and an updated list of partners can be found at www.healthyMOMS.org/partners.

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OUTREACH AND TREATMENT

Healthy MOMS has assisted 40 dyads—or mom-baby duos—as of early May. That’s in line with an initial goal of about 50 by sometime this spring. A surge in participation is expected as the program expands into Luzerne County.

Most participants receive medication-assisted treatment, which typically involves taking Subutex. It works to block receptors in the brain so patients don’t get the euphoric feeling associated with heroin and other opioids. Over time, the treatment can reduce cravings.

One of the most important aspects of the program is that moms also have access to behavioral health-care, counseling and other support services. TWCCCH uses a team-based approach that includes a case manager, a certified recovery specialist and others. Services are provided regardless of the woman’s insurance status or ability to pay.

TWCCCH recently was awarded grants to begin offering certain participants temporary housing.

Partners such as Outreach Center for Community Resources provide a range of social, educational and legal services. Others in the community, including Parker Hill Church, have made significant financial donations to support the women and supplied gifts, including knit hats, for the newborns.

Word of mouth accounts for some of the early participation, including a number of moms who had been incarcerated at the Lackawanna County Prison. However, there has also been an outreach campaign since early 2019.

“We’ve placed ads in the Scranton Times-Tribune,” Dr. Montoro-Edwards said of the campaign. “We built a website, www.healthymoms.org. We’ve done some radio ads and billboards, and we’ve seen some real engagement on social media when we share something about the program.”

“We did grand rounds at Moses Taylor Hospital. The focus of that was educating some of their OB-GYNs, resident physicians, nurses and social workers on the program,” Durkin added. “I think every opportunity that any of us has had to meet with potential partners in the community, we’ve talked about Healthy MOMS.”

The Healthy MOMS website was designed and programmed by Kerri Price, The Wright Center for Community Health’s Senior Marketing Strategist, with input from the Healthy MOMS steering committee members. Although TWCCCH’s marketing communications team is small, they are mighty, and were especially passionate about ensuring this important initiative was accessible and easy to find online.

The website development—from acquisition of the URL, www.healthymoms.org, to launch—took approximately one week’s time. Establishing a standalone Healthy MOMS website reinforces the uniqueness of this program as a true community effort, not “owned” by any one individual organization.

One of the website’s unique features is text to connect capabilities, through which moms who are interested in the program can connect digitally to a member of the Healthy MOMS team via text message.



Healthy MOMS has assisted 40 dyads—or mom-baby duos—as of early May. That’s in line with an initial goal of about 50 by sometime this spring. A surge in participation is expected as the program expands into Luzerne County.

FUNDING AND SUSTAINABILITY

At this time, Healthy MOMS relies on grant funding. The Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs provided the initial grant, a Federal Opioid-State Targeted Response Grant in the amount of \$448,763, to begin serving moms in Lackawanna and Susquehanna counties.

The AllOne Foundation subsequently awarded a \$500,000 grant to Maternal and Family Health Services and The Wright Center for Community Health

to reach residents in a wider service area. It includes Luzerne, Pike, Wayne and Wyoming counties.

"Right now, Healthy MOMS is 100 percent grant-funded. There is no reimbursement model around this type of platform," Constantini explained. "But what we are trying to do is engage the state Medicaid MCOs and also commercial insurers ... to give us a per-member, per-month, value-based payment to support all non-medical services such as case management, certified recovery specialists and other things."

Program organizers are exploring alternatives for a consistent funding stream that will allow Healthy MOMS to become permanent and continue to make a sustainable impact in the lives of the women and children it serves.

"We're working with moms on goals, but we haven't gotten that far in the program yet," Dr. Montoro-Edwards said in closing. "It's so new. We talk to them about goals in terms of, 'So, you want the baby to be home with you. You don't want Children and Youth to be involved. Here are some things that we need to work toward to make that happen.'" 🍷



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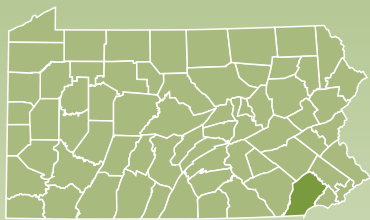
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COUNTY HIGHLIGHT:

CHESTER

Michelle Kichline,
Kathi Cozzone,
Terence Farrell
Chester County
Commissioners

The Return on Environment report offers eye-opening results about the economic benefits associated with open space preservation across five areas: property values, environmental benefits, recreation and health, economic activity, and cost of community services.

Chester County Proves That Saving Land Saves Money

Rolling countryside dotted with historic farmsteads. Vibrant towns with village greens, community parks, and urban gardens. Robust farms producing fruit, vegetables, cheese, meat, flowers, honey, and more.

These are just some of the ways to describe Chester County's scenic views, which have inspired one of the nation's most successful open space initiatives. A new study, Return on Environment: The Economic Value of Protected Open Space in Chester County, quantifies the benefits of these efforts.

FROM THE GROUND UP

Thirty years ago, when Chester County's remarkable growth was in its infancy, public concern began to outpace suburban sprawl. "If we don't do something about it now, it will be too late," said then-Chester County Commissioner Irene B. Brooks, chair of the county's Open Space and Environmental Task Force, in 1989.

In response to these concerns, the task force recommended a \$50 million funding program for open space preservation. County voters overwhelmingly approved a ballot referendum with an 82% "yes" vote in November 1989, and funding has continued ever since.

Chester County's Department of Open Space Preservation has been leading efforts to administer funds that preserve land for public benefit. The Chester County Planning Commission has been working hand in hand with the Department of Open Space on these preservation efforts through the development and implementation of Landscapes3, the county's new comprehensive plan. A public survey issued in 2017 as a part of the comprehensive plan update process found that protected open space and the environment was by far the highest ranked issue of importance among county residents. The plan includes a "Preserve" goal that focuses on advancing

the protection and stewardship of open space, farmland, and natural and cultural features to realize the economic, ecological and quality of life benefits.

As of the end of 2018, nearly 29% of Chester County's land area, or 140,000 acres, has been preserved as protected open space, which is more land than the size of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh combined. In addition to keeping the county beautiful, protected open spaces—public parks, preserved farmland, and private conserved lands—provide proven and substantial economic, environmental, and public health benefits to surrounding communities.

PRETTY PLACES PLUS

The Return on Environment report offers eye-opening results about the economic benefits associated with open space preservation across five areas: property values, environmental benefits, recreation and health, economic activity, and cost of community services. More than just pretty places, open space contributes to local economies and property values and helps businesses, governments, and residents save on everything from health care to recreation.

For instance, homeowners are willing to pay a premium to live near parks, nature preserves, and other protected open spaces. As a result, protected open space adds to the overall value of Chester County's housing stock. Homes in the county are valued at over \$11,000 more when they are located within a half-mile of preserved open space, according to the study. In total, it's a gain of more than \$1.65 billion for Chester County's homeowners and economy.



Protected open space also provides value through naturally occurring environmental processes. If protected lands were lost to development, Chester County would need to spend \$97 million a year to replicate vital services such as flood control and air and water pollution mitigation through costly alternative methods.

Chester County's protected open spaces invite exploration and enjoyment. There is an abundance of opportunities to exercise for free at many parks and nature preserves throughout the county. Recreational opportunities on open space keep people healthy and account for over \$170 million in avoided medical costs every year.

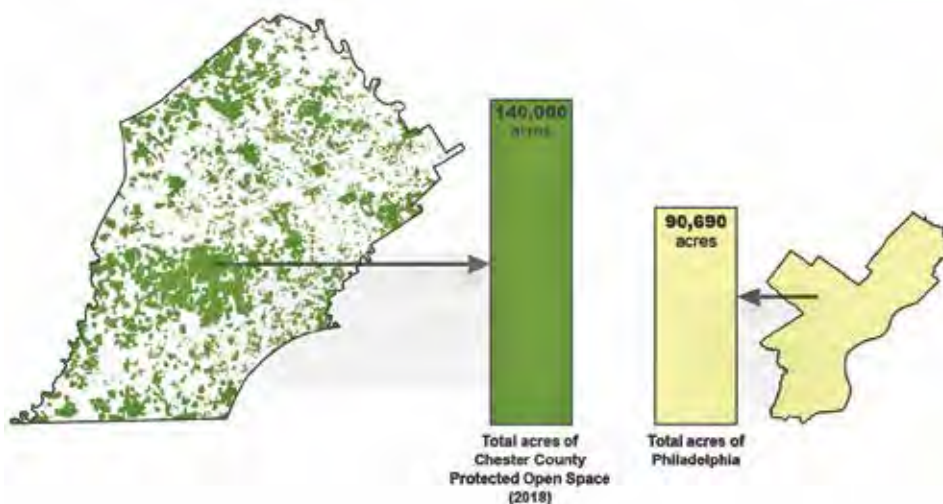
Chester County's preserves, farms, and trails are destinations that create jobs and attract tourists who spend money when they visit. Each year, open space accounts for \$238 million in spending and \$69 million in salaries earned through 1,800 jobs. Agriculture on protected farmland puts about \$135 million back into the economy each year.

Developing open space into housing can be costly for municipalities and school districts. For every \$1 received from residential developments through taxes, local governments spend \$1.11 on services, whereas only 7 cents are spent on services for each dollar in tax received from farmland and preserved open space.

TEAM EFFORT

The Return on Environment report is an update of a similar study completed in 2011 by the Green Space Alliance and Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission that estimated the economic value of protected open space for all of Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Chester County leadership partnered with many organizations to produce the report. The partners included Brandywine Conservancy, Brandywine Red Clay Alliance, Chester County Agricultural Development Council, Chester County Association of Township Officials, Chester County Department of Open Space



The amount of protected open space in Chester County is greater than the size of Philadelphia.

Preservation, Chester County Economic Development Council, Chester County Planning Commission, Chester County Water Resources Authority, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Econsult Solutions, Inc., French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, Natural Lands, Stroud Water Research Center, The Land Conservancy for Southern Chester County, and Willistown Conservation Trust.

The economic analysis was conducted by Econsult Solutions, Inc., who completed the similar study in 2011. Using data from multiple sources including peer reviewed studies and their own economic models, Econsult used Chester County's open space data to estimate the monetary benefits associated with protected open space in the county. Based in Philadelphia, Econsult is an economic consulting firm that provides econometric and analytic expertise to businesses and policymakers nationwide.

This report builds off the previous regional report and uses standard

economic analysis techniques to provide estimates of the economic value of protected open space in Chester County. The study informs elected leaders, policymakers, and residents on the value of protected open space and contributes to informed decisions concerning both preservation and development in the county.

GROWING MESSAGE

Many people came together to ensure the message about the Return on Environment was shared with various stakeholders, including municipalities, conservation partners, the business community, economic development partners, the agricultural community, and residents. A working group was created that included 20 representatives from the different partner agencies that produced the report. A marketing committee also developed a plan for promoting the report.

The report was unveiled to a crowd of 250-plus people at the Chester

County Open Space Summit in May at the ChesLen Preserve. The county and its partners shared the information about the report in various ways after its release, including a press release, social media posts, newsletter, a new webpage, video, marketing brochure, and executive summary. In addition, stakeholders were encouraged to share the message. Social media toolkits were provided to all the stakeholders with infographics and sample messages for use on Facebook and Twitter. Sample articles were sent to all municipal officials for dissemination to residents through their newsletters and websites.

PRESERVATION ROOTS

Not only did the Chester County Department of Open Space Preservation play an important role in creating the Return on Environment report, but it also has been successfully handling efforts to preserve farms, parks, trails, and nature preserves in the county since its creation in 2004.

The department's nine-member staff works with the county's Agricultural Land Preservation Board to offer agricultural preservation programs that focus on permanently preserving agricultural land by purchasing farmland preservation easements. The county has preserved more than 500 farms to date. Every year, the department's staff visits at least 275 farms, 100 municipal parks, and 100 land trust preserved sites to ensure the protection of the county's investment in open space.

In addition, the staff administers a Municipal Grant Program that helps municipal governments meet local demands for parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces. Chester

Benefits of Open Space Preservation



County's Municipal Grant Program has completed about 400 open space projects in 67 of the county's 73 municipalities and two regional recreation authorities. One in five Municipal Grant Program projects is located in Chester County's urban centers.

Another program called the Preservation Partnership Program, or the Conservancy Grant Program, helps conservancies preserve natural, agricultural, historic, and culturally significant land resources and promotes responsible public access. Over 200 projects have been completed through this program with 18 partners, resulting in more than

10,000 preserved acres. In addition, Chester County has invested about \$4.5 million for the preservation of nearly 500 acres of the Brandywine Battlefield through this program.

REAPING BENEFITS

Steps taken by Chester County 30 years ago have more than paid off. The investment is providing a great return and one that is unique to Southeastern Pennsylvania. In fact, nearly half—or 45%—of all conserved land in this region is in Chester County, according to the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association.

Open space preservation efforts will continue to be a priority for

Chester County for years to come. Green fields, preserved farms and community parks are more than just pretty places that contribute to our quality of life—they are true assets that generate significant economic value for the county. 🌱

View the report:
[http://chescoPlanning.org/
OpenSpace/ROE.cfm](http://chescoPlanning.org/OpenSpace/ROE.cfm).

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HOW **SAFE** IS YOUR INFORMATION?

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Rita D. Reynolds, CGCIO
Chief Technology Officer
National Association of Counties

I know there are quite a few avid fishermen (and women) in Pennsylvania. But did you know that fishing or phishing can mean something other than catching fish out of a trout stream!



As you continue reading, it is important to understand terminology. Phishing is the fraudulent attempt to obtain sensitive information such as usernames, passwords, and credit card details (and money), often for malicious reasons, by disguising an electronic communication as a trustworthy entity. The word phishing is derived from the common term with the known, correct spelling, "fishing." The definition of phishing is actually quite similar to the word of origin. Both phrases refer to catching something by sending out bait. Just as the fisherman lures a fish by putting a fake worm on a hook, so too does the cyberspace criminal lure his prey by baiting an email or a website with false information to catch passwords and information in the sea of internet users. Over time (actually since about 1996) hackers have tended towards

replacing the letter "F" with "Ph" and therefore, the word phishing was formed.

The other term to become familiar with is Social Engineering. Social engineering, in the context of information security, refers to the psychological manipulation of people into performing actions or divulging confidential information. Similar to con artist traits of trickery, social engineering's sole purpose is to gather information or system access. The main difference is that there are generally many steps in a more complex fraud scheme.

Social Engineering can occur through email phishing or other means, such as ads on Facebook or other social media. For example, think of the entertainment quizzes on Facebook. Most view these as a fun use of spare

time; however, there are significant security dangers of these increasingly popular quizzes. While many websites and platforms offer harmless quizzes with engaging content, many malicious attackers use the popularity of these quizzes to install malware on your devices and steal your data.

One may ask why? Well scammers are after your passwords, your identity, financial information and ultimately money! As you can imagine this can damage your personal life as well as the organization you work for, depending on the situation.

In addition to the seemingly innocent social engineering scams, there are all types of scams. Of particular frequency these days are emails asking HR or payroll to change an employee's direct deposit information. As CCAP CIO, I have heard of multiple instances

in county government over the past six months where a county came very close to changing or actually changed someone's paycheck to go to an unauthorized user, aka a cybercriminal. It's incredible to think that there are individuals out there like this, but unfortunately, they are out there.

So how do we avoid this both in our personal lives and in the workplace? Here are some easy tips to remember:

- Watch out for spelling and grammar errors
- Check the sender's address
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Beware of unsolicited emails that contain attachments, links or login pages.
- Check the signature line. If it's from another employee does it look like the county's signature format? Report those suspicious emails to your IT support.

Tips specific to ACH or direct deposit scams include:

- First if the request is coming in to HR or payroll by email, verify that the email really did come from the employee. Depending on the size of your county or organization, this may mean picking up the phone and calling them to verify, or better yet, having them complete a form that they must hand deliver to either HR or payroll.
- Second, payroll should have the prenote option for verifying ACH accounts. This is a process whereby finance staff or the financial institution sends a prenotification (or prenote) that involves sending zero dollar amounts through the ACH (Automated Clearing House) network as a test before the

first actual direct deposit for an employee.

- Third, ensure that you have policies and procedures in place for setting up or modifying ACH for your employees.
- Finally, train and educate your staff on a continual basis. Counties in Pennsylvania have access in 2019 to a partnership with the state to utilize a Phishing scenario subscription called Cofense. This online tool allows a county to create fake phishing emails based on template emails that mirror real world phishing emails. If an employee does click on one of these emails, the employee is then redirected to an educational page to help them become more aware of how to detect phishing emails. Contact CCAP's Kim Ade, kade@pacounties.org, for more information.
- And don't forget to send regular reminders to staff to be cautious in updating any online payroll access they might have. "Phishers" have been known to send emails requesting one verify their login credentials. Valid payroll and HR services won't do that.

Beyond the email phishing, there are additional steps each of us as end users can take to protect our identities and personal information, especially with social engineering schemes. To avoid being a victim of a phishing attack or email scam:

- Use safe password practices including regularly changing passwords and use altogether different passwords for personal and work logins. Take advantage of Multi-factor Authentication where possible (a PIN number being sent to your phone or an alternate email)

- Avoid clicking directly on links, whether in email or social media—always search through your search engine to verify legitimacy and find the appropriate site.
- Refrain from opening suspicious attachments.
- Refrain from sharing highly sensitive information through messaging apps and services.
- Know your rights when it comes to data use and storage.
- Be mindful of your emails; always check the date, subject line, and recipients to confirm that you are reading and using the correct email.
- Check your email, financial accounts, and credit reports regularly for abnormal activities.
- Stay up to date on the news regarding recent fraud and phishing attacks to see if you may have been affected.
- Understand the risks of putting your personal information into the world and only share what you have to share.
- Minimize the number of accounts that have direct access to your bank account or card numbers.

One final note about those entertainment quizzes—protect yourself from these potential dangers by exercising caution when participating in online quizzes. While utilizing safe and legitimate websites is crucial to protecting your data privacy, even these days that doesn't guarantee security. So maybe avoid them at all costs! In the end, a one-minute quiz to show how high one's IQ isn't worth risking your financial loss or your theft of your identity. 🍷

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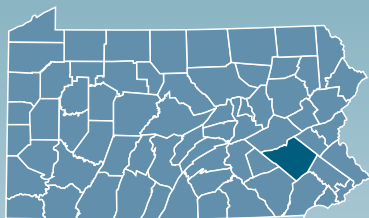
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COUNTY HIGHLIGHT:

BERKS

It's time to stop talking about mental health in our county jails and to start making a real difference.

**Berks County
Commissioner
Christian Leinbach**

Berks County Now a **STEPPING UP** "Innovator"

It already has been four years since the launch of Stepping Up: A National Initiative to Reduce the Number of People with Mental Illnesses in Jails, the result of a collaboration between the National Association of Counties (NACo), The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center and the American Psychiatric Association Foundation (APA Foundation). The program continues to increase awareness about the mental health crisis affecting communities across the nation.

Since it launched, nearly 500 counties in 43 states have passed a Stepping Up resolution committing to building local leadership teams, identifying the number of people with mental illnesses who enter their jail system, ensuring that those people are connected with services and developing a comprehensive plan for systems-level change.

Recently, the Stepping Up partners chose Berks County, Pennsylvania to be a Stepping Up Innovator County, recognizing the county's hard work, strengths and leadership in this area.

WHAT IS A STEPPING UP INNOVATOR COUNTY?

Starting in 2018, the initiative's focus turned to providing counties with the tools they need to have accurate, accessible data on the prevalence of people with serious mental illnesses (SMIs) in jails. Having accurate and usable data is key to making systems-level policy and practice changes to better link people to treatment and services while reducing jail populations and improving public safety in effective and fiscally responsible ways. The Stepping Up partners select counties to serve as Innovators based on the major progress they have made toward this goal by establishing a shared definition of SMI, implementing a mental health screening and assessment process and collecting baseline data.

THE STEPPING UP INITIATIVE

Berks County joined the national Stepping Up initiative in December 2015, passing a resolution to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in jails.

Last year, the national Stepping Up partners launched the Stepping Up Innovator Counties project as a way to highlight counties that are meeting the recommended three-step approach to gathering accurate, accessible data on the prevalence of people in their jails who have serious mental illness (SMI).

The three-step approach includes:

1. Establish a shared definition of SMI for your Stepping Up efforts that is used throughout local criminal justice and behavioral health systems.
2. Use a validated mental health screening tool on every person booked into the jail and refer people who screen positive for symptoms of SMI to a follow-up clinical assessment by a licensed mental health professional, and
3. Record clinical assessment results and regularly report on this population.

So far, these counties, of various sizes and locations, have been designated as Stepping Up Innovator Counties and are available to help mentor other counties on how to implement this approach. They include: Calaveras County, California; Miami-Dade County, Florida; Champaign County, Illinois; Polk County, Iowa;

Douglas County, Kansas; Johnson County, Kansas; Hennepin County, Minnesota; Franklin County, Ohio; Lubbock County, Texas; Pacific County, Washington; and now, Berks County, Pennsylvania.

BERKS COUNTY LEADS THE WAY

Berks County joined the national Stepping Up initiative in December 2015, passing a resolution to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in jails. But even before passing the resolution, county leaders were working to address this issue by completing a cross-systems mapping exercise to identify gaps in its processes and programs and implementing a forensic diversion program and forensic case management. Data and information-sharing have always been a priority for the county.

"As chair of our County Prison Board and the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania's Comprehensive Behavioral Health Task Force," Commissioner Kevin Barnhardt said, "it is extremely important to me that we engage in a two-way sharing of information and knowledge that all can learn and implement best practices that are custom to their unique criminal justice needs."

"It's time to stop talking about mental health in our county jails and to start making a real difference," said Berks County Commissioner Christian Leinbach. "That's why we joined this NACo effort and I'm so proud that our team, led by Dr. Ed Michalik and Commissioner Barnhardt have done just that. We are making a difference for taxpayers and most importantly in the lives of the people dealing with serious mental health issues. It's great to see that Berks County is a leader in the nation!"

PA PARTICIPATES

34 counties in Pennsylvania now participate in Stepping Up, including: Allegheny, Berks, Blair, Bradford, Bucks, Butler, Carbon, Chester, Clinton, Cumberland, Dauphin, Delaware, Erie, Fayette, Franklin, Fulton, Juniata, Lancaster, Lycoming, McKean, Mercer, Mifflin, Montgomery, Northampton, Northumberland, Philadelphia, Pike, Potter, Tioga, Warren, Washington, Wayne, Westmoreland and York.

County leaders are encouraged to visit <https://stepuptogether.org/what-you-can-do> and reach out to Nastassia Walsh at nwalsh@naco.org if they are meeting the three-step criteria and are interested in becoming Innovator Counties or wish to learn more about Stepping Up. 🍷



AND IN KEEPING WITH AN EARLIER THEME ...

Montgomery County Board of Commissioners Chair **Dr. Valerie Arkoosh** threw out the first pitch at a recent Philadelphia Phillies game as part of the “Bark at the Park” night during which the Valley Forge Tourism and Convention Board promoted their “Embark Montco” brand. The first 350 dogs that brought their owners to the game received treats and information about pet-friendly hotels available in Montgomery County.

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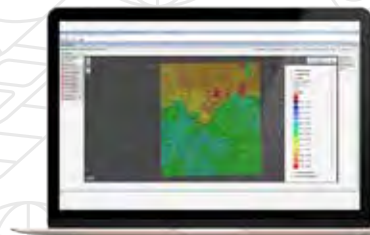
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