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Alameda County Program Named One of 2017's Best Innovations in County Government

An innovative Alameda County program that empowers women to rebuild their lives following crises such as domestic violence and sexual assault has been named one of the 100 Best Innovations in County Government for 2017.

The program known as STEP-UP (Survivor Training and Empowerment – Utilizing your Potential) was named one of the “100 Brilliant Ideas at Work” by the National Association of Counties (NACo) in a new awards program championed as examples to all 3,069 counties in the United States.

STEP UP was also one of eight Alameda County initiatives recognized with Achievement Awards in NACo’s annual program highlighting the best work by counties across the country. The awards were presented at NACo’s annual meeting last month and celebrated at the August 1st meeting of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors.

“These awards reflect the innovative work being done across our County organization,” said Susan Muranishi, Alameda County Administrator. “They also affirm the significant progress we are making in protecting the environment, supporting our community’s most vulnerable residents and finding efficient, cost-effective new ways to do business.”

STEP-UP is a training and empowerment program offered by the District Attorney’s Office to women who are survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, as well as women diverted from the criminal justice system after an allegation of public assistance fraud.

The program, offered in English and Spanish, helps women develop personal, professional and financial skills to assist them in breaking the cycle of violence and poverty. It also includes detailed job development sessions that serve as pathways to paid employment.

Along with STEP UP, other Alameda County programs winning 2017 NACo Achievement Awards include efforts to fight human trafficking, protect natural resources, expand elections transparency, improve customer service and save taxpayer dollars.

In addition to STEP-UP, Achievement Award winners were:

- MAP1193 – Stop Human Trafficking, a mobile application developed by the District Attorney’s Office and Information Technology Department to educate businesses and mobilize community support for a State law requiring certain businesses to display posters fostering awareness and a quick response to suspected cases of human trafficking.
- The Criminal Justice Operational Database Management System, an upgraded Countywide criminal justice database that provides vital information to the County’s major criminal justice partners – the Sheriff, Superior Court, District Attorney, Public Defender and Probation Department.
- Automated Employee Onboarding System, which streamlines the process of bringing new hires into the Alameda County organization by having the employee provide required information via online application, saving large amounts of paper.
- Online Filing of Assessment Appeals, a new online system that lets residents and business owners appeal property assessments performed by the County. The process saves staff time and allows appellants to track their appeals online.
- Elections Results Viewer, an online map created by the Information Technology Department that provides precinct-by-precinct election results in real time.
- A Strategic Plan for Office Paper, a comprehensive countywide effort in which County departments together reduced paper use by 23 percent over five years.

- Public Works Surveyor Documents Sharing Website, an online tool that makes parcel maps, survey records and other important documents often sought by the public available online – enhancing public convenience and saving large amounts of staff time.

Wilma Chan, President of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, said: “We are extremely proud of the national recognition Alameda County is receiving this year for the many ways we are improving service to our residents.”

Added Supervisor Keith Carson, a member of the NACo Board of Directors: “It’s gratifying to see such a wide range of excellent County programs recognized for the innovative ways they are addressing challenges facing all local governments.”