



BARRY GLASSMAN

HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Harford County Earns Five Awards for Innovation from National Association of Counties

BEL AIR, Md., (June 3, 2021) – Harford County has earned five national awards this year for innovative and effective county government programs.

The National Association of Counties (NACo) recognized Harford County with its 2021 Achievement Awards for programs that support public safety, Black history, local veterans, and “virtual” recreation in the pandemic.

The Glassman administration has earned 16 NACo awards over the past six years.

Brief summaries of this year’s award-winning programs are below.

NEXT GEN Responders Student Loan Repayment Program

Developed to attract and retain lifesaving volunteers, this program offers up to \$5,000 per year, for up to four years, to help volunteer fire and EMS providers repay their student loans. College students in any field of study and anyone with student loans are eligible to apply if they are a member of one of the county’s 12 volunteer fire and ambulance companies. The program was initiated by County Executive Glassman, a former EMT, and saves taxpayer money by sustaining the volunteer system Harford relies on for its fire and EMS services.

<https://www.harfordcountymd.gov/2976/NEXT-GEN-Responders-Student-Loan-Relief>

Publicly accessible lifesaving equipment

Because emergencies can happen anywhere, even during a hike or a run, Harford County installed bright yellow boxes containing an automated external defibrillator (AED) for cardiac arrest and a Stop the Bleed kit at several county parks and trails. To access them in an emergency, users first call 911. If a box is nearby, callers are directed to send someone to its location and call 911 upon arrival. The 911 dispatcher will then provide the access code to open the box and give instructions for using the equipment.

Sgt. Alfred B. Hilton Medal of Honor Playground

Sgt. Alfred B. Hilton is Harford County's only native-born recipient of the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military award for valor. Born a free Black man, Sgt. Hilton was a flag bearer in the Civil War who continued to carry the flag even after he was mortally wounded. To honor Sgt. Hilton and bring his story to future generations, Harford County developed a new playground near his birthplace in Gravel Hill. It features a U.S. flag, a replica of his medal, military-themed play equipment, and information about Sgt. Hilton's life and legacy.

<https://secure.rec1.com/MD/harford-county-md/catalog/index?filter=dGFiJTVCNTEyNCU1RD0xJnNlYXJjaD0=>

Veterans Photo Gallery of Honor & Resource Guide


When the pandemic canceled Harford's annual veterans resource fair, it was replaced by this program that gave citizens a way to thank local veterans and connected more veterans to resources than all prior events combined. Veterans and their families were asked to send in photos and details about their service for an online photo gallery of honor. Their stories were then posted on the county's website and social media pages throughout November, generating comments from community members. On Veterans Day, a comprehensive resource guide was published on the county website and delivered to nearly 14,000 households via the local newspaper.

At Home with Parks & Recreation

Created in response to the pandemic, At Home with Parks & Recreation kept citizens safely connected to county programs through a series of videos produced by county staff. A total of 132 videos covered a wide range of interests, including improving athletic skills, making crafts, and learning sign language. Other videos brought viewers inside county nature centers for critter feeding time. Videos were posted on the county website and social media and included a countywide game of virtual catch: <https://www.harfordcountymd.gov/2822/At-Home-with-Parks-Recreation>.

"I am proud that, despite COVID-19, my administration continued to create and deliver programs that make life better for our citizens," County Executive Barry Glassman said. "I would like to thank all of the county employees who helped develop and implement these programs and thank NACo for recognizing our efforts."

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