

NEWS RELEASE

Oakland County Board of Commissioners receives national award for human trafficking prevention efforts

May 10, 2018, Pontiac, Mich. – Oakland County’s 2018 Human Trafficking Public Awareness Campaign has been recognized with an Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo). The campaign was selected as a winner in the category of Civic Education & Public Information, and was the result of a collaborative partnership between the Oakland County Board of Commissioners’ Human Trafficking Task Force (HTTF), the Oakland County Health Division and the award-winning Oakland County IT/eGovernment (eGov) team.

“I was pleased to hear of the national recognition for all the passionate individuals and organizations working against the terrible act of human trafficking,” said Board Vice Chairman Michael Spisz, who chairs the Oakland County HTTF. “I am very proud of what the Oakland County Task Force has been able to achieve to date and look forward to the continued push to do more in this global battle.”

“We are proud that Oakland County’s human trafficking task force has increased awareness and created a website, in partnership with our health department, empowering and educating our residents [and] helping all to recognize, report and assist those in our community that may be being victimized by this insidious crime,” said Commissioner Janet Jackson, who serves as minority vice chair on the Oakland County HTTF.

“Counties seize opportunities to deliver services more efficiently and build stronger communities every day,” said NACo President Roy Charles Brooks. “Achievement Award-winning programs are examples for counties that are determined to enhance services for our residents.”

The program involved a month-long public awareness campaign to educate citizens about human trafficking via social media posts, the development of a new resources website and a press conference on January 11, 2018. The social media aspect of the campaign, created and coordinated in partnership with the IT/eGov team, was the most successful ever for Oakland County, reaching more than 1.6 million people. The development of the county human trafficking website (www.oakgov.com/humantrafficking)

was central to the overall effort, and was created to provide a hub for vital information and resources about human trafficking in Oakland County, and to facilitate intergovernmental and cross-agency collaboration in the region. The January press conference to raise awareness about human trafficking and to announce the launch of the website was attended by more than 100 people, including representatives from across law enforcement, the judicial system, social service agencies and state and local government who participated to demonstrate their commitment to the shared fight against human trafficking in the region. Speakers included Oakland County Sheriff Michael J. Bouchard and Kathy Forzley, Director of Oakland County Health & Human Services.

Started in 1970, NACo's annual Achievement Awards program is designed to recognize county government innovations. Nationally, awards are given in 18 different categories that reflect the vast, comprehensive services counties provide. These include Children & Youth, Criminal Justice, County Administration, Information Technology, Health and many more. NACo will recognize award-winning counties at its 2018 Annual Conference and Exposition July 13-16 in Nashville, Tennessee.

For more information about NACo and their annual Achievement Awards, please go to www.naco.org. For more on the Oakland County HTTF or the Board of Commissioners, please visit www.oakgov.com/boc.

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