



FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY



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For Immediate Release

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FCPA's Virginia Swims Garners NACo Award

For its lead role in developing the Virginia Swims learn-to-swim curriculum, the Fairfax County Park Authority will receive a 2016 Achievement Award next month at the National Association of Counties (NACo) 2016 Annual Conference and Exposition. NACo's annual awards program is designed to recognize innovative county government programs, and the Virginia Swims program is being honored in the Parks and Recreation category. Applications are judged on such criteria as demonstrated community impact, innovation, community/county partnership, and transferability -- qualities that enable it to be replicated by other counties.

Virginia Swims is a comprehensive learn-to-swim program that has provided swimming instruction to more than 150,000 individuals of all ages in Fairfax County and other jurisdictions since implementation in fall 2012.

To avoid a dramatic increase in licensing fees charged to customers for the existing learn-to-swim program, the curriculum was developed through the Virginia Swims Advisory Group (VSAG), a partnership established in 2011 with several regional jurisdictions and organizations, including the Fairfax County Park Authority, Reston Association, Town of Herndon, Town of Leesburg and the Reston Community Center. Aquatic professionals with more than 137 combined years of experience from these jurisdictions developed a financially sustainable way for local parks and recreation programs to provide quality swim instruction to the community.

To assess its effectiveness, evaluations were conducted measuring multiple aspects of customer satisfaction and instructor quality. Based on thousands of customer responses, quality and satisfaction with swim lessons increased after Virginia Swims implementation in Fairfax County RECenters. The program continues to be developed and is now expanding across the country as a free resource to other jurisdictions.

For more information about the award, contact the Public Information Office at 703-324-8662.

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If accommodations and/or alternative formats are needed, please call (703) 324-8563, at least 10 working days in advance of the registration deadline or event. TTY (703) 803-3354.