Durham County earns national achievement award for the library initiative Practicing Inclusivity

WASHINGTON – Durham County’s library initiative Practicing Inclusivity has been recognized with an Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo). The awards honor innovative, effective county government programs that strengthen services for residents.

NACo recognized Practicing Inclusivity, an initiative to make Durham County Library more welcoming and accessible for individuals with special needs, their families, friends, and caregivers. Led by the library’s Community Engagement Administrator Sarah Alverson, the project provided training to staff, created more inclusive spaces, and significantly increased inclusive programming at the library. In 2018, Durham County Library was awarded funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the State Library of North Carolina, a division of the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (IMLS grant number LS-00-19-0034-19) to implement the project, which was renewed for a second year in 2019.

Durham County Library Director Tammy Baggett-Best said “We’re thrilled to be recognized for this initiative. From our Neurodiversity Book Club to sensory-friendly bubble walls at our libraries, Practicing Inclusivity has helped us better serve people with special needs, and I’m excited to see it continue to grow.”

NACo President Mary Ann Borgeson said, “We are seeing firsthand now more than ever that counties work tirelessly to support our residents. This year’s Achievement Award-winning programs showcase how counties build healthy, safe and vibrant communities across America.”

Nationally, awards are given in 18 different categories that reflect the vast, comprehensive services counties provide. The categories include children and youth, criminal justice and public safety, county administration, information technology, health, civic engagement and many more.

Started in 1970, NACo’s annual Achievement Awards program is designed to recognize county government innovations. Each nominee is judged on its own merits and not against other applications received.
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. Learn more at www.naco.org