

DUTCHESS COUNTY RANKED #1 IN THE NATION FOR USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Molinaro: "Helping us connect with and better serve our residents each day"

Poughkeepsie... Dutchess County Government has been ranked #1 in the nation in the 2012 Digital Counties Survey as the leading example of counties using information and communication technology for population size between 250,000 – 499,999. Dutchess is the first county in the Northeastern United States to be ranked #1 in any of the four population categories in the ten-year history of the Digital Counties Survey.

"Technology gives us so many additional ways to engage with our residents and share the work of county government. Dutchess County Government has earned this impressive #1 national ranking based on where we are and where we are going in our use of technology," said County Executive Marcus J. Molinaro. "This county government has a significant history of using technology to do more, share more and save money, plus we have several initiatives to come in the next few months to help us reach out even more to our residents."

The Digital Counties Survey recognizes leading counties for demonstrating successful outcomes through the strategic use of technology and is conducted jointly by The Center for Digital Government, Government Technology and the National Association of Counties (NACo). Dutchess County Government has held a top ten national technological ranking every year since 2004.

Winning counties carried out strategies with measurable benefits that align with county priorities. Successful programs showed progress over the previous year, utilized innovative solutions and revealed a commitment to collaboration within and outside of their organizations.

"Counties across the country are aligning technology initiatives with executive strategic priorities to provide vital cost savings and administrative efficiencies," said NACo Executive Director Larry E. Naake. "The Digital Counties Survey identifies best practices and innovative uses

of technology crucial with today's constrained budgets to maintaining and even improving service levels."

The Center for Digital Government's (CDG) award announcement recognized how Dutchess County Government is navigating a dual challenge faced by many governments across the nation: daunting fiscal challenges coupled with increased expectations of government from residents.

Computerization and innovation have been major part in the County's effort to control costs while continuing to provide vital programs and services to residents. These successful efforts have resulted in Dutchess County Government spending 31% less per capita than the seven surrounding counties.

Dutchess County's Office of Computer Information Systems (OCIS) has been able to reduce its' net county costs by more than 20% over the past five years while improving and expanding computer services. This has been accomplished through consolidation, shared services and virtualization. The County's Information Technology (IT) services have been centralized into one computer center, with physical servers reduced by 35%, reducing equipment and support costs.

OCIS Commissioner Timothy Mahler said, "It is more important than ever to be able to provide substantial value-added services that allow our county employees to be more efficient to maintain or improve the services offered to the public. We have a great team of dedicated people who work closely with the various departments to better serve our residents each day. I am pleased to see their hard work recognized with this prestigious ranking."

The award spotlighted several initiatives Dutchess County has or will be undertaking to deliver savings and efficiencies, and provide shared services that offer added value to residents including:

- **ParcelAccess GIS services**, originally launched in 2002 with several enhancements over the years, had more than 91,500 unique users in 2011. This application offers a wide variety of property data from numerous sources in one online portal, allowing users to conduct address searches, estimate taxes, access appeal information and much more. According to Commissioner Mahler, ParcelAccess results in more than \$14 million in annual savings for municipal assessors, highway departments, businesses, realtors, and the

general public by eliminating trips to county buildings.

- A new, innovative **GIS-based Emergency Tracking System** is now available for use in the County's Emergency Operations Center. This tracking system can be used by various agencies in the EOC during an emergency event to track problems throughout the county such as flooding or road closures as well as available resources such as emergency shelters. It allows EOC participants to view a real-time "big picture" of the emergency management operations throughout the County during the emergency.
- New **Unified Communications System (UCS)** is currently being installed that merges telephone and data networks. The UCS will provide major improvements to County services and will reduce County operational costs by 54% over the next 10 years.
- **County Clerk Document Search Application**, launched in April 2012, provides on-line access for the public and businesses to 1.5 million land and legal digital documents.
- Dutchess County's **Criminal Justice AJL** (AEQIS Justice Link) was enhanced this summer to provide interagency alerts to key Public Safety staff. The AJL is the only known application in the U.S. to integrate subject records across criminal justice systems of the District Attorney, Jail, Probation and Sheriff. This interagency collaboration provides efficiency benefits for Public Safety staff.
- The online **Budget Survey** , launched in June 2012, provides residents with information about how County property tax dollars are spent and how the county budget process works. The survey allows residents to provide feedback about programs and services that are important to them. To date, more than 1,800 residents have taken the opportunity to fill out the survey.

Some of the initiatives to be launched later this year include:

- **Dutchess Delivery** – a new subscription- based public outreach service that will allow the County to better engage residents by providing news and notifications using several different methods including text, email and social media. Residents will have the ability

to stay informed on issues they choose, such as emergency alerts, events and surveys. The County is also offering this shared service to all local municipalities at a greatly discounted cost. Dutchess Delivery is expected to be online this fall.

- **Updated County Website** dutchessny.gov - new design with enhanced features will make it even easier for residents to navigate to the information they need. Dutchess County's website, dutchessny.gov, serves up more than 10 million pages per year to more than 100,000 visitors. The updated website will go online by early fall.

“Congratulations to our entire OCIS team on this impressive national honor. The work OCIS does each day, in collaboration with our other county departments, has earned Dutchess County this impressive national honor. More importantly, the work they do helps us connect with and better serve our residents each day,” concluded County Executive Molinaro.

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