

The Orange County Government Gazette

Serving Orange County Residents since 1752

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Orange County Honored with Three National Awards for Innovation and Service

Orange County Government has received three prestigious 2025 Achievement Awards from the National Association of Counties (NACo), recognizing the county's commitment to innovative, impactful public service. The awards celebrate exceptional county programs that enhance services for residents and improve quality of life.

The honored programs represent a diverse cross-section of county-led efforts that focus on well-being, crisis response, and community enrichment:

R Place – Innovative Social Engagement for Older Adults

Developed by the Orange County Department on Aging and launched in 2023, R Place is a social engagement program designed to reduce isolation and provide meaningful connections for individuals living with dementia and their caregivers. Through interactive activities, shared meals, art, music and conversation, R Place helps participants maintain a sense of belonging and joy while strengthening caregiver support. R Place sessions are held Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Seymour Center in Chapel Hill. www.orangecountync.gov/RPlace

Community Care and Diversion Response (CCDR) Team – Policing and Mental Health Diversion Collaboration

Orange County's Community Care and Diversion Response Team, launched in 2023 by the Criminal Justice Resource Department, is a multidisciplinary collaboration between mental health professionals, emergency responders, and law enforcement. The team provides immediate, trauma-informed care and support to individuals with serious mental illness by diverting them from arrest, jail or emergency rooms, whenever possible. The program, currently funded by a grant provided by the N.C. Dept. of Health and Human Services, emphasizes de-escalation, safety, holistic support, case management and access to critical needs and resources. www.orangecountync.gov/CCDR

Uproar Festival – A Bold Celebration of Public Art

The Uproar Festival of Public Art, coordinated by the Orange County Arts Commission, in partnership with the towns of Chapel Hill, Carrboro, Hillsborough, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, debuted in the summer of 2023. The three-week event brings large-scale, temporary art installations to Chapel Hill, Carrboro and Hillsborough. Featuring works from 60 artists from throughout the southeast,



the festival prioritizes accessibility for people of differing physical abilities and socioeconomic status. The festival is entirely free and prioritizes engagement by relying on community votes to determine the \$10,000 People's Choice Winner. "These awards reflect Orange County's dedication to thinking boldly, acting compassionately, and serving inclusively," said Jamezetta Bedford, Chair of the Orange County Board of Commissioners. "Each of these programs represents the values we hold dear—care for our neighbors, innovation in public service, and celebration of our vibrant community." uproarfestnc.com

The National Association of Counties' Achievement Awards recognize counties for outstanding programs in a variety of service areas. Orange County's recognition among hundreds of applicants nationwide underscores the strength of its staff, leadership, and community partnerships.

Each year, NACo's Achievement Awards recognize outstanding programming in 18 categories aligned with the vast, comprehensive services counties provide. The categories include children and youth, criminal justice and public safety, libraries, management, information technology, health, civic engagement and more. Launched in 1970, the program is designed to celebrate innovation in county government. Each nominated program is judged on its own merits and not against other applications. "The Achievement Awards shine a spotlight on the hard work and innovation happening in county governments across the nation," said NACo President James Gore. "This year's winners highlight the dedication and creativity of county leaders and our teams to building thriving communities and providing the best possible services to our residents."

For more information about the NACo Achievement Awards: www.naco.org/page/achievement-awards?_page=1

Tropical Storm Chantal Giving Fund: Help Orange County and Towns Recover

In response to the widespread impacts left by Tropical Storm Chantal, Orange County has launched the Tropical Storm Chantal Giving Fund in collaboration with the towns of Carrboro, Chapel Hill and Hillsborough. This joint initiative is dedicated to supporting local recovery efforts and ensuring aid reaches those most in need across all areas of the county.

Tropical Storm Chantal brought significant challenges to the community—damaged homes, displaced families and disrupted local services. The Giving Fund represents a coordinated effort among county and municipal leaders to address these challenges through equitable and prioritized distribution of resources.

The fund will focus on providing essential resources and services in critical areas, including:

- Emergency housing assistance for displaced families
- Food security and meal distribution programs
- Mental health support and counseling services
- Restoration of public services and infrastructure
- Small business recovery grants



All contributions will directly support these vital recovery efforts, helping Orange County and its towns emerge stronger and more resilient. As of July 23, the giving fund total is more than \$44,000. Community members, businesses, and organizations are encouraged to contribute to the fund. Donations can be made through www.orangecountync.gov/ChantalFund.

Checks can be made out to Orange County Government and mailed to:
ATTN: Accounting
Orange County Finance
PO Box 8181
Hillsborough, NC 27278

Small Business Administration Disaster Loan Outreach Centers Open Through August 30

The SBA Disaster Loan Outreach Centers are open through Saturday, Aug. 30, at 1 p.m. SBA staff will be available to assist businesses and residents complete their disaster loan application, accept documents, and provide updates on an application's status. Walk-ins are accepted, or you may schedule an in-person appointment in advance at appointment.sba.gov. The hours of operation for the centers are as follows:

The Drakeford Library Complex
Multipurpose Room 152B
203 S. Greensboro St., Carrboro
8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. weekdays; 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Saturdays

Alamance County Health Services
319 N. Graham-Hopedale Road, Burlington
8 a.m. - 5 p.m. weekdays; 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Saturdays

Online applications will be accepted until September 23, 2025, for physical damage and April 27, 2026, for economic injury at lending. sba.gov.



Businesses and private nonprofit organizations may borrow up to \$2 million to repair or replace disaster-damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory, and other business assets.

For more information and to apply online visit sba.gov/disaster. Applicants may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov for information on SBA disaster assistance. For people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, please dial 7-1-1 to access telecommunications relay services.

APPLY TODAY! Community Climate Action Grant Program

The Community Climate Action Grant Program is dedicated to accelerating climate change mitigation actions in Orange County. All public and non-profit entities and small businesses are eligible to apply.

We are looking for great project ideas that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and make a positive impact in our community.

Applications must be received by **August 15, 2025.**

For more information, visit www.orangecountync.gov/CCAG
Or contact Orange County Sustainability at sustainability@orangecountync.gov

BACK TO SCHOOL BASH!

Join us at the Efland Cheeks Community Center for a back to school bash!

- School supplies giveaways!
- Bring your bike for a tune up and get a new helmet!
- Hot dogs!
- Community resources!
- Free vision clinic and free eyewear for Medicaid patients ages 4 – 18 (appointment required – schedule when registering for event)
- And much more!

FREE!

Saturday, August 16 • 11am-1pm
Efland-Cheeks Community Center, 117 Richmond Road, Efland, NC

Registration encouraged by calling (919) 563-1130

Sponsored by United Voice of Efland Cheeks, Orange County Sheriff's Office and Orange County Department on Aging Project EngAGE Intergenerational SRT with generous donations from Alliance Health and AmeriHealth.

Start Smart Soccer

The Start Smart Program is a sports development class structured to teach you and your child the basic skills of sport. Start Smart Soccer will focus on the fundamentals of running, dribbling, passing and receiving, shooting, and throw-ins.

3-5-years-old with adult co-participant

Wednesdays
Sep 3-Oct 8
5:45-6:30 p.m.

Saturdays
Sep 6-Oct 11
9-9:45 a.m.

\$50

Central Recreation Center

Register by Aug 27

More information: www.orangecountync.gov/505/Start-Smart-Soccer
To register: www.orangecountync.gov/ActivityRegistration

Tippling Fees Waived for Storm Recovery

In response to Tropical Storm Chantal, Orange County Solid Waste is **waiving all tipping fees for construction and demolition debris from impacted properties—effective immediately through August 9.**

- ✓ Applies to storm-related debris only
- ✓ No cost for qualifying loads at the Orange County Disposal Center (Landfill)

*Permitted Materials Only

Let's work together to recover, rebuild, and restore.

ORANGE COUNTY SOLID WASTE

Opioid Settlement Funds Community Meeting

Saturday, August 16, 11 a-3p

Scan code or visit OrangeCountyNC.Gov/OpioidSettlement

HOT WEATHER RESOURCES IN ORANGE COUNTY

For a list of showers, cooling off areas, phone charging spots and public restrooms, go to: www.orangecountync.gov/Heat

For more help for people living unsheltered, contact SOHRAD at 919-886-3351

Monday - Friday 8am - 9pm
Saturday 12noon - 9pm

Check out OC Connect, at occonnect.info, a more comprehensive list of resources across Orange County.

ORANGE COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA WE ARE HIRING!

To learn more about job opportunities available in Orange County Government, please visit www.orangecountync.gov/Careers or contact the Human Resources Recruitment Manager at (919) 245-2557