



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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PRESS RELEASE

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COUNTY RECEIVES 2021 CSAC MERIT AWARDS

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) announced the recipients of the 2021 Challenge Awards, spotlighting the most innovative programs developed and implemented by California counties. The County of Santa Cruz received Merit Awards for programs to improve results in addiction treatment and government operations.

In the category of Government Finance, Administration, and Technology, the County won a Merit Award for its County Operational Plan Strategy and online dashboard. The dashboard details and tracks progress toward scores of specific objectives intended to improve services to residents and overall operations. In the area of Health and Human Services, the County won a Merit Award for its Peer Support Specialist Program, which draws on the knowledge and support of people with lived experience to mentor those struggling with substance use disorder.

"These awards highlights the organizational improvements we continue to make throughout Santa Cruz County government, and it is especially gratifying to see our strategic and operational planning efforts receive statewide recognition," County Administrative Officer Carlos Palacios said. "This recognition is the result of County staff who work every day on behalf of the people of Santa Cruz County to make our community more safe, equitable and healthy."

Following the adoption of the six-year Strategic Plan, the County implemented a two-year Operational Plan to measure departmental progress towards achieving strategic goals. The County tracks all progress through the interactive online dashboard, <https://www.sccvision.us>, which ensures full transparency of all successes and challenges.

The awards were selected from a pool of evaluated entries from across the state. Twenty-two counties were recognized for their creative and collaborative solutions to local challenges. To learn more about all of the award-winning programs, visit <https://www.counties.org/post/2021-challenge-award-recipients>