

Macomb County takes top honors

*Association hands
out awards for
programs, services*

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For 26 consecutive years, Macomb County has set an example for the state to follow.

This year, Michigan's third-largest county was awarded 16 Achievement Awards from the National Association of Counties, which honors counties that have successfully implemented original governmental programs and services that enrich the quality of life for residents in the community.

The county earned the highest number of awards among Michigan's 83 counties — leading the state with 542 honors in the last 26 years.

"It is a truly remarkable achievement for our government to perform at this level for so many years," said William Crouchman, chairman of the Macomb County Board of Commissioners.

Macomb County received awards in seven categories for providing continuing service to residents, including civic education and public information, court administration and management and information technology.

The Department of Senior Citizen Services received four awards for its Senior Crime Victim Liaison, Discount Dental, Medication Assistance Through Prescription Resource Network and Legal Assistance programs.

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"We're very proud of the recognition we've received," said Karen Bisdorf, the department's assistant director. "We're working to find new approaches to solving continuing problems that seniors in the area are having."

The Clerk's Office received three awards this year through its implementation of an Earn and Learn program for student election inspectors; a secured, Internet birth certificate verification system designed to prevent document fraud, and wireless Internet access for those called for jury duty.

Macomb County Clerk Carmella Sabaugh said she was particularly pleased by the response to the Earn and Learn program, which allowed 17- and 18-year old students to train with and work beside adult election inspectors.

"The schools are very excited about it," Sabaugh said, adding that people — not programs — make Macomb County a success.

"In each area, we have people who are willing to come up with new ideas and make them work for the benefit of the public."