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Charleston County Coroner's Office Earns 2024 Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award

At yesterday's South Carolina Association of Counties (SCAC) awards ceremony, the **Charleston County Coroner's Office** was announced as the winner of this year's [Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award](#), which recognizes the importance of regional partnerships by honoring two or more local governments that collaborated on an innovative project to better serve their communities.

The winning project, a partnership between the Charleston and Beaufort County Coroners' Offices, established a framework for sharing resources and investigative tools to improve data standardization and communication between the counties. Additionally, it addresses challenges that can delay death investigations and the issuance of death certificates, particularly in cases involving natural disasters, the opioid crisis, or mass fatalities.

Supported by grant funding, the initiative also enhances the county offices' abilities to manage mass fatalities and provide services to their combined 630,000 residents.

According to SCAC, winners of the Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award "represent the best qualities of local governance—attention to details, service to citizens, efficient use of tax dollars, and improvement in the quality of life. They demonstrate how creative problem-solving and collaboration can achieve impressive results and offer new ideas for other counties to consider."

"The goal of our office is to represent decedents and survivors as thoughtfully and effectively as possible, and this partnership with Beaufort allows both counties to do just that," said Charleston County Coroner Bobbi Jo O'Neal. "I'm proud to see our work recognized with this prestigious award and look forward to continuing our efforts to meet the evolving needs of our respective communities."

The **Charleston County Consolidated Emergency Communications Center**, which also submitted and presented for the Barrett Lawrimore Award, received an Honorable Mention for their Coastal Area Cooperative partnership with Beaufort, Berkeley, and Horry counties, and Goose Creek and Summerville.

The South Carolina Coastal Area Cooperative establishes resources to help ensure that emergency calls are answered, and help can be dispatched in the event of 911 service disruptions. The agreement includes automatic and mutual aid, disaster recovery, resource coordination, information sharing, and technology integration.

Since implementation, the partners have provided backup call-taking and dispatching for each other on several occasions, including during recent natural disasters and unforeseen power outages.

In keeping with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), those needing assistance should contact Charleston County at (843) 202-6917 during regular business hours.

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