



Chatham County Board of Commissioners
124 Bull Street, Savannah, GA 31401



NEWS RELEASE

Chatham County Programs Honored by the National Association of Counties

For Immediate Release

Chatham County, GA (July 30, 2026) - Chatham County was recently recognized with two Achievement Awards from the National Association of Counties (NACo) during the organization's annual conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, earlier this month. The NACo Achievement Awards have recognized outstanding county government programs and services since 1970.

The Chatham County Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) received a NACo Achievement Award in the Criminal Justice and Public Safety category. The BHU is an innovative and collaborative first responder/clinician approach to the community mental health crisis. The program aims to connect the community's most vulnerable citizens and their families to services designed to break the cycle of recidivism, criminality, mental health crisis, and episodes of homelessness by providing a multidisciplinary approach to problem solving.

This work builds trust and relationships between Chatham County first responders, the community, and mental health and community service providers while furthering increased communication and collaborative approaches to problem solving and data sharing, resulting in solutions that improve the quality of life for all Chatham County citizens.

"This recognition highlights the meaningful impact our Behavioral Health Unit is making in Chatham County, and we're proud to see this innovative approach recognized," said Chatham County Chairman Chester A. Ellis. "By bringing together first responders, mental health professionals, and community partners, we're helping residents obtain much-needed services while strengthening public safety."

Learn more about the BHU [here](#).

Project Hope Water, a mobile shower unit developed in partnership with Chatham County and the Chatham Savannah Authority for the Homeless (CSAH), received a NACo Achievement Award in the category of Human Services.

Launched in 2024, Project Hope Water is one of Chatham County's most innovative partnership initiatives for unhoused and vulnerable populations. Through planning with CSAH, the mobile shower and hygiene program is designed to restore dignity and improve health outcomes for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Services include showers, hygiene products, Continuum of Care IDs, transportation, connections to emergency shelter beds, health care, mental health and recovery services, employment services, and mainstream benefits.

"Project Hope Water is a result of our strong partnership with the Chatham Savannah Authority for the Homeless, and our shared commitment to serving Chatham County with compassion and purpose," Ellis said. "This project is making a real difference by meeting immediate needs, but it also connects individuals with the resources that can help them make long-term positive change. We're proud to see those efforts recognized by NACo."

Learn more about Project Hope Water on CSAH's website: www.homelessauthority.org.

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