



Gloucester Community Engagement & Public Information

6382 Main Street
Gloucester, Va. 23061
804.693.5730 • www.gloucesterva.gov

August 18, 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Quinton Sheppard,
Director of Community Engagement
& Public Information
qsheppard@gloucesterva.info

Gloucester County Receives two VACo Achievement Awards

Gloucester County is the recipient of two Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) 2025 Achievement Awards, which recognize excellence in local government programs. Gloucester's winning entries focused on its "Current Conversations" podcast and its efforts to reach different audiences via video. Both entries were submitted by Gloucester's Community Engagement & Public Information department.

This year, VACo received a record number of 155 submissions from localities across the Commonwealth. "It really makes me feel good to know Gloucester's programs can compete against similar ones in much larger jurisdictions and come out on top," said Quinton Sheppard, Gloucester's Community Engagement & Public Information Director. "We have worked extremely hard to try to develop innovative approaches to reach as many of our residents as possible with factual and timely information related to their local government."

The County's "Current Conversations" podcast was launched in early 2020 as a budget-friendly way to try to reach a wider demographic and expand on topics that are of importance to residents and visitors alike. Since its inception, the podcast has grown leaps and bounds, reaching well over 2,000 members of the public, who have been able to learn more about certain topics and events of interest to them. The podcast is published monthly and can be listened to by visiting <https://currentconversations.buzzsprout.com>.

The second winning entry focused on the County's efforts to overhaul its media strategy to acknowledge new market trends such as the effectiveness of short videos on social media channels. This shift of focus toward short-form videos in 2024 has returned excellent results in the County's overall communications strategy.

"It pays to stick with the plan," said Savannah Haugdahl, Gloucester's Public Communication & Media Specialist, who records and produces most of the County's videos. "We've noticed that over time, as our initial videos gained traction and social media algorithms started to predict our videos could hold an audience, our viewership gradually increased. So far in 2025, all our social media

statistics are on-track to comfortably outpace either of the past two years.” All the County’s digital media can be found on its YouTube channel,
<https://www.youtube.com/@GloucesterCountyVirginia>.

A VACo representative is expected to formally present the two awards before the County’s Board of Supervisors on Sept. 2.

###



Quinton Sheppard, director of Gloucester’s Community Engagement & Public Information department, records an episode of the County’s Current Conversations podcast alongside Savannah Haugdahl, the County’s public communications/media specialist.