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## NEWS RELEASE

### Two National Digital Government Organizations Award Oakland County's Digital Response to Pandemic

Pontiac, Mich., Sept. 20, 2021 – Two national awards are shining a spotlight on Oakland County's digital response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The county received the Granicus Digital Government Award for its overall Digital Coronavirus Response and a Project Experience Award from the Center for Digital Government for its #OaklandTogether COVID-19 Tribute.

"These awards highlight the talent and dedication of the county's communications, information technology, and public health teams throughout the pandemic," County Executive Dave Coulter said. "When we learned about our first COVID-19 case, my administration made a commitment to be transparent and keep the public informed. Digital communications played a key role in that effort."

Oakland County's Digital Coronavirus Response for which it won the Granicus Digital Government Award included:

- A COVID-19 website and dashboards
- Press conferences and Board of Commissioners meetings by virtually accessible videos with online citizen feedback
- Streamlined CARES Act grant process, increasing transparency through GIS-powered dashboards
- Redesigning Workforce Development website to help connect job seekers and businesses with vital information while reducing number of service calls
- Launching a separate Vaccine hub with dashboard, FAQs, newsletters, and the 'Save Your Spot' online form. The hub has had more than 2.2 million pageviews, with 767,000 users since it launched in January 2021.
- The 'Save Your Spot' online form for vaccine appointment registrations which at its height had 600,000 names on the list
- A COVID-19 vaccination weekly newsletter, including a video message, to nearly 115,000 email and text subscribers
- The utilization of crowdsourcing for a COVID-19 safety video, art public service announcements competition, and the Oakland Together COVID-19 Tribute Gratitude and Remembrance Story maps

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- The COVID-19 Tribute Month initiatives to honor and remember everything we've experienced together this past year implemented through a website, crowdsourced Remembrance and Gratitude Maps, a Tribute Walk, community discussion, and videos

"Oakland County responded to COVID-19 with a host of digital services and tools," Granicus said. "In addition to organizing virtual press conferences and board meetings, it developed a dedicated COVID-19 website, redesigned its workforce development website to connect job seekers to employers, and created a digital vaccine hub with a 'save your spot' online form that has generated over 2 million page views since its launch."

The Center for Digital Government's Project Experience Award highlights Oakland County's collaborative effort to produce the #OaklandTogether COVID-19 Tribute. Oakland County lead the project and coordinated across county departments, including the County Executive Office, Health Division, Information Technology, and Oakland County Parks and Recreation, as well as a vendor, Bluewater Technologies. Tribute events included:

- A virtual discussion and COVID-19 update by County Executive Coulter and Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist on the inequities people of color faced when confronting the virus. This video had more than 1,700 views.
- A video of county officials remembering one year of living with COVID-19 while reflecting on the pandemic and the tragedies, suffering, and heroism many experienced since March 10, 2020. The video received more than 2,700 views.
- Remembrance and Gratitude Story Maps which were crowdsourced story maps for stories and photos of those we have lost to COVID-19 on the Remembrance Map as well as appreciation for acts of kindness for frontline workers and support for local businesses on the Gratitude Map.
- The #OaklandTogether COVID-19 Tribute Walk, a half-mile immersive light display that honored the memories of those lost to COVID-19 and gave thanks to those who risk their health and safety the past year. More than 3,000 people attended in person, and another 5,243 viewed the livestream. After expenses were covered, \$3,500 was donated to CARE House, a Pontiac-based agency that provides services for children who are the victims of child abuse and neglect.

To learn more about Oakland County's digital resources for COVID-19, go to [oakgov.com/COVID](https://oakgov.com/COVID) or [OaklandCountyVaccine.com](https://OaklandCountyVaccine.com).