



News Release

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CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG LIBRARY EARNS NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR MECKTECH PROGRAM

Award demonstrates transformative approach to revolutionizing public libraries

Charlotte, NC – May 27, 2021 – Charlotte Mecklenburg Library has been recognized with an Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo) for the program “MeckTech Kits for Mecklenburg County’s Most Vulnerable Population.” This award honors innovative, effective county government programs that strengthen services for residents in the library category.

“Charlotte Mecklenburg Library is honored to receive this award for serving our community through the important work of reducing the digital divide, especially during this difficult time of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Seth Ervin, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Chief Innovation Officer. “Our Library works to improve lives and build a stronger community, and the inspiring responses of recipients affirm the vital leadership role we serve in connecting our neighbors to the digital ecosystem.”

“The pandemic reminded us all of the importance of digital access,” said Leslie Johnson, Mecklenburg County Deputy County Manager. “While Mecklenburg County is honored to receive an award, it is an even greater honor to create a resourceful way to bridge the digital divide for so many within the community.”

When many organizations and institutions rapidly transitioned to digital and online platforms to help serve their customers during the pandemic closures, this quick pivoting in services unfortunately left a whole segment of the population behind. It is estimated that in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community, nearly 20% of all households—or 80,000 households—lack a computer in the home. The MeckTech program was funded by Mecklenburg County as a grantee of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act and made available 1,400 free computer devices to eligible households in Mecklenburg County adversely affected by COVID-19. The free computers were placed into the hands of residents in search of work, of students and parents struggling with virtual learning, of people with physical challenges and of the elderly navigating the healthcare system.

NACo President Gary Moore said, “Over the past year, county officials and frontline employees have demonstrated bold, inspirational leadership. This year’s Achievement Award winning programs illustrate the innovative ways counties build healthy, safe and vibrant communities across America.”

Nationally, awards are given in 18 different categories that reflect the vast, comprehensive services counties provide. The categories include children and youth, criminal justice and public safety, county administration, information technology, health, civic engagement and many more.

Started in 1970, NACo’s annual Achievement Awards program is designed to recognize county government innovations. Each nominee is judged on its own merits and not against other applications received.

More information on the Library and services available can be found at cmlibrary.org.

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About Charlotte Mecklenburg Library:

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library is one of America's leading urban public libraries, serving a community of more than one million citizens in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. Through 20 locations, targeted outreach and online resources, the Library delivers exceptional services and programs, with a mission to improve lives and build a stronger community. For more, visit cmlibrary.org.

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