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ELECTIONS DIVISION RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD FOR ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAM

The Contra Costa Elections Division has been presented a prestigious Professional Practices Program Award by the National Association of Election Officials (Election Center) for its innovative poll worker training class on voter accessibility.

Joe Canciamilla, Contra Costa County Clerk-Recorder/Registrar of Voters and Assistant Registrar Scott Konopasek received the award on behalf of the department at the Election Center's annual conference Monday in New Orleans. The pair gave a presentation to their peers at the conference about the Accessible Polling Place Locations and Equipment (APPLE) Program.

"We are honored to be recognized for the work that our team does every day to make sure that all Contra Costa residents have the best voting experience possible," Canciamilla said. "There are some of our polling place locations that present challenges from an accessibility standpoint. The APPLE Program has proven to be an engaging, effective way to help our poll workers recognize and meet this challenge."

Contra Costa Election's APPLE Program earned the Election Center's Independence Award for being the best innovation for voter accessibility.

APPLE puts poll workers in the shoes of voters who need assistance and provides real-life examples of situations that can occur at a polling place on Election Day. The 90-minute class covers:

- Creating a welcoming environment for all voters;
- Making the ballot marking device an accessible solution for all voters;
- Understanding how our office conducts site surveys for compliance with federal accessibility standards;
- Using items, such as ramps and signs, to make the path of travel to the polling place accessible; and
- Ensuring that the polling place remains accessible throughout Election Day.

"I think the timing of the APPLE program is impeccable. Voter accessibility is really going to be an issue in the upcoming election, so the program will be super beneficial, not only to election officials, but to the voting community," said Tim Mattice, Executive Director of the Election Center. "It's going to go a long way in making voters feel more comfortable and increase the poll workers level of confidence."

In addition to the Election Center award, the APPLE program has been featured in publications by U.S. Election Assistance Commission and electionLine, a nationwide trade publication for election officials.

More information about the APPLE Program can be found on the Contra Costa Elections website at <https://www.cocovote.us/poll-worker-center/accessible-polling-place-locations-and-equipment-apple-class/>.

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