



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2020.** Please include this application form with electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).


PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Dinwiddie
Program Title: Dinwiddie County Faith-Based Initiative
Program Category: Community & Economic Development

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Marie Grant
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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: W. Kevin Massengill
Title: County Administrator
Signature: 

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2020 Achievement Award
Dinwiddie County – Faith Based Initiative**

Problem:

The Dinwiddie County Board of Supervisors, Dinwiddie County School Board, and both administrations recognize that the health and vitality of our community extends beyond the scope of government and schools. In order to achieve the maximum level of success for all citizens, we must work collectively with each component of the community. For years, we attempted to initiate change from within the walls of our respective board rooms, offices and classrooms, however, this approach was not completely effective. In order to plan services to address critical needs, County and school leaders needed a way to communicate more directly with the community.

Award Criteria: Community & Economic Development

Dinwiddie County has a robust faith community. There are more than 80 churches and houses of worship located in the County. It has been said that in Dinwiddie, there is a church on every corner. Building on a shared mission of serving, the Board of Supervisors, County staff and public schools seized the opportunity to **collaborate** with local faith-based leaders to develop an **innovative** approach to service. In February 2018, **Dinwiddie County's Faith-Based Initiative** was established with representation of local government, schools and more than 20 churches.

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Program Description:

The Faith-Based Initiative brings pastors and church leaders to the table for in-depth conversations with County government and school leaders. The initial meeting, held in February 2018, included a lengthy brainstorming session titled “What keeps you up at night?” During this meeting, participants shared problems, issues and concerns experienced in their congregations and the communities that surround their churches. The responses covered an array of topics; yet there were several common themes including, poverty, food insufficiency, lack of transportation, single-parent households, limited youth activities, access to the Internet, mental health concerns, and job training.

From the large round-table group, a 12-member steering committee was formed and immediately began to develop strategies for addressing these issues. The steering committee meets monthly and includes the County Administrator and Superintendent of Public Schools. When the Faith-Based Initiative began, meetings were facilitated by the County Administrator. As the program has evolved, the facilitator’s role has transitioned to that of a local pastor. County leaders continue to serve as members of the steering committee.

Since inception, the Faith Based Initiative has had a significant impact on the community. Their first order of business was to survey churches throughout the County to develop a list of existing programs, services and missions. This information was used to populate a Community Support Map, which has been made available on the County website. The map may be accessed by following this link: <https://www.dinwiddieva.us/1259/Community->

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[Resource-Map](#). The Community Support map includes information on programs and services offered by churches, County government and schools and can be easily navigated by citizens through targeted key word searches.

Through careful consideration of topics raised at the initial meeting, the steering committee developed a four-pronged approach to addressing key issues: **LIVE, LEARN, LEAD, and LOVE** in Dinwiddie County. These prongs evolved into a series of community events.

The **LIVE WELL** expo is an annual event held at Dinwiddie County High School, which includes health screenings, demonstrations, seminars and exhibits designed to encourage healthy lifestyles and community involvement. This event is FREE and open to the entire community.

To support the **LEARN WELL** concept, the Faith Based Initiative raised money to provide school supplies for all kindergarten students in the County for the 2018-2019 school year. School supplies were provided to ALL students to ensure that each and every kindergartener in Dinwiddie County would be equipped with the tools he/she needed to start school successfully. Supplies were purchased in bulk by Dinwiddie County Public Schools in an effort to make certain brands and quantities were consistent among students. The supplies were delivered directly to schools so parents of kindergarten students would have one less thing to worry about on the first day of school.

In February 2020, Dinwiddie County's Faith Based Initiative hosted the first-ever **LEAD WELL** summit. This event brought together leaders from all facets of the community – faith, government, schools, businesses, civic, and non-profits, in an effort to coordinate practices

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that will lead to a stronger, healthier community for all people. The theme for the half-day event was “Servant Leadership”, which is a concept applicable to leaders and organizations in all sectors of the community, and featured international faith-based leader Dr. John Kinney as keynote speaker. This event was very well received and boasted more than 300 attendees. Following the keynote address, participants broke into smaller groups based on their affiliation (business, faith, school, government, nonprofit, civic) and were asked to respond to a series of questions regarding the community. Their responses were compiled and used to determine a course of action. Sub-committees were formed to delve deeper into the most prominent issues, which included food insufficiency, neighborhood enhancements, transportation, senior needs and education-related issues. These subcommittees are becoming increasingly active in the community. One example is the food insufficiency subcommittee. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, this group mobilized to coordinate a one-day, “Dinwiddie Gives” event to support the County’s four food banks/pantries. More than \$58,000 was raised, and 1,650 pounds of food was collected during this event, to help supply sustenance to families and communities

Discussions are underway to establish a **LOVE WELL** event. This is in the very early planning stages, but will include a community open house-style event, where families from across the County will come together to share a meal, a message, and lots of fun. Of course, to ensure the health and safety of attendees, this will be a post COVID-19 pandemic event.

The Dinwiddie County Faith Based Initiative has created opportunities for County and school leaders to work directly with and in the communities we serve through collaboration with

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churches and houses of worship. It is an additional conduit through which important information is shared with citizens, and brings faith leaders to the table to discuss issues most pertinent to their congregations and communities. The Initiative represents a partnership like none other in the history of Dinwiddie County, and its model is easily replicated in other localities. Through the Faith Based Initiative, Dinwiddie County is positioning itself to be the best community around to LIVE, LEARN, LEAD and LOVE.

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Executive Summary:

The Dinwiddie County Board of Supervisors, Dinwiddie County School Board, and both administrations recognize that the health and vitality of our community extends beyond the scope of government and schools. In order to achieve the maximum level of success for all citizens, we must work collectively with each component of the community. County leaders moved outside the walls of traditional offices and classrooms, to create a unique partnership with the County's faith community. The Dinwiddie County Faith Based Initiative was established in 2018 and has created a variety of opportunities for better communication and service to all citizens of Dinwiddie County.

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Brief Overview:

The Dinwiddie County Faith Based Initiative was established in 2018 as an avenue for better communication and service to all citizens of Dinwiddie County.

The Dinwiddie County Board of Supervisors, Dinwiddie County School Board, and both administrations recognized that the health and vitality of our community extends beyond the scope of government and schools. In order to achieve the maximum level of success for all citizens, we must work collectively with each component of the community. County leaders moved outside the walls of traditional offices and classrooms, to create a unique partnership with the County's robust faith community.

By inviting Dinwiddie's more than 80 churches and houses of worship to the table, County leaders were able to initiate open dialogue regarding the matters most important to citizens. The response has been tremendous and the results are phenomenal. In its first two years of organization, the Faith Based Initiative has developed an interactive resource map and already coordinated three successful community events designed to address identified issues, with a fourth event in the planning stages.

Building on a shared mission of service, the collaboration of County, schools and the faith community makes perfect sense. The partnership is making a difference in Dinwiddie County and can serve as a model for other localities.

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Images of Events:

LIVE WELL



Logo for the Live Well Expo



School nutrition staff provided an array of fresh fruits and vegetables for sampling.



Dinwiddie County Board member, Harrison Moody, attended the event with his grandson.



Representatives from local agencies and non-profits spoke directly with patrons about resources available in the community.

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The Tri-City Soul Dancers demonstrated a fun way to stay active – line dancing!

LEARN WELL



In partnership with the Dinwiddie County faith-based community, all school supplies will be provided to Kindergarteners for the 2018-2019 school year.

Supplies will be distributed at each elementary school during the Open House/Meet the Teacher event on Thursday, August 30, 2018.

DINWIDDIE COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DEEP ROOTS • GREAT HEIGHTS

School supplies were provided to EVERY kindergarten student in Dinwiddie County!

LEAD WELL



This one-of-a-kind event drew an enormous crowd of people striving to make a difference through servant leadership.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9Dhblyv5Mo>