



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 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: County of Henrico

Program Title: Pooling Resources: Swimming Partnership Makes a Community Safer

Program Category: Organizational Development

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Brandon Hinton

Title: Deputy County Manager for Administration

Signature: 

Program Overview

Henrico County Public Schools expresses a divisionwide commitment to every student by communicating a vision of inclusiveness, and embraces four critical cornerstones: student safety and wellness, academic growth, equity and opportunity, and relationships. The sports medicine program at the Advanced Career Education (ACE) Center at Hermitage High school in Henrico County provides 11th- and 12th-grade students with a strong foundation in sports medicine, athletic training and other medical fields. Community involvement is imperative for creating a positive learning environment to support our mission.

In summer 2019, the sports medicine program acted to support Henrico Schools' cornerstone of student safety and wellness in creating a partnership with SwimRVA, a Richmond-area nonprofit. SwimRVA is dedicated to making swimming, water safety and aquatic fitness more accessible. The collaboration aims to teach students to swim and possibly earn lifeguarding credentials. As a result, students who couldn't swim have become more comfortable in the water and developed swimming skills. Students have also become certified as lifeguards, giving them more opportunities and increasing overall water safety in the region.

This affiliation has benefited Henrico County citizens, SwimRVA, and Henrico County Public Schools' sports medicine program.

Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

Half of the U.S. population does not know how to swim. Drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death among children under age 14 and is a leading cause of death of children with an autism spectrum disorder. Seventy percent of African Americans and 66% of students qualifying for free- or reduced-price meals do not know how to swim.

With SwimRVA's water safety programs and the collaboration with Henrico County Public Schools' sports medicine program, we are changing the region's relationship to water. Lifeguarding plays a crucial role in "drownproofing" Richmond waters. By empowering our sports medicine students to understand, respect and appreciate the water, our students can save lives, through direct instruction and education. As we look at trends in the community, we realized that we must increase students' knowledge of water safety. In addition, 3,000 lifeguards are needed annually. Many guard positions remain unfilled, and local pools are forced to close early. The collaboration with SwimRVA will allow Henrico Schools' sports medicine students to provide education and fill area lifeguard positions. This helps SwimRVA with its overall mission and supports the sports medicine program's efforts to expand student knowledge, opportunities, and certifications.

How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria

This innovative model of community collaboration fills gaps in Richmond-area lifeguard positions and increases water safety. Our affiliation with SwimRVA has directly impacted the safety and wellness of the individuals in Henrico County and the surrounding Richmond area. HCPS' cooperation with SwimRVA has helped to provide water safety skills to those in need, education to a high-risk population, and supported Henrico Schools' sports medicine program. The partnership between SwimRVA and the ACE Center at Hermitage is an example of community and local government working together to meet the needs of the community in a cost-efficient manner. SwimRVA benefits through succeeding in its mission. Henrico County benefits by having more of its young people able to swim safely and to help others in case of a swimming emergency.

How Program Was Carried Out

Henrico County Public Schools' mission is to "actively engage students in diverse learning experiences that inspire and empower them to become contributing citizens." SwimRVA fosters water safety. By forming a partnership, the two have created opportunities for growth and community support. SwimRVA initiated a discussion with HCPS' sports medicine program to assist in the group's efforts to promote water safety and community awareness in Henrico County and the City of Richmond. The group aims to reduce the high rate of deaths related to drowning and to help fill area lifeguard positions.

The objectives of the program are to teach students who have not been given the opportunity to learn to swim, and to provide the opportunity for advanced swimmers to become certified as lifeguards through the American Red Cross. A list of skills was compiled that students would need to be taught. These skills ranged from simply becoming comfortable in the water by blowing bubbles, to swimming 100 yards. Once students were assessed, they were divided into three levels based on skills. At each swim session, the students were split into groups and instructed by professional swim instructors. The sports medicine teacher collaborated with SwimRVA to arrange dates for students to participate. The participants were 37 sports medicine students with varying levels of swimming skills. SwimRVA provided the facility and staff members to train the students at no cost to Henrico County Public Schools.

Financing and Staffing

No cost was involved for training the students, and no cost to establishing the partnership. For students ready to earn lifeguard certification, the price for certification was \$75.

Program Results

Of the 37 students who participated in the program, 27 gained swimming skills. All were able to swim 25 yards or more by the end of the program. This was an impressive feat since some of the students had never been in a pool or other swimming situation. Ten students earned certification, and 37 students received certification in first aid and CPR.

Brief Summary

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