

Professional Practices Program Press Release:

The Election Center created the Professional Practices Program in 1996 to provide a forum in which Election Officials could share their successful practices with other jurisdictions and bring recognition to an Election Official through a presentation of an award to an Election Official at the Election Center National Annual Conference.

This is a celebration of best practices from small medium and large jurisdictions around the country and the U.S. Territories. It includes a category for state entries as well. All of the professional practices papers that are submitted in a year are posted on the Election Center website and members have the opportunity to search on topics to read about, learn and utilize best practices in their jurisdictions.

The Election Center congratulates the following award categories and wining jurisdictions for 2021:

Democracy Award *(Best practice of the year)*

 **Partners in Ballot Access**, Minneapolis, MN

Minuteman *(Efficient implementation)*

 **Texting and Voting A Collaborative Time Saving Experience** Lee County, NC

Freedom Award (Innovation)

 **Vote Anywhere: Transforming Voter Experience** St. Louis County, MO

Stars and Stripes Award *(Outstanding partnerships)*

**Running the Floor with the Weber State Women’s Basketball Team** Weber County, Utah

Eagles Award *(Use of technology)*

 **Improving Efficiency with the Esri Application Suite** King County, WA

Guardian Award *(Exemplifies our Principles and Standards of Conduct)*

 **Insights from High School Poll Workers** Minneapolis, MN

Security Award *(New - Securing the election)*

**Absentee Ballot Chain of Custody Improvements: Strengthening Security & Accountability** St. Louis County, Missouri

State Award *(Outstanding best practice by a state)*

 **Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise** Secretary of State, Arizona

Globally, 2020 was a year unlike any in recent history. We all felt the effects of the pandemic, political uncertainty and economic challenges.  Locally, Utah experienced an earthquake and a windstorm that uprooted many neighborhoods in our community. Amidst everything that was going on, the Weber State Women's Basketball team was inspired by their coach, whose mother has served as a poll worker for years, to get involved and make a difference. Serving as poll workers was out of the question since they were all registered to vote in the home states and communities so they volunteered to help setup and take down the polling place as well as work on Election as door greeters, sanitizers, and directing traffic. In total, 57 athletes were inspired to help provide more than 250 hours of service - proving that our elections can still benefit from people who aren't registered to vote or eligible to serve as traditional poll workers.

*“We’ve been talking for months about everything that goes on in the world because that’s just how I run my program. After all this, they’ve got to go be people and help society in any way they can. So we’ve talked about the right to vote, women’s suffrage, civil rights, we got them all registered to vote ... so this is just another piece of it, let’s go help other people do the same.”* Velaida Harris, Weber State Women’s Basketball Head Coach

“To be recognized by your peers is always an incredible honor, especially in a year like 2020 that presented us all with so many different challenges. It was encouraging to me to see this group of student athletes get involved to make a difference in their community in such a meaningful way.” Ryan Cowley – Weber County Elections Director