

ISAC EXCELLENCE IN ACTION PROGRAM

Please fill out each field completely:

Please indicate nomination type: Program: XXX Individual:

Name of program: Linn County GIS Division - Community Services Resource Hub

Name of Project Manager: Peter Konrad County: Linn

Name of nominator: Brian D. Gardner Title: Sheriff (ISAC Immediate Past-President)

Nominator's phone: 319-892-6100 Nominator's email: brian.gardner@linncountyiowa.gov

Location based information and services are vital products any level of government can utilize to enhance the understanding of government services using a Geographic Information System (GIS). Leveraging the ESRI ArcGIS platform, the Linn County GIS Division has worked on projects that support and improve the administration of services by providing new innovative ideas and workflows that enhance information access to County staff, stakeholders, and residents.

I would like to nominate Peter Konrad from the GIS division of Linn County Information Technology (IT) for the ISAC Excellence in Action Program award for the work effort he put forth on a GIS product. This product became publicly available on the Linn County website during 2023, offering innovative GIS methods that enhance the visibility of County services to our residents.

Peter Konrad, GIS Specialist, worked closely with the Linn County Community Services Department to help improve a workflow that greatly enhanced the methods used to collect and share community resources for those seeking assistance within the community
<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/2374b9927b2f44b9872b5bba9e6c4430>.

Historically, the Community Services Department published annual resource sheets to list services and some basic information for each, however, the process was labor intensive and found to be dated soon after these files were added to the County website. The Linn County Community Services Hub provides Linn County residents with an interface that allows citizens to search for necessary resources such as basic needs, childcare, food assistance, etc. Peter developed innovative methods using GIS automation processes that allows each of these community service partner agencies to submit changes about their services as they happen. The new interactive map allows users to search by various means, including by proximity of the user. The final step achieved was to preserve the legacy sheets for simple printability that are updated as changes are approved using the production data being maintained and approved. This not only saves the Community Services staff a tremendous amount of time each year, but it has also proven to be an effective process to share current data for many needs.

Peter took ownership of this idea, spent the time learning the required processes and successfully used GIS to enhance the services the County offers. His product provides our community with an efficient means to access and understand County data and services while not having a negative impact on our budgets.

Peter's GIS project was innovative and:

- Enhanced the cost effectiveness of a new or existing county government program;
- Enhanced the level of citizen participation in, or the understanding of, government programs; and
- Provided a model from which other counties or affiliates may learn.

Peter's GIS project demonstrated innovative thinking and:

- Provided the ability to offer new and innovative ideas or methods to residents, staff, or stakeholders;
- Enhanced the cost effectiveness of these projects within the county; and
- Enhanced the level of citizen participation in, or the understanding of, government programs.

Peter's and his co-worker's GIS products were demonstrated to the ISAC Board of Directors in Cedar Rapids last year during the Board Retreat with high praise from those in attendance.

Comment from Ashley Balius, Director of Linn County Community Outreach & Assistance :

"I am pleased to support Peter Konrad's nomination for the ISAC Excellence in Action Award. Peter jumped into what became an enormous undertaking with an open and innovative mind, yielding an essential product for the Linn County community.

Peter worked closely with the Linn County Community Services Department to help improve a workflow that greatly enhanced the methods used to collect and share community resources for those seeking assistance with the community. Historically, the Community Services Department published annual resource sheets to list services and some basic information for each; however, the process was labor intensive and was found to be dated soon after these files were added to the county website. Peter worked with a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders to ensure that the end product was on the right path and meeting all needs.

The Linn County Community Resources Hub provides Linn County residents with an interface that allows citizens to search for necessary resources such as basic needs, childcare, food assistance, etc. Peter's idea to use GIS tools and data automation processes allows for enhanced updates to each community service as the partner agency notices a change. This means that residents in crisis always have up-to-date information when they need it. The new interactive map will enable users to search by various means, including the user's proximity. This was an essential upgrade to previous versions of the community resources sheets by taking the service a step further and helping people in crisis figure out how far away they are from that resource and how they can get there.

The end product far exceeded expectations. The Community Resources Hub has been functional for nearly a year, and the Community Services staff have heard nothing but positive feedback. This has saved Linn County staff time, as the old process took months of their time and effort. It also provides a vital service for residents who need to know what resources are available to them in the community."

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May 24, 2024

To Whom it May Concern:

It is my pleasure to support Peter Konrad's nomination for the ISAC Excellence in Action Award. Peter's work was critical to the successful development and implementation of Linn County's online Community Resource Hub. Peter's work made valuable community resources more accessible to our residents in need.

Prior to the online resource hub, the community resources were listed on more than 20 PDFs, posted on Linn County's website, and updated annually. This was a burdensome process for staff, but, more importantly, it was overwhelming for residents. When people are in crisis or stressed, the last thing they want to do is search through dozens of PDFs on a website looking for the right resources. This interactive resource hub has search and filtering options that allow residents to identify the resources they need much faster and easier than in the past. It also allows the resource providers and Linn County to keep the resources up to date.

The community resources are consistently among the top pages visited on Linn County's website. While that fact shows we have work to do to help residents meet their basic needs, it also shows us that the resource information we are providing is valuable to our residents.

Peter's work embraces Linn County's focus on collaboration, innovation, and providing exceptional public services for our residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kirsten Running-Marquardt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kirsten Running-Marquardt, Chairperson
Linn County Board of Supervisors