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CAMP VERDE, Ariz. — The National Association of Counties (NACo) selected Yavapai County Sheriff Steve Waugh as a 2011 recipient of its national Courthouse award. The purpose of the award is to profile elected county officials who have improved the lives of citizens through outstanding governance and strong leadership.

Only three Courthouse award winners are selected each year, representing “superior leadership” and programming from urban, suburban, and rural counties.

A panel of judges selected Sheriff Waugh as the winner in the suburban county category, who will receive his award at a ceremony at NACo’s annual conference in Portland, Ore. The Sheriff will also receive a \$5,000 college scholarship to present to a graduating Yavapai County high school senior.

Sheriff Waugh was selected for spearheading the creation and implementation of the county’s Restoration to Competency (RTC) Program. A partnership between Yavapai County and private correctional healthcare company Wexford Health Sources, the program provides behavioral health services to jail inmates who do not meet the court’s competency requirements and are unable to stand trial.

“I cannot express how grateful I am for this prestigious award from the National Association of Counties,” said Sheriff Waugh. “In 2009, I didn’t think twice about offering our jail facility and staff resources to this program. With Wexford Health, we have been able to diminish the impact of the RTC cost shift for our county and also help other local counties.”

The RTC program enables detainees to understand court proceedings and participate in their own defense.

In 2009, when Arizona’s fiscal situation deteriorated and the state shifted responsibility for RTC program costs to each county, Sheriff Waugh recruited several experts to launch a local RTC program. At that time, Yavapai County was paying a state-operated hospital more than \$600 per

day for RTC inmates, for a projected annual expenditure of more than \$2 million.

Based on the County's relationship with Wexford Health to provide inmate health services, the sheriff encouraged the expansion of the company's services to include the RTC program. Under Sheriff Waugh's authority, Wexford Health and county officials created a local RTC program, saving hundreds of thousands of dollars in annual program costs while maintaining the level of patient care, according to Wexford Health.

Yavapai has also opened up its RTC program to neighboring Arizona counties, with more than half of the counties in the state having signed agreements to participate in the program.

"Not only are county taxpayers saving a lot of money, but mentally incompetent detainees do not have to wait as long to stand trial," said Darius Holmes, Wexford Health senior vice president of strategic development. "We're pleased that the program continues to expand into surrounding counties, saving them money, too."

Pittsburgh-based Wexford Health Sources provides medical, mental health, pharmacy, rehabilitation, utilization management, claims processing and technology services to state, regional, and local clients across the U.S.

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