

**COUNTY OF LOUISA**  
**Tommy J. Barlow, Chairman**  
**Board of Supervisors**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: April Lowe  
Phone: (540) 967-3499  
Email: [alowe@louisa.org](mailto:alowe@louisa.org)

**LOUISA COUNTY WINS VACO ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR LEARN AND WIN PROGRAM**

Louisa County is pleased to announce that it is a recipient of a 2015 Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) Achievement Award for its Learn and Win (LAW) Program. The LAW program, founded in 2009 and managed by the Louisa County Sheriff's Office, is a collaborative partnership with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the Louisa County Public Schools. VACo's Achievement Awards Program recognizes innovative, model county government programs across the State. Of the 92 total entries received by VACo this year, Louisa County is thrilled to receive this honorable award for a local program.

"Preparing the youth of our County for realities which they may encounter is a crucial component of education," explained Louisa County Board of Supervisors Chairman Tommy Barlow. "I am grateful for the Sheriff's Office for partnering with the Schools and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services in this worthwhile endeavor."

The LAW Program strives to encourage Louisa County tweens/teens to make good choices on key issues affecting their future.

"The Learn and Win (LAW) program is a way for the department to take the best of the Drug Abuse Resistant Education (DARE) program and tailor it specifically to our Louisa County students using examples that they are familiar with locally to increase interest and input from the students," said Louisa County Sheriff Ashland Fortune. "This is a first for the County and I am extremely proud of this program, the Louisa County Public School System, and my staff for their efforts in making this an example of what communities can accomplish when working together."

The cornerstone of the LAW initiative is the elementary school program. Students receive ten 45-60 minute lessons in key areas such as making smart choices, tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, other drugs, internet safety, gang awareness, and vehicle safety. The middle school program provides two lessons at each of three grade levels and includes such topics as student responsibilities, juvenile justice, internet safety/sexting, and vehicle safety. The high school program provides lessons in other drugs, motor vehicle responsibilities, and search and seizure.

Additionally, the LAW program includes special events for students such as Operation SAFE PASSAGE and training for school faculty and staff. The focus of Operation SAFE PASSAGE is to reduce teens under the influence and distracted driving mishaps. Using a realistic motor vehicle collision reenactment with student actors, teens quickly learn the “it can’t happen to me” adage is not true. Furthermore, to keep our Louisa County schools safe and orderly, School Resource Officers and other Sheriff’s Office personnel provide critical incident response and gang awareness training to school faculty and staff.

“The entire Louisa County Public School division benefits from the LAW program, and the Schools appreciate the support of the Sheriff’s Office and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services. Their involvement is critical in the education of our students on key life lessons and the safe and orderly operation of our schools,” said Dr. Deborah Pettit, Superintendent for the Louisa County Public Schools.

The LAW program is further supported by outside agencies and businesses, and is constantly evolving to ensure a continued positive influence in Louisa County’s students.

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