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Franklin County Receives National Award for Poll Worker Recruitment

(Columbus) Franklin County's ongoing effort to recruit poll workers from local employers, Champions of Democracy, received top honors today from the National Association of Election Officials.

The program was recognized with the "Democracy Award for Best Practice of 2014" at ceremonies in San Francisco and cited for promoting poll worker service as an "opportunity to work the democratic process."

Franklin County launched Champions of Democracy in 2004 to broaden the poll worker recruitment pool for local elections. The effort encouraged local companies to give employees time off to work the polls amid national studies showing that election boards were too dependent on retired workers. A third of them were being replaced each year because they no longer wanted to work or had died.

More than 4,000 poll workers and needed to staff Franklin County's largest elections.

"This is an honor for our board of elections, for employers who have partnered with us and for hundreds of their employees who've served as poll workers over the years," said board of elections Director Bill Anthony. "We're very grateful to our corporate partners for making this award possible."

"Champions of Democracy has given us a reliable source of poll workers so dedicated to the job, that eight out of ten are with us from one year to the next," Deputy Director Dana Walch said. "That stability is a key factor for holding successful elections in our county."

The board of elections is always searching for qualified poll workers and would like to hear from employers and other organizations willing to supply them for the Nov. 4 general election. Anyone interested should contact us at (614) 525-5353.

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