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PRESS RELEASES

Data-Driven Recovery: How States Are Using Evidence to Deliver Better Results

Results for America Releases the 2021 Invest in What Works State Standard of Excellence

WASHINGTON, DC – During a **virtual event** co-hosted by the National Governors Association today, Results for America will release the *2021 Invest in What Works State Standard of Excellence*, which highlights how states are using evidence and data to protect the health and safety of their residents, accelerate their economic recovery, and advance equity.

The 2021 State Standard of Excellence recognizes eight Leading States – **Colorado, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Tennessee, Utah, and Washington** – and four Honor Roll States – **Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island** – for using evidence and data to deliver better results for residents. This year's State Standard of Excellence showcases 202 examples of data-driven and evidence-based practices, policies, programs, and systems in 36 states across the country – an 20% increase from last year.

"For government leaders across the country, the COVID-19 pandemic underscored the importance of using evidence and data to meet the urgent needs of residents," said Michele Jolin, CEO and Co-Founder of Results for America. "The 2021 State Standard of Excellence shows how many governors and other state leaders are now taking a data-driven, evidence-

"As America's Governors continue to lead the recovery from COVID-19, they are using data to achieve outcomes that make a measurable difference in the lives of Americans of all backgrounds, no matter where they live," said Timothy Blute, director of the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices. "We are proud to support Governors as they use data and evidence to inform policymaking on behalf of their residents, and to work with Results for America to showcase the gubernatorial leadership shown in the 2021 Invest in What Works State Standard of Excellence."

Results for America's analysis found many innovative examples of how states are using evidence and data to deliver better results. Here are a few examples:

- **Colorado**'s Governor and state legislature are using a 5-step evidence continuum to evaluate budget requests, and one-third of all budget requests this year were assessed based on evidence;
- **Washington**'s Department of Children, Youth, and Families is shifting its entire client services portfolio – \$500 million annually – to **performance-based contracts**, a key equity priority for the department;
- **Minnesota** is spending 1% percent of the budget of its opioid epidemic response grant program funds to evaluate which investments worked;
- **New Mexico** launched a first-of-its-kind **LegisStat** initiative – led by a joint state House-Senate Committee – to address the root causes of performance challenges;
- **Utah, North Carolina, and Minnesota** used **disaggregated data and evidence-informed strategies** to improve equity in vaccine distribution (Utah increased the vaccination rate among its Hispanic population by 463%.)
- **Tennessee**'s evidence requirements – which were included in cost-increase and reduction requests – helped the state make informed choices about **how to balance its budget**.
- **Rhode Island**'s Office of Management and Budget **budget requests** must include the evidence base for any new and expanded programs in FY21.

- **North Carolina** and **Colorado** are providing grants to state agencies to conduct research and evaluations that will help inform policy and program decisions.

"We are building a Colorado for All and helping save people time and money by utilizing data and relying on facts, not anecdotes," said Colorado Governor Jared Polis. "Our administration has a data driven approach when it comes to making our state more affordable, improving our schools, achieving 100% renewable energy, addressing inequity and ensuring Colorado remains the best place to live, work and thrive no matter who you are or where you live."

"Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Minnesota has made decisions to save lives and protect our economy based on accurate, real-time data," said Minnesota Governor Tim Walz. "I am proud that Minnesota's commitment to data-driven COVID-19 response and recovery is reflected in our recognition as a leading state in Results for America's 2021 State Standard of Excellence."

"In North Carolina, our data-driven investments and policies have supported our communities and benefited our economy greatly," said North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper. "The recent bipartisan state budget and billions of dollars in federal recovery funding reinforce the need for a strong commitment to using data and evidence to improve decision making and to maximize the investment of taxpayers."

"Through efforts such as the DataOhio Portal and the InnovateOhio Platform, Ohio is leading the way on improving how Ohioans interact with state websites and systems," said Ohio Governor Mike DeWine. "We appreciate the recognition from Results for America as it underscores our commitment to using data to develop state policy, promote innovation and spur economic prosperity."

"Oregon's commitment to centering and uplifting the voices of Black, Indigenous, Latino, Latina, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, and Tribal communities is central to all our work, including how we use data to inform decisions and build a just and equitable future for all of Oregon," said Governor Kate Brown. "We are excited to be featured as a leading state in the 2021 State Standard of Excellence."

"There has never been a more important time for state government to make data-driven decisions from both a budgetary and size of government perspective" said Tennessee

how our investments are performing and also ensures we serve Tennesseans well in the process."

"Our state's focus on maximizing the impact of taxpayer dollars has contributed to a culture of innovation and evidence-based decisions which make big impacts possible," said Utah Governor Spencer Cox. "We're thrilled to be recognized as a leading state and look forward to continuing to improve the function of state government."

"I am proud to highlight Washington's successes and use of data to support our responsiveness and resilience in the face of both obstacles and opportunities," said Governor Jay Inslee of Washington. "We have used data to successfully navigate the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and prioritize the use of data to assure an equitable and just place for all Washingtonians. In our state, we continue to place great emphasis on supporting data-driven and evidence-based solutions across the enterprise. We are grateful for the partnership with Results for America and the focus on the importance of using data and evidence to support decision-making."

To see more examples, take a look at the [state-by-state results](#) in the *2021 Invest in What Works State Standard of Excellence*.

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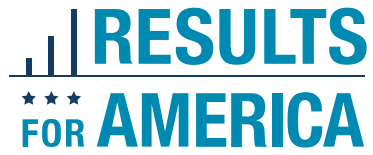
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