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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Thursday, March 24, 2016

**Secretary Husted Endorses Ohio Association of Nonprofit Organizations’ Standards for Excellence® Program**

*COLUMBUS* – Ohio Secretary of State Jon Husted today met with nonprofit organizations from around Ohio to discuss efforts to impact communities and families throughout the state. During the meeting, the Secretary endorsed the Ohio Association of Nonprofit Organizations’ (OANO) Standards for Excellence Accreditation program.

“Nonprofit organizations are improving our communities around the state,” Secretary Husted said. “The Standards for Excellence Accreditation helps to safeguard nonprofit organizations by giving them the tools they need in order to meet basic legal and financial requirements so they can provide better services to people in need.”

The Standards for Excellence Accreditation helps nonprofit organizations take a proactive approach to managing their policies, procedures and governance to protect from costly mistakes.

“We are thrilled to receive this endorsement from Secretary Husted, this is a great step forward in the partnership that we have always enjoyed with the Secretary of State’s office ” said OANO Executive Director Marcy Williams.

OANO’s program includes a four-step accreditation process for nonprofits seeking the Standards for Excellence seal. Nonprofits are required to meet 58 standards in eight areas of operation that are assessed by a peer-review board. The prestigious accreditation is awarded only after successful completion of the review process, which requires between eight months and two years. To date, 39 nonprofit organizations in Ohio have completed the program.

“With the Standards for Excellence, OANO goes further than simply asking a charity if they comply,” Williams explained. “The program includes intensive, practical training for nonprofits on implementing the principles in their specific organization while protecting the donors and taxpayers that help fund them.”

In addition to the Standards for Excellence program, OANO offers a monthly series in Capacity Building for Stronger Nonprofits. More information about these programs can be found at [www.OANO.org](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.OANO.org&d=CwMFAg&c=Uk4MC68c_p3FA5jX7N-Q91WDvpli5Y9kf-6DmZwtkEI&r=6XKKd7MOenq25mCn8bnFmWuuxxO_soLkOAgUFB6b4Uw&m=npymfcPZ9mTe-SU8LUhjnslsmgNQx5VA2lxrsgI9Pgc&s=ci6MIRWmFi_yQnCnx3A9YuR2uGM52WWFfE-W4ITs-ME&e=).

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