
For Immediate Release

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FIFTY OF GOVERNMENT'S BEST & BRIGHTEST CITED FOR HARVARD AWARD

WASHINGTON, DC – Fifty of the most creative, forward thinking, results-driven government programs at the federal, state, county and city levels were named semifinalists today for the prestigious **Innovations in American Government Awards**—often referred to as the “Oscars” of government prizes. The fifty programs are now eligible to win one of six \$100,000 grants.

The programs represent the nation’s very best public sector efforts in the areas of education and training, criminal justice and public safety, economic and community development, health and social service, management, transportation, public works and environment. The programs were chosen from a pool of more than 1000 applicants for their novelty and uniqueness, effectiveness in addressing important problems, significance, and the potential for replication by other government entities.

Among the programs named to the Top 50 list are ten at the federal level (including two from the U.S. Department of Justice), twelve at the state level, ten at the county level, eleven at the city level, two school districts, two government corporations and two special/regional authorities. There are eight programs from or within California and four from or within New York. Other states with multiple finalists include: Virginia and Washington with three each; and Kentucky, Minnesota, Oregon, Texas and Vermont (all with two each).

“These fifty programs—which touch the lives of so many people across the street and around the world—offer a very compelling snapshot of what is right, good and uniquely innovative in American government at every level today,” said Stephen Goldsmith, Director of the Innovations in American Government Awards, when releasing the top 50 list. “Each deserves special recognition, not just by citizens, but also by other government leaders and practitioners who should be inspired by the programs’ blend of creativity and effectiveness,” added Gowher Rizvi, Director of the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation, which sponsors the Innovations in American Government Awards Program.

Eighteen finalists will be chosen from the fifty and announced in April. The Innovations in American Government National Selection Committee, chaired by David R. Gergen of the Center for Public Leadership at Harvard and including former Maryland Lt. Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, former San Diego Mayor Susan Golding, and former member of the U.S. House of Representatives William Clinger will choose six winning programs, which will be announced on July 27, 2005.

The Innovations in American Government Awards program, now in its 18th year, is a program of the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government, administered in partnership with the Council for Excellence in Government.

A description of the North Carolina semifinalist, including contact information, is attached and is also available on the web at www.ashinstitute.harvard.edu and www.excelgov.org.

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NEWS

The Innovations in American Government Awards



Ecosystem Enhancement Program

State of North Carolina

The Ecosystem Enhancement Program facilitates responsible economic development while protecting and enhancing the environment. The initiative made North Carolina's environmental agency, not its transportation agency, the primary watchdog over compensation for unavoidable environmental damage from new transportation infrastructure.

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