

ASH INSTITUTE

FOR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE
AND INNOVATION



JOHN F. KENNEDY
SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

The Innovations in American Government Awards



INTRODUCING THE 2007 WINNERS

CELEBRATING

20 YEARS

THE 2007 INNOVATIONS in American Government Awards mark the 20th anniversary of the program. Since its inception, we have had the honor of recognizing the finest in American government. The seven recipients of the 2007 Innovations in American Government Awards once again prove that government is continuing to effectively respond and adjust to uncertainties in an ever-changing world.

This past year, many of the hot-button issues seem far removed from the reality of everyday life—American troops remain indefinitely in the Middle East and the threat of global warming is becoming a looming reality. Many Americans feel powerless to act in the face of such daunting challenges. However, leaders in public service across the country have stepped up to the challenge, and we are pleased to recognize their gumption and intelligence. Through partnerships and collaboration, these leaders have developed effective solutions to significant problems.

Notably, all seven winners of the 2007 Innovations in American Government Award winners are initiatives of state or local governments. These winners have tackled a wide range of global policy issues and local challenges. Some of these government initiatives utilized new technology to improve service delivery—one created a paperless county court system while another linked individuals needing assistance with appropriate social services through a web portal.

Please join us in recognizing these seven inspiring programs and their predecessors as we celebrate 20 years of government at its best. We are also pleased to highlight the winner of our first international competition, a special award in transforming government. We look forward to the future with hope and inspiration provided by these shining examples of effective government.



Gowher Rizvi
Director, Ash Institute for Democratic
Governance and Innovation



Stephen Goldsmith
Director, Innovations in American
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Automated Community Connection to Economic Self-Sufficiency

STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Transforms Access to Benefits

ACCESSING PUBLIC ASSISTANCE has long been regarded as an unpleasant experience; one observer described it as a “nightmare—wait and wait and wait and then come back and wait some more.” Duplicate applications, repetitive interviews, and shabby offices make for bad client relationships and low employee morale.

This negativity is a thing of the past in Florida. In 2004, the state launched a new way of doing business known as ACCESS Florida. A web-based application was added in 2005.

Now anyone applying for or renewing food stamp, TANF, or Medicaid benefits can do so quickly and easily: on-line, 24 hours a day, at state-run offices or any of 2,500 “partner” agencies, including churches, libraries, food banks, senior centers, and homeless shelters, even on personal computers. ACCESS Florida also operates three regional call centers to field questions and process changes in benefit amounts.

The results have been close to miraculous, according to experts who evaluate such services. There are now thousands of access points where Floridians can apply for benefits.

Staff members, now working in state-of-the-art offices, process more than 850 cases a year each. As a result, the state has been able to reduce staff, saving \$83 million annually in administrative costs. And, along with the increase in speed and the reduction in staff, error rates are being reduced.

While the state hasn’t yet formally analyzed the impact of the new system on the health and well-being of the 1.2 million food stamp recipients, 70,000 TANF clients, or the 1.7 million Medicaid recipients, client and employee satisfaction surveys indicate that



ACCESS Florida is certainly onto something.

More than 90 percent of all applications are now filed on-line, with nearly 95 percent of those users saying they’d use the system again. Eighty percent said they didn’t need help in the process. Sixty percent found it “easy.”

One customer contrasted his experience in New York—a small room with eight folding chairs, 60 applicants, and an army of crying babies and screaming kids—with his experience in Florida, which was “very professional, very comfortable, and very efficient.”

■ For information: Jennifer Lange, Department of Children and Families; 850-414-1328; Jennifer_Lange@dcf.state.fl.us

Citizen and Law Enforcement Analysis and Reporting

CITY OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Data + IT + Police + Citizens = A Safe Chicago

CHICAGO BURGLARY DETECTIVE Dewey Lee Jr. used to describe his job as “chasing ghosts,” a citywide game of hide-and-seek. But now, those ghosts are increasingly visible and more easily tracked, thanks to Chicago’s pioneering Citizen and Law Enforcement Analysis and Reporting (CLEAR) system.

that have been woven together over a decade to enable the city’s anti-crime efforts to become more information-driven and prevention-focused. CLEAR includes everything from laptops and other hand-held devices to mobile cameras that can scan thousands of license plates an hour. CLEAR also links databases containing information on arrests and convictions, stolen vehicles, warrants, firearms data, and incident reports, among a host of others.

By streamlining the administrative side of police work and reducing the amount of time personnel have to spend filling out and finding paperwork, CLEAR has, in effect, added the equivalent of 700 officers to the force, says Commander Jonathan Lewin, head of IT for the police department. That means police are free to spend more time on the street, rebuilding and strengthening connections to their communities.

The benefits of CLEAR are not enjoyed only by the 13,600-member Chicago Police Department: CLEAR databases are accessible to 17,000 users in 411 other federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, not only in Illinois, but in Indiana and Wisconsin. CLEAR also serves as a model for law enforcement agencies around the world. Chicago has hosted over 400 site visits from local, state, federal, and international agencies since the inception of CLEAR.

The benefits to Chicago have been obvious, according to city officials. CLEAR is credited with the reduction of both violent and property crime in Chicago from 2003 to the middle of 2006, even as the incidence of such crimes has increased in most other major metropolitan areas nationwide.

■ For information: Jonathan Lewin, Information Services Division; 312-745-5755; jonathan.lewin@chicagopolice.org



CLEAR takes the concept of data-driven crime mapping and builds on it to gather, store, cross-reference, and retrieve a massive amount of information about crime, criminals, and criminal justice activity. The result: all law enforcement officials—from beat cops to chiefs—have a real-time picture of crime in the metro region.

CLEAR also includes a strong community involvement component. The police department works closely with local leaders to draw attention to neighborhood crime alerts. Citizens also can access registered sex offender databases, retrieve information on wanted persons, and pass along tips.

CLEAR isn’t a technological monolith; it’s a collection of IT tools and IT-enabled tactics

Climate Protection Initiative

CITY OF SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Seattle Acts Locally and Affects Globally

GLOBAL CLIMATE DISRUPTION has been described as “the most serious environmental problem mankind has ever faced.” But, with the federal government sitting on the sidelines and citizens just waking up to the problem, spurring strong action to address this growing threat hasn’t been easy.

But that is changing, in no small part due to the efforts of local governments in the U.S. that are dealing with the impacts of global warming and that see that the road to a climate-friendly, clean energy economy is paved with opportunity. Leading the way is Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels, who, in 2005, launched the Seattle Climate Protection Initiative to reduce the city’s own carbon footprint and to spread the word to other cities that local action on climate change is not just necessary and feasible, but critical.

Mayor Nickels was already aware of some of the stark and close-to-home environmental impacts of a warming planet: shrinking glaciers and a loss of snow pack in the nearby North Cascade Mountains (the latter a key source of water and hydroelectricity for the city), wildfires on the increase, and troubling shifts in regional stream-flow patterns.

Joining with local businesses and not-for-profits, Seattle first focused on an aggressive effort to curb its own appetite for carbon. Seattle made its municipal-owned electricity utility completely “carbon neutral,” reigned in sprawl with strong “smart growth” policies and regulations, worked on regional transportation plans and projects to produce more climate-friendly transportation alternatives, and added trees to development projects. The city also worked with several partners to get cruise ships calling on the Port of Seattle to plug into the city’s “climate-neutral” supply of electricity, allowing them to turn off their dirty diesel engines while docked in Elliott Bay.



Dealing with the community’s own carbon footprint was one thing, but Seattle officials understood that one city’s actions would not solve the problem. Through the U.S. Conference of Mayors, Nickels created a U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, which has now been signed by more than 600 mayors, from Fargo, North Dakota, to Meridian, Mississippi, all committed to push for carbon reductions in their own communities.

And so, Seattle has succeeded in taking on two very big jobs: First, to boost awareness and seed best carbon-reduction practices nationwide and abroad, and, second, to do so based on a powerful local model. Or as Nickels says, “We are showing the world that you can power a city without toasting the planet.”

■ *For information: Steve Nicholas, Office of Sustainability and Environment; 206-615-0829; steve.nicholas@seattle.gov*

Community Care

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

Coordinated Network Care for Children and Families

PROVIDING QUALITY, affordable health care to children and families can be tough under any circumstances, but it can be particularly challenging in a state where those children and families are flung across a largely rural landscape.

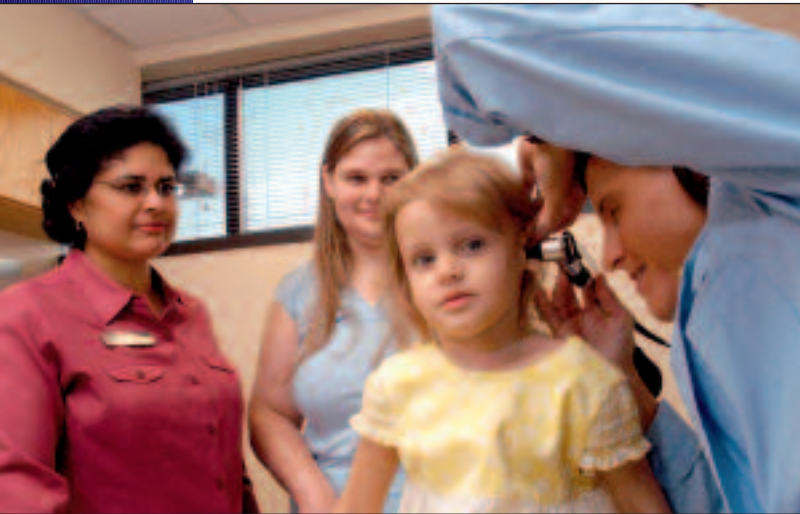
North Carolina, though, is doing just that

basics, such as ensuring that parents bring children in for appointments and follow through on prescribed medications and treatments. In educating parents on critical basic health and medical information, care coordinators improve child welfare by reducing emergency visits and unnecessary hospitalizations for children. “The care coordinators are the glue that binds the network,” says Allen Dobson, assistant secretary in the state’s Department of Health and Human Services.

By getting physicians directly involved in the structure of the health care delivery system, and by using the coordinators, the state has been able to hold down the cost of health care generally, while focusing on areas of particular concern. For example, early program data indicated that emergency room doctors most commonly treated children experiencing asthma attacks. Through the networks, the state helped coordinate a full-court press for better treatment of childhood asthma. That led to a 34 percent decrease in emergency room visits and a 35 percent reduction in hospital admissions from 2001 to 2005, drastically improving the welfare of children while saving the state \$3.5 million in Medicaid costs.

While some say that the sense of mission and collaboration that underpins CCNC would be hard to replicate, the combination of measurable, high-quality care for all ages along with the documented savings is drawing other states to North Carolina to see how Community Care works.

■ *For information: Denise Levis Hewson, Community Care of North Carolina; 919-715-1088; denise.levis@ncmail.net*



through Community Care of North Carolina (CCNC), a statewide group of locally grown and guided health care delivery networks involving physicians, public health and hospital officials.

Under CCNC, the state provides per-client funding to the networks and allows the networks to design their own delivery systems and set their own health care priorities.

The networks provide care for the majority of Medicaid recipients in North Carolina, most of whom are women and children.

At the center of the integrated service network are individual “care coordinators”—medical caseworkers who manage and monitor the well-being of children and their families. For example, care coordinators cover

Electronic Court Records

KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

County Courts Cut Paper and Improve Process

AS COUNTERINTUITIVE as it might seem, supporters of King County’s controversial new paperless system for filing and keeping Superior Court case records knew they were on solid ground when the system experienced a catastrophic crash. That’s because during the five weeks in 2005 that the system was down, only a handful of users pushed for going back to the old-style, paper-driven system. Most were just anxious to know when the new system would be back on-line.

The benefits of moving from paper to electronic court files is hard to overestimate, say the system’s supporters. The limits of paper-based records systems (which still predominate nationally) are formidable. Paper files are available only during regular business hours, and retrieving them requires a trip to the clerk’s office. Finding paper records can take hours—even days—and when they are located, only one party can view a file or document at a time. Paper files can be lost, altered, stolen, and destroyed. And then there is storage: In King County’s case, paper files covered 7,500 square feet of storage space and were stacked seven tiers high.

Key to the change was the King County Department of Judicial Administration’s decision to treat electronic files (created either by scanning papers or producing them originally on a computer) as “original records” once they were filed with the clerk.

A solid master plan and the inclusion of all possible users—judges, prosecutors, private attorneys, public defenders, court commissioners, and others—in the development of the system was critical to a successful switchover, which began in 2002.

Today, users can access records immediately, remotely, and at any hour. Multiple users can view the same document simultaneously. Meanwhile, the system includes a



secure backup (during the crash of 2005, users could still access electronic documents at select sites) and multiple safeguards to ensure that only authorized persons have access to relevant files.

While the new system has dramatically improved efficiency and reduced costs, the most positive consequence may be on justice itself, contends King County Superior Court Judge Mary Yu. “I now can instantaneously view all relevant records from the bench,” says Yu. “The sad reality in the past is that judges were sometimes put in the position where they had to make decisions without the full record. It’s a judge’s nightmare after a case is finished to have to say to someone, ‘I didn’t know [that fact].’”

■ For information: Roger Winters, Department of Judicial Administration; 206-296-7838; roger.winters@kingcounty.gov

Overt Drug Market Strategy

CITY OF HIGH POINT, NORTH CAROLINA

Community Confronts Dealers, Cleans Up

A DECADE AGO, crime in High Point, North Carolina, had increased to the point that one prominent pastor suggested that those living in his West End neighborhood no longer lived under the protection of the Constitution.

Everyone agreed on the problem: street-level drug dealing and its attendant criminal

Strategy (ODMS), which combines crime mapping, community policing, and a new accord with drug dealers.

Police first identified the most crime-ridden neighborhood in High Point. They then began a program of aggressive intelligence-gathering to identify and build cases against the most active dealers. The most violent dealers were immediately prosecuted. The remaining dealers were “called in” by police and confronted, not just by officers but also by family and community members who spoke of the damage criminal behavior causes loved ones and neighbors.

Drug dealers were then offered a second chance: The case against them would be “banked” and would remain inactive as long as the dealers retired. The city offered assistance to help them rejoin society through work, school, and other support mechanisms.

The results were immediate and impressive. Drug dealing in the neighborhood where ODMS was tested disappeared virtually overnight. Related crimes plummeted. Community members retook the streets. “People can walk to school and to church now,” says Jim Summey, pastor of the English Road Baptist Church in the West End. “It’s been redemptive.”

The same strategy has since been used successfully in two other troubled High Point neighborhoods. The results are so convincing that at least a half a dozen other cities are now piloting ODMS and reporting similar results.

■ For information: Marty Sumner, High Point Police Department; 336-887-7880; marty.sumner@highpointnc.gov



activity, from violent personal assaults to prostitution, were making life untenable for law-abiding residents.

Not only were traditional police tactics like aggressive “street sweeps” ineffective, the strong-arm police tactics only served to alienate community members. As High Point Police Chief Jim Fealy recalls: “The African-American community felt that ‘The police alternately abandon us and ride roughshod over us.’”

What Fealy and others realized had to change was the relationship between the police and members of the community. Effecting that change required a different approach to street-level crime fighting, an approach that engaged the community as a partner. That new approach is called Overt Drug Market

Urban Land Reform Initiative

GENESEE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

Local Land Bank Renews Urban Core

IT'S A CYCLE all too familiar to many old, industrial, "rust belt" cities: tax-delinquent properties auctioned to speculators who have no interest in the long-term health of the city. Those speculators flip the properties and set off a downward spiral as homes deteriorate and lay vacant, creating havens for criminal activity and targets for arsonists.

By the late 1990s, Genesee County Treasurer Dan Kildee had seen enough of that cycle, particularly in the shrinking core city of Flint, once an auto-manufacturing center. Kildee understood what few county officials anywhere had: that the rot from a dying core city will spread outward. To prevent that, he persuaded the state legislature to allow the county to seize delinquent real estate and repackage it.

The power to control property was a promising start, but Kildee knew that to reduce the pressure to auction parcels for back taxes the county would have to pay localities the full tax load—back taxes and all—for the repossessed properties. By increasing fees and penalties on delinquent taxpayers and selling off other more valuable assets, the county created a self-sustaining property tax fund—more than \$8 million to date.

With that solid foundation, the county created the Genesee County Land Bank in 2002, which determines how to use property in the best interest of the community. Together with over a dozen local government partners, the county land bank floated a \$5 million brownfield bond, a tax increment financing-based package that has helped increase property values around target parcels by more than \$100 million.

Working with community groups and developers, the Genesee County Land Bank also demolished nearly 700 abandoned structures



and developed more than 50 single-family homes and 90 affordable rental units. It has sold nearly 500 "side lots" to adjacent owners and rehabbed more than 30 single-family homes. All the while, the county land bank is taking good care of the properties it still owns: in 2006, the land bank mowed 4,082 lots and removed 270 tons of debris.

On the commercial development front, Genesee County Land Bank recently cut the ribbon on the \$3.8 million redevelopment of a four-story commercial building downtown, which has spurred other new commercial development nearby.

In explaining the program's success, Kildee says, "What we've done is taken systems that generally haven't worked well in isolation and linked them together." The best evidence that the strategy is working: Flint witnessed a 5 percent increase in home sale prices between 2004 and 2006.

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Trail-Blazing Transformation in Vocational and Technical Education

REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

Tapping Each Student's Full Potential

AT AGE 15, SINGAPORE teenager Sairin bin Sani was on a fast track to nowhere. Not interested in school, he spent time skipping class and hanging out with his buddies.

With an undistinguished academic record, Sairin was the kind of kid who normally would be left behind, but for an ambitious new

approach to vocational education now available in Singapore. weren't blossoming academically needed an alternative track that would allow them to share in and contribute to their country's economic health. That is when ITE's CEO and a core group of top assistants saw an opportunity: to transform ITE into a high-performing institution that would take the country's toughest academic cases and turn them into high performers. Through an ambitious 10-year plan, the school turned its previously drab and backwards curriculum into course work that was more market-relevant and career-focused. Key to the transformation was a wholesale upgrade of teaching staff. Teachers with fairly low levels of academic achievement themselves were expected to re-engineer their own education and upgrade to higher qualifications and skill sets. Meanwhile, the Institute also aggressively recruited new, dynamic, and higher-skilled teaching staff.

The payoffs have been impressive. The country's youth unemployment rate is currently less than 9 percent—one of the lowest in the world. Ninety percent of ITE graduates have moved into the job market in the last decade. A recent survey of employers indicated that 93 percent were satisfied with the ITE graduates' "technical, methodological, and social competencies." And average pay for ITE graduates continues to increase.

Meanwhile, both numbers of students and graduation rates have ratcheted up from 1995 to 2006, going from 11,900 and 60 percent respectively, to 24,600 and 80 percent.

As for Sairin bin Sani, the nowhere kid: He now has an engineering degree, a job in aerospace engineering, and plans to get married.

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approach to vocational education now available in Singapore.

In the past, low-achievers like Sairin were consigned to Singapore's notoriously dead-end educational institution of last resort—the Institute of Technical Education (ITE), an institution considered so bad it had earned the nickname "It's The End." But, as Singapore's economy heated up—fueled by businesses and industries requiring high-level skill sets—educational leaders in Singapore realized that the country's existing offerings in vocational and technical education weren't fitting the bill.

And so, in the early 1990s, the Ministry of Education mandated that every child in Singapore spend more time in school. Those who

CELEBRATING TWENTY YEARS

CELEBRATING TWENTY YEARS OF INNOVATION



When the Innovations in American Government Awards Program was conceived, its creators at the Ford Foundation and the John F. Kennedy School of Government figured that the program would have a good run of several years, accomplish its purpose, and then fade away.

Twenty years later, the awards program remains strong, with applicants presenting more ideas and inventive programs than ever. Since 1986, 174 programs have won Innovations Awards. Each has been an outstanding example of how government can solve problems. And many have marked the first step in important new strategies for tackling the toughest challenges we face—in criminal justice, health and human services, environmental protection, and education.

The continuing vitality of the awards also reflects their impact on public perception. By spotlighting innovation in the public sector, they serve notice that government, which often deals with our most difficult problems, can successfully adapt and respond. And, they send a clear message to those toiling away in government: It's okay to push the boundaries, to experiment, even at the risk of failure.

Not every award winner's innovation changes the face of government. But the list of winners is a refreshing reminder that many good ideas are conceived of and carried out by courageous and energetic public servants every year. Whether it's Operation Cease Fire, a Boston-based anti-gang-violence initiative that saved lives at the street level, or FirstGov.gov, an effort that opened up a world of government services and information to citizens, the awards prove that innovation in government is not an oxymoron.

Twenty years later, there is more reason than ever to believe that if you want a daunting job done, you can look to government to develop the strategies, build the partnerships and networks, recruit the allies, and muster the resources to get it done.

CELEBRATING THE STARS

Groundwater Management Code—State of Arizona
Food Assistance Network—Los Angeles County, CA
Quality Incentive Program—State of Illinois
One Church/One Child Minority Adoption Campaign—State of Illinois
Family Learning Center—Ingham County, MI
Block Nurse Program—City of St. Paul, MN
Strive Toward Excellence in Performance—State of Minnesota
Rehabilitation Engineering Program—State of North Carolina
Case Management for At-Risk Children—City of New York, NY
Video Disc Catalog—City of Rochester, NY

Wetland Wastewater Treatment—City of Arcata, CA
Alternatives to Incarceration—State of Georgia
Parents Too Soon—State of Illinois
Domestic Abuse Intervention Program—City of Duluth, MN
Homeless Services Network—City of St. Louis, MO
Parents as Teachers—State of Missouri
OPEN/NET—The Open Public Events Network—State of North Carolina
Nova Ancora—City of New York, NY
Water Pollution Control Program—City of Fort Worth, TX
Vision Through Diversity—City of Dallas, TX

Single Room Occupancy Residential Hotel Program—City of San Diego, CA
Land Development Guidance System—City of Fort Collins, CO
Project Match—State of Illinois
Parent and Child Education Program—Commonwealth of Kentucky
Kentucky Video Courts—Commonwealth of Kentucky
Industry Action Project—Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Computer Assisted Report Entry—St. Louis County, MO
Public/Private Partnerships in Education—City of Tupelo, MS
Racial Integration Incentives—City of Shaker Heights, OH
Statewide Library Automation Project—State of Vermont

Inupiat Ilitqusiak: Traditional Values—Northwest Arctic Borough, AK
Specialized Treatment and Rehabilitation Services—Merced County, CA
Landfill Reclamation Project—Collier County, FL
Farm Family Assistance Program—State of Iowa
Work Force Unemployment Prevention Program—City of Cambridge, MA
Project Deliver: Assuring Quality Obstetrical Care—Montgomery County, MD
Electronic Benefit System—Ramsey County, MN
XPORT, The Port Authority Trading Company—Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
Medical Care for Children—Fairfax County, VA
Seattle Recycling Program—City of Seattle, WA



Trauma Intervention Program—Cities of San Diego County, CA
K-SIX Early Intervention Partnership—Fresno County, CA
No-Tillage Assistance Program—State of Georgia
KET Star Channels—Commonwealth of Kentucky
The Blackstone Project—Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Friends of the Family—State of Maryland
School Based Youth Services Program—State of New Jersey
Anti-Graffiti Network, Inc.—City of Philadelphia, PA
Maternity Center—Monroe County, TN
Neighborhood Matching Fund—City of Seattle, WA

Humanitas—Los Angeles Unified School District, CA
Automated Traffic Surveillance and Control—City of Los Angeles, CA
Environmental Cleanup Program—City of Wichita, KS
CityWorks—City of Cambridge, MA
Quincy Court Model Domestic Abuse Program—Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Child Assistance Program—State of New York
Fleet Improvement R&D Network—City of New York, NY
Bilingual Outreach—Arlington County, VA
Elderly Services—Spokane County, WA
Workers' Compensation System—State of Washington

Info/California—State of California
Telecommuting Program—Los Angeles County, CA
Housing Commission's Computer Learning Centers—City of Lansing, MI
Central Park East Secondary School—City of New York, NY
Government Action on Urban Land—Cuyahoga County, OH
Vendor Information Program—State of Oregon
Police Homeowner Loan Program—City of Columbia, SC
Child Care Management Services—State of Texas
Low-Income Assisted Mortgage Program—State of West Virginia
Community Voice Mail for Phoneless/Homeless Persons—City of Seattle, WA

QuickCourt System—State of Arizona
Coles Levee Ecosystem Preserve—State of California
Student Conflict Resolution Experts—Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Voluntary Investigation and Cleanup—State of Minnesota
Parents' Fair Share—Anoka County, MN
"Here, Thayer, and Everywhere"—Winchester School District, NH
Partnership for Long-Term Care—State of New York
Citywide Central Insurance Program—City of New York, NY
Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners Program—City of Tulsa, OK
Oregon Benchmarks—State of Oregon

GENESIS: Healthy Young Families—Boulder County, CO
Reinvention of the Bureau of Reclamation—U.S. Department of the Interior
Ozone Depleting Chemical Elimination—U.S. Department of Defense
National Defense on the Offense—U.S. Department of Defense
Operation Jobs—U.S. Department of Justice
Maine Top 200 Experimental Targeting Program—U.S. Department of Labor

TWENTY YEARS OF

Early Warning Program—U.S. Department of the Treasury

County Health Care Plan—Hillsborough County, FL

Competition and Costing—City of Indianapolis, IN

CityWork—City of Louisville, KY

Hamilton Terrace Learning Center—Caddo Parish School District, LA

Elder CHOICE—Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The Civil Enforcement Initiative—City of New York, NY

Center for Technology in Government—State of New York

Project QUEST—City of San Antonio, TX

Environmental Technology Certification—State of California

Greater Avenues for Independence—Riverside County, CA

Consolidated Planning/Community Connections—U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Consequence Assessment Tool Set—Federal Emergency Management Agency

No Sweat: Eradicating Sweatshops—U.S. Department of Labor

Healthy Kids Program—State of Florida

Affordable Housing Roundtable—City of Santa Fe, NM

Compstat: A Crime Reduction Management Tool—City of New York, NY

Oregon Health Plan—State of Oregon

Arts Incubator—Arlington County, VA

ConnectCare—State of Arkansas

Reform of the U.S. Drug Approval Process—U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

TeleFile—U.S. Department of the Treasury

Pathways to Teaching Careers Program—State of Georgia

Voluntary Prekindergarten Program—State of Georgia

Gallery 37—City of Chicago, IL

Recreating Public Education for Results—Commonwealth of Kentucky

Operation Cease Fire—City of Boston, MA

Structured Sentencing—State of North Carolina

Land Recycling Program—Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

First Offender Prostitution Program—City and County of San Francisco, CA

Puente Project—State of California

Fast-Track Product Recall Program—U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Best Manufacturing Practices Program—U.S. Department of Defense

Northern New Mexico Collaborative Stewardship—U.S. Department of Agriculture

Smart Start—State of North Carolina

BCMS Project Access—Buncombe County, NC

Center for Court Innovation—State of New York

Edwin Gould Academy: Unified Approach to Foster Care—Ramapo Union Free School District, NY

Reparative Probation—State of Vermont

PulseNet—U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Continuum of Care—U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Toxics Use Reduction Program—Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Rehabilitation Subcode—State of New Jersey

Neighborhood Entrepreneurs Program—City of New York, NY

INNOVATION



Electronic Bond Bidding Initiative—City of Pittsburgh, PA
Behavioral Health System—City and County of Philadelphia, PA
Cangleska, Inc.—Oglala Sioux Tribe
School Performance Review—State of Texas
Wisconsin Works—State of Wisconsin

HOPE VI Mixed-Finance Public Housing—U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative—U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Performance-Based Contracting—State of Illinois

Public Health Model for Corrections—Hampden County, MA

Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation—State of Maryland

Charter School Law—State of Minnesota

Partnerships for Parks—City of New York, NY

Perritech—Perry Local Schools, OH

Mental Hospital Seclusion and Restraint Reduction—Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Metro Commute Partnerships—King County, WA

Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement—State of California

National Center for Patient Safety—Department of Veterans Affairs

Ho-Chunk, Inc.—Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska

Toledo Plan—Toledo Public Schools, OH

OK-FIRST—State of Oklahoma

FirstGov.gov—U.S. General Services Administration

311 System—City of Chicago, IL

La Bodega de la Familia—State of New York

Center for Higher Education—State of Ohio

Energy Efficiency Utility—State of Vermont

Resolve to Stop the Violence Project—City and County of San Francisco, CA

ClinicalTrials.gov—U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Performance Standards for Juvenile Corrections—U.S. Department of Justice

CitiStat—City of Baltimore, MD

Natural Drainage Systems—City of Seattle, WA

A Regional Coalition for Housing—City of Bellevue, WA

Systematic Code Enforcement Program—City of Los Angeles, CA

The SEED School—District of Columbia Public Schools

Program Assessment Rating Tool—U.S. Office of Management and Budget

Charter Agencies—State of Iowa

State Forensic Program—Allegheny County, PA

Youth Civic Engagement—City of Hampton, VA

Supportive Housing Pilots Initiative—State of Connecticut

Gay and Lesbian Liaison Unit—District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department

Grass Roots Conservation—U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Health Information Technology—U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Urban Academies Program—School Board of Broward County, FL

Mayor's Charter Schools Initiative—City of Indianapolis, IN

Teaming—Commonwealth of Massachusetts

GOING FORWARD

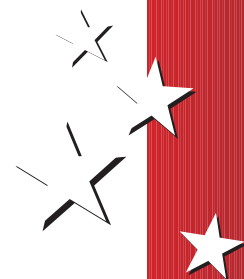


The Innovations in American Government Awards Program at the Kennedy School's Ash Institute was initiated in 1985 amidst widespread concern about citizen apathy and loss of trust in government. Through these Awards, the Institute has sought to restore confidence in government by recognizing, celebrating, and replicating innovation in government.

Over the years, the Innovations Awards Program has received more than 25,000 applications from federal, state, local, tribal and territorial government programs and given awards to more than 400 agencies. The Innovations Awards Program itself has been replicated globally. Sister programs that recognize innovation and excellence in government have been created in Brazil, China, Chile, Mexico, Peru, the Philippines, South Africa, the East African region, and among American Indian Nations. Encouraging government effectiveness by fostering innovation is fast becoming a global strategy.

This year, the Ash Institute celebrates the 20th anniversary of the Innovations in American Government Awards Program. We see this milestone as an opportune time for both retrospection and looking forward. We will reflect on the lessons learned from government innovations worldwide and identify areas for new research with a view to refocusing on the need for innovation as a mechanism for solving critical issues.

Many of the winning government innovations are now regarded as standard operating procedures in jurisdictions across the United States and beyond. The Innovations Awards Program has proved that many public servants are prolific innovators. Governments over the years have become more efficient, transparent, and accountable than ever before. They are nimble, responsive, and cost-conscious, while still able to solve problems and respond to the different needs of diverse citizens.



Governance today is no longer what it was 20 years ago, although the public purpose of government remains unchanged. There are a number of recent trends worth noting. Governments have adopted the principle of competition, using market incentives (instead of setting up new agencies) to advance public policy. Governments have become flexible and effective by introducing new ways of budgeting and by simplifying procedures, emphasizing outcomes and not merely outputs, and delivering quality services. Governments are vigorously delegating and decentralizing in recognition of the principle that problems are best solved by those most familiar with them.

In honor of the 20th Anniversary of the Innovations in American Government Awards Program, the Ash Institute has planned a constellation of events, meetings, and research activities. This will include: events at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government highlighting past winners of the awards; a global conference to bring together award winners, practitioners, and experts in government; and the launch of a book series on the history of the Innovations in American Government Awards, as well as the new frontiers of government innovation, such as innovation in networked governance and innovation in markets.

Going forward, there is still much to be done. We must ensure that innovations strengthen and nurture our democratic institutions and processes, and that the habit of innovation remains deeply ingrained in the culture of public service.

If the last 20 years of recognizing innovation tells us anything, it is that the country—and the world—are up to the challenge of good governance. In that spirit, the Ash Institute looks forward to a future of highlighting, celebrating and seeding innovation and democracy here and globally.

— *Gowher Rizvi*



Innovations in American Government

A PROGRAM OF THE ASH INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND INNOVATION

The Roy and Lila Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation

at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government fosters excellence in government around the world in order to strengthen democratic governance, institutions, and processes. By linking theory and practice, the Ash Institute seeks to increase understanding of democracy in diverse societies around the world, and disseminate best practices to public-sector leaders to make governments innovative and responsive to citizens' needs. Through its annual awards competition, the Innovations in American Government Awards, the Ash Institute not only encourages the replication of exemplary initiatives across jurisdictions, but also provides concrete evidence that government can address many of our most pressing public concerns and deserves greater public trust. The Ash Institute is funded through endowment grants from the Ford Foundation, the founder and long-time sponsor of the Innovations Awards, and Roy Ash, former U.S. cabinet member and best known as the founder of the modern Office of Management and Budget.

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In 2007, IBM entered into a partnership with the Ash Institute to offer a special global Innovations Award in Transforming Government.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation

works to build better futures for disadvantaged children and their families in the United States. The primary mission of the Foundation is to foster public policies, human service reforms, and community supports that more effectively meet the needs of today's vulnerable children and families.

In 2005, the Annie E. Casey Foundation entered into a partnership with the Ash Institute to offer a special Innovations Award in Children and Family System Reform.

The Fannie Mae Foundation—supported solely by Fannie Mae—creates affordable homeownership and housing opportunities through innovative partnerships and initiatives that build healthy, vibrant communities across the United States.

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“Once again, this nation has said there are no dreams too large, no innovation unimaginable, and no frontiers beyond our reach.”

**—John S. Herrington
Former Secretary of Energy**

The Innovations in American Government Program is a significant force in recognizing and promoting excellence and creativity in the public sector. Through its annual awards competition, the Program provides concrete evidence that government can work to improve the quality of life for citizens and that it deserves greater public trust. Many award-winning programs have been replicated across jurisdictions and policy areas, and some have served as harbingers of today’s reform strategies or as forerunners to state and federal legislation. By highlighting exemplary models of government’s innovative performance, the Program serves as a catalyst for continued progress in addressing the nation’s most pressing public concerns.

Innovations Award winners receive national press attention, serve as examples of model programs worthy of replication, and spark research and teaching cases at Harvard University and other schools across the country.





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