



HARVARD Kennedy School

**ASH INSTITUTE**

for Democratic Governance and Innovation

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## **HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL'S ASH INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES INNOVATIONS IN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT FINALISTS**

**Cambridge, Mass., – June 3, 2008** – The Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard Kennedy School today announced the finalists for the 2008 Innovations in American Government Awards competition. These programs are models of government excellence, representing innovative programming from the local, county, city, tribal, state, and federal levels. The 15 finalists were selected from an initial pool of nearly 1,000 applicants. Winners of the 2008 Innovations Award will be announced in September 2008. Each of the six winners will receive \$100,000 toward the replication and dissemination of its innovation.

The Innovations in American Government Awards Program recognizes innovative government programs that tackle public problems and improve the lives of citizens. In honoring their innovations, the Program builds public confidence in government and fosters replication of best practices nationwide. These 15 finalist government programs address a host of pressing policy issues: prison reform, the immigrant workforce, nutrition in underprivileged areas, and juvenile delinquency. The finalist pool includes nine state programs, two city programs, and two federal programs, one school district, and one tribal government. The city of New York, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania have multiple programs as finalists.

Finalists underwent seven months of rigorous evaluation by a host of policy analysts, government officials, and academic experts at both Harvard Kennedy School and institutions around the country. Over the last month, finalists have been visited by an Innovations policy expert. On June 12, 2008, programs will present their innovations

before the National Selection Committee, chaired by David Gergen, which will determine the 2008 winners. This free event is at Harvard Kennedy School and is open to the public. Presentations will also be available via live stream at <http://video.ksg.harvard.edu:8080/ramgen/encoder/live>.

“We are pleased to recognize these model initiatives of governments that are making a tangible difference in the lives of our citizens,” said Stephen Goldsmith, director of the Innovations in American Government Awards Program. “By highlighting these inspiring programs, we hope to foster the replication of such innovations nationwide.”

“The Innovations in American Government Awards program is at the forefront of honoring government at its best,” said Gowher Rizvi, director of the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation. “We commend their creativity, novelty, and munificent dedication to doing the public’s business better and hope their achievements will rebuild confidence in government.”

Established in 1985 at Harvard Kennedy School by the Ford Foundation, the Innovations in American Government Awards Program has honored 181 federal, state, and local government agencies over its 20 year history. The Program provides concrete evidence that government can work to improve the quality of life of citizens. Many award-winning programs have been replicated across jurisdictions and policy areas and serve as forerunners for today’s reform strategies and new legislation.

The following government programs are finalists for the 2008 Innovations in American Government Awards:

**ACCESS Plus**

*Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*

ACCESS Plus delivers health care services to low income children and families, adapting incentives for prevention and disease management found in managed care to fee-for-service settings.

**Acquisition Fund**

*City of New York, New York*

The Acquisition Fund is a \$230 million partnership that finances the purchase of land and buildings for affordable housing. Private finance tools allow smaller developers to compete in a tough market.

**Division of Youth Services**

### *State of Missouri*

The Division of Youth Services rehabilitates juvenile delinquents through small, humane treatment centers, characterized by rigorous treatment, education, and extensive family and community engagement. The “Missouri Model” has achieved cost effectiveness through transforming young people into law-abiding and productive citizens.

### **Fresh Food Financing Initiative**

#### *Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*

The Fresh Food Financing Initiative increases access to fresh, affordable food by providing grants and loans to supermarkets and grocery stores in underserved communities.

### **Getting Ready: Keeping Communities Safe**

#### *State of Arizona*

The Department of Corrections' real world re-entry effort, Getting Ready, begins the day inmates are admitted and continues throughout their sentence. This system-wide reform transforms prisons and improves long-term results.

### **Global Maritime Domain Awareness**

#### *United States Department of Transportation*

Global Maritime Domain Awareness is a low cost, and rapidly deployed, global vessel traffic monitoring system that contributes to the maritime security and safety of the United States and its allies.

### **Intelligence Community Civilian Joint Duty Program**

#### *Office of the Director of National Intelligence*

The Intelligence Community Civilian Joint Duty Program requires intelligence professionals to complete assignments outside their agency to achieve executive rank, with the goal of developing leaders who can break through stovepipes that prevented the intelligence community from “connecting the dots” prior to 9/11.

### **Knowledge Management**

#### *Commonwealth of Virginia*

Knowledge Management supports the Virginia Department of Transportation by strengthening its ability to share critical knowledge and experiences of its employees to improve ongoing processes and products.

### **Learn and Earn**

#### *State of North Carolina*

The Learn and Earn Initiative allows high school students to gain job skills, jumpstart their college education, and earn a four-year degree debt free.

### **MassDocs**

#### *Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

MassDocs makes affordable housing development in Massachusetts easier by creating one set of loan documents that simplifies the closing process, saving time and money.

**Project Zero**

*City of New York, New York*

Project Zero, a juvenile justice reform initiative of the Department of Probation, offers family-focused, community-based programs as alternatives to juvenile incarceration.

**Solid Waste and Energy Management**

*Yukon River Tribes*

Sixty-six indigenous tribes and First Nations have improved the solid waste systems on the Yukon River through their BackHaul program, removing over 6 million pounds of hazardous materials and recyclables that would otherwise return to the mainland empty.

**Teacher Residency**

*Boston Public School District, Massachusetts*

Based on the medical residency model, Boston Teacher Residency employs a hands-on, in classroom approach to teacher training and preparation, recruiting and retaining teachers to work in the Boston Public School system.

**Welcome Back Center**

*State of California*

The Welcome Back Center assists internationally trained health professionals as they pursue re-entry into the health workforce.

**Youth Leadership Advisory Team**

*State of Maine*

The Youth Leadership Advisory Team engages youth in foster care with state and federal policymakers to create significant improvements in child welfare policies, legislation, and programs.

**About the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation**

The Roy and Lila Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation advances excellence in governance and strengthens democratic institutions worldwide. Through its research, publications, leadership training, global network, and awards program – developed in collaboration with a diverse, engaged community of scholars and practitioners – the Ash Institute fosters creative and effective government problem-solving and serves as a catalyst for addressing many of the most pressing needs of the world's citizens. The Ford Foundation is a founding donor of the Institute. Additional information about the Ash Institute is available at [www.ashinstitute.harvard.edu](http://www.ashinstitute.harvard.edu). Applicants for the 2009 Innovations in American Government Awards are encouraged to apply at [www.innovationsaward.harvard.edu](http://www.innovationsaward.harvard.edu).

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