



Innovations in American Government

An awards program of the Institute for Government Innovation at the
John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.
The awards program is administered in partnership with the
Council for Excellence in Government.

NEWS

For Immediate Release

November 13, 2002

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FOUR WISCONSIN PROGRAMS CITED FOR HARVARD GOVERNMENT AWARD

(WASHINGTON D.C.) – Four creative, forward thinking and results-driven government programs in Wisconsin are among the 99 semifinalists named today for the prestigious **2002 Innovations in American Government Awards**. The awards competition – often referred to as the Oscars of government prizes – is a program of the Institute for Government Innovation at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government. The award recognizes outstanding programs that devise imaginative and effective ways to meet urgent social and economic challenges. Each semifinalist is eligible for one of five top grants of \$100,000.

The four programs--selected from a pool of nearly 1,000 applicants and representing the best and brightest in government from across the country—are: the State’s **I Owe You Campaign**; Milwaukee’s **Central City Cyberschool** and **Brownfield Redevelopment Program**; and Waushara County’s **Cooperative Care** initiative.

Four criteria are used to evaluate each application: novelty; effectiveness in addressing important problems; significance; and the potential for replication by other government entities.

Fifteen finalists will be selected from the semifinalists in early winter 2002. The National Selection Committee on Innovations in American Government, chaired by David R. Gergen, editor-at-large, *U.S. News & World Report* and Director of the Center for Public Leadership at Harvard University, will choose five winning programs after a full day of presentations in May 2003 in Washington, D.C. Each will receive a \$100,000 grant to promote and replicate their innovative efforts.

The Innovations in American Government awards, now in its sixteenth year, promotes excellence, innovation and creativity in the public sector. A program of the Institute for Government Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, the awards program is administered in partnership with the Council for Excellence in Government. The Institute is funded through an endowment from the Ford Foundation.

A description of each program and contact information is attached. The entire list of semifinalists is available on the web at www.excelgov.org.

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Brownfield Redevelopment Program (City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin) In earlier days, Milwaukee was reluctant to get stuck with contaminated, deteriorating brownfields by bringing often-futile property tax foreclosures. So the city crafted and enacted a statute that allows the brownfields to be environmentally rehabilitated, improved, and put into productive, taxpaying use. Under the innovative new law, the city forecloses against brownfields, wipes out tax and other liens against former owners, and then assigns its foreclosure judgment rights to developers willing to put the properties back into usable condition.

Press Contact:

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Brownfield Redevelopment Program
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Central City Cyberschool (City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin) brings technology-based learning to children living in Milwaukee's Parklawn public housing development. It serves 400 K-8 grade students. Instead of books and backpacks, students are equipped with a laptop computer, e-mail account, instructional software and Internet access. Classrooms are equipped with smartboard and wireless data network, facilitating immediate electronic communication between teacher and student.

Press Contact:

Laura Wake
Central City Cyberschool
414-286-8639

Cooperative Care (Waushara County, Wisconsin) is a group of home and personal care providers in rural Wisconsin that joined forces with county officials, community leaders, a federal agency, a technical college and a community action agency. Together, they organized a worker-owned cooperative, where the members have a voice and share profits. This program addresses growing concern about care of elderly and disabled individuals and provides an efficient alternative to nursing home care.

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I Owe You Campaign (State of Wisconsin) Wisconsin veterans in rural areas need the same benefit and entitlement services that are available to veterans elsewhere in the state. In areas with large numbers of underserved veterans, this program operates one-stop “supermarkets for veterans benefits” that bring together the counseling, information, and other services of federal, state, and local agencies.

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I Owe You Campaign

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