



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

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FIVE TEXAS GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS CITED FOR HARVARD AWARD

(WASHINGTON D.C.) – Five creative, forward thinking and results-driven government programs in Texas 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 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 **Management Advisory Services, Northstar Program, Family Pathfinders Program** and **Center for Community Support** and the American YouthWorks Charter School’s **Creating Better Healthcare Consumers** 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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Center for Community Support (State of Texas) assists nonprofit organizations and local governments in Texas to secure funding. Since 1999, it has helped these organizations and communities to get more than \$18 million for their programs, performing tasks that range from identifying opportunities to writing the proposals. The program levels the grant-getting playing field, providing access for those who lack fundraising knowledge and skills.

Press Contact:

Kash Krinhop
Center for Community Support
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Creating Better Healthcare Consumers (American YouthWorks Charter School; Austin, Texas) is an individualized healthcare plan for students at the American YouthWorks Charter School in Austin, Texas. Meeting with each student individually, and with a goal of overall wellness, prevention of disease and access to appropriate healthcare, this program helps students use the healthcare system as they transition into adulthood. This one-of-a-kind program educates students about the healthcare system. It gives them the responsibility, and an awareness of the importance of addressing their wellness and healthcare needs.

Press Contact:

Jeffrey Wagers
Creating Better Healthcare Consumers
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jwagers@ail.org

Family Pathfinders (State of Texas) is a community-based mentoring program for families trying to break the cycle of poverty, led by people who want to make a difference to others. After training, each leader is assigned to a family and works with it for a year, providing management skills and practical information to find employment and remain in the workforce. The program creatively allows citizens to be personally engaged in making welfare reform work.

Press Contact:

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Family Pathfinders
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Management Advisory Services (State of Texas) provides government clients with professional consulting services (from the State Auditor's Office) to help improve performance, manage risk, enhance accountability and achieve expected results. The program provides a new and creative way to assess and limit government agencies' risk.

Press Contact:

Deborah Kerr

Management Advisory Services

512-936-9500

dkerr@sao.state.tx.us

Northstar (State of Texas) is a public behavioral health insurance project. It creates a seamless care system for mental health and substance abuse and focuses on the treatment needs of individuals rather than artificially separating programs by funding source. The program blends funding from multiple sources to create a private insurance model for eligible consumers.

Press Contact:

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Northstar

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