



HARVARD Kennedy School

ASH INSTITUTE

for Democratic Governance and Innovation

The Annie E. Casey Foundation

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HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL'S ASH INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES CHILDREN AND FAMILY SYSTEM REFORM SEMIFINALISTS

Eight Programs to Compete for Annie E. Casey Innovations Award in Children and Family System Reform

Cambridge, Mass., – April 15, 2008 – The Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard Kennedy School today announced eight semifinalists for the 2008 Annie E. Casey Innovations Award in Children and Family System Reform. These government programs were selected from a pool of 100 applicants and offer tangible solutions to children and family services issues. The 2008 winner will receive a \$100,000 Award towards replication and dissemination of best practices.

The Annie E. Casey Innovations Award in Children and Family System Reform was created in 2004 to highlight successful innovation in public systems affecting children and families, and to encourage other systems to adopt these reforms. Through a partnership with the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation, this annual Award encourages improvements in public policy to support disadvantaged children and families.

After a series of thorough rounds of evaluation, semifinalists were selected by an esteemed panel of child and family service policy experts. Five state, one county, and two city programs make up the semifinalist group. Finalists will be announced on June 3, 2008 and the winner will be honored at an awards gala in September 2008 with five Innovations in American Government Awards recipients.

“The eight semifinalists have shown us that effective and innovative programs can play a role in improving the futures of children and strengthening children and family service programs,” said Douglas W. Nelson, president and CEO of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. “This is the third year that we are funding this award, which we feel contributes meaningfully to the Casey Foundation’s mission: improving opportunities and outcomes for America’s most vulnerable children and families.”

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 semifinalists for the Annie E. Casey Innovations Award in Children and Family System Reform are at the forefront of some of our nation’s most pressing children and family challenges,” said Stephen Goldsmith, director of the Innovations in American Government Awards Program. “They are bringing about core reforms in how we treat domestic violence, juvenile justice, and foster care issues.”

The semifinalists for the 2008 Annie E. Casey Innovations Award in Children and Family System Reform are:

Child Welfare Reform

State of Maine

Maine has achieved child welfare reform over the past six years through conscious, data-driven management, driven by the vision that every child needs a family.

Construyendo Circulos de Paz/Constructing Circles of Peace

Santa Cruz County, Arizona

Santa Cruz County’s Constructing Circles of Peace program is a long-term, restorative justice counseling program that brings together multiple stakeholders – the perpetrator, victim, family, and community – in response to crimes of domestic violence.

Division of Youth Services

State of Missouri

A national model for juvenile justice reform, Missouri's Division of Youth Services has achieved exemplary results and cost effectiveness through regionally-based, small, humane treatment centers, group and family systems approaches, universal case management, and community engagement.

Family Civil Intake Screen Process

State of Connecticut

Connecticut's Family Civil Intake Screen Process is a scientifically-validated, comprehensive assessment methodology designed to identify parenting conflicts and match the dynamics of the family with a corresponding array of evidence-based alternative dispute resolution services.

No Child Left Inside

State of Connecticut

Connecticut's No Child Left Inside initiative reconnects families to nature by exposing them to outdoor recreational opportunities, thus growing healthier kids, fostering environmental stewards, and showcasing the joy of playing outside.

Positive Youth Development

City of Washington, District of Columbia

The District of Columbia's Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services is becoming the nation's first juvenile justice agency based on the tenets of Positive Youth Development, an effort to meet the needs of young people by building their competencies and enabling them to become successful adults.

Project Zero

City of New York, New York

New York City's Department of Probation's Project Zero enhances public safety and reduces the number of juvenile delinquents removed from home and incarcerated in New York State facilities through family-focused, community-based programs.

Youth Leadership Advisory Team

State of Maine

Maine's Youth Leadership Advisory Team, a national pioneer, engages youth in foster care with state and federal policymakers to create significant improvements in child welfare policies, legislation, and programs.

About the Annie E. Casey Foundation

The Annie E. Casey Foundation is a private charitable organization, whose primary mission is to foster public policies, human-service reforms, and community supports that more effectively meet the needs of today's vulnerable children and families. For more information, visit www.aecf.org.

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. Applicants for the 2009 Innovations in American Government Awards are encouraged to apply at www.innovationsaward.harvard.edu.