What Sets Winners Apart

Overview

• History and Purpose of SCAC’s Awards Program
• Role of Judges & SCAC Staff
• Rules & Requirements
  • Judges’ Evaluation Criteria
  • Common Elements of Award Winners
  • Resources

History & Purpose of Awards Program

J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award

• Created in 1973
• Named after SCAC President “Mitch” Graham, Charleston County Council Chairman

• Recognizes counties that address community challenges, implement operational improvements, or enhance quality of life in a unique way
• More than 260 entries since 1995
History & Purpose of Awards Program

Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award
- Created in 1999
- Named after SCAC President Barrett Lawrimore, Charleston County Council Chairman
- Recognizes counties or county regional partnerships formed with municipalities, districts, or councils of government to complete an innovative project
- More than 62 entries since the program began

Role of SCAC Staff & Judges

SCAC Staff
- Select impartial judges who have an understanding of local government
- Promote the annual awards program and receive entries
- Provide all entries and score sheets to judges prior to awards competition
- Coordinate the awards competition and encourage all county officials to attend
- Compile judges’ scores immediately following competition to identify winners
- Publish news releases and articles in County Focus magazine
- Facilitate shared learning

Judges
- Thoroughly read all written entries and prepare questions for oral presentations
- Actively engage during competition by considering information provided during oral presentations and asking questions
- Independently score each entry based on evaluation criteria
- Rank order entries for each award and break ties, if necessary
- Head Judge prepares announcements for Annual Banquet
**Awards Program**
- Submitted online or received no later than deadline
- Projects must be put into action or completed during previous fiscal year.
  - No additional items or information may be provided to judges during competition.
  - Adhere to the 10-minute presentation time limit followed by a brief Q&A period with judges.

**Project Entry**
- Project Description cannot exceed 8 pages and should address:
  - Benefit/Importance questions
  - Effort/Difficulty questions
  - Originality/Innovation questions
- May include up to 5 additional pages of supporting documentation (graphs, tables, newspaper clippings, press releases, photos, etc.)

**J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award**
- Each county may submit one entry per year
- Must be submitted by the county and have a letter of support from council chairman or county chief administrative officer
Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award

• Open to two or more political subdivisions (counties or county regional partnerships formed with municipalities, districts, or councils of government) that collaborated to complete an innovative project
  • Entry must include letters of support from council chairmen/mayor or county chief administrative officers of each participating political subdivision.
  • Counties may submit multiple projects.

Judges’ Evaluation Scale

• Benefits/Importance of Project
• Project Effort/Difficulty
• Project Originality/Innovation
• Quality of Project Entry

Additional Scale for Barrett Lawrimore Award
• Collaboration

Common Elements of Award-Winning Projects

• The written presentation addresses all of the questions and is error free.
• The oral presentation is done well and finishes on-time; supporting videos are helpful but not required; presenters are able to answer questions from the judges.
• The project or the approach is truly original; it has not been done in South Carolina before.
• The work has been done primarily by county staff and not another agency or outside firm.
• Projects have data to demonstrate the success of the effort.
Lessons from Winners

- Internal review process
- Identify who is best suited to:
  - Write the submission
  - Proof the written submission and the oral presentation
  - Give the presentation and answer questions
- Practice the oral presentation to adhere to 10-minute limit

Resources

Awards Online Toolkit: [www.sccounties.org/awards-toolkit](http://www.sccounties.org/awards-toolkit)

Awards Video Library: [www.sccounties.org/awards-video-library](http://www.sccounties.org/awards-video-library)

Questions

SCAC Staff Contact:
Anna Berger
(803) 252-7255 or 1-800-922-6081
aberger@scac.sc