

ACHIEVEMENT

AWARDS



JWML

2006

Population awards

The VML Achievement Awards competition includes five categories based on population so that local governments compete with other local governments of comparable size. The population categories are: (1) under 5,000; (2) 5,000-10,000; (3) 10,001-35,000; (4) 35,001-90,000; and (5) more than 90,000.

A local government may submit up to three entries in its population category. One winner will be selected from each population category to receive an Achievement Award. Entries in the five population categories will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- developing more efficient and innovative ways of delivering government services;
- having a documented record of effectiveness that illustrates how a project or program has achieved its goals;
- possessing ideas and approaches that make a project or program relevant to other local governments; and
- implementing new and improved approaches in addressing a significant community need, or significantly improving an existing program.

For entries that represent significant improvements to existing programs, the improvements must have been made between Jan. 1, 2005 and May 1, 2006.

All submittals in this category must list one of the five population brackets on the cover page of the entry.

President's award

In addition to the Achievement Awards in the five population categories, the league will present a President's Award for Entrepreneurial Government to recognize and encourage the principles of innovative and imaginative local government. Local governments of all sizes are encouraged to submit their single most entrepreneurial program or project to compete for this open award.

By incorporating entrepreneurial principles into the President's Award, the league hopes to encourage

local governments to discover new ways to improve services and operations.

The 10 most often listed characteristics of entrepreneurial government are as follows:

- promoting competition between service providers;
- empowering citizens by moving control out of the bureaucracy and into the community;
- measuring performance by focusing on results rather than on statistics unrelated to the desired result;
- being driven by missions rather than by rules and regulations;
- redefining clients as customers and offering them choices;
- preventing problems before they emerge rather than offering services after they arise;
- focusing on ways to generate revenue rather than on how to spend money;
- decentralizing authority to embrace participatory management;
- creating programs that encourage the use of private and non-profit sectors rather than implementing new bureaucratic services; and
- acting as a catalyst to involve all sectors of the community in solving problems.

All submittals in this category must list the entry as "President's Award" on the cover page of the entry.

Communications award

The Communications Award recognizes the best in local government communications programs. Local governments of all sizes may submit one entry for this award.

Projects may include publications, audio-visual productions, special events, speeches, crisis plans and the like. Any videotapes must be submitted in 1/2-inch VHS format. CDs and DVDs may also be submitted.

All submittals in this category must list the entry as "Communications Award" on the cover page of the entry.

The 5 possibilities

To summarize, each VML local government has the opportunity to submit up to five entries in this year's competition: three in their population category, plus one entry for the President's Award for Entrepreneurial Government and one entry for the Communications Award.

Rules of entry

- The competition is open to all Virginia Municipal League local government members.
- Entries must describe programs or projects brought to conclusion or showing significant results between Jan. 1, 2005 and May 1, 2006.
- Each entry must include a cover page bearing the title of the entry, the category of entry, the name of the locality submitting the entry, and the signature of the local government's chief administrative or elected official.
- All entries must be typed double-spaced, and the body of the entry, which does not include the cover page, appendices or any supplemental materials, **must be at least two pages and not more than eight pages.**
- Submit one complete bound copy of your entry, including the cover page, all appendices and supplemental materials, videotapes, etc.
- All entries must be bound or submitted in a notebook or presentation folder.
- Entries may be accompanied by photographs, artwork, CDs or DVDs. Video-tapes must be in 1/2-inch VHS format.
- A local government may have up to five entries: three in their population category, one in the President's Award for Entrepreneurial Government category and one in the Communications category.
- An entry that is entered in one category may not be entered in any other category.

Entries must be postmarked by May 31, 2006

Helpful reminders

- The entry must be signed on the cover page by the chief administrative officer or the chief elected official.
- The cover page must show the category of entry, (e.g. Achievement Award - Population 35,001-90,000; President's Award; or Communications Award.)
- Only one copy of each entry needs to be submitted

The annual Virginia Municipal League Achievement Awards program encourages and recognizes excellence and innovation in Virginia local government. The awards program continues to be an important forum for sharing some of the very best public service ideas in Virginia, a competition in which local government leaders can learn. By sharing winning entries with the public, the league demonstrates that Virginia's local governments are imaginative, highly professional and cost effective.



Writing & presentation

Although the presentation of your entry will not be the most important consideration of the judges, it will be taken into account. Therefore your entries should have a neat appearance and should be well-written. Photographs or artwork are encouraged.

In writing your entry, be succinct and clear. State the program's goals and objectives; explain how the project or program was accomplished; and provide as much relevant information about the results as possible.

Write your entry so that it progresses in a logical manner and tells a story. Your introduction should include background information, such as the need for the project, how it originated and the goals and objectives. Clearly explain how the project was carried out or how your program operates. Also include how the project is financed and staffed. Your conclusion should state the results of the project or program.

The judging

Entries will be screened by the VML staff and judged by a four-member panel selected for their expertise in local government.

The winners

All winning entries will be featured in the September issue of Virginia Town & City. The Population Category winners, the winner of the President's Award and the winner of the Communications Award will be recognized and presented with their awards at the 2006 VML Annual Conference in Virginia Beach on Oct. 17.

Deadline & address

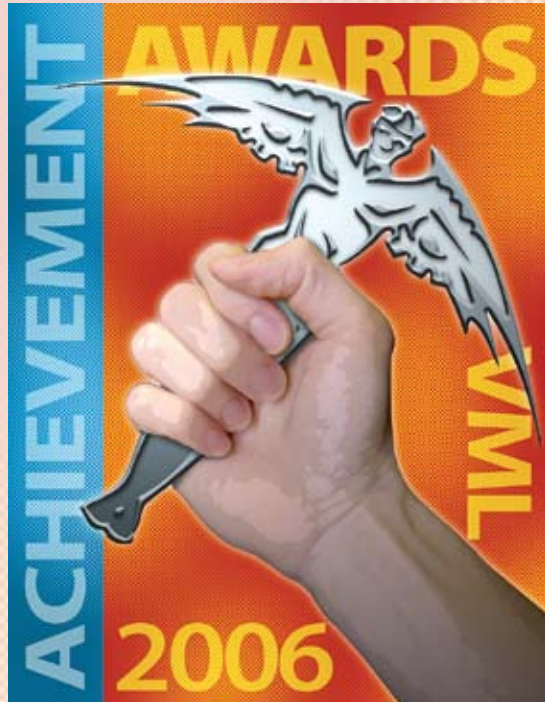
All entries must be postmarked by May 31, 2006 and mailed to:

VML Achievement Awards
P.O. Box 12164, Richmond
VA 23241

or shipped to:

VML Achievement Awards
13 E. Franklin St.
Richmond, VA 23219

Entries, including CDs, DVDs and video tapes, will not be returned. If you have any questions, contact David Parsons at the Virginia Municipal League via e-mail at dparsons@vml.org or by telephone at 804/649-8471.



Final checklist

- Does each entry have a cover page showing:
 - The title of the entry?
 - The category of entry?
 - The name of the locality?
 - The signature of the chief administrative officer or elected official?
- Are your entries neatly and securely bound?



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