

Reutilization web site recognized among semifinalists in innovations awards program

Contending for \$100,000 in Ford Foundation grants

BATTLE CREEK, Mich.- The Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service is one of three government activities in Michigan named as a semifinalist in the Innovations in American Government Award competition.

Headquartered at the Battle Creek Federal Center, DRMS supports the Defense Department by administering disposal of excess military property. Most items used by the military are eventually turned in to DRMS to be matched with existing defense needs, federal agency requirements, or those of state and local governments, and eligible nonprofit organizations. DRMS is part of a larger organization, the Defense Logistics Agency, located in Ft. Belvoir, Va.

The DRMS submission, *Moving Information, Not Property*, applied the best use of current technology to place information online. The associated Web site, a truly customer-driven system, offers 24-hour worldwide visibility of more than \$21 billion worth of inventory, allowing customers to screen and request. Innovations in American Government is recognized as one of the most prestigious public service awards programs in the country. Started in 1986, it is sponsored by the Ford Foundation, and administered by Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government in partnership with the Council for Excellence in Government.

Innovations Awards recognize government initiatives that are original and effective. Selected from a pool of more than 1,600 applicants, the semifinalists include programs to improve the quality of education, reduce crime and protect the environment. The 98 semifinalists named in 1999 include 22 federal, 40 state, 9 county, 22 city and town programs, 2 school districts, 2 tribal governments, and 1 government corporation.

"Each day government is confronted with complex problems that have a direct bearing on the well-being of our citizens," said Elaine Kamarck, director of the Innovations program at the Kennedy School. "This year the Innovations program highlights fresh examples of government's capacity to address these challenges."

Four criteria are used to evaluate each application: originality of the approach; effectiveness in addressing important problems; value of services to clients; and the potential for replication in other jurisdictions.

In early September, 25 finalists will be named from the pool of semifinalists. The National Selection Committee on Innovations in American Government, chaired by David R. Gergen, editor-at-large, U.S. News & World Report, will select 10 winning programs after a full day of presentations on Oct. 13 in Washington, D.C. Winners will be announced on Oct. 14, and each will receive a \$100,000 award from the Ford Foundation. The remaining 15 finalists will each receive \$20,000.

Since the Innovations program began in 1986, the Ford Foundation has made grants totaling \$14.6 million to 125 winners and 105 finalists. More than 85 percent of the programs receiving Innovations Awards have been replicated. Community Voice Mail for the Homeless, a 1991 winning program that enables phoneless individuals to pursue job and housing opportunities, has been replicated in 27 communities across the country.

Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government is a graduate school of public policy dedicated to preparing leaders for service in government and contributing to the solution of important public problems.

The Council for Excellence in Government is a national, nonprofit and nonpartisan organization whose 750 members have served as senior public-sector officials. The Council's mission is to improve the performance of government by strengthening results-oriented management and creative leadership in the public sector and to build understanding in government by focusing public discussion on its role and responsibilities.

The Ford Foundation, established in 1936, is a private, nonprofit institution that serves as a resource for innovative people and institutions worldwide. Its goals are to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty and injustice, promote international cooperation, and advance human achievement. A national and international philanthropy with assets over \$10 billion, the Foundation has granted more than \$9.3 billion to some 9,000 institutions and 100,000 individuals worldwide. The Foundation maintains headquarters in New York City and has offices in For more information about the DRMS program, contact the Public Affairs Office at (269) 961-7015 or visiting the nominated site at www.drms.dla.mil. Additional information on the Innovations in American Government Awards program and the semifinalists, as well as previous winners, is available on the Innovations home page at www.innovations.harvard.edu or by calling Bill Parent at (617) 495-0557.

1999 INNOVATIONS IN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT MICHIGAN SEMIFINALISTS

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