



HARVARD Kennedy School

ASH CENTER

for Democratic Governance
and Innovation

For more information, contact:

Kate Hoagland

Ash Center

617-495-4347

kate_hoagland@harvard.edu

HARVARD ANNOUNCES BRIGHT IDEAS IN GOVERNMENT

Recognizes 36 Noteworthy Government Programs and Practices

Cambridge, Mass., – March 29, 2011 – Today the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, recognized 36 government initiatives as Bright Ideas recipients. This cohort of Bright Ideas addresses a host of pertinent issues including health care, education, performance management, civic engagement, and service delivery, and represents the creative and innovative programming of school districts, county, city, state, and federal agencies, as well as public-private partnerships. The programs were selected by an evaluation team of policy experts comprised of both academics and practitioners.

Many of the recognized Bright Ideas offer unique solutions to delivering quality health care and education to underserved populations. Washington, D.C.'s Automatic HIV Counseling/Testing Program delivers a wealth of early HIV/AIDS assessment options to district residents, and the Healthy Indiana Plan gives the state's low-income uninsured adults an alternative care option to Medicaid. Philadelphia's Project U-Turn is dedicated to increasing school graduation rates through a collective public-private partnership of concerned leaders, while Denver Public School District's Professional Compensation System is meeting the same goal by rewarding teachers for student academic achievements.

Other Bright Ideas demonstrate the value of partnership among nonprofit, public, and private sectors in improving the lives of citizens. New York City's Bryant Park Corporation is beautifying and improving the upkeep of city parks by working together with the New York Public Library, city government, and a host of concerned philanthropists and real estate owners. Similarly, Envision Utah is tackling problems of unfettered growth in Utah through shared regional visioning projects to create more neighborly and attractive communities.

Still other Bright Ideas are using cutting-edge technology to engage citizens in civic life and improve performance of service delivery. Kentucky's Open Door – Transparency Portal is designed to increase government accountability by providing citizens with full access to information on state budgets, expenditures, taxes, and salaries. Boston's Citizens Connect program empowers citizens to take an active role in beautifying their own neighborhoods by reporting service issues through an easy-to-use mobile phone application.

"Government is struggling to deliver quality services with strapped resources and diminishing budgets," said Anthony Saich, director of the Ash Center. "These 36 government programs demonstrate that creative solutions to some of our nation's most intractable problems can be generated and succeed in even in the most challenging of environments."

Now in its second cycle, the Bright Ideas program is part of a broader initiative of the Innovations in American Government Awards program, which spotlights exemplary models of government innovation and advances efforts to address the nation's most pressing public concerns.

The Ash Center will be accepting applications and recognizing more Bright Ideas on a rolling basis throughout the year. Bright Ideas will be showcased on the Ash Center's [Government Innovators Network](#), an online community for practitioners and policymakers to share innovative public policy solutions. Learn more about the [Bright Ideas](#) program.

About the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation

The Roy and Lila Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation advances excellence and innovation in governance and public policy through research, education, and public discussion. Three major programs support our mission: the Program on Democratic Governance; the Innovations in Government Program; and the Rajawali Foundation Institute for Asia. For more information, visit www.ash.harvard.edu.

Bright Ideas 2011

Automatic HIV Counseling/Testing Program *City of Washington, DC*

The Automatic HIV Testing Program is a component of the city's Community-Oriented Correctional Health Care model that provides comprehensive continuity of care through early assessment, treatment, education, prevention, and discharge planning and case management. The program identifies and treats offenders with positive HIV status while providing counseling on managing the disease's impact.

Florida Benchmarking Consortium *State of Florida*

The Florida Benchmarking Consortium is an intrastate partnership of local governments seeking to improve the delivery of services through the use of performance measurement data and proven benchmarking tools and techniques.

Bend the Curve *State of Maine*

The State of Maine has established its *Bend the Curve* program to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of government, including the development and training of an internal capacity of Continuous Improvement Practitioners -- change agents and coaches who facilitate the analysis of government systems and business processes using "Lean" improvement approaches, methods, and tools. These consultants work throughout state government to reduce waste, add value and reduce delivery times, improve customer service, and lower costs.

Bryant Park Corporation *City of New York, NY*

Bryant Park was the first publicly-owned park in the nation to become privately managed, and continues to operate as a collaboration between the City of New York, the New York Public Library, real estate owners, corporations, and philanthropists who have worked to restore, maintain, and operate the park.

Budget Formulation and Execution Manager *U.S. Department of the Treasury*

The Budget Formulation and Execution Manager is a Web-based application that allows government agencies to formulate budgets and track performance measures. This multi-agency application provides customers with an effective budgeting and performance management tool at a much lower cost than an independently developed system.

Citizens Connect *City of Boston, MA*

Citizens Connect is a mobile phone application that empowers constituents to beautify their neighborhood by making it easier to report basic city service issues such as potholes. After downloading the app, a constituent is able to automatically capture an incident and send it off to the City for easy tracking and fast resolution.

Envision Utah
State of Utah

Envision Utah is a public-private partnership that pioneered the process of regional visioning to generate strategies and political will to address the challenges associated with Utah's rapid growth. Through an innovative and interactive public process, Envision Utah helps build communities that are beautiful, prosperous, healthy, cost-effective, and neighborly.

eRulemaking Program
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The Regulations.gov Website provides the general public with the opportunity to make online comments on Federal Register documents. The corresponding Federal Docket Management System allows participating agencies to better monitor public comments and respond to public inquiries.

Family Resource Center Initiative
State of Michigan

The Family Resource Center Initiative provides collaborative services for vulnerable families and supporting schools to achieve higher standards. Recognizing the connection between service provision and school achievement, Family Resource Centers are school-based sites where customers can access services provided by the state's Department of Human Services and other partners.

Florida Virtual School
State of Florida

The Florida Virtual School provides online learning to students statewide as part of a free, public education system. Students with learning disabilities, medical challenges, or a desire to take courses not available locally are now able to take classes year-round and from any location.

Greenprint Denver Environmental Management System
City and County of Denver, CO

The City of Denver has implemented the first certified, citywide ISO 14001 Environmental Management System used to drive sustainability throughout the organization. By adopting and transforming a business tool, Denver is modeling a new form of public-private environmental management that has led to better compliance, better outcomes, and reduced costs.

Health Reform Program
King County, WA

King County created its Health Reform Program to moderate its increasing health care costs by lessening employee demand for health care and ensuring access to quality care in the region. A new benefit design that incorporates wellness programs supports improved employee health, while a regional collaborative drives health care quality improvements.

Healthy Families Succeed Program
State of Wyoming

Through family-centered care, Wyoming's Healthy Families Succeed program offers information about health and jobs, and provides education and decision support. These services help move individuals and their families from dependence on the state to better health, productive employment, and greater self-sufficiency. The program implements information-driven improvements in state services across agencies at a reduction in costs of \$2,000 per enrolled person.

Healthy Indiana Plan
State of Indiana

The Healthy Indiana Plan is a consumer-driven program for the uninsured that provides an alternative to traditional Medicaid for low-income adults. The plan's structure promotes personal responsibility by incentivizing participants to utilize health care services appropriately while simultaneously improving health.

High Tech High
San Diego Unified School District

Launched as a single public charter school in 2000, High Tech High now operates nine schools serving 3,500 K-12 students in San Diego County. It also offers a teacher certification program and a graduate school of education. The schools combine rigorous academics with projects and internships to prepare urban students for post-secondary success.

Human Services Work Management System
City and County of Denver, CO

The Denver Department of Human Services has implemented an integrated Work Management System that enables staff to manage delivery of programs to citizens with an unprecedented level of accessibility, transparency, and accountability. The system has generated efficiencies in service results and productivity.

I-Jury
Travis County, TX

I-Jury is a Web-based impaneling process that handles all preparatory juror processing, including qualification, excuses, service date coordination, questionnaire, orientation, and court assignment. It also sends service reminders and cancellation notices. The system allows jurors to report directly to the courtroom ready for an assignment without waiting in an assembly room.

Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training
State of Washington

Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) is an instructional model designed to provide educational access and support for adult basic education to progress further and faster along educational pathways. I-BEST pairs basic education with professional-technical instructors or academic instructors in the classroom to advance student gains concurrently in both basic education content and professional-technical and academic skills.

Limited English Proficiency/Sensory Impaired
State of Georgia

The Limited English Proficiency/Sensory Impaired program transformed the delivery of language services from a cadre of 250 individual interpreters across the state to a language brokering service delivered by six service providers. This service has resulted in increased efficiency in service delivery and significant cost-savings for the program.

Master Trust and Investment Pool
City of Winston-Salem, NC

The Master Trust and Investment Pool acts as an internal mutual fund, allowing the city to diversify its investments for pensions, health benefits, and capital reserves while allowing for centralized management and accounting of the funds. The arrangement has saved the city a minimum of \$2.9 million a year by eliminating separate custodial and trust services for each fund and reducing the amount the city must contribute to pension funds to ensure they are fully funded.

Mental Illness Project
City of Los Angeles, CA

The Mental Illness Project is a co-response model, utilizing officers and mental health clinicians who manage incidents involving persons suffering a mental health crisis. The goal is to minimize violent encounters with law enforcement and to provide safe and humane treatment for some of the most vulnerable members of our society.

Money Follows the Person
State of Texas

The Texas Money Follows the Person program allows for individuals in a Medicaid nursing facility to leave that residential setting and move back into the community. The program supports individual choice and enhances quality of life, while also providing additional community services.

Multi Jurisdictional Assessing
Town of Newbury, NH

The New Hampshire towns of Newbury, New London, and Sunapee joined forces to create a real estate assessing solution that would benefit all three towns. They combined financial resources and the mutual interests of the towns that surround Lake Sunapee to create a regional assessing district employed by all three communities.

Neighborhoods for Kids—East County
San Diego County, CA

San Diego County's Neighborhoods for Kids—East County strives to keep abused and neglected children in safe, familiar environments, such as in their schools and communities, when it is not possible to remain with their parents. The program aims to minimize disruption in the child's life while family reunification efforts are in process.

Open Book Texas
State of Texas

Open Book Texas is a set of initiatives to improve government accounting accuracy, spending, and transparency. Texans have tools to track state expenditures and federal stimulus funds and monitor local government transparency. The program also helps improve Texas' effectiveness in purchasing and accounting through smart buying and revamping accounting systems.

Open Door–Transparency Portal
Commonwealth of Kentucky

The Open Door Website is a bipartisan, multiagency effort that provides a more transparent, accountable state government. Information displayed on the Website includes department and agency budgets, information on Kentucky taxes, open records, ethics, as well as searchable databases for employee salaries, contract, and expenditure information.

Pediatric Practice Enhancement Project
State of Rhode Island

The Pediatric Practice Enhancement Project (PPEP), a medical home initiative for youth with special health care needs is based on the concept that parents of these children, having faced the same challenges, are best equipped to help other families. PPEP is cost effective and increases the utilization of community- based services.

Philadelphia LandCare Program
City of Philadelphia, PA

Blighted abandoned land is a significant negative force in Philadelphia and many other cities. The Philadelphia LandCare Program has transformed thousands of trash-strewn, idle parcels of land into neighborhood assets by adding trees, wood fences, and well-maintained lawns as a strategic interim precursor to development.

Professional Compensation System Implementation for Teachers
Denver Public School District, Denver, CO

ProComp is a compensation system that links teacher pay to the school district's instructional mission. Designed in a partnership between the Denver Classroom Teachers Association and Denver Public Schools, ProComp rewards teachers for their professional accomplishments while linking pay to student achievement.

Project U-Turn
City of Philadelphia, PA

Through Project U-Turn, the City of Philadelphia has taken responsibility for resolving its dropout crisis by providing high quality educational programs for struggling students and out-of-school youth. Leaders from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors collectively set quantifiable goals and objectives, develop funds and other resources to address them, and measure progress and report results to the public.

Quality Compensation
State of Minnesota

The Quality Compensation program is designed to promote educational excellence by increasing student achievement, improving the instructional practices of teachers, and promoting the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers for each classroom. This school reform model includes teacher leadership opportunities, goal setting, teacher collaboration, and teacher evaluation.

Return to Roots
Commonwealth of Virginia

The Return to Roots program is an innovative effort to combat both the challenges of out-migration and a skill-limited workforce. This Web-based program aims to fill vacant and high-level positions by encouraging expatriates of Southwest and Southern Virginia to return home to take advantage of the new opportunities available in their hometowns and neighboring communities.

SECURE Electronic Recording Delivery System
Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Diego Counties, CA

Real estate transactions in California traditionally have been handled manually by county Recorder's offices. Building on Orange County's first-in-the-nation electronic recording system, Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside and San Diego counties collaborated to allow customers from throughout the U.S. to submit documents over the Internet. Keys can now be handed over to a new buyer in a matter of hours instead of days.

Smart Charlotte 2050
Charlotte County, FL

The Charlotte County Building and Growth Management department maintains the County's Comprehensive Plan, Smart Charlotte 2050, and obtains and responds to input from many stakeholder groups inside and outside of the county. This mandate led to the development of the Public Insight and Comment Tool (PICT), an online public participation software package that allows citizens to comment on documents within the plan and employees to respond to each comment.

STOPPED
Van Buren County, MI

Teen drivers often take risks when driving that they would not take if their parents were in the vehicle. In response, STOPPED is a voluntary parental notification system designed to inform parents when their teen driver has been pulled over by law enforcement while driving their vehicle.

Transit Oriented Development Gap Financing
City of Philadelphia , PA

Transit Oriented Development Gap Financing is a competitive loan product created to fill the "gap" between bank financing and a business' equity in targeted locations where the public has made significant investments in transit or other infrastructure.