



THE CBC PRIZE  
*for*  
PUBLIC SERVICE  
INNOVATION

*2007 Winner*

The New York City Department  
of Information Technology  
and Telecommunications

*and*

The Office of the Deputy Mayor  
for Health and Human Services

*for*

ACCESS NYC

## **The CBC Prize**

The CBC Prize for Public Service Innovation was created in 1997 by the Citizens Budget Commission to recognize and promote successful innovations in the delivery of public services. Awarded annually, the Prize celebrates creative thinking and shares government achievements with the public and other agencies. In alternating years, it is awarded either to a New York State or a New York City agency.

Each year the winner is selected from nominations requested from more than 150 government officials. The nominations are reviewed by CBC staff and a committee composed of CBC Trustees, and that committee of Trustees makes the selection.

## **The 2007 Winner**

The 2007 CBC Prize for Public Service Innovation is awarded jointly to the New York City Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications and the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services for their creation of ACCESS NYC.

ACCESS NYC is an online tool, available in seven languages, that enables New York City residents to screen themselves for 21 City, State and Federal assistance programs. Through a series of three filtering questionnaires, users are able to learn about, qualify for and fill out applications for up to nine programs at once. Launched in September 2006, the site has already been visited by more than 57,000 people, with more than 14,000 engaging the screening process. Initial user surveys reveal client satisfaction (excellent or good) at 85%.

As a result of the electronic application process, caseworkers' productivity has and will continue to rise as more applicants register for programs and services online. The improved process

will also reduce staff time spent on non-qualifying cases and deciphering hand-written applications. In addition, with the privacy of individuals protected, ACCESS NYC is planning to make anonymous collected data available to the City for use in better targeting services and information to identified communities in need.

Much like the City's 311 initiative, ACCESS NYC uses technology to improve citizens' interactions with government and pushes the client-centered approach to government to a new level. To overcome the barrier of internet accessibility that many applicants face, ACCESS NYC is also available at community-based organizations, City support agencies, and ACCESS NYC kiosks.

## **Honorable Mention**

Honorable Mention for the 2007 Prize goes to the New York City Department of Probation for its Project Zero.

Project Zero places juvenile offenders in the most suitable treatment program, providing maximum rehabilitation while maintaining community safety. The project accomplishes this goal by shifting mid- and low-risk juvenile offenders away from incarceration and towards in-home and in-community supervision programs. This approach uses community care, intensive counseling, and community service to tailor the best rehabilitative strategy to each client. It also avoids having the juvenile isolated from family members and exposed to high-risk juvenile offenders in correctional facilities.

This approach reduces the number of juveniles incarcerated, providing cost savings to the City; it adapts to the changing criminal environment (with felony arrests dropping and misdemeanor arrests on the rise); and it finds the best method for rehabilitating each offender. Project Zero is not only an innovative approach to criminal justice but a way to reduce future crime rates and improve public safety.

## **The CBC Innovation Prize Committee**

The Innovation Prize Committee, composed of CBC Trustees, reviewed and evaluated this year's nominations and selected the Winner and Honorable Mention. The Committee was chaired by Walter Harris and consisted of Paul R. Alter, Paul F. Balsler, Kenneth W. Bond, Lawrence B. Bittenwieser, Anne E. Cohen, Stephen F. DeGroat, Cheryl Cohen Effron, H. Dale Hemmerdinger, Jack D. Hidary, Jerome E. Hyman, Peter J. Kiernan, Alan M. Klein, Jeffrey Lynford, Robinson Markel, Frances Milberg, Stephen W. Nislick, Steven M. Polan, Lester Pollack, Carol Raphael, Deborah M. Sale, Peter Samton, David T. Schiff, James L. Lipscomb, *ex-officio*.

The entire CBC staff participated, to one degree or another, in evaluating the nominations and assisting the Committee in its selections. The staff work was supervised by Charles Brecher, Executive Vice President and Research Director, and managed by Corey Kunz, Communications and Public Affairs Associate.

## **The Citizens Budget Commission**

Founded in 1932, the Citizens Budget Commission is a non-partisan, nonprofit civic organization devoted to influencing constructive change in the finances and services of New York City and New York State governments.

A complete list of recent CBC reports is available on the Commission's web site – [www.cbcny.org](http://www.cbcny.org).

James L. Lipscomb, Chair  
Diana Fortuna, President  
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