

NEWS RELEASE

Chesterfield County Public Library

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Chesterfield County Public Library Named Semifinalist in Harvard's 2017 Innovations in American Government Awards Competition

CHESTERFIELD COUNTY, VA — The Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, recognized today Chesterfield County Public Library (CCPL) as part of the 100 programs named as semifinalists in this year's Innovations in American Government Awards competition. CCPL will compete to be named a finalist in the competition and have the chance to be awarded the \$100,000 grand prize in Cambridge this spring.

CCPL advanced from a pool of more than 500 applications from all 50 states. The library was selected by the Innovations Award evaluators as examples of novel and effective action. CCPL's work has had significant impact, and staff believe it can be replicated across the country and the world.

In 2012, CCPL implemented Your Personal Librarian, a reference service in which customers meet once with a librarian for help with a learning question (e.g. setting up an email account). This led to The CCPL Way, a revolutionary new reference approach which encompasses two goals:

- Turn outward in all that CCPL does by breaking down the walls between library and customer
- Create transformative 21st century library experiences by cultivating a learning-charged environment using a flexible, out-come based application to help customers collaboratively achieve personal goals
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This revolutionary service allowed CCPL to address complex customer needs, such as job, finance or education related challenges and to break out of the traditional reference desk mold of delivering just one "right" answer.

"These programs demonstrate that there are no prerequisites for doing the good work of governing" said Stephen Goldsmith, director of the Innovations in American Government Program at the Ash Center; "small towns and massive cities, huge federal agencies and local school districts, large budgets or no budgets at all — what makes government work best is the drive to do better, and this group proves that drive can be found anywhere."

The semifinalist programs represent a cross-section of jurisdictions and policy areas, and embody one of the most diverse and sophisticated groups that have advanced to this stage in the competition's 30-year history. They were invited to complete a supplementary application last fall, answering in-depth questions about their work, the process of creating and sustaining their programs, and how they believe they can teach others to do what they do. The Ash Center

expects to announce 10 programs that will be named finalists and be invited to Cambridge to present to the Innovation Awards Program's National Selection Committee in March, with the grand prize winners to be named in June.

Please visit the Government Innovators Network at <http://innovations.harvard.edu> for the full list of Semifinalists, and for more information regarding the Innovations in American Government Awards.

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About the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation

The Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation advances excellence in governance and strengthens democratic institutions worldwide. Through its research, education, international programs, and government innovations awards, the Center fosters creative and effective government problem solving and serves as a catalyst for addressing many of the most pressing needs of the world's citizens. For more information, visit www.ash.harvard.edu.

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