

INNOVATIONS

The Center for Technology in Government

Center Wins Innovations in American Government Award

"This country is bursting with pride in your accomplishments."

Vice President Gore
October 26, 1995

"This country is bursting with pride in your accomplishments." With these words, Vice President Al Gore honored the Center for Technology in Government and fourteen other public sector programs named 1995 Innovations in American Government award winners. The Vice President went on to urge public managers to persevere and overcome the barriers to innovation in the public sector pointing out the irony that "innovation is so basic to the American character" but so difficult to achieve within the structure of American government.

CTG staff attended the Washington, DC celebration which included a press briefing with the Vice President and Ford Foundation President Franklin Thomas who characterized the award winners as "the best in American Government." A formal awards ceremony was held at the State Department, and the winners visited President Clinton in the White House Rose Garden. The award brings with it a \$100,000 grant from the Ford Foundation to be used to disseminate results and help replicate our program in other government settings.

The Innovations program, begun in 1986, is one of the nation's most prestigious public service prizes. Sponsored by the Ford Foundation and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, it honors exemplary initiatives at the federal, state, and local levels that provide creative solutions to important public problems. In all, more than 1450 applicants were evaluated for the 1995 awards. Thirty finalists were visited by independent site evaluators in May and made presentations before the national selection panel in July. The Center is one of

only two state-level programs selected this year: There were six federal winners and seven local government winners, including the New York City Police Department.

CTG was honored for its program of partnerships with businesses and academic institutions, for its ability to provide low-risk, low-cost assessments of information technology applications to mission-critical public problems, and for its knowledge building capacity which has allowed thousands of government managers to benefit from projects conducted by only a few.

Partnership is a key value and operating principle at CTG. The Innovations Award therefore belongs not only to the Center, but to every government manager, corporate partner, student, and faculty member who has enriched our program over the past years. Congratulations to all who believed in a good idea and brought it to life.

INNOVATIONS IN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

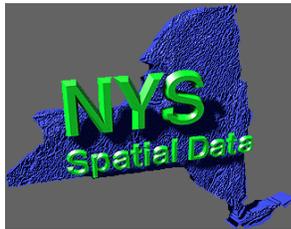
*An Awards Program of the Ford Foundation
administered by the John F. Kennedy School
of Government at Harvard University*



First Edition of Innovations

The CTG staff is so pleased to receive the Innovations in American Government award that we have adopted the name 'Innovations' for our quarterly newsletter. We welcome your comments, questions, and contributions for and about the publication.

New York Geographic Information - On-line GIS Clearinghouse



Maps used to be flat, representing a two dimensional view of the earth. The new view of geographic information is to see it as three-dimensional, layered, and ever-changing. Large geographic information systems (GIS) make this dynamic view of space possible, but it takes hefty computerized databases and costly efforts to collect the data for it to happen.

The New York State GIS Cooperative Project is a collaborative effort to design, develop, use, and evaluate a prototype geospatial data resource for New York State.

The project, originally proposed by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), was developed by the Center for Technology in Government (CTG) and carried out through a partnership among public, private, and academic organizations.

The project produced a NYS Spatial Data Clearinghouse prototype, available through the Internet (<http://www.ctg.albany.edu/gisny.html>). It is a repository of metadata (information about information) and related spatial data sets, available for sharing among private and public organizations, utilities, and the academic sector. To make the Clearinghouse workable, New York stakeholders examined the Federal Content Standard for Geospatial Metadata and developed guidelines for the standard.

At the prototype demonstration in October, Tom Ruller from the NYS Archives and Records Administration, said that standards are critical so that "people will not have to learn a whole new language when they want to search for information." Lany Alber, manager of DEC's GIS unit, concurred, saying that the federal GIS standard is a "common [information] currency" that will allow the sharing of data across organizations.

Nancy Tosta of the Federal Geographic Data Committee spoke at the meeting. She repeated the cautionary words of other speakers when she said that "data are the expensive elements in GIS." Ann DiCaterino, CTG's Manager of Project Support, demonstrated the prototype, noting that information technologists could take a lesson from environmentalists by "reducing (redundancy), reusing (data) and recycling (information)."

The point is that expenses for creation and maintenance of spatial data can be cut through collaboration, cooperation, and data interchange. Kristine Kelly, Research Associate for the Center for Technology in Government, summed up the spirit of the GIS project when she said "in New York we have the need, expertise, enthusiasm, and opportunity" to reap the potential benefits of high quality geographic information systems.

For more information about the GIS project, or to participate in the Clearinghouse, please contact Theresa A. Pardo, Project Coordinator at (518) 442-3984 or tpardo@ctg.albany.edu.

Best of the Web for government information

- TIP <http://nyslgti.gen.ny.us>
- EnCon <http://nyslgti.gen.ny.us:80/nystate/EnCon/EnCon.html>
- Guide to the U.S. Congress <http://policy.net/capweb/congress.html>
- US Legislation <http://thomas.loc.gov/>
- Yahoo (Internet Index) <http://www.yahoo.com/>
- NYS Info Locator Service <http://unix2.nysed.gov/ils>
- Government Information <http://www.usc.edu/Library/GovDocs/index.html>
- Internet Search http://home.netscape.com/home/internet_search.html
- Town of Ramapo <http://nyslgti.gen.ny.us/nylocal/Rockland/Ramapo/>
- Calif. Elections '94 <http://www.election.ca.gov/>
- Tools <http://cws.wilmington.net/>
- NYS Court of Appeals <http://www.law.cornell.edu/ny/ctap/overview.html>
- ABAG (Bay Area) <http://www.abag.ca.gov/index.html>
- City of Belmont, CA <http://www.belmont.gov/>
- Traffic flow <http://wsdot.wa.gov/regions/northwest/>

CTG's Corporate Partners contribute many resources that make the Center's projects possible. The collaboration among CTG staff, corporate partners, faculty and students at the University is the key to success.

Allied Telesyn
 Anixter International
 Applied GIS
 AT&T Global Info Solutions
 Aule-Tek, Inc.
 Bellcore
 Blue Moon Training Systems
 Borland
 Computer Sciences Corp.
 Digital Equipment Corp.
 Documentation Strategies
 DRT Systems International
 EMI
 ESRI

Excalibur Technologies
 Executive Systems Planning
 Full Circle Communications
 Grumman InfoConversion
 GTE Vantage Solutions
 Harlan Wallach Graphics
 Hewlett-Packard
 Inteligis
 IBM
 Kirby Marketing
 Lotus
 Microsoft
 New Vision Systems
 Novell

NYNEX
 OA Systems
 Oracle
 Panduit Sales Corp.
 Precision Systems
 RealTech
 Silicon Graphics
 SUN Microsystems
 SynOptics
 WordPerfect
 Xerox
 Xyplex

The Center's Current Corporate Partners

“Just jump into it,” was Michael Genito’s advice to agencies thinking of delivering government services through the Internet. At the kickoff workshop for CTG’s Internet Testbed Project on October 6, Genito said that establishing your own home page on the Internet requires a short learning curve, but delivers big benefits. When Genito’s staff in the Town of Ramapo Department of Finance went from thirteen people to eight, he had to take action. Ramapo developed a presence on the Internet’s world wide web. The town’s staff can now “talk” to many people at one time, and information is available to residents twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

One-hundred and seventy participants attended the “New York on the Internet” workshop held at the Empire State Plaza, co-sponsored by the Center for Technology in Government and the NYS Forum for Information Resource Management. During the “best practices” demonstrations in the morning, the group saw applications developed by the Government Information Locator System, the Department of Health, and the Office of State Comptroller. Tony Pascarella, Project Director of the NYS Local Government Telecommunications Initiative (TIP), introduced participants to useful Internet and network access tools. Kai Larsen, CTG Research Associate, gave a quick tour of the best national and international world wide web (www) sites relating to government services.

Policy, management, and technology were the themes of the afternoon as attendees worked to craft an agenda for CTG and NYS Forum activities to support New York State’s use of the Internet as a strategic resource.

Some of the major benefits of using the Internet to deliver government services cited by the groups include:

- ◆ providing a wide audience with access to a wide variety of information,

- ◆ eliminating duplication by providing direct access to the source,
- ◆ providing “one-stop shopping” for citizens,
- ◆ allowing greater public participation by democratizing access, and
- ◆ providing timely and accurate information twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

All three of the discussion groups identified security, both internal to a network site and on the network itself, as a major obstacle to making effective use of the network. Participants also identified learning objectives and products that would help agencies progress in their use of the Internet. Among them:

- ◆ a “cookbook” detailing how to develop on-line services,
- ◆ a guide to cost-benefit evaluations of network-based services,
- ◆ a study of cross-agency service delivery and data sharing, and
- ◆ a security testing service.

Next steps include evaluation of proposals for the Internet Testbed and initial meetings of the Forum’s Network Services Standing Committee and two Special Interest Groups on Technical and Applications issues.

The Internet Testbed promises to be an active and energetic effort. For more information, contact Peter Bloniarz at info@ctg.albany.edu.

For a sampling of government best practices www sites, see the “Best of the Web Sites” box on page 2.

NYS Wired - Internet Testbed Begins



CTG Project Reports

CTG's Project Report, "Supporting Psychiatric Assessments in Emergency Rooms" was recently released. The project was a joint effort with the Office of Mental Health and the University at Albany Center for Policy Research.

Other available reports are:

- ◆ Title Imaging Project
- ◆ Groupware Testbed Project
- ◆ Voice Information Response System Project

If you would like a copy of any report, contact CTG at (518) 442-3892 or info@ctg.albany.edu.

Monthly CTG Open House

CTG conducts a monthly open house designed to introduce the Center to government managers, corporate representatives, and members of the academic community.

legislature, several state agencies, the academic community, and the private sector

The open houses are held from 3:30-5 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month in our Government Technology Solutions Lab.

The program includes an introduction to the Center and its projects, a tour of the Center's laboratory, and a demonstration of one of the prototypes developed at the Center. Brief presentations begin at 3:45.

The first open house, held on October 12, 1995, drew representatives from the

There's no need to register in advance, but call us if you need directions to the Campus or Lab. We hope to see you sometime soon.

Talented Graduate Students Critical to CTG Success

Talent, brains, and energy are the valuable qualities that graduate students bring to their work at the Center. Since its beginning, CTG has been fortunate in having students from a wide variety of departments including computer science, information science, and public policy.

Say 'Norway' and you'll find native son Kai Larsen speaking its praises. Hailing from 30 miles outside of Oslo, Kai comes to CTG from WM-Data, a Norwegian Consulting firm. His background is in computer science, general education, and philosophy. Kai is currently in the Information Science Ph.D. program where he is pursuing his interest in public administration and information systems. His work at CTG is focused on the Internet Testbed project. For some excellent www links, access Kai's home page: <http://www.albany.edu/kl7686/>

Steven Hyde, one of the first graduate assistants to join the CTG staff, was a political science major at Potsdam College. While serving on the Project Coordination Team at CTG, he completed his MPA at the University at Albany Rockefeller College. Steve graduated last year and is currently a decision analyst and facilitator at TASC Inc. TASC, located in Virginia, is an engineering consulting firm.

Fazal Ilahi is a second year Master's student in the Computer Science Department. He is from Madras, India, where he received his degree in Engineering from the University of Madras. Fazal provides technical support for CTG's projects. He has been active in the GIS project and is helping to maintain the world wide web server. His interests are client-server application development tools, databases, and Internet applications.

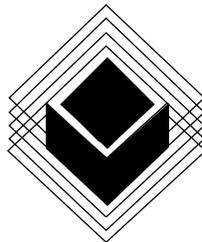
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