



**NCLIS**

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## **News Release**

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**For Immediate Release**

### **NCLIS Announces Winner of 2006 Health Information Awards**

#### **South Carolina's REACH 2010 Judged America's Best Library Consumer Health Program**

Washington, DC USA May 4, 2006—Beth Fitzsimmons, Chairman of the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS), has announced the winner of the 2006 NCLIS Health Information Award for Libraries. Chosen from entries from throughout America, South Carolina's REACH 2010 program was judged the best library program for encouraging healthy lifestyles and providing health information to the citizens. Organized and managed by the Charleston and Georgetown Diabetes Coalition's Library Partnership, South Carolina's REACH 2010 expands Internet access at five community sites and uses libraries and the Internet to train African Americans to locate high quality diabetes information.

REACH (Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health), is a national demonstration project funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The NCLIS award recognizes how South Carolina's REACH 2010 is effectively teaching 12,000 African Americans diagnosed with diabetes to reduce disparities through improved self-management and care. Dr. J. Edward Hill, President of the American Medical Association, made the presentation to Barbara Carlson and a delegation of the Coalition's leadership at a reception following the 2006 Libraries and Health Information Forum at the National Library of Medicine in Bethesda, MD. REACH 2010 was presented with a plaque and \$20,000 for continuing and expanding its programs. Each of the other nine finalist programs was given a \$1,000 award.

Sponsored by NCLIS, and organized by staff of both NCLIS and the National Library of Medicine, the forum offered representatives of the ten award finalist libraries the opportunity to describe their programs in three panel discussions, each focusing on one of the criteria established for the awards. All entries were judged on all three criteria: health literacy, effective programs, and partnerships and outreach. The panelists and their programs were:

“Health Literacy” panel, moderated by Heidi Sandstrom of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Pacific Southwest Region:

- \* Jean Shipman, Tompkins-McCaw Library, Virginia Commonwealth University Libraries
- \* Sally Mandler, Minnesota Prevention Resource Center
- \* Naomi Broering; Pacific College of Oriental Medicine, California

“Effective Programs” panel, moderated by Karen Motylewski, Institute of Museum and Library Services:

- \* Jeanne Farnworth, Portneuf Library District, Idaho
- \* Ada Seltzer, Rowland Medical Library, University of Mississippi
- \* Alberta Richetell, Lyman Maynard Stowe Library, University of Connecticut

“Partnership and Outreach” panel, moderated by Barbara Nail-Chiwetalu, University of Maryland:

- \* Elizabeth Schneider, Treadwell Library, Massachusetts General Hospital
- \* Vickie Rose, Olive Hill Adult Learning Center/Library, Kentucky
- \* Barbara Shultz, Health Information Center, Memphis Public Library, Tennessee
- \* Barbara Carlson, REACH 2010 Charleston and Georgetown Diabetes Coalition Library Partnership, South Carolina

Two of the finalists, the “Get Fit Get Real!” programs in Portneuf Library District, Idaho, and the Olive Hill Adult Learning Center/Library in Kentucky were supported by Libraries for the Future and MetLife Foundation, in their efforts to establish library-based activities and discussions focused on physical fitness and healthy eating for teenagers and families.

In his keynote presentation at the forum, Dr. Hill emphasized the need for health education, particularly through educating people early in life about the benefits of good health habits. Dr. Hill praised libraries for undertaking this important effort. Forum moderator Eugenie Prime, a member of the Board of Regents of the National Library of Medicine, commented that an estimated 90 million Americans have limited skills in understanding health information. She praised the awards program and congratulated each of the ten finalists for their efforts in enabling citizens to have access to health information.

The NCLIS Health Information Awards for Libraries are designed to encourage library programs that address one or more of the following: dietary choices; exercise; smoking

cessation; alcohol and/or drug abuse prevention or cessation; immunizations and health screenings; and improved health literacy, that is, the ability to understand and make use of health information. State winners were selected in each state, and from those, a panel of NCLIS Commissioners—Mary H. (“Mitzi”) Perdue, Carol Diehl, and Dr. Colleen Huebner—selected the ten finalists. A panel of distinguished judges, including former Health and Human Services Secretary Louis Sullivan, former Health Education and Welfare Secretary Joseph Califano, and American Medical Association President Edward Hill chose the South Carolina program as the best library program for health information distribution.

Support for the forum was provided by generous donations to the Commission’s Gift Fund from the Henderson Foundation, Commissioner Perdue in memory of Frank Perdue, Thomson Gale, and the ProQuest Company. The Commission gratefully acknowledges these gifts.

At the forum, Chairman Fitzsimmons spoke about the importance of the Commission’s awards program. Listing the Commission’s goals: (1) appraising the country’s library and information services; (2) strengthening the relevance of American libraries; and (3) promoting research and development in library and information science, Dr. Fitzsimmons said, “I am happy to say that the Commission has made great progress in addressing these goals, and your presence here today—and the subject of today’s forum—speaks eloquently to the Commission’s efforts in achieving its objectives. America’s libraries today are better libraries because the Commission takes an interest in and is committed to this effort, to recognize libraries that achieve excellence in providing consumer health information to their users.”

#### **ABOUT NCLIS**

The U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) is a permanent, independent agency of the Federal government charged by Public Law 91-345 to advise the President and Congress on national and international library and information policies, to appraise and assess the adequacies and deficiencies of library and information resources and services, and to develop overall plans for meeting national library and information needs.

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