



NCLIS

U.S. National Commission on
Libraries and Information Science

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News Release

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For Immediate Release

Health Awards for Libraries January 31, 2006 Application Deadline

\$20,000 Prize plus Nine \$1,000 Honorable Mentions

Washington, D.C. December 20, 2005—The U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) announced today that applications continue to be submitted for the 2006 Health Awards for Libraries. All libraries in the United States are eligible to submit an electronic application at <http://www.nclis.gov/award/healthawards06.html>. Applications will be received through January 31, 2006.

The awards, to be presented in May 2006 at the National Library of Medicine, are designed to mobilize the resources of libraries to help citizens learn how to live healthy lifestyles and to provide citizens with consumer health information, particularly when they require information in a critical or unusual situation. The 2006 NCLIS Health Awards will recognize libraries that excel in providing these resources.

A winner in each state will be determined by a panel of local judges selected by the state librarian. From these state winners, ten finalist libraries will be chosen by a panel of NCLIS Commissioners. Three recognized leaders in national policy on healthcare, Joseph Califano, Edward J. Hill and Louis W. Sullivan, will select the \$20,000 grand prize winner. The other nine finalists will receive prizes of \$1,000 each.

“Our job as a commission is to make libraries relevant in the lives of American citizens,” said Beth Fitzsimmons, NCLIS Chairman. “This recognition of outstanding library programs in consumer health information delivery is a significant step in that direction. Every American is grappling with health issues, and so much confusion abounds about where to find good health information that our citizens are often left wondering where to turn to next. Their libraries are the answer. As with so many problems, libraries are the solution. The Commission is committed to recognizing those libraries that do an excellent job of providing health information and helping Americans learn to live a healthy lifestyle.”

“NCLIS encourages libraries to align their resources to address the needs of the country,” said Mary H. (“Mitzi”) Perdue, NCLIS Commissioner and leader of the Libraries and Health Communication Task Force. “The need for health and medical information continues to be a pressing one, as Americans struggle with health issues and to live healthier lives.”

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“Many Americans need to change their lifestyle and health habits,” said Perdue, “and libraries provide the resources for encouraging that change. This country has 120,000 libraries, including roughly 16,000 public libraries, and these libraries already exist as a connected network. The NCLIS Health Awards for Libraries promote collaboration and working together to provide consumer health information and help people live a healthy lifestyle. Once the awards are publicized, all library managers will be able to see what the really good programs can do, and adapt them to their local situations.”

According to Trudi Bellardo Hahn, NCLIS Executive Director, the 2006 Health Awards for Libraries will do more than provide prizes. “The Commission takes its advisory role very seriously,” she said. “Our report of the 2004 Blue Ribbon Awards not only provided descriptions of programs that could be replicated by other libraries, we took this message to the President and Congress, advising them to make special efforts to position libraries as the central resource for providing citizens with consumer health information. The 2006 Health Awards for Libraries, backed by the prospect of a cash award, will identify even more well-managed programs. All of these will be described for the benefit of other library managers and to provide additional background material to support the Commission’s further recommendations to the President and the Congress.”

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 resources and services, and to develop overall plans for meeting national library and information needs.

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