



‘Partners in Policymaking’ online learning program receives 2007 Digital Government Achievement Award

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(ST. PAUL) – “Partners in Policymaking,” Minnesota’s groundbreaking online training program for citizens interested in working with elected officials and influencing change in public policy, has received the 2007 Digital Government Achievement Award from the Center for Digital Government.

“Partners online once again demonstrates Minnesota’s commitment to delivering effective, efficient and economical government services,” said Administration Commissioner Dana Badgerow. “Converting a highly effective, world-renowned program to an online format opens this tremendous training opportunity to people across the state and all over the world, at any time and at no cost to learners.”

The online Partners (www.partnersinpolicymaking.com) builds on the “live” leadership and communication skills training program initiated 20 years ago by the Minnesota Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities (GCDD) in the Department of Administration. Since then, more than 15,000 people from 47 states, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and other countries have graduated from the program.

“Although we have had tremendous success over the years with Partners in Policymaking, the Council could see that with growth limited by costs and logistics, the ‘live’ program would never be available to all of the people who could benefit from it,” said Colleen Wieck, GCDD executive director. “Facing this reality, the Council over the last five years has recreated the entire Partners program as an online learning experience.”

The lively online program includes personal testimonials, life stories, slide shows, articles and videos that enhance the learning experience. Training materials are available in both PDF and text

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versions, eliminating printing and distribution costs and the challenge of fundraising to pay for them. Now, anyone can receive the materials at any time, at no cost.

“It’s clear that America’s state and local governments are unrelenting in their pursuit of excellence for the citizens they serve,” said Cathilea Robinett, executive director of the Center. “The competition was fierce and there were many applications and portals that were topnotch.”

The Center for Digital Government awards, presented Sept. 21 in Las Vegas, recognize innovative, creative and user-friendly state and local government web sites. A national panel of experts in digital government, technology and communications served as judges for the competition.

The Partners program’s achievement was recognized in the state government-to-citizen category, one of five designated for the 2007 Digital Government Achievement Awards. Other categories were local government-to-citizen, government-to-business, government-to-government and internal. A list of all recipients is available online at www.govtech.com.

The Center for Digital Government (www.centerdigitalgov.com) is a national research and advisory institute on information technology policies and best practices in state and local government. The Center is a division of e.Republic, Inc. (www.erepublic.com), a national publishing, event and research company focused on information technology in the public center. Sponsors of the 2007 awards were Qscend Technologies and GovDelivery.

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