

2003 INNOVATIONS AWARDS PROGRAM
Application Form

1. Program Name: the MIRROR (Management Information, Research, References & Operational Reports)
2. Administering Agency: New York State Workers' Compensation Board
3. Contact Person (Name & Title): Thomas B. Wegener Director, MIS\Research
4. Address: 100 Broadway-Menands
Albany, New York 12241
5. Telephone Number: 518-486-5143
6. FAX Number 518-486-3515
7. E-mail Address tom.wegener@wcb.state.ny.us

8. Please provide a two-sentence description of the program.

The MIRROR is an application software system that automatically extracts performance data from functional systems and delivers performance measure reports for every level of the organization. From within the MIRROR, executives, managers, supervisors and staff can view how the Board is performing from the Board Room to the Mail Room.

9. How long has this program been operational (month and year)?

The MIRROR and the Board's scorecard of performance measures was implemented in April 2000.

10. Why was the program created? (What problem[s] or issue[s] was it designed to address?)

Workplace injuries, and their aftermath, impact millions of Americans and hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers each year. In the past, New York's workers' compensation system has been characterized as slow and unresponsive. It had been suggested that system participants and the Workers' Compensation Board did more "to add insult to injury" than to efficiently and effectively administer claims for benefits under the law.

The Board underwent a comprehensive reengineering project. A balanced scorecard of performance measures and appropriate performance measures at all levels of the organization was seen as a critical component to the successful reengineering of the Board's business processes. A limitation frequently observed in the public sector is an inability to track outcomes, outputs, timeliness and effectiveness of programs. The MIRROR provides performance measures for the right people, at the right time and the right level of detail from the Chairman of the Board down to the mailroom staff. When

Board employees need to know how the Board is performing, all they need to do is look in the MIRROR.

11. Describe the specific activities and operations of the program in chronological order.

The New York State Workers' Compensation Board embarked on an aggressive program to revitalize the Workers' Compensation Program in New York State and refocus the agency's efforts on service to our customers - the State's workers and employers. This program - called OPTICS for Organization, Process, and Technology Innovations for improved Customer Service - was initiated to implement the comprehensive recommendations produced by a Business Process Improvement (BPI) project conducted by the Board.

The BPI recommendations were developed as a result of a thorough analysis of the Board's operations in all areas. An interdisciplinary team of line staff and mid-level managers, facilitated by our consulting partner, Price Waterhouse, spent several months analyzing and documenting the Board's current policies, procedures and organizational structures, identifying what served our customers well and what didn't. This "as-is" (or "as it was") analysis provided the basis for brainstorming sessions, and reengineering of the Board, and resulted in the production of a "framework for the future", a broad outline of the environment "to-be". This envisioned environment included not only significant systems and technology recommendations, but also recommendations for a comprehensive restructuring of the workforce, and completely reengineered workflow and work processes that would advance the agency's mission ***"...to serve the workers and employers of New York State by fairly and promptly administering the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Law"***.

The BPI recommendations provided the framework for the OPTICS program, but a lot of work needed to be done to make it a reality. A number of statewide, interdisciplinary teams were formed in 1997 and 1998 to advance the various organizational, technological, and process initiatives that had to coalesce to make OPTICS a reality. Any one of these teams is deserving of recognition for their enthusiastic and extensive efforts, many above and beyond the call of duty, in support of this comprehensive program. The Board recognized, however, that the implementation of a state of the art software system that addressed only the *functional* requirements of the claims process would fail to deliver the ultimate goals of the OPTICS initiatives. The Board's systems modernization effort would need to include technological innovations that address the *informational* requirements of the Agency and its constituents. As a result, the Board developed an application software system, called "the MIRROR - Management Information, Research, References & Operational Reports" which distills and presents performance data.

This year, the Board has selected the "MIRROR" as our 2003 Innovation Awards submission because this project most closely embodies the substantive efforts and achievements identified as qualification for this award. The team responsible for implementing the MIRROR was tasked with developing the performance measures for

programs within the Board that would directly support the Agency's "Balanced Scorecard" of performance measures for the new Claims Operations, Conciliation, Adjudication and Appeals processes. They were tasked with developing the targets for performance in each of the areas measured and they have been leaders in the process of integrating performance measures into management programs at the Board. While the development of functional software systems like the Electronic Case Folder were instrumental in launching the successful Business Process Improvements at the Board, the efforts reflected by the implementation of the MIRROR have enabled sustained and continual improvement throughout the Board. It represents the critical "next step"; both evolving and validating the earlier technologies while enabling their benefits to become fully realized.

The team was tasked with developing performance measures across all levels of the organization. In addition, they also needed to develop an efficient and effective mechanism for delivering performance reports to all levels of the Agency. Since the focus of the Board's technology initiatives has been to move to a paperless environment with its electronic case folder (ECF), it was critical that performance data also be available to workers electronically.

The goals of the committee were identified as follows:

- To develop an electronic database that would encapsulate the performance data that could be derived from the various operational databases implemented throughout the Board.
- To develop a consistent reporting format which would enable employees to rapidly and readily understand how they were performing.
- To develop a full-featured software system that can provide all of the navigational features required to readily and easily obtain the needed performance data.
- To implement a continuous improvement strategy that facilitated the use of performance reports in each and every one of the Board's District Offices.

The team approached their mission aggressively and purposefully. They quickly established a project plan and schedule so that all team members understood the tasks to be accomplished, the timeframe within which these tasks had to be performed, and their individual and collective responsibilities. Representatives from across the State, and from each level/type of employees in the work groups (i.e., examiners, conciliators/attorneys, and administrative law judges), were included in the team. Key activities of the team included:

- **Development of a Dashboard of Performance Measures**
These key indicators, required by executive management to lead the Agency, closely tie every performance measure to the mission critical success factors. This achievement enabled the Board to translate its Mission Statement and Critical Success Factors into eight focused, measurable and pragmatic targets.
- **Development of Process Level Measures**

There are over 50 process level measures that derive directly from the Dashboard of Performance Measures. They are the process-based performance data required by management to evaluate the effectiveness of the Board's business processes. This accomplishment ensured that what was being measured within the program areas was consistent with the Board's primary mission.

- **Development of Activity Level Measures**

Notwithstanding the mantra to “measure the process not the people” the project endeavored to implement greater accountability by driving performance measures, wherever appropriate, down to the activity or individual staff level. Through a creative extension of the “textbook” methods of measuring performance, the project achieved the complete chain of measures; from Mission Statement to the individual staffer.

- **Development of a Reporting Architecture**

To support the availability of performance data at every level of the organization, a reporting architecture was developed that ensures the right data is available to the right person at the right time!

- **Development of a Report Standard**

Many of the Board's historical management reports adhered to the “kitchen sink” approach to reporting standards; producing legal size reports containing many rows and multiple columns of data. These reports were difficult to read and their message confusing. The committee set out to establish a reporting standard that was consistent, clear and easy to understand.

12. Why is the program a new and creative approach or method?

A common theme among the many modern methods of measuring performance is the need to limit the number of performance measures. Measures are easy to come by, you must focus on getting the right ones. Throughout the development of a “Balanced Scorecard” of performance measures, or the implementation of similar contemporary systems of measurement, it would be easy to conclude that with a limited number of measures, the development and delivery of performance data will not represent a significant operational endeavor. The team was quick to recognize, however, that in the public sector, this would be far from the practical reality of implementing performance measures. Early on, the team realized that 8 “Dashboard Level” scorecard measures supported by 50 “Process Level” measures, when sliced, diced and trended, would expand into hundreds of reports. No performance measures system could endure developing or delivering hundreds of reports without an appropriate technology. The MIRROR reflects the Board's technical innovation that has enabled the successful implementation and delivery of performance measures throughout the agency.

A critical component of a successful implementation of performance measurements is the ability to deliver performance data which is easy to understand and available to appropriate staff, supervisors, managers and directors. Performance Measurement

Reports and information about performance must be quickly and easily accessed through “sort and find” functions from a single collection site that stores all pertinent measurement information. A full-featured application, the “MIRROR” was designed and developed by the New York State Workers’ Compensation Board to support the creation and delivery of the suite of reports required for integrating the “Balanced Scorecard” of performance measurements into its management programs. From within the “MIRROR” you can extract and analyze data in detail or rapidly review performance across a wide variety of topic and focus areas. By delivering performance measurements in a user-friendly and push-button format, the “MIRROR” can be used without extensive formal training and has helped to make building a “performance driven” Board a reality.

Supporting the core Claims Operations, Conciliation, Adjudication and Appeals components of the Board, the “MIRROR” delivers one-stop-shopping for performance data.

Robust navigational aides and the many informational components combine to provide easy access to performance data as well as “how to” tips on using the “MIRROR”.

These features include:

- Informational text "balloons" that pop up when you hold the mouse over any object.
- My Favorites – Create a customized collection of the reports you need to see.
- News Bulletins announce new reports and keep you apprised of the latest performance data.
- Documentation that enables the new user to learn the fundamentals of measuring performance and the Board’s “Balanced Scorecard” of performance measures.
- Online Help that easily guides the new user through the MIRROR’s many features
- The Data Dictionary, currently under construction, will allow users to understand all of the meta-data; the information about the data and how it is summarized or aggregated in support of measuring performance.
- Report levels that direct the user to the best level of detail for their interests.
- Open many reports at once and tile them side-by-side or over-under for easy comparison.
- Screen, text and background colors and picture objects are fully customizable.
- Four different sets of Display Columns to choose from in the “Report Selection Window”.
- Report viewing provides full zoom capability and Report Extracts allows performance data to be saved in any one of dozens of industry standard file formats.

Graphically depicted as a pyramid within the “MIRROR”, the Performance Measurement Reporting Architecture assembles reports with a structure that enables the user to rapidly find the answers to the business questions they are asking. By organizing reports “by Level”, the Reporting Architecture first ensures access at the appropriate level of detail. For the Executive, the *Dashboard of Performance Measures* is delivered in a series of “Composite View” reports. These reports combine data on specific business questions that span functional boundaries. For example, the Board can fully resolve all issues in a case either by informal Administrative Determination, a Conciliation Agreement or a

formal Hearing. The “Composite View: Case Resolution” report answers the Dashboard Question “How are we Fully Resolving Cases” by combining data from the various functional areas involved in issue resolution. The *Dashboard of Performance Measures* drills-down to the Process Level, which provides additional details about Dashboard Level measures and expanded coverage of functional areas. For answers to business questions about a particular function within the Board, the *Process Level Measures* zero in on individual processes. In addition, many *Process Level Measures* drill-down further to the *Staff Level Measures*. The performance of individuals participating in the activities addressed at the Process Level is tracked at the Staff Level. These measures relate to day-to-day Operational Reports that form the base of the Performance Measurement Reporting Architecture.

In addition to organizing reports “by Level”, the “MIRROR’s” Performance Measurement Reporting Architecture arranges reports “by Topic” and “by Focus”. Each report involves a specific functional “Topic” and covers a specific “Focus” area within that topic. The Report Selection Window provides access to the filtering and selection functionality that enables a user to zero in on the specific topic or focus of interest. Also, the user can select a specific viewpoint (interval, quality, outcome etc.) by filtering on the report’s “Viewpoint”. Time periods can also be filtered to enable you to look at the current or previous issue, the current or prior quarter, the current or prior year or every issue ever published.

The “MIRROR’s” Performance Measurement Reporting Architecture also supports filtering and navigational features within the “Report Viewer” technology. The “Report Viewer” further extends the informational and navigational features of the “MIRROR” by providing access to a detailed description of the report and a detailed description of the target measure contained on that report. You don’t just view the report contents; you get to view the makeup of those contents and the thinking behind the target. The “Report Viewer” technology also enables navigation to drill down reports, related reports and detailed list reports of cases that fall outside the performance target range. These functions are a simple “mouse click” away from a context pop-up menu.

The reporting architecture within the MIRROR also supports a publication life cycle for each report issue. When a new issue of a report is released, it first appears in the MIRROR as a Sneak Preview. The “Report Viewer” Technology displays a “Sneak Preview” stamp on each issue as it is released into the MIRROR. Security within the MIRROR ensures that only the Quality Assurance and Business Analysts responsible for that report’s publication have the ability to view the Sneak Preview. While in “sneak preview” mode, a report’s contents are quality assured and analyzed. The results of the analysis enable the “owners” to prepare and key enter the narrative analysis that is built into each issue of every report.

All of the navigational aides found within the MIRROR enable you to rapidly navigate the reports horizontally “by topic” or vertically “by level” or chronologically “by period” or organizationally “by scope”. The MIRROR guides you through *asking* the questions as well as *answering* them.

Having been recognized for technical achievement by Sybase, Inc. and presented at the company's annual Technical Conference (TechWave 2000) and also having been recognized in New York by the Governor's Office of Employee Relations with the Work Force Champions award in 2001, the project reflects imaginative innovation both in terms of a highly successful project team and technical accomplishment. In addition, the MIRROR was the winner of the Citizens Budget Commission's Prize for Public Service Innovation (2002) and was a New York State Forum for Information Resource Management "Best Practices" award winner (2002). The Board's Performance Measures Project and the MIRROR were recognized as a semi-finalist in Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government Innovations In American Government award.

Recently, the team was awarded the prestigious Computerworld Honors Program Laureate and the MIRROR was accepted into the program's worldwide compendium of technical innovation and the Smithsonian Institute.

13. What were the program's start-up costs? (Provide detail about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other financial expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place.)

Rather than build a multi-million dollar data warehouse (as was recommended by some performance measures experts), the Board leveraged existing technologies and software development platforms in developing the MIRROR in house. The program's total start up costs, including the conceptual and detail design of the Board's Dashboard of Performance Measures and the development of the database and front-end software were under \$400,000; less than 5% of the Board's total reengineering budget.

14. What are the program's annual operational costs?

Due to the innovative use of technology, the MIRROR operates with little additional programmer/analyst support. All report layouts, including targets, are table driven and dynamic – being changed by simply modifying data in the underlying database tables. Two programmer/analysts are deployed to supporting the system, but these activities include the implementation of all new performance reports in areas of the Board not included in the original reengineering project.

15. How is the program funded?

A component of the state's Executive Budget, the entire program is funded by an assessment (a tax) levied on the insurance carriers and self-insured employers who must provide workers' compensation coverage for their employees.

16. Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations? If YES, please indicate the citation number.

The program was implemented after passage of a comprehensive workers' compensation reform act but no specific legislation was required to implement performance measures or the MIRROR.

17. What equipment, technology and software are used to operate and administer this program?

Sybase Adaptive Server Enterprise is the database engine upon which the MIRROR is built. The software required to support the system includes Sybase stored procedures, Replication Server and the PowerBuilder application development environment. The MIRROR can run on legacy PCs from Windows95 through XP.

18. To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state? If YES, please indicate the innovator's name, present address and telephone number.

Yes. This program was wholly developed by the New York State Workers' Compensation Board; drawing heavily on the works of Kaplan & Norton and their Balanced Scorecard approach to measuring performance. The MIRROR is an innovation wholly developed by the Board's Information & Management Services Division's Office of MIS\Research. The project manager and technical architect is:

Thomas B. Wegener
Director, MIS\Research
NYS Workers' Compensation Board
100 Broadway-Menands
Albany, New York 12241

Voice: 518-486-5143.

19. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does this program differ?

No. We have presented the MIRROR to other state agencies in New York and at national conferences on performance measures in Chicago and Washington, DC. Repeatedly, the observation we hear about the MIRROR is that "no one has anything like this" in the public sector.

20. Has the program been fully implemented? If NO, what actions remain to be taken?

A successful performance measures project will give way to a truly continuously improving organization. Some areas of the Board's business, not originally included, are now being studied and incorporated into the MIRROR. Sustaining the performance driven culture at the Board through continuous improvement activities is an on going objective at the Board.

21. Briefly evaluate (pro and con) the program's effectiveness in addressing the defined problem[s] or issue[s]. Provide tangible examples.

Complexity and Scope

The project's challenge in defining performance measures and the appropriate targets for these measures was broad in scope, addressing all areas of the Board's "core competency" – the handling of claims for benefits. The team had to learn about performance measures, the Balanced Scorecard and the technology that would be required to implement them. In the past, many of the Board's functional areas that support the handling of claims for benefits, operated independently and, occasionally, in conflict. Under OPTICS, these functional areas began to develop into cross-functional teams working together for the same purpose. With the development of performance measures, the committee was able to coalesce as a team and advance the notion of interdependence amongst the Claims Operations, Conciliation, Adjudication and Appeals programs. These functional areas now operate in concert.

In addition, the group had to be workflow experts able to understand the changes necessary to the Board's processes and systems to make available, and viable, the data needed to support the critical measures. Performance measures required refinement and redefinition as the project progressed and the work of the group is on going as the Board has evolved into an organization with a commitment to continuous improvement. The implementation of the MIRROR and the introduction of performance measures have indirectly involved 80% of the Board's employees. This work has influenced and helped to standardize the work of 35 claims teams throughout the State. This has had a direct impact on the daily work of hundreds of Board employees including:

- 103 Indexers and Pre-Indexers
- 217 Claims Examiners
- 32 Conciliators
- 112 Administrative Law Judges
- 44 Office of Appeals Writers
- 100-plus Team Leaders, Mentors and Managers

The Innovations

In addition to the many navigational aides built into the software, the MIRROR's many innovations are significant and demonstrable:

- **Cost Effective Central Repository of Performance Data.**
Nearly every performance measures guru today preaches the need to implement a data warehouse to make performance data viable and available. At a projected cost of 2 to 4 million dollars, a full-scale data warehouse was prohibitive. The MIRROR reflects the many benefits of a data warehouse including clean and viable data stored in a central location that is easy to access. By leveraging existing technology and staff, the

MIRROR was implemented for 10% of the cost of a data warehouse!

- **The future is today.**

In July, 2001 the “current insights” reported by the META Group included the following:

“...By 2003/04, market leaders will drive changes with scorecards and cross-organizational teams. By 2005/06, companies will link strategies to individual behaviors through cascading management systems that monitor internal staff...”

These features are in the MIRROR today. While government innovation tends to lag the private sector, the MIRROR’s innovations are far ahead of the trends.

- **Timely Performance Data.**

“Best Practices” research today reveals that many public sector entities have attempted the implementation of performance measures. Most, however, provide performance data as an “annual report” exercise. Some even record that reporting more frequently than quarterly would be cost prohibitive. The MIRROR collects, summarizes and aggregates performance data automatically each week without manual intervention or additional cost. Performance reports are available on a weekly, monthly, quarterly or annual basis.

- **Creative Implementation of a Concept.**

At the beginning of the Performance Measures project, the Board’s consulting partner presented a simple, single PowerPoint “slide” that introduced the concept of needing to develop a “database of performance measures” as part of the project. From that single slide came the spark that led the Board to develop and implement the MIRROR, a full-featured “front end” application and a comprehensive “back end” performance database.

While great progress had been made in many areas of the Board since the implementation of OPTICS, the implementation of performance measures and the MIRROR have had tangible results in many areas. For example:

- In 1997, before the implementation of OPTICS, the Board required an average of 31.4 days to index a new claim. After the implementation of OPTICS initiatives, this average dropped to 16.5 in 1999. After the implementation of Performance Measures, the average is now 6.7 days with one district office performing this function in an average of 3.4 days!
- In 1995, before the implementation of OPTICS, the Board had 266,981 cases pending on the calendar of cases. After the implementation of the 7 Principles of Effective Hearings under OPTICS, the calendar of cases was reduced to 196,388. Since the implementation of performance measures, the calendar of cases today is 136,016.

- In 1989, only 33.8% of cases were fully resolved within 12 months. By 1999, the OPTICS initiatives had produced impressive results with 51.8% of all cases being fully resolved within 12 months. Since the implementation of performance measures, 59% of cases are fully resolved within 12 months.
- In 1997, only 60% of all workers' compensation hearings before an administrative law Judge produced a finding. Now, over 75% of these hearings produce findings.
- In 1998, the Board fully resolved 24,870 cases through an informal administrative determination. Under OPTICS, this number rose to 45,157 in 1999. Since the implementation of performance measures (with fewer Claims Examiners deployed to claims teams) the Board fully resolved 59,788 cases through the administrative determination (AD) *and* generated over 20,000 interim findings through the AD process.
- While tripling the number of AD's proposed by the Board, the approval rate for AD's remained at 95% or higher.
- At times, the work of the **PMC** highlights flaws in the process that are beyond the control of the functional process. In addition, the work of the **PMC** refines and quantifies measures. For example, in 1999, the Board targeted 5 days as the timeline within which a decision notice should be produced after an administrative law Hearing. 72.4% of decision notices were being generated within 5 days and this work took an average of 7.9 days to complete. Today, the Board recognizes the work attendant to a variety of decision types. Today, 94.3% of decision notices are produced within 6 days and, on average, it now requires only 5.5 days to produce a finding.

Every area measured and reported on within the MIRROR has experienced significant and almost immediate improvement. "You get what you measure"!

The Results – Impact on the Public

The focus of the MIRROR is internal. The message to Board employees is "If you need to know how the Board is performing all you need to do is look in the MIRROR". While primarily developed for an internal Board audience, the impact on the public has, nonetheless, been significant and demonstrable:

Responsiveness – Access to Information

In the past, management data was limited and exclusively volumetric. The Workers' Compensation Research Institute recently reported "...In 1992, we were frustrated in our attempts to measure the speed of resolution....Not so today...Using the Board's powerful database, board officials

generated....meaningful measures.” In addition to the “canned” reports within the MIRROR, the reporting architecture and reliable, summarized data now enable the board to respond to a wide variety of ad hoc requests.

Cost Savings – Continued Reductions after Reengineering

As the Board has emerged from reengineering and the implementation of the Electronic Case Folder in 1999, system costs and the “manual rate” of workers’ compensation insurance premiums continue to decline. It has been estimated that the system cost savings attributed to OPTICS are between 50 and 100 million dollars each year. The implementation of the MIRROR and the commitment to continuous improvement ensure that the system cost savings made possible by an investment in technology are on going and maximized.

A Record of Accessibility and Accountability

There is no doubt that a “performance driven” culture has emerged at the Board since the implementation of the MIRROR. This has had tangible results in how the Board’s customers and the system stakeholders perceive the Board. In July 2000, the NYS Association of Self Insured Counties recognized the Board for “continued commitment to customer service”. Further, it was noted that in addition to the technology, the “renewed spirit of cooperation and dedication” has transformed the Board into a “model agency of public service in New York” and the Board was recognized for having “established a record of accessibility and accountability to the constituents of the Board”.

Responding to Crisis

While no one could have foreseen the events of September 11, 2001, the Board’s performance reporting architecture and the MIRROR helped enable a rapid response. Within days of the attack on the World Trade Center, key performance reports were designed, developed, debugged and implemented. The reporting architecture developed to support the MIRROR made this urgent response possible. Performance reports are helping ensure that the Board follows the lead of Governor Pataki and marshals all resources towards resolving the complex issues attendant to many of the claims filed as a result of 9/11.

Credibility – System Performance Measurements

The Board’s strategy was simple yet insightful – by implementing comprehensive performance measures of the Board’s internal business processes, we would both improve the service delivered to the public AND establish the experience and credibility with measuring performance to look outside the Board. The Board’s ability to implement meaningful measures of the cost drivers of the system and the impact of the business processes in place outside the Board has been significantly enhanced as a result of this internal project’s success.

22. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

With limited resources, only a subset of performance reports were available when the system went live in 2000. Since that time, hundreds of performance reports have been created and over 70,000 issues of performance reports are managed by the system. While the program has grown in scale and scope, the original MIRROR design services the expanding coverage of performance measures at the Board.

In response to the tragic events of September 11, 2001 when nearly every individual killed or injured in the attack on the World Trade Center was at work and potentially eligible for Workers' Compensation benefits, the Board expanded its dashboard of performance measures from 8 to 15. This change, implemented within a few days of 9/11, enabled the Board to ensure the highest level of service to the victims of this tragic event.

23. What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter if they attempt to adopt this program?

Implementing performance measures in the public sector brings numerous challenges. The Board has developed strategies for overcoming each and every obstacle from "long lead times" to "fear of big brother". The obstacles were unknowns when the Board embarked on this effort. These obstacles are now known and contemporary project managers can assess risk and develop successful mitigation strategies using the Board's experience as a guide.

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CSG Innovations Awards 2003

The Council of State Governments

2760 Research Park Drive, P.O. Box 11910

Lexington, KY 40578-1910

innovations@csg.org

DEADLINE: All original applications must be postmarked or e-mailed by April 11, 2003, to be considered for an Innovations Award for 2003.