

ACMLA Awards Committee Annual Report, 2005/06

The Awards Committee consisted of Elizabeth Hamilton (chair), Trudy Bodak and Cheryl Woods. The task of the committee is to ensure that the guidelines and protocols of the ACMLA Awards are carried out according to the wishes of the Association. The Committee conducted its business via email, with an occasional telephone call as needed.

There are three awards currently offered by ACMLA. The first and most prestigious is the ACMLA Honours Award. A call for nominations is sent to the membership through the ACMLA Bulletin every year and nominees are reviewed for eligibility. This year, Trudy Bodak was nominated for the Award and her name has been forwarded to the Executive for recognition at the Association's Annual Conference in Ottawa.

The second award administered by the Awards Committee is the Paper Award. No nominations were received by the Awards Committee, but the Committee members reviewed all the papers meeting the Paper Award criteria in Bulletins 122, 123 and 124. The Committee recommended that one paper be sent to an external reader and, in consideration of the response of the outside reader and the unanimity of the Committee, the 2006 Paper Award will go to Susan McKee, at the University of Calgary. The Executive have been informed and will contact Ms. McKee about the cheque for the award, and encouraging her to attend the annual conference.

The third award is the Student Paper Award, and the Committee received two submissions for the award. Neither paper was judged to have met the criteria for the award, and the Committee is not putting a name for this award forward to the Executive.

The Committee was also charged with writing terms of reference for the Certificate of Appreciation. That document is appended and has been submitted to the Executive for ratification at the Annual General Meeting.

In addition, the Committee was given the task of reviewing the request submitted in 2004/05 that Derek Hayes receive a Certificate of Appreciation from the Association.

The Awards Committee had begun their deliberations on this issue when they received a new nomination in 2006 for Derek Hayes. The Awards Committee is unanimously recommending that the work of Derek Hayes be acknowledged with the presentation of a Certificate of Appreciation from the Association of Canadian Map Libraries and Archives at the June 2006 annual conference.

Respectfully submitted by E. Hamilton
May 2006

ACMLA Awards Committee
“Certification of Appreciation” Considerations

Task: From the minutes of the 2005 AGM:

Item 12.1 Certificates of Appreciation

Marcel Fortin explained that a request for an awarding of a “Certificate of Appreciation” to a distinguished Canadian cartographer was submitted to the Executive. As the preparing of “certificates” cost a lot of money (\$100+shipping), this request was forwarded to the Awards committee along with another request for the drawing up of criteria and procedures for the awarding of “Certificates of Appreciation”. The request will be reviewed by the Awards Committee with the possible awarding at next years meeting.

Background:

The inspiration for the ad hoc awarding of certificates of appreciation seems to have originated with the high price of spatial data in Canada, a long-time barrier to the use of that data, particularly in the not-for-profit and educational sectors. Within the past five years, ACMLA has honoured two map producers for their initiative in reducing or eliminating the cost barrier to spatial data.

The first producer to be honoured at an ACMLA annual conference was in 2002 when DMTI was awarded a certificate "in recognition of the substantial and innovative contribution to the teaching and study of GIS in post-secondary institutions through the provision of affordable access to high quality national geospatial data" through their SMART program.¹

The second producer to be honoured was the Government of Manitoba as the first provincial government to make their data available freely on the internet through the Manitoba Land Initiative.²

There is little documentation on the process for the determination of the recipients of the award, the criteria, or the process. The first award was a result of a “unanimous consent of the ACMLA Executive. The genesis of the second award is a little less clear.

The ACMLA Executive has requested the ACMLA Awards Committee to make recommendations on the criteria and process for this type of recognition. The delay in action on this item is due to the transmittal time of the background information to the Awards Committee chairperson.

At this point, the first requirement is that the rationale for the establishment of the award be clarified. Note that the Committee does not have specific guidelines as to what the intent of the award is.

The Association already has an award for the contributions of individuals to “map librarianship, curatorship and archiveship” with the ACMLA Honours Award, so it is clear that this new award would not normally be presented to someone in the association for their contributions to the profession and/or to normal map library/archival institutions.

From the description of past recipients, it appears that the award was made in recognition of those producers whose work has been exemplary in reducing barriers to access. Note that the emphasis has been on corporations or entities that are leading the way in providing more equitable or free access to spatial data.

¹ http://www.dmtispatial.com/pr_06_19_02.htm

² It is not the first government to make spatial data freely available within the context of the academic/educational sector, but was the first to receive an award.

Based on past practice, the award is proposed as follows:

Intent

That the Certificate of Appreciation be awarded to corporate entity (or individual) responsible for the generation or production of traditional or digital map and spatial products

- a) for leadership and exemplary conduct in reducing barriers to those products;
- b) for excellence in the production of such products
- c) for innovation in documentation, metadata, user guides and other means of making those products better and more easily used.

Process:

This award will be given from time-to-time, not necessarily on an annual basis, and there may be more than one recipient in any one year.

Nominations may be made by any ACMLA member in good standing, or by the ACMLA Awards Committee.

Nominations should be accompanied by a brief explanation of the nomination, signed by two ACMLA members in good standing.

Normally, such a certificate of appreciation should be approved by the Executive upon the recommendation of the ACMLA Awards Committee. However, Association members may, by resolution at the Annual General Meeting, award a certificate of appreciation at the Annual Meeting, provided there is consensus among the members to so honour a potential recipient.

These measures are to ensure that there is no conflict of interest or undue lobbying or influence in the decision on the award.