



MEDIA RELEASE

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Winter Park, FL WINS America in Bloom National 2013 Awards

(COLUMBUS, OH): After months of anxious waiting, top honors for the prestigious 2013 America in Bloom national awards program were announced at the annual awards held in Orlando, Florida on September 21.

America in Bloom executive director, Laura Kunkle, said, “America in Bloom is helping participants of all types achieve their potential. The accomplishments and progress shown by this year's towns and cities is remarkable.”

Winter Park earned a four bloom rating and is the overall winner in the 25,001 to 30,000 population category. In addition, they received two special awards: one for the best Arbor Day celebration and the other for having the most effective water management program.

Winter Park was judged on six criteria: overall impression, environmental awareness, heritage, urban forestry, landscape, and floral displays, across four sectors: municipal, residential, commercial, and community involvement.

Jack Clasen and Jim Sutton, two specially trained AIB judges, visited towns of similar populations and spent two days touring each town, meeting municipal officials, residents, and volunteers. Other competitors in the 25,001 to 30,000 category were Kent, OH; Wake Forest, NC; and West Chicago, IL.

Clasen and Sutton were very impressed with the city's environmental efforts and commented, “The city of Winter Park has made a commitment to lead, not follow, the rest of the country in environmental stewardship. Tim Maslow, sustainability coordinator for the city, works with city departments to incorporate sustainable practices into all aspects of municipal activity. Winter Park is a certified Florida Green Building Coalition and certified Green Local Government at the Gold level. The AIB judges tallied over 30 projects and initiatives the city is currently undertaking related to recycling, energy conservation, and wetland protection.”

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Congratulations to Winter Park!

Registrations for the 2014 national awards program can be submitted until February 28, 2014. Eligible participants include towns, cities, college and university campuses, business districts, military installations, and recognized neighborhoods of large cities.

America in Bloom is an independent, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to promoting nationwide beautification programs and personal and community involvement through the use of flowers, plants, trees, and other environmental and lifestyle enhancements. America in Bloom provides educational programs, resources, and the challenge of a friendly competition between participating communities across the country. For more information, visit www.americainbloom.org.

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