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America in Bloom Announces 2015 Awards Program Participants

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America in Bloom today announced the participants of its 2015 national awards program.

According to awards chairperson Jack Clasen, “We have 42 communities this year, a 27% increase over last year. The great news is that we have a 50% increase in participants over the past 2 years. New this year is a “Circle of Champions” category in which eleven past winners will compete against one another in two population categories – small and mid-sized. “

AIB board president Charlie Hall, Ph.D., said, “I am quite excited that we have more cities this year than we’ve had in a while. I think it speaks to the improving economic conditions at the local level, as well as the recognition that quality landscapes are one of the best forms of economic development that a city or community can engage in.

It’s also exciting to consider that we have a good mix of small and medium-sized cities this year, with a number of first-time communities. Obviously, word is getting out about the AIB program and the good results communities are realizing from participating.”

Each participant will receive a two-day visit from a two-person team of specially trained judges. They will tour the community, meet with volunteers, elected officials, and members of the business community, and then develop an extensive written evaluation. Many mayors have commented that the evaluation would cost upwards of \$10,000 if the city had hired a consultant to do the work.

Since 2002, America in Bloom has engaged nearly 250 towns in 40 states, touching millions of lives.

Awards will be announced at the annual symposium and awards to be held this year in Holland, MI on September 24-26.

Evaluations will be sent to participants on September 28.

Participants are as follows:

Population Categories

Under 3,500

Independence, LA; Slippery Rock, PA; Edmonston, MD; Castle Rock, WA; Combined Locks, WI

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3,500 to 6,000

West Columbia, TX; Brewton, AL; Lewisburg, WV; Catskill, NY

6,000 to 12,500

Tarboro, NC; Newtown Twp, PA; Belpre, OH; Morro Bay, CA

12, 500 to 16,000

Marietta, OH; Woodhaven, MI; Warrenville, IL; Holliston, MA

16,000 to 20,000

Fairhope, AL; Madisonville, KY; Fairview Park, OH; Ottawa, IL

20,000 to 30,000

Hammond, LA; Winter Park, FL; Venice, FL; Calabasas, CA;

30,000 to 40,000

Saratoga, CA; Santa Paula, CA; Hopkinsville, KY; St Charles, IL;

Over 40,000

Rockford, IL; Lexington, KY; Henderson Co, NC

Champions Category

Small Champions Category

Gallipolis, OH; Echo, OR; Lewes, DE; Greendale, IN; McCall, ID

Mid-Sized Champions Category

Estes Park, CO; Arroyo Grande, CA; Washington, MO; Holland, MI

America in Bloom envisions communities across the country as welcoming and vibrant places to live, work, and play – benefiting from colorful plants and trees; enjoying clean environments; celebrating heritage; and planting pride through volunteerism.