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America in Bloom Announces a New Level of Awards Program

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America in Bloom today announced the creation of a new level of competition in its nationwide awards program. The new level is called the Champions category.

Jack Clasen, program chair stated, "The America In Bloom National Awards Program continues to expand with over 220 communities throughout the country participating over the past 13 years. Many communities participate for a number of years and win numerous awards. The "Circle of Champions" designation was created a few years ago to acknowledge these multiple winners. Beginning in 2015 a new "Champions" category will begin for Circle of Champions members. They will compete against each other for awards. All other aspects of the current National Awards Program will remain the same. We are excited to offer this new expansion of the program as AIB continues to promote welcoming and vibrant places to live, work, and play."

Clasen added, "This is a win-win for everyone as multiple award winners will compete against each other while increasing the opportunity for communities to do well within their population category. Depending on the final 2015 registration numbers there might be a "small" or "large" Champions category."

Here are additional details:

- 1) The registration fee will remain the same for all communities; a sliding scale based on population.
- 2) The "Champion" participants will still be able to qualify for the Outstanding Achievement Awards, Special Awards, the YouTube Video Award, the Community Champion Award, and the Photography Contest Awards.
- 3) Judges will use the same evaluation grid and provide recommendations for improvement.
- 4) The Community Profile and judging tour will remain the same.

Community feedback has been very supportive of this change. Registration for the 2015 program ends February 28.

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.

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