

Awards of Merit and Certificates of Commendation from AASLH

The American Association for State and Local History invites nominations for Awards of Merit or Certificates of Commendation for 1967. The statement below indicates the basis for these Awards and Certificates.

All nominations must be made on the "Awards Nomination Form" and *postmarked by not later than June 23, 1967*. Each nominator must include a supporting letter which is explicit in indicating why the Award or Certificate seems merited. Each nominator is also responsible for making certain that at least two or three other persons send similar statements *directly to the undersigned*. Finally, each nominator should send relevant supporting material such as pamphlets, newspaper clippings, programs, scripts, books, etc.

The Indiana competition for Awards and Certificates will doubtless be keen for 1967. Hence, nominations cannot automatically be approved even though they indicate worthy achievements. Such achievements should be varied, continuing, and quite significant. The views and evaluations of a number of persons will be obtained regarding the nominations received.

1. *Certificate of Commendation*. The Certificate of Commendation is given for outstanding achievement by an individual or an organization in the field of state, provincial, and local history, but with that achievement judged in the light of local limiting circumstances rather than on a basis of over-all excellence in the United States and Canada as a whole. This is an award of encouragement and commendation to a person or group which by great effort has accomplished something that is really outstanding within its own area. It matters not that the accomplishment is less than the achievements of similar groups in wealthier or more sophisticated areas of the country. The Certificate is a pat on the back, and says to the individual or organization that receives it: "We think you are doing a wonderful job in your area, and we want to recognize you for it."

2. *The Award of Merit*. This was the original award of the Association and is still the backbone of the Association's award competition. It is given for excellence of accomplish-

ment or program in the field of state, provincial, and local history, and is in no way judged relative to local limiting circumstances. The giving of the Award of Merit is the same as saying to everyone: "This is public acknowledgement by the American Association for State and Local History that this accomplishment or this program, in comparison with all similar accomplishments and programs in North America, deserves the adjective excellent." In using the term "excellent" we do not employ it in the archaic sense of excelling all others, but in the modern sense of extremely good, first class, of great inherent worth. This distinction is important because it should be clearly understood that an award to one organization for a particular kind of program does not bar another organization from receiving an award for a similar program, if both programs are indeed excellent.

It should also be clearly understood that a nominee rejected for an Award of Merit will not necessarily be given a Certificate of Commendation. It is not the intention of the Committee on Awards that the Certificate of Commendation will become a runner-up prize for those who failed to receive the Award of Merit. The two awards are designed to accomplish different purposes.

As chairman for nominations from Indiana for 1967, the undersigned has nomination forms which are available upon request.

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