

## In-Service Training Award in Memory of Clarence E. Ridley



## EDWIN DALEY

*ICMA's In-Service Training Award is presented to the administrator or administrators who have developed and implemented highly effective in-service training programs for local government employees. The award was established in memory of Clarence E. Ridley, a pioneer in the field of local government management. This year, ICMA presents the award to Edwin Daley, city manager of Winchester, Virginia.*

Throughout his local government career, which spans nearly three decades and four states, Ed Daley has been an advocate for municipal workers and their continued development. As city manager of Winchester, Virginia, he has designed and implemented a training program to help city employees grow professionally while meeting the needs of the public in a customer-friendly fashion.

In 1986, when Mr. Daley was hired, he began scheduling "Department Head Advances"—two-day work sessions of brainstorming and policy and procedure discussions for department heads. Three years later, the city added "City Council Advances." These sessions enable council members to get to know each other better, learn ways to improve their teamwork, discuss pressing issues, and plan for the city's future in a stress-free atmosphere that allows for open communication.

Also initiated in 1986, on each Secretary's Day all support personnel are treated to a catered breakfast and lunch during a fun training program designed especially for their personal and professional development. They are given the afternoon off with pay while department heads perform the responsibilities of their administrative staff. A similar program was soon created for front-line field workers.

In 1993 the city put together a training program with key workshops: New Employee Orientation, Valuing Diversity, Quality Customer Service, and Preventing Workplace Violence.

A session on ethics and another on the city's safety manual were added in 2001, and three more were added in 2004. Today, all employees must attend the nine development training sessions during their first two years of employment and whenever a new training class is added. The courses are held during working hours.

In 1991 the city began offering a workplace literacy program that provides classroom instruction on three levels for employees with less than a high school education. Enrollment is voluntary and confidential. Winchester also partners with Lord Fairfax Community College (LFCC) to offer educational classes to assist employees with their daily routines and help them work more efficiently.

Another component in the training program is an Education Incentive Plan, which offers an annual bonus of up to \$1,500 for higher educational course work beyond what the position requires. The city also provides tuition assistance toward further training or education and reimburses employees who successfully complete classes in their field.

In 1990 Winchester partnered with LFCC to conduct a three-month comprehensive training process called "Total Quality Management." This program brought together public and private sectors to learn how to solve problems and work on projects using the Deming team approach. In 2005 the city initiated the Leadership Discussion Club, in which supervisors meet twice a month to discuss

the principles and theories of quality leadership. Many staff also attend the week-long LEAD program at University of Virginia's Institute of Government.

In 2001, the city established the EXCELL Academy, a year-long educational program of internally conducted seminars that address city and regional policies, budget and purchasing procedures, and philosophies critical to the successful functioning of current management-level personnel, as well as future organizational leaders. The seminars are augmented by three college-level courses conducted in partnership with LFCC and designed to provide skills essential in today's organizational environment. Up to 25 students are selected for the academy each year. The students take one class each semester; after successfully completing each class, they receive college credit for three courses from LFCC. They must also take a field day with a city department with which they are unfamiliar so they can learn how other city departments operate. Several times a year, a motivational speaker or a proven organizational leader is invited to speak to the academy. Finally, the class chooses a community service project and works on it together. More than 75 city employees have completed the academy, as have employees from other public entities, such as the Winchester Public School Board Office and the regional jail. The new friendships they forged and the contacts they made in different city departments have enabled them to provide better customer service to Winchester citizens.

Under Mr. Daley's leadership, Winchester is committed to continuing education and employee development, not just for improved customer service but, most importantly, for the betterment of the employees. ■