

Eight New York School Districts Win Prizes For School Lunch Programs

New York State Office of General Services (OGS) Commissioner, John C. Egan, today announced that OGS, in conjunction with representatives of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), selected eight New York State school districts to receive 2010 Best Practices Awards for their efforts using USDA foods. Grand prize winners receive a \$5,000 cash award and honorable mention award recipients receive \$1,000. The federally-funded cash awards will be used to support the purchase of school lunch related equipment.

"This program is a perfect example of New York State's commitment to healthy living" said Commissioner Egan. "These awards recognize the creativity used in school lunch programs to make healthy eating an integral part of a student's day."

First Lady Michelle Paige Paterson who established the school-based "Healthy Steps to Albany: First Lady's Challenge," a competition developed to teach children about health and wellness, commends OGS and the award winning schools for supporting healthy eating environments in New York State. "Wellness and education go hand in hand. Research has shown that healthy students are four times more likely to do better in school. Poor nutrition and hunger interfere with brain function and are associated with lower academic achievement. Their dedication to providing healthy meals symbolizes their commitment to the health of our students. "

OGS manages the receipt and distribution of USDA foodstuffs including fresh produce, meat and dairy products and canned goods to school districts statewide. Each year, in conjunction with the USDA, New York State school districts are honored for creativity and excellence in their school lunch programs. Schools submit a description of innovative programs that they have incorporated into their lunch programs that include the use of USDA food. The submissions are judged by a four-member panel consisting of representatives from OGS and USDA. This year's winners will be recognized at the New York School Nutrition Association (NYSNA) Annual Conference in Saratoga Springs in October.

The 2010 award recipients are:

Grand Prize:

Gates Chili Central School District, Rochester (Monroe County)
Three Village Central School District, Stony Brook (Suffolk County)
Charlotte Elementary/Hamburg School, Hamburg (Erie County)

Honorable Mention:

Poughkeepsie City School District, Poughkeepsie (Dutchess County)
Schoharie Central School District, Schoharie (Schoharie County)
Wilson Central Schools, Wilson (Niagara County)
Beekmantown Central School District, West Chazy (Clinton County)
Westfield Central Schools, Westfield (Chautauqua County)

OGS provides a broad range of core services that facilitate the operations of state and local governments in areas such as: property management, design and construction, procurement and essential support services.