

**Award for Career
Development
in Memory of
L. P. Cookingham**



DANIEL W. FITZPATRICK

Each year, ICMA presents the Award for Career Development to a Corporate Member who has made a significant contribution to the development of new talent in professional local government management. The award commemorates former ICMA president L. P. (Perry) Cookingham, who is credited with creating the local government internship. This year, ICMA presents the Career Development Award to Daniel W. Fitzpatrick, city manager of Peekskill, New York.

For 22 years as a city manager, Dan Fitzpatrick has contributed significantly to the development of both new and mature local government management professionals. While city manager of Oak Park, Michigan, he hired four assistants to the city manager; three are currently ICMA members and all are local government management professionals. In 2003, Jim Hock, his assistant city manager and successor in Oak Park, received ICMA's Assistant Excellence in Leadership Award. Even his daughter Laura, assistant to the city manager in Troy, Michigan, has benefited from his commitment to the development of new talent in the field.

Those who have worked with Mr. Fitzpatrick attribute his great success to his management style. He takes the time to mentor his colleagues, imparting valuable insights gained from his years of experience. At the retirement party for Oak Park recreation director Al Urpsis, the honoree thanked Mr. Fitzpatrick for "always letting me take the ball and run with it." Mike Overton, city manager of Grosse Pointe, Michigan, said, "Dan expects much of his people, he holds them accountable, but unlike many managers, he also works diligently to ensure that his people, especially his protégés, have the tools and resources to accomplish the task he set before them. Dan has great faith in those he mentors and demonstrates it by empowering them to speak freely and make significant decisions, yet he is always avail-

able for consultation. I learned much from his tutelage and find myself passing along some of his wisdom to a protégé of my own! What better testament than emulation."

In addition to developing city management generalists, Mr. Fitzpatrick has recruited and supported talent in the ranks of department heads. As Bill Bohlen, public works director in Lincoln Park, Michigan, said of Mr. Fitzpatrick's role in his professional development, "My working relationship with Dan began when I was union president and working with him on labor relations issues. Dan always had an interest in employees that return to college after being established in their careers. Dan once said to me, 'Individuals who go back to school after age 30 or get braces after age 30 get my utmost respect because it takes courage and perseverance to do both.' This and similar conversations inspired me to complete my bachelor degree and pursue a master of public administration. His words of wisdom paid off for me as I moved from a laborer in the public works department to the department director in the eight years I was with Oak Park."

Throughout his career, Mr. Fitzpatrick has made outstanding contributions to the education of new talent in the field. In 1980 he served as an adjunct instructor in the Marist College MPA Program in Poughkeepsie, New York. As an instructor for the ICMA Training

Institute from 1979 to 1996, he established citizen relations programs later used as examples in the ICMA training package *Citizen as Customer*. He was appointed by the ICMA Executive Board to the 1991-1993 Task Force on Continuing Education and Professional Development and served as a reviewer and adviser on two ICMA Green Books. He also served as mentor for the only ICMA University Certificate-in-Management Program graduate, Walter J. Bobkiewicz, now city manager of Santa Paula, California. He was selected by the University of Kansas and ICMA as a practitioner participant for the 2002 Hansell Symposium on Management and the American City in Lawrence, Kansas. And in 2004 Mr. Fitzpatrick was appointed to the ICMA Credentialing Advisory Board.

Mr. Fitzpatrick earned his 25-Year Service Award in 2001 and was honored by ICMA with the Award for Excellence in Honor of Mark E. Keane in 1990, the Program Excellence Award for Intergovernmental Cooperation in 1998, the Program Excellence Award for Innovations in Local Government Management in 2001, and the Award for Programs for the Disadvantaged in Memory of Carolyn Keane in 2003. In 2002 he became a Certified Quality Manager through the American Society for Quality. In March 2004, the National Academy of Public Administration and the American Society for Public Administration presented Fitzpatrick with the prestigious National Public Service Award, which recognizes individuals who have made a difference in public administration for a sustained length of time. His continuous pursuit of excellence and commitment to his own professional development inspire those around him to follow suit. ■