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Golden GOVIT Award Winners Work to Transform Minnesota Communities Through Collaboration, Innovation and Service

GTS Educational Events announced and celebrated the winners at a special ceremony on December 5 at the Science Museum of Minnesota, in conjunction with the 36th Annual Government IT Symposium

Saint Paul, Minnesota – GTS Educational Events was thrilled to announce the winners of the first Golden GOVIT Awards in recognition of individuals, government agencies, and other public sector institutions that have advanced government technology through collaboration, innovation and service. Winners were presented with their awards at a special awards ceremony at the Science Museum of Minnesota on December 5.

Golden GOVIT award winners were reviewed and selected through a peer-voting process in each of the following categories: Collaboration, Innovation, Service, and Individual Leader.

“We couldn’t be more proud of our first Golden GOVIT Award winners, individuals and agencies who continue to create and advance new solutions that benefit us as individual citizens and society as a whole,” said Mary Wynne, executive director, GTS Educational Events. “The vote totals were close in all categories, which is a testament to the caliber of our nominees.”

The winners of the 2017 Golden GOVIT Awards are as follows:

Service Award: MnSpin: Local Music Online at Hennepin County Library, Hennepin County: *Jeff Radford, Christine Clifford, Shannon Crary, Michele McGraw, Francine Alt-Greene, Adam Breininger.* ([See photo here.](#))

MnSpin is a new online collection of Minnesota music curated by local experts. It features recent works from musicians of all genres who currently perform and are based in Minnesota. Music will be free to stream or download. Using MnSpin, artists gain exposure and music lovers explore the rich diversity of the local scene.

(MnSpin was recently featured in a December 13, 2017 article in the Star Tribune. Read the article [here.](#))

Collaboration Award: Bring GIS to K12 Education in Minnesota, *Minnesota Department of Education: Scott Freeburg.* ([See photo here.](#))

After obtaining free Geographic Information Systems software for all K12 districts to access, the Minnesota Department of Education developed a collaborative project between state agencies, and local and regional GIT professionals that led to teacher training, student competitions and increased number of students with GIS skills that can be used in the marketplace.

GIS is the 3rd leading jobs producer. It is imperative we provide spatial and critical thinking skills to our young people. This collaborative project between state agencies and local and regional GIS professionals is providing training, competition and GIS skills for use in the marketplace.

Innovation Award: Aurora in the Cloud, *Minnesota State Retirement System:* Daniel McClean, Jye Meier, Al Cooley, Kevin Chan, Michael Collins, Mike Ring, Chrissy Lammers. ([See photo here.](#))

In 2016, the Minnesota State Retirement System moved its largest business application, Aurora, to the IBM cloud. This is one of the largest uses of the cloud for a production system within Minnesota government. It was also at the forefront of cloud usage for the state, and this successful innovation saves the state more than \$1.1 million annually, reducing costs by more than 60 percent while improving service and security.

Individual Leadership Award: Jessica Parker, *Minnesota IT Services.* ([See photo here.](#))

Jessica Parker works for MN.IT Services at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, where she serves as Project and Services Director, and creates standards and governance in areas of PM, BA & QA. Parker is described as the poster child for practicing what she preaches and getting her teams involved. She goes above and beyond in her recognition efforts to ensure staff feel valued and appreciated on a day to day basis. She is an effective listener who takes in information and decimates to her staff. She is an expert at showing the business the value of IT via metrics reporting and ensuring her teams understand the direction that has been set and can meet the goals of their work.

In addition to being honored at the Golden GOVIT Awards night, winners also showcased their projects and programs in the Golden GOVIT Expo area during the three-day Symposium, as well as shared a short presentation on their projects.

The Government IT Symposium is the Midwest's largest government IT event, bringing together nearly 1,000 IT government leaders and professionals from around the region to collaborate and focus on using IT innovations, integration and intelligence to support the public good. Next year's conference will take place on December 4-6, 2018.

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About GTS Educational Events:

GTS Educational Events is a nonprofit organization working to transform communities by designing, convening and supporting educational programs that engage, inspire and inform. Since 1976, GTS has served government agencies and civic organizations with educational event planning and management to ensure they have the knowledge and skills needed to make positive change for themselves and the communities they serve. For more information, visit www.mnqts.org.