

Herman Kehrli Award

The Herman Kehrli Award is granted to a city **employee** who has provided lasting benefits to their community through exceptional contributions to city government. It recognizes the outstanding public service career of Herman Kehrli, who was executive secretary of the League of Oregon Cities and director of the University of Oregon's Bureau of Governmental Research and Service (BGRS) from 1933 to 1966. Kehrli received the first award in 1988; he passed away in 1990 at the age of 88.

About Herman Kehrli

In 1933, the Oregon Board of Higher Education established the Bureau of Municipal Research and Service at the University of Oregon, and the League located its headquarters in the same office. Under Herman Kehrli's leadership, the joint program immediately put in place an ambitious agenda of research, consultation and training in city government affairs. The quality of Oregon city government today is due in large part to this program and the high standards of its founders.

A native Oregonian, Kehrli was a high school teacher and served as executive secretary of the City Club of Portland. He held a deep conviction that public service is a calling of great dignity and profound significance to community, state and national life. Kehrli's impressive contributions to state and local government includes:

- The Bureau's model city charters, which gave substance and form to municipal home rule in Oregon;
- Promotion of the council/manager form of city government;
- Chief designer of Oregon's Public Employees Retirement System; and
- Leadership that established the state civil service system and reorganized state government after World War II.

Eligibility

For City Employees – City and Regional Impact

Any city **employee**, regardless of city size, as well as past or current League of Oregon Cities employees, are eligible to be nominated for the Herman Kehrli Award.

Purpose

The Herman Kehrli Award, which is one of three LOC Exceptional Service Awards, honors city employees or past or present League of Oregon Cities employees who have made lasting contributions to their communities through exceptional careers in city government. The award recognizes qualified nominees who have demonstrated outstanding leadership, professional excellence, and a deep commitment to ethical public service. It celebrates those who have elevated the quality of local government, earned the respect of their peers and community, and left a meaningful and enduring impact on the cities and regions they have served.

The Selection Process

Each year, a slate of judges is put forth by the Conference Coordinator and Member Services Director, who select candidates meeting the approved criteria. The slate is submitted first to the Executive Committee for approval and then to the full Board of Directors for final approval. The recommended slate consists of five judges and up to three alternates.

The committee consists of five judges, including past LOC presidents (who must have served at least three years and currently hold elected office), past or current LOC board members (past board members must have served three years and both past and current board members must currently hold elected or appointed office). Two mayors (who must currently serve on the LOC or Oregon Mayors Association Board) and one chief administrative officer (CAO) (who must be a current or former LOC board member).

If a judge is nominated for any of the three Exceptional Service Award, the judge will be replaced by an approved alternate. If a judge has submitted a nomination for an Exceptional Service Award, the judge must disclose the conflict and refrain from participating in the discussion or evaluation of that award. The judge may also choose to recuse themselves entirely, and an approved alternate will participate in their place.

The Exceptional Service Award nominations, including the Herman Kehrle Award, will be pre-screened by the LOC Executive Director, the Legislative Director, and one additional manager selected by the Executive Director. The purpose of this pre-screening is to eliminate any nominations that do not meet the minimum eligibility criteria for each award, as outlined in the Eligibility and Criteria sections of this form. This process does not preclude the judges from determining that there are no eligible recipients in any award category. The selection committee is only permitted to grant the award to one nominee.

Criteria

- The nominee has demonstrated a record of significant service, as compared to others, to the nominee's city, regional government, the League of Oregon Cities, and other municipal and professional organizations;
- The nominee has demonstrated leadership in their own city, regionally, the League of Oregon Cities, and at the state or national levels;
- The nominee has made tangible contributions that improved local government operations, service delivery, innovation or community well-being;
- The level of public esteem the nominee has achieved and the influence they have had in raising the prestige of city government service;
- The nominee has demonstrated commitment to high ethical principles and conduct in public service. There is clear evidence of widespread respect and support from peers, colleagues and community members, and stability in the overall employment history; and
- The nominee is widely recognized by peers and colleagues as a role model/example of exceptional public service through leadership, integrity, and a commitment to their community.

This award recognizes exceptional career service and professional excellence in municipal government, with consideration given to the size and capacity of the nominee's city.