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NATIONAL AWARD TO MINNESOTA COALITION

The American Library Association, an organization of nearly 60,000 individual and organizational members, announces that the Minnesota Coalition on Government Information has been selected as recipient of the inaugural Eileen Cooke State and Local Madison Award. <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/foi/cogi.html>

Named for distinguished Minnesota native, Eileen Cooke, the award will be presented annually on the anniversary of the birth of James Madison, champion of access to information. For the past fifteen years the American Library Association and other supporting groups have celebrated March 16 as Freedom of Information Day. <http://www.ala.org/ala/washoff/woawards>.

Since 1989 the Minnesota Coalition on Government Information has sponsored Freedom of Information Day and the annual John R. Finnegan Freedom of Information Award. In announcing the national recognition, Carol Brey-Casiano cited the Minnesota Coalition for having been “persistent in promoting open access and the role of the state in that process. It is a tribute to the Coalition that you have sustained your work for fifteen years with a remarkable diversity of partners.”

The State and Local Madison Award is named for Eileen Cooke, a Minneapolis native, graduate of the College of St. Catherine and member of the staff of the Minneapolis Public Library. Ms. Cooke rose to national prominence as the Director of the Washington Office of the American Library Association. For three decades she was, in effect, the chief lobbyist for libraries, freedom of access and literacy. Ms. Cooke died in May 2000.

The national award will be presented at the Freedom Forum's World Center in Arlington, VA on March 16. <http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/news.aspx?id=14772>. Mary Treacy will accept the national award on behalf of the Minnesota Coalition Government Information. Ms. Treacy's leadership as Director of Metronet, a Minnesota consortium of Twin Cities libraries of all kinds, provided memtum for Minnesota to offer its own Freedom of Information Award for the past fifteen years.

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