

2007 Florida Cities of Excellence Awards Program ▶ Nomination Form

Category (Please check one) See Award Criteria for more information. Please print or type. One nomination per page.

FLORIDA CITY OF EXCELLENCE AWARD
Name of Municipality Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

CITY SPIRIT AWARD
Name of Municipality Nominated _____
Nominated Project _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

MAYOR OF THE YEAR
Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

COUNCIL MEMBER OF THE YEAR
Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

CITY EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR
Name of Individual Nominated _____
Title _____ Department _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

CITY MANAGER OF THE YEAR
Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

CITY CLERK OF THE YEAR
Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

CITY ATTORNEY OF THE YEAR
Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

CITY FINANCE OFFICIAL (DIRECTOR OR OFFICER) OF THE YEAR
Name of Individual Nominated George J. Bergali's
Nominated by City of Fort Pierce
(Name of City/Town/Village)

CITY CITIZEN OF THE YEAR
Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Contact Person

The following person will be the main contact if your city's nominee is selected as a finalist.

Please print or type.

Name Anne Satterlee
Title Asst. to the City Mgr.
Government City of Fort Pierce
Address P.O. Box 1480 Ft. Pierce 34954
Telephone Number 772.460.2200 x308 Fax 772.489.8042
E-mail Address ASATTERlee@City - FT Pierce.com

Nomination Certification

This nomination has been voted on and approved by a majority of the city council/commission.

Signed Cassandra Stule
City Clerk

The judges will use the narrative and supportive information to select the award winners. Nominators/nominees are asked not to contact the judges directly.

Narrative

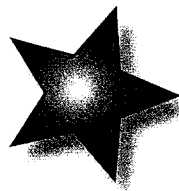
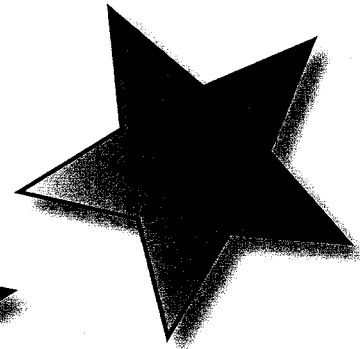
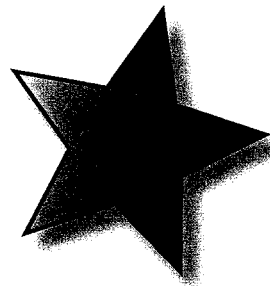
In the narrative, please be clear and concise, using the Award Criteria to support the selection of your nominee. Please type (or print in black ink), up to 1,200 words, double-spaced on white 8-1/2" x 11" paper.

Please include a word count: 862
Number of words

Supportive Information

Up to 10 pages of supportive information (newspaper clippings, photographs, letters from constituents, etc.), on 8-1/2" x 11" paper (single-sided) may be provided. Please do not include videotapes, DVDs, CDs or Power-Point presentations.

Submit nominations by **August 10, 2007**:
Florida League of Cities, Inc.
Attn: Florida Cities of Excellence
301 S. Bronough Street, Suite 300 (32301)
P.O. Box 1757
Tallahassee, FL 32302-1757



Florida League of Cities - Florida City of Excellence Award Entry

City of Fort Pierce - City Finance Director of the Year

George J. Bergalis

The City of Fort Pierce is located at latitude 27.4N and longitude 80.3W and encompasses 24 square miles. The population is 40,000 and growing. The City is governed by a 5-member Mayor/City Commission and a City Manager.

Perhaps the most important member of senior staff, other than the City Manager, is the Finance Director. This position handles approximately \$70 million in revenues and expenditures annually. George Bergalis, Director of Finance joined the City of Fort Pierce as Chief Accountant in December 1978 and was promoted to his current position in February 1983. In addition to his responsibilities as finance director, he also supervises Risk Management, and until recently, the Management Information Systems department. He is deeply committed to the City of Fort Pierce. He's the watchdog over the City's finances, a huge responsibility he takes very seriously.

This is a time of tremendous growth for the City of Fort Pierce. In the past five years the City's taxable values have increased threefold. Property values went from a decrease of five percent in 2000 to an increase of forty-five percent in 2006 – more than any other city of its size in the State of Florida. We went from worst to best in just six years.

The City established the Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency (FPRA) in 1982 to address growing concerns about slum and blight conditions. Because of the increase in property values within the geographic area of the Redevelopment Agency, FPRA revenues have jumped from \$115,200 in 2001 to \$4,982,814 in 2005 and \$10,036,000 in 2006. Building permit fees have also increased from \$299,808 in 2000 to \$2,660,182 in 2005 and \$2,343,439 in 2006. The building department issued 59 permits for new construction in 2000 versus 344 in 2005 and 385 in 2006. The City is growing without a doubt and that means there is a lot more money to handle and a lot more responsibility placed on the Finance Department.



The City's employee population has remained generally stable with approximately 371 employees including General, Police, Marina and Solid Waste and increased slightly with the acquisition of the Indian Hills Golf Course and Sunrise Theatre.

In 2002, the City acquired ownership of Indian Hills Country Club a 6,555 yard par 72 golf course. We have most recently taken over ownership of the Sunrise Theatre, which will become another enterprise fund. The Theatre, originally built in 1923, closed its doors in the mid 1980s, and after 10 years of renovation the new construction, reopened in January 2006.

In September 2004, Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne damaged or destroyed over eighty percent of the marina, including millions of dollars of damage to privately-owned boats. The cleanup effort was huge and in December 2005, the marina was placed back into operations. There was also significant damage to other buildings and property from these storms, including the golf course, City Hall and Public Works. Risk Management led the reimbursement efforts which to date has totaled more than \$20,375,000 from insurance and FEMA. And for Hurricane Wilma in 2006, we have received over \$897,937 so far.

George has been a member of the Association of Government Accountants (AGA) and a certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM), the standard by which government financial management professionals are measured. He is also a member of Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) and Florida GFOA. The City of Fort Pierce Finance Department submitted for and received the Government Finance Officers Association Distinguished Budget Award from 1994 to 2000. We have also received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting award every year since 1988 for our Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

George serves as Secretary/Treasurer and Plan Administrator to the City of Fort Pierce Retirement and Benefit System, The City's self-funded retirement system. He's been



active on the Board for more than 25 years. His expertise and management has helped the System grow and increase in assets from \$50 million to over \$230 million, even through times of good and bad economic conditions.

Mr. Bergalis is a man of honesty and unwavering integrity. No matter who the customer is, internal or external, George can always be relied upon to provide firm facts regardless of his personal opinion. The information he provides may not always be popular, but you can count on it to be unbiased, correct and true; you can literally take it to the bank. He is a true professional and is well respected within the City and community. This kind of uprightness is a critical component to his position, to the institution, and to his staff. George always makes time for employees who stop in to share an event or to seek his advice. He provides guidance and support for both work-related and personal issues. This is probably one of the reasons this department has minimal turnover. He is stern but kind, steadfast in his opinion and without fail seems to have the right answer.

With more than 27 years with the City and his chosen career mostly behind him, his thoughts have turned to retirement. What a task it will be to find someone to fill his shoes!

