

ERICA winners announced today

- *U.S. and U.K organizations will share USD 250,000 in Web Development Services for creative Internet sites*

Ericsson today announced the winners of the inaugural Ericsson Internet Community Awards, ERICA, a global program designed to help non-profit organizations use the Internet as a vehicle for social change.

The 1999 ERICA winners are:

- The National Library for the Blind (Stockport, United Kingdom)
- Medical Training Worldwide (Novato, California)
- Kids HealthLINK (San Francisco, California).

Launched in January, the ERICA received 1,400 entries online and mailed in from non-profits around the world. Judging was done on the ERICA web site (www.ericsson.com/erica) by a panel of leading Internet industry executives. This year's winners will share USD 250,000 in Web development services to make their dream Internet projects a reality.

Leading Web development companies donating their time and expertise is a key component of the ERICA program. This year's ERICA Web developers are:

- Brand Internet (Stockholm, Sweden), VisualCom/Miami
- KOZ, Inc. (Durham, NC), Technical Focus/Dallas
- K 2 Designs, Inc. (New York, NY), The Connection/Hong Kong
- NMP-AppNet Interactive/Falls Church, VA, WCJ/Amsterdam
- Organic/ San Francisco, NYC
- Exceed Interactive / formerly Mercury 7 (New York, NY)
- VisualCom / Miami
- Technical Focus / Dallas
- The Connection / HongKong

- WCJ /Amsterdam

“In creating the ERICA awards program we never realized how big it would be,” said Donna Campbell, director of Ericsson’s CyberLab, an Internet business division in New York that will organize and oversee the design, development and implementation of the program’s winning concepts. “ERICA was launched at a time when non-profits have realized that their organizations will be transformed by the Internet and are wrestling with how to cope with these changes. Non-profits have told us this is the program they had been looking for, one that offers real solutions and creates a global online community to raise awareness about technology and its uses.”

The following is a summary of the winning projects:

National Library for the Blind – Stockport, UK

Dedicated to ensuring that visually impaired people get the same access to library services as sighted people, the NLB will improve its Web site with the latest database technology to create a well-stocked bookshop online. With the ERICA award they will create a system that presents information about new books in an exciting, dynamic and revolutionary way, enabling the visually impaired people to participate fully in the world of literature for the first time.

Medical Training Worldwide – Novato, CA

In order to teach modern surgery, anesthesia, and critical care techniques to physicians and nurses in developing countries, Medical Training Worldwide will create an online database to assist in the collection of donated medical equipment, coordinate physicians/nurse volunteers and search for needy training sites.

Kids HealthLINK – San Francisco, CA

With the Erica award, Kids HealthLink will broaden the support and resources available to children from low-income households living with severe illnesses, such as cancer and HIV/AIDS. After their release from the hospital, these children will be able to communicate via personal e-mail accounts with their physicians and school-based peers and others recovering children. By providing this forum, the organization hopes to improve the quality of their lives.

Ericsson also announced today the expansion of the ERICA program for the year 2000.

“We received such an overwhelming response from everyone involved, non-profits, judges and even Web developers, that we decided to renew the program next year,” said Campbell. “We hope to renew ERICA annually and continue to address the problems that exist everywhere.” Details about ERICA 2000 will be released later this year.

Ericsson is the leading provider in the new telecoms world, with communications solutions that combine telecom and datacom technologies with freedom of mobility for the user. With more than 100,000 employees in 140 countries, Ericsson simplifies communications for its customers – network operators, service providers, enterprises and consumers – the world over.

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About ERICA

ERICA is a first-of-its-kind international awards program, designed to recognize the community-building power of the Internet. Founded by Ericsson, a global leader in voice and data communications, the program is seeking creative ideas from non-profit organizations for technology applications that help non-profits better manage their organizations, deliver services, raise money and communicate their messages. In year one, non-profits will vie for a share of the \$250,000 (U.S.) prize fund, divided between cash and Web development services. The goal of ERICA is not only to build new Internet applications but also lasting ties between three important communities: non-profit organizations, commercial Internet companies and Web developers.