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Tulsa library gets state award for excellence

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Posted: Thursday, December 4, 2014 12:00 am



Tulsa Mayor Dewey Bartlett (left) with Tulsa City-County Library Chief Executive Officer Gary Shaffer pose with the pursuit of excellence award given to the library system by the Oklahoma Quality Foundation. COURTESY

By GINNIE GRAHAM News Columnist | 1 comment

OKLAHOMA CITY — The Tulsa City-County Library became the first library system to be awarded an Oklahoma Quality Award, which was received on Wednesday.

Gov. Mary Fallin was present when the library was given the Oklahoma Quality Award for Pursuit of Excellence by the [Oklahoma Quality Foundation](#). It recognizes Oklahoma businesses and organizations for achievement in quality, business performance and best practices.

The award for excellence has identified seven categories to gauge overall performance of an organization: leadership, strategic planning, customer focus, workforce focus, process management, results and measurement, analysis and knowledge management.

The quality program is intended to help organizations find strengths and improvement opportunities.

Library CEO Gary Shaffer said staff members worked for three years meeting application criteria. Eight staffers worked with others on the 50-page application in the first round of

evaluations, and a team of examiners later visited various library locations for a week in September in the next round.

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"However, the work is not done, nor is it ever done," Shaffer said. "... The library system plans to continue on its quality journey for the foreseeable future — improving internally so that we can offer better service to customers externally."

The Oklahoma Department of Commerce and many Oklahoma businesses started the award program in 1993. The foundation focuses on ways organizations can be more competitive in the marketplace through self-assessment and improvements.

In addition to the awards, the foundation hosts a "Sharing of Best Practices" speaker series and provides an examiner training program.

Affiliated with the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, Oklahoma's Quality Award program is regarded as one of the most rigorous Baldrige programs in the country.

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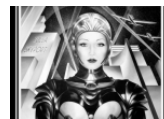
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By Jennifer L. Smith

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