

# Government Innovators

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**Presented by: Fran Tagmire & Dilworth Paxon**

**1st Place: Free Library of Philadelphia** led by Siobhan Reardon: The mission of the Free Library of Philadelphia is to advance literacy, guide learning, and inspire curiosity. Its vision is to build an enlightened community devoted to lifelong learning. The Free Library of Philadelphia is a welcoming and inclusive public space and strongly believes in promoting understanding and community engagement. All 54 of our libraries provide a safe haven for individuals of all ages and backgrounds, providing homework help, ESL classes, supportive job search assistance, and much more. We encourage and host conversations about differences and complex social issues. The library exists to provide opportunities for discussion supported by educational resources, access to a vast array of information, and ideas that transform

communities, open minds, and promote inclusion.

"We are honored to be a finalist for a Social Innovation Award! We have been working hard to transform the library into an active and innovative space adding services from lending musical instruments to providing healthcare information to being the backbone organization for helping every child to read on grade level by 4th grade. Our library spaces too are transforming into bright, comfortable environments for interactive learning, community gathering and continuing education. Our mission is to advance literacy, guide learning and inspire curiosity". Sandra Horrocks

**2nd Place: Health and Human Services** led by Eva Gladstein. Eva Gladstein is the Deputy Managing Director of Health and Human Services for the City of Philadelphia. She's responsible for the oversight of five City Departments including the following: Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility (DBHIDS), Department of Human Services (DHS), Office of Supportive Housing (OSH), Department of Public Health (PDPH), and the Mayor's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity (CEO). Prior to that, she served as Executive Director of CEO. While there, she developed and implemented a nationally recognized comprehensive citywide plan to address poverty called Shared Prosperity Philadelphia, using a collective impact approach. It became the lead agency for the West Philadelphia Promise Zone, designated by President

Obama in January 2014. Eva has held a variety of leadership positions within City government since 1998. Most recently, she completed a three-year assignment as Executive Director of the Philadelphia Zoning Code Commission, successfully reforming and modernizing Philadelphia's 50-year old zoning code. She also served as the Director of Neighborhood Transformation for former Mayor John F. Street, coordinating a multifaceted strategy designed to renew and strengthen entire communities. Prior to being appointed to this position, Gladstein served as the Executive Director of the Philadelphia Empowerment Zone under Mayors Street and Rendell.

"Receiving the Social Innovations Award is affirmation of the collaborative efforts of our five City departments - Community Empowerment and Opportunity, Behavioral Health, Homeless Services, Human Services, and Public Health. For the last year, we have worked hard to create a framework that aligns all of our efforts to address poverty through providing high quality services, reducing barriers, strategic investment of resources to prevent and divert vulnerable children and families so that they are able to remain healthy, safe, and supported in their communities".

Eva Gladstein

**3rd Place: City Council (Helen Gym).** Helen Gym, chair of the Committee on Children and Youth, is a community and education leader whose work across different organizations supports the right to a quality public

education for all children. As a Councilwoman, her primary concern is addressing widespread poverty in Philadelphia, particularly through an emphasis on building a quality public education system that anchors schools within communities. She will continue to push for fairer and more responsible taxation, sustainable investments in neighborhoods, language access and civil rights, and a focus on the long-term health and safety of Philadelphia residents. Helen's political vision is rooted in her organizing background. A former school teacher and journalist, Helen co-founded Parents United for Public Education, a citywide parent group that builds parent voice and works for quality, equity and transparency in school budgets, while also successfully advocating for millions of dollars in new revenue for Philadelphia public schools. The group is working to establish a baseline level of resources, staffing and programs for every child at every school. Helen co-founded the Philadelphia Public School Notebook, an independent education newspaper, which has done extensive investigations into school district budgeting, evaluated major policy initiatives, and reported on areas (i.e., charter school admission policies) in need of accountability