

Jennifer Byrd receives Cy Young Award

Award given for best Salvation Army story pitching to a news outlet.

by Kathy Lovin –

The territorial Community Relations and Development Department recently gave an award to the public relations practitioner in the West who submitted the finest example of material designed to interest a news outlet in covering a Salvation Army story.

The first-ever award, called the CY YOUNG AWARD for Story Pitching, honored the Golden State Division's Jennifer Byrd.

Byrd's winning entry was her successful pitch about the 120 Year Anniversary of San Francisco's Chinatown Corps and their March of Witness celebration, pitched to a staff photographer at the San Francisco Chronicle. The pitch resulted in a full-page photo essay on August 20, 2006 entitled: 120 Years of Salvation in the City, and another photo and description the following day in the same paper. The essay included five photos with captions and a four-paragraph description of the Army's mission, work in Chinatown and visit from the Kowloon Central Corps band in Hong Kong.

This entry was the first choice of the selection committee, because it showcased Byrd's skill in understanding the needs and interests of the media outlet, her detailed presentation of a traditional Salvation Army story concept, and her follow-through with the photographer to get the best possible final product.

The next CY YOUNG AWARD for Story Pitching will be given to the winning entry for the period covering October 1, 2006 through March 30, 2007. Story pitches can cover a range of ideas—from human interest features on Army staff or clients, programs, special events, disaster relief, holiday or seasonal activities, announcements and anniversaries, to any other idea that has the potential of attracting media interest in the work of the Army.

Any Salvation Army employee or officer who pitches stories to their local media as a part of their job and can submit examples of their best work for consideration, e.g., news release, media alert, pitch letter, or email transcripts of a story pitch. Entries will be accepted from personnel in divisional



headquarters, county or city commands, corps, programs or any other Salvation Army unit in the Western Territory.

Work submitted must be story-pitching materials produced in the current six-month period. Qualifying entries will be judged on the following criteria:

Creative expression of Salvation Army mission

Originality of pitch concept

Quality of writing

Application of sound PR principles and tactics

Effective use of statistics, quotes, and headlines

Last but not least—success in attracting media outlets!

If you have any questions about the CY YOUNG AWARD for Story Pitching contest or would like to submit materials for consideration, please contact Kathy Lovin in the territorial headquarters Community Relations and Development Department kathy_lovin@usw.salvationarmy.org