



Margaret Taylor Writing Prizes

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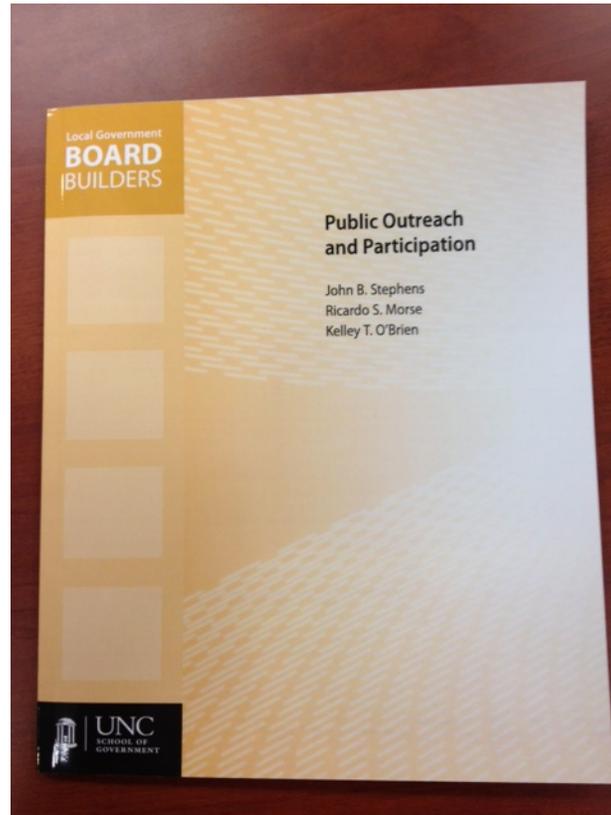
With the help of generous donors, we have created two prizes in honor of Margaret Taylor, a former Institute of Government editor who was known as a “defender of and standard-bearer for the plain style.” She joined the Institute in 1965 as an editorial assistant, and later became publications coordinator and then publications manager before her retirement in 1987. Margaret edited many of the Institute’s books and other publications as well as our quarterly magazine, *Popular Government*. She was highly regarded and appreciated for her commitment to good writing, her hard work and attention to detail, and her willingness to help authors become better writers.

I was one of many authors who benefited from Margaret’s sharp editorial eye and equally sharp blue pencil. She had a special way of making you understand that good writing was more than a question of style and taste. Margaret made it feel like a moral issue. If you wanted to be a good person, and certainly if you wanted to be a good faculty member, you must care deeply about clear, concise writing. This prize honors Margaret by recognizing good writing and editing by our colleagues.

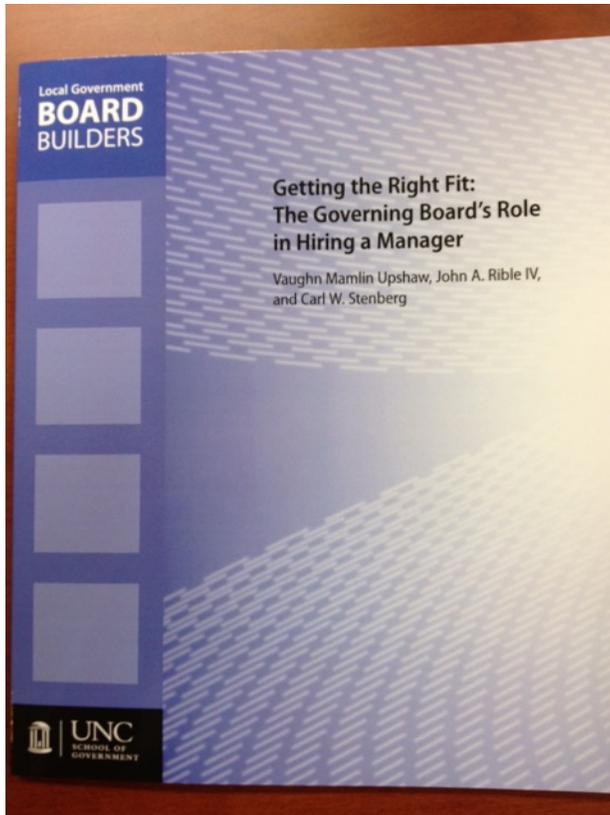
There are two awards. One is for “collaboration between authors and editors who achieve the plain style for which Margaret Taylor was highly regarded.” For this award the selection committee unanimously recommended *Public Outreach and Participation*, edited by Nancy Dooly and written by John Stephens, Rick Morse, and Kelley O’Brien. Here is what the committee said: “This work is a sterling example of a collaborative project that brings together contributions of authors with different fields of expertise and different composition styles. The guide is a clear, accessible, and



useful introduction for public officials and others about creating opportunities for involving residents in board meetings. Nancy received praise not only for synthesizing the authors' contributions but also for providing valuable improvements in style and expression. The work product achieves the goals of School of Government publications as practical scholarship that helps public officials and citizens understand and improve state and local government."



The second award is "for an author who creates an outstanding writing that displays the clear and direct style Margaret Taylor brought to Institute publications for so many years." The selection committee unanimously recommended *Getting the Right Fit: The Governing Board's Role in Hiring a Manager* written by Vaughn Upshaw, Carl Stenberg, and John Rible (who as an MPA student is not eligible to receive the monetary prize). Here is what the committee said: "Building on Vaughn's initiative in developing the Board Builders series, and combining her work in leadership and training with Carl's expertise in local government management and leadership development, this publication is a tightly composed and handy resource for elected officials and managers. Its value to public officials and citizens was described by the director of the county commissioners association as a 'single-source reference with in-depth guidance and suggestions'—in a publication that can be read painlessly in a couple of hours. This work also was edited expertly by Nancy Dooly, whose knack for clear and direct writing shines through, and who deserves the recognition but does not share in the monetary prize for this award."



Each prize is for works published during the preceding calendar year (2011). “They may be text in any format including but not limited to books, monographs, bulletins, papers, articles, and online publications. It may be published by the School of Government or another publisher. There is no length requirement.” Each award is for \$1,000. The award recognizing collaboration is a combined \$1,000, one-half to the author or authors and one-half to the editor or editors of the work.

Congratulations to Nancy and to each of the authors. Publications in many different forms are important to our mission and it is wonderful that we are recognizing good writing and good editing. Margaret would be proud of these inaugural winners and of these great examples of our writing for public officials. Many thanks to the Selection Committee: Margaret Henderson, Katrina Hunt, Laurie Mesibov, and Chuck Szypszak (Chair) for the hard work of creating the criteria and selecting these deserving recipients.