



# ***NEWS RELEASE***

**OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL HENRY MCMASTER**  
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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## **Harvard Names McMaster's Domestic Violence Program One Of Nation's Most Innovative**

**Columbia, S.C.** –The Attorney General's Pro Bono Domestic Violence Prosecution Program was recognized as one of the nation's "most creative, forward thinking, results-driven government programs at the federal, state, county and city levels" in an announcement by Harvard and The Council For Excellence In Government. The program is now eligible to win one of six (6) \$100,000 grants.

Attorney General Henry McMaster's Pro Bono Prosecution program, which targets criminal domestic violence (CDV) in the state, has been cited in a group of fifty nationwide for excellence and listed as a semifinalist for the *Innovations in American Government Awards*, a project of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

The Attorney General's program trains and supervises volunteer attorneys to prosecute criminal domestic violence cases in local court jurisdictions that lack a government prosecutor. The effort began in 2004, with the pilot counties of Orangeburg and Kershaw. In the past year, the program has spread to Winnsboro in Fairfield County, and has begun work in York County. Pro Bono attorneys also prosecute cases in Columbia's CDV court. In addition, McMaster has applied for a federal grant to place prosecutors in six (6) rural Pee Dee counties.

According to information released from Harvard's School of Government, the programs chosen "represent the nation's very best public sector efforts in the areas of education and training, criminal justice and public safety, economic and community development, health and social service, management, transportation, public works and environment."

"When it comes to combating domestic violence, necessity is the mother of invention," said McMaster. "Hopefully, this national recognition from Harvard University will help persuade lawyers around the state to volunteer for this necessary and rewarding work."

Eighteen finalists will be chosen from the fifty and announced in April. The six (6) winning programs will be announced on July 27, 2005.

**A list of semifinalists, including a description of each program and contact information is available on the web at [www.ashinstitute.harvard.edu](http://www.ashinstitute.harvard.edu) and [www.excelgov.org](http://www.excelgov.org).**

Additional information on the Attorney General's Pro Bono Program and domestic violence can be found online at [www.scattorneygeneral.com](http://www.scattorneygeneral.com).

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