

# Division 19 - Society for Military Psychology

## Call for Award nominations

Each year, Division 19 solicits nominations for a series of distinguished awards. To make a nomination, please submit a brief statement (300-500 words) that identifies the award and describes those aspects of the nominee's work that support the nomination. In addition, please provide a brief biography of the nominee. Nominations should be submitted no later than April 15, 2006 to Brad Johnson (see contact information below). Awards will be presented at the 2007 APA Convention in New Orleans.

### **Submit nominations to:**

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## **SOCIETY FOR MILITARY PSYCHOLOGY AWARDS**

**Robert M. Yerkes Award:** This award is given for significant contributions to military psychology by a non-psychologist. The award is named for Robert M. Yerkes, the "Founding Father" of military psychology. Yerkes (1876-1956) had a distinguished career as a comparative psychologist first at Harvard, and later at Yale University. He studied chimpanzee behavior extensively, and together with John D. Dodson developed the Yerkes-Dodson Law, relating arousal and motivation to performance. As the President of APA in 1917, Yerkes led in the application of psychology to the demands of World War I. Also serving as chief of the Psychology Division in the Surgeon General's Office during World War I, Yerkes led in the development and use of the Army Alpha and Beta Tests, the first large-scale application of psychological testing. This program established the value of psychological testing for screening and placement purposes.

Previous recipients of the Robert M. Yerkes Military Psychology Award include General Max Thurman, Senator Daniel Inouye, Ms. Elizabeth Dole, and Senator Kay Bailey Hutchinson.

**John C. Flanagan Lifetime Achievement Award:** This award recognizes career-long achievements in military psychology. These contributions may be in the form of excellence in research, service, product development, or administration that clearly reflects advancement of the profession of military psychology, improved effectiveness of military psychology systems, or service on behalf of the welfare of military personnel.

This award is named for John C. Flanagan (1906-1996), who served as Division 19 President from 1961-1962. Flanagan received his Ph.D. in psychology from Harvard in 1934 and then worked for the Cooperative Test Service of the American Council on Education. He joined the Army Air Corps in 1941, where he established the Aviation Psychology Program. This is considered a milestone in the history of psychology, as it was one of the most successful applied psychology programs ever. His work for the Army Air Corps resulted in new and more effective selection procedures for flight personnel, paving the way for the use of sophisticated psychological selection tools in military and

civilian settings. After leaving the Air Corps in 1946, Flanagan created the American Institutes for Research, where for the next 20 years he carried on an innovative research program to improve tests and measurements for education and job selection applications. In 1976 Flanagan was awarded APA's Distinguished Professional Contribution Award.

**Charles S. Gersoni Military Psychology Award:** This award is for outstanding contributions to military psychology. The award is made for excellence in research, service, product development, or administration that clearly reflects advancement of the profession of military psychology, improved effectiveness of military psychology systems, or service on behalf of the welfare of military personnel. Awardees may be individuals or a group of individuals whose contributions merit special recognition by Division 19.

Charles S. Gersoni received his Ph.D. in psychology from New York University in 1937, and joined the Army in 1941 where he served as a clinical psychologist through World War II. After the war and following a brief stint with the Veterans Administration, he returned to the Army and worked to establish a career force of uniformed clinical psychologists, becoming the first Clinical Psychology Consultant to the Army Surgeon General in 1947 (through 1951). The clinical psychology training program developed by Gersoni was launched by the Army in 1949, and later became a model for similar programs in the Navy and Air Force. At Gersoni's urging, the Army was the first military agency to insist upon doctorate level training for psychologists. Gersoni also served as Chief of Psychology Service at Walter Reed Army Hospital (1951-53), as Deputy Chief of the Department of Physical Standards Research, Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (1957-59), and as Commander of the Army Personnel Research Office (later named the Army Research Institute) from 1962-1965. He retired from the Army in 1965, and after that served in a variety of positions at the APA including Associate Executive Officer. Gersoni was the editor of the "American Psychologist" when it became the first journal to adopt anonymous peer review in 1972. He was a Fellow of Division 19, and throughout his professional life Division 19 was the only APA division that he chose to belong to. Gersoni died in 1981 and was buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

**Arthur W. Melton Early Achievement Award:** This award is to recognize early career achievements in military psychology, normally within 5-10 years of entry into the field. These contributions may be in the form of excellence in research, service, product development, or administration that clearly reflects advancement of the profession of military psychology, improved effectiveness of military psychology systems, or service on behalf of the welfare of military personnel.

The award is named in honor of Arthur W. Melton (1906-1978), a distinguished psychologist who served as the second President of Division 19, from 1948-1950. After earning his Ph.D. from Yale University, Melton served at various times on the faculty at Yale, University of Missouri, Ohio State University, and the University of Michigan. When World War II came, he entered the Army Air Corps as Chief of the Department of Psychology at the School of Aviation Medicine at Randolph Field, Texas. His war time research focused on using psychomotor tests to predict aptitude for flying. Colonel Melton left military service in 1946 to return to academia at Ohio State. While there, he continued his involvement with applied military psychology by promoting research and initiating an extension graduate program at Wright Field in Dayton, Ohio. Melton's significant contributions to applied military psychology led to his election to the National Academy of Sciences in 1969. He was also awarded the Gold Medal of the American Psychological Foundation in 1976 in recognition of his many scholarly accomplishments.