

MICHAEL SUTCLIFFE (2007 WINNER)



The Anderson Medal is the highest honor which the Applied Geography Specialty Group (AGSG), Association of American Geographers (AAG), can bestow. It is awarded by the AGSG Board of Directors, upon recommendation by the Anderson Medal Committee, in recognition of the most distinguished service to the profession of geography.

The AGSG may bestow a Medal for achievement in geography on individuals or organizations for notable contributions to the advancement of the profession by recognizing outstanding accomplishments in one or more areas of industry, government, literature, education, research, service to the profession, or public service. A Medal is so distinctive an honor that it is bestowed only if the accomplishments are truly outstanding.

In being named the 2007 Anderson Medalist, Michael Sutcliffe is recognized for exceptional accomplishments in government, service to the profession, and public service.

Michael Sutcliffe completed his PhD program at Ohio State University in 1984, and over the intervening years he has been a leader in the political, administrative, planning, and social transformation of South Africa through consulting practice, university lecturing, and involvement in public affairs.

After the end of apartheid in 1994 he served in the Kwazulu-Natal Province legislature (1994-99), as Chair of the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB, 1999-present), and currently as City Manger of Durban (2002-present). These appointments carry a great deal of responsibility in terms of the governance and politics of South Africa, and clearly indicate that Michael Sutcliffe is held in high regard by the African National Congress (ANC), including Nelson Mandela and the current president Thabo Mbeki. Further, and of particular pertinence to the Anderson Medal, Michael Sutcliffe's training as a geographer is central to all the appointments with their focus on local government and political redistricting, and the creation of a new municipal system for South Africa.

Evidence of the success achieved by Michael Sutcliffe during his outstanding career to date in applied geography includes recognition by major organizations in South Africa. Recent testimonials to the significance of his efforts include the Institute for Local Government Management Award for service excellence and leadership in the transformation of local government in South Africa, 2004, the Golden Peacock Achiever Award from the Indian Academy of South Africa for leadership in public affairs, dynamic progress in eThekweni municipality, 2005,

and IT Person of the Year Award from the Computer Society of South Africa (KZN), 2005. These awards are testimony to many years of important undertakings across a range of applied geography endeavors in diverse fields, and underline the societal value of contributions by geographer Michael Sutcliffe.

On behalf of the Anderson Medal Committee, and the Applied Geography Specialty Group, Association of American Geographers, congratulations are extended to Dr. Michael Sutcliffe who is the unanimous selection for the 2007 Anderson Medal of Honor in Applied Geography.