Background

The PAHO Award for Administration dates from 1969, when the 61st Meeting of the Executive Committee of PAHO accepted the generous gift of Dr. Stuart Portner, former Chief of Administration of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, to institute an annual award for the purpose of "contributing to the improvement of the administrative systems of the health programs."

In 1970 the XVIII Pan American Sanitary Conference approved the procedure and the criteria governing the Award. The Chairman of the PAHO Executive Committee was made responsible each year for appointing a committee--composed of three members of the Executive Committee--who would decide on the Award during the sessions of the Committee.

The Award was granted for work done by an active public health officer who has authored studies, research, or essays on administrative topics or otherwise contributed to improving administration in the health sector. One year the Award was made to a public health officer who had excelled in the administration of health services, and the next, on the basis of the quality of written works relating to administration as well as training in that area.

Because of the growing importance of new administrative methods for health in the Region of the Americas, it clearly became necessary to revise these criteria in line with a sense of devotion to service to the communities and the social realities of each country. Therefore, in 1978 the XX Pan American Sanitary Conference decided to change the procedures and guidelines for the Award so that the candidacies of persons who had made an outstanding contribution in any health field, be it administration or execution of programs, could be considered.
Accordingly, the Organization extends an invitation to the Member Governments to identify citizens that have contributed to the improvement of the health of their people.

The guidelines and procedure for conferring the Award, as approved by the XVIII Pan American Sanitary Conference (1970) and amended by the XX Conference (1978) and the XXVII Meeting of the Directing Council (1980), are as follows:

**Guidelines**

1. **Effect of the activity of the candidate in improving administration in the health sector. For example:**
   a) Contribution to the improvement of the organization and introduction of administrative methods and procedures required for the execution of a national, regional or provincial health plan;
   b) contribution to the coordination and strengthening of health service agencies;
   c) Contribution to the establishment of a sense of devotion to duty and esprit de corps;
   d) Incorporation of the teaching of administration into educational programs in the health sector;
   e) Methods of applying and evaluating administrative methods;
   f) Contribution to the establishment of an efficient personnel system;
   g) Contribution to the establishment of the program budget;
   h) Design and introduction of an accounting system;
   i) Participation in teaching as a disseminator of knowledge and practical experience in problem areas or disciplines relating to health administration.

2. **Value of a written work as judged by the feasibility of applying its contents to improve health administration, including training. Examples:**
   a) A model program of administrative training in medical, health of sanitary engineering schools, etc.
b) A model personnel system for the health sector;

(c) A program for the development of administrative manpower adapted to a health plan.

Procedures

1. To contribute to the improvement of the administration of health programs, the Pan American Health Organization has established the PAHO Award for Administration, which will be competed for annually and will consist of a diploma and the sum of US$500.

2. The Award shall be made to a candidate who has done outstanding work in any health field, whether in administration or execution of programs.

3. The Chairman of the Executive Committee of PAHO shall appoint an Award Committee consisting of three representatives of the countries members of the Executive Committee, who will discharge their duties for the period of their term of office as representatives of their countries on the Executive Committee. The Chairman shall fill any vacancies that occur among the members of the Award Committee. When there are candidates from the countries represented by members of the Award Committee, those members shall be replaced by representatives of other Member Countries of the Executive Committee, who shall be designated by the Chairman of the Executive Committee to sit on the Award Committee for that occasion only.

4. The names of candidates shall be submitted by the Member Governments of PAHO, through their ministries of health.

5. The Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau shall, at the end of each meeting of the Directing Council or the Pan American Sanitary Conference, invite the Governments of Member Countries to submit nominations for the Award.

6. The names of proposed candidates shall be submitted to reach the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau by 15 March, together with their curriculum vitae AND DOCUMENTATION SUPPORTING THE NATURE AND QUALITY OF THE WORK DONE, OR OF THE WRITTEN WORK SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD, as the case may be. This documentation shall include a brief narrative describing the impact which the candidate's work has had on health administration in the home country. All documentation shall be submitted in an original and three copies.
7. Nomination of candidates shall not necessarily be limited to officers serving at the ministerial level but may include those serving in other administrative units or institutions in/or related directly to the health sector.

8. The Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau shall forward copies of the documentation submitted to the members of the Award Committee 45 days before the date of the opening of the first annual meeting of the Executive Committee, so that they can meet and decide on the Award during the sessions of the Executive Committee, and report their decision to the Committee in order that it may be duly transmitted to the Directing Council or the Pan American Sanitary Conference.

9. Nominations received by the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau after 15 March shall be held in abeyance for consideration by the PAHO Award Committee of the following year.

10. The Award Committee shall have the authority to declare the PAHO Award void in the event that no candidate meets the approved criteria.

11. When in any year only one nomination is received within the time limit prescribed, the Committee shall have the authority to refer that candidacy for consideration with others received in the ensuing year.

12. Unsuccessful candidates in any one year may be renominated for consideration once only and in the following year. For such renomination a simple communication incorporating any additional pertinent data shall suffice.

13. The announcement of the winner of the Award shall be made during the meeting of the Directing Council or the Pan American Sanitary Conference.

14. Whenever practicable, the Award shall be presented during the appropriate meeting of the Directing Council or the Pan American Sanitary Conference, the cost of the travel involved being borne by the Government concerned.

15. When such presentation is not practicable, alternatives shall include:

   a) Receipt of the Award at the meeting of the Directing Council or the Pan American Sanitary Conference by a member of the delegation of the recipient's country, on his behalf;

   b) Presentation made in the home country by the Country Representative on behalf of the Director.
16. Whatever the method of presentation of the Award may be, it shall be accompanied by appropriate publicity issued for the news media, both by the Pan American Sanitary Bureau and the Government concerned.

17. Member Governments shall be requested by the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau to give more active attention to making use of the purpose for which the Award was made to foster administrative improvement within the framework of national health services.

18. These general rules and the Award guidelines shall be reviewed at any time deemed appropriate in light of the experience gained. The amendments approved by the Executive Committee shall be submitted to the Directing Council or the Pan American Sanitary Conference.

Winners of the Award

The following persons have received the PAHO Award for Administration:

1972 Dr. Eduardo Zapata Salazar (Peru). Director of Personnel, Ministry of Health of Peru. For his work on the preparation and implementation of a model of a personnel administration system for the health sector in his country.

1973 Mr. Guillermo Istúriz (Venezuela). Founder of the hospital administration program and of the courses in this discipline at the School of Public Health of Venezuela. For work in the field of hospital management which is regarded as the basis for the doctrine and practice in this field and as having shaped the modern approach to hospital management in Venezuela.

1975 Mr. Dennis Sánchez Acuña (Costa Rica). Planning expert in the Sectoral Unit of the Ministry of Health of Costa Rica. For his outstanding contribution to drawing up the National Health Program for 1975-1978, and particularly of the methods used to improve the development of administrative resources.

1976 Dr. Ernani Guilherme Fernandes da Motta (Brazil). Superintendent, Health Campaigns Superintendancy, Ministry of Health of Brazil. For his work in administrative management, especially in connection with the meningitis vaccination campaign in his country.
1977 Dr. Roberto Pereda Chávez (Cuba) (posthumous). Director of the Department of International Relations, Ministry of Public Health of Cuba.
For the exceedingly salutary effects of his work on the administration and consolidation of the National Health System of his country.

1978 Dr. Oswaldo Egas Cevallos (Ecuador). General Director for Health Planning in the Ministry of Public Health of Ecuador.
For his work in the administration of health services in his country.

1980 Dr. Jair de Oliveira Soares (Brazil). Minister of Social Security, Federal Government of Brazil.
For his contribution to the organization and management of health sector services of his country, at both the regional and national levels.

1981 Dr. Frederick Burns Roth (Canada). Professor of Health Administration, University of Toronto. President and Chairman of the Board, Home Care Program for Metropolitan Toronto.
For his work in improving the practice and teaching of health care administration both nationally and internationally.

On the recommendation of the Committee, the Award was declared void in 1971, 1974, and 1979 because either the nominations did not meet the approved criteria or only one nomination had been submitted.

Present Situation

At the beginning of this year, PASB prepared a pamphlet entitled "PAHO Award for Administration, 1982" (Spanish and English) and gave it wide distribution among the Member Governments to inform them of the background, guidelines, and procedures for the Award.

As a result of this action, the following names were received prior to the deadline of 15 March as candidates for the PAHO Award for Administration, 1982:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Country</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Roberto Ciganda Morere</td>
<td>Argentina</td>
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<td>Dr. Alvaro Fernández Salas</td>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
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<td>Dr. Tulio López Ramírez</td>
<td>Venezuela</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Julio César Mérida de León</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Arnaldo Tejeira Fernández</td>
<td>Cuba</td>
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The members of the Award Committee of the PAHO Award for Administration, 1982, were Dr. Walter Chin, of Guyana; Ramón Álvarez Gutiérrez, of Mexico; and Dr. José Rodrigo Soldevilla, of the Dominican Republic. Dr. Manuel A. Bobenrieth (PASB) served as Secretary.

The Committee met on 23 and 24 June and, after being informed in detail about its terms of reference and about the work done by the PAHO Secretariat in connection with the granting of the Award, took note that the following five nominations had been presented for the PAHO Award for Administration in 1982:

- Dr. Roberto Ciganda Morere of Argentina,
- Dr. Alvaro Fernández Salas of Costa Rica,
- Dr. Tulio López Ramírez of Venezuela,
- Dr. Julio César Mérida de León of Guatemala, and
- Dr. Arnaldo Tejeiro Fernández of Cuba.

This was the third consecutive year that five or more nominations were presented since the establishment of the Award in 1969. This large number of nominations was highly gratifying to the Committee, which interpreted it as a result of the PAHO Secretariat's effective work of publicizing and promoting the Award and of the interest of the Member Governments of PAHO in giving recognition to those who had contributed to improving the administration of their health systems and services.

The Award Committee studied the current general guidelines for conferring the Award and adopted the following seven criteria for the
evaluation of nominations: (a) The priority of the specific problem area or discipline of knowledge in relation to the administrative function (high, intermediate or low); (b) continuity and consistency of the candidate's work throughout his professional career (occasional, intermittent or continuous); (c) scope and significance of the candidate's accomplishment (local, national or international); (d) the level at which he has worked (that of methods and procedures, programs, or policy); (e) duration of the effects (short, intermediate or long term); (f) originality of his contribution (does it apply existing knowledge or generate new knowledge?); and (g) his personal qualities, especially in regard to leadership, ability to work as a member of a team (high, intermediate, or low).

The Committee made an objective study of all the documentation presented and was gratified to find that three of the candidates essentially met these criteria for the Award. After a second thorough and detailed study of all the material before it, the Committee decided unanimously to recommend that the PAHO Award for Administration be conferred in 1982 on Dr. Julio César Mérida de León, of Guatemala, for his outstanding work in the organization and conduct of programs for the prevention and control of communicable diseases and for his influence in strengthening and modernizing the administration of general health services.

Dr. Mérida de León's steady, genuine and unassuming leadership combined in some measure the wisdom and perspective of the historian and the penetrating insight of the scientific observer with the ability to take decisions and implement appropriate actions directly beneficial to the health of the people of his country, and whose effects extended beyond its borders.