

Governor's Service Awards

The 2016 Awards

The Governor's Service Awards are presented by the Governor's Office on Service & Volunteerism each year. These awards recognize Maryland citizens for their significant volunteer contributions to the state and its people, and for working to change Maryland for the better. The 2016 awards ceremony will recognize volunteer service during 2015 (or longer for the lifetime achievement award). The awards will be presented to selected recipients and invitees at an event in the fall.

SELECTION CHARACTERISTICS

Recipients of the Governor's Service Awards must exemplify the following characteristics:

- Demonstrate sustained volunteer commitment to meeting Maryland's most pressing human needs and protecting the environment;
- Engage in meaningful volunteer service that makes a measurable difference in the community;
- Perform extraordinary acts of generosity and kindness; and
- Through volunteerism, have an impact on the greater community.

[Read about](#) last year's recipients of the Governor's Service Awards.

ELIGIBILITY

Any individual volunteer or group of volunteers that has demonstrated commitment and dedication to Maryland through significant and direct volunteer service in 2015 (or longer for the lifetime achievement award) can be nominated. The nominee's volunteer service must have occurred in Maryland and must have been for the direct benefit of Maryland citizens and/or the environment. The volunteer service must not be provided for the sole benefit of a for-profit business.

- Nominations must represent outstanding volunteer service during 2015 for the nominating category except lifetime achievement nomination. The lifetime nomination must include a description of volunteer service over a significant period of time in Maryland that focused on Maryland citizens and/or the environment.

ELIGIBILITY (CONTINUED)

- The nominated volunteer service must benefit citizens and have a positive influence that addresses a community problem or enhances the quality of life in Maryland.
- For individual nominations, the nominated volunteer service must be performed outside the context of a nominee's paid employment (i.e., it cannot be part of his/her job).
- Groups, teams, and organizations must have been operational for two years to be eligible for a volunteer service award.
- Individuals or groups should not be nominated for their financial contributions or fundraising, political advocacy, roles as members of a board of directors, or in any other oversight or administrative roles in the nominating agency.
- Recipients of the Governor's Service Award since 2011 may not be nominated again.
- Self nominations or nomination of family members/spouses will not be accepted.
- No more than three nominations will be accepted from any individual nominator.
- Multiple submissions for the same individual or group by the same nominator will not be accepted (i.e., do not submit three forms for the same nominee).

THE NOMINATION PROCESS

Each nomination must include contact information for the nominee and nominator, the selected award category (only one per nomination), and the nomination narrative. The award categories are listed below along with information to be included in the nomination narrative. The nomination is an online form. A completed nomination form must be submitted **no later than 5 p.m. on June 1, 2016**. Late or incomplete submissions will not be reviewed. [Click here to submit your nomination.](#)

Nominators are expected to notify the individual or group before submitting their nomination for consideration.

THE AWARD CATEGORIES

The Governor's Office on Service & Volunteerism will recognize outstanding volunteers who provide meaningful and direct impact in Maryland communities.

Nominations will be accepted in these categories:

- **Youth:** An individual (age 17 or younger) who volunteers.
- **Individual:** An individual (age 18 or older) who volunteers.
- **Lifetime Achievement:** An individual who has exhibited a lifelong commitment to volunteerism and community service. Nominees must have made a substantial and long-term sustained impact in the community as a result of their service efforts.
- **National Service:** An individual member of a National Service program (AmeriCorps, VISTA, or Senior Corps) who has demonstrated outstanding volunteer service. The service must be above and beyond the requirements of the designated program.
- **AmeriCorps Alum:** A Maryland AmeriCorps Alum whose commitment to embody service beyond their term of AmeriCorps service continues to bring about positive change in the community.
- **Faith-Based:** An individual, family, group/team, or youth that volunteers through a faith-based community organization.
- **Group/Team:** A group or team of two or more people that volunteer together on the same project(s) under a group or team name.
- **Nonprofit Volunteer Program:** A nonprofit whose volunteers carried out the mission of the organization through direct service to the community.
- **Corporate/Business:** A corporation or business that has made a substantial impact in the community by promoting service to their employees through engaging in volunteer activities and/or by providing paid time for employees to volunteer for local organizations and/or agencies.
- **Community of Service:** Maryland cities, towns, townships, or other identified communities that mobilized volunteers to meet pressing needs.
- **Exemplary Service-Learning:** An individual or group (or class), regardless of the age of the individuals, participating in service-learning activities.
- **State Employee:** An individual employed by the state of Maryland who has provided outstanding service to the state in a capacity outside of paid employment.
- **First Responder:** An individual employed in an emergency service occupation whose service has gone above and beyond the call of duty in a capacity outside of paid employment.
- **Veteran:** An individual who has served or is serving in the armed forces and volunteers in a Maryland community in a capacity outside of paid employment.

A nominee may be nominated in only one category. The Governor's Office on Service & Volunteerism reserves the right to reassign a nomination to a more appropriate category.

THE NOMINATION FORM

The Governor's Service Awards nomination is completed [via an online form](#). A diverse panel of staff and external volunteers review nominations to select the strongest in each category. On the online form, the nominator will be asked to submit his/her contact information along with contact information for the individual or group nominated. **Be sure to notify the nominee before submitting the form for consideration.**

THE NOMINATION NARRATIVE

For each section of the nomination, please enter the information in a narrative. The narrative should be written in paragraph form (i.e., **not** as a bulleted list):

- A. Provide a brief summary of the nominee/group (please provide biographical information for individuals and organizational data for groups). [1,000 character limit (with spaces)]
- B. What motivated the nominee to volunteer/why was the group created? [1,000 character limit (with spaces)]
- C. What did the nominee accomplish in 2015 (or longer if a lifetime achievement nominee)? Provide quantitative data citing number of volunteer hours provided, number of people served, etc., that shows specific and measurable results of the volunteer service activities. [1,000 character limit (with spaces)]
- D. What made this nominee's volunteer service extraordinary? Provide anecdotal information, such as stories and quotes to demonstrate the non-measurable impact of the nominee's volunteerism. [1,000 character limit (with spaces)]

The narrative will be the only information used to select the recipients of the 2016 Governor's Service Awards. Nominators should submit a well-written and thorough narrative for consideration. A sample nomination narrative may be found on [our website](#).

In addition to the nomination review, the narrative will be used for promotional purposes. The Governor's Office on Service & Volunteerism will publish summaries of the nominations for each selected recipient on the website, in the awards ceremony program, and in press releases.

REVIEW, SELECTION, AND NOTIFICATION

Each nomination received by the June 1, 2016 deadline will be reviewed by a panel of community leaders, volunteers, and staff of the Governor's Office on Service & Volunteerism. Nominations will be scored and ranked, based on the eligibility criteria above, and the panel will recommend at least one recipient in each category to the Governor's Office. Following a fact-checking process, the Governor's Office will announce the recipients in a press release in mid-September, and the Governor's Office on Service & Volunteerism will notify each recipient of his/her selection. Each individual recipient and one guest will be invited to an award ceremony in the fall.

***Please note:** All selected recipients must provide a digital photograph for use at the awards ceremony upon notification of award selection.*

QUESTIONS?

Contact Lola Abdulai, outreach coordinator, Governor's Office on Service & Volunteerism, at 410-767-1821 or rafiat.abdulai@maryland.gov.