The Governor's Volunteer Service Awards

Building Stronger Communities Through Service

2011 Nomination Form and Application Guidelines

The bipartisan, Governor-appointed Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service presents "The Governor's Volunteer Service Awards." These awards recognize individual volunteers and volunteer programs through a statewide award program to highlight the importance of volunteerism and community service in the State of Illinois.

Individual Awards:
Individual awards will be provided to one Youth (18 & under), one Adult (19-54 yrs.) and one Retiree/Senior (55+ yrs.) in each of the Commission's five service regions across the state (Northeast, Northwest, East Central, West Central and Southern Illinois).

National Service Awards:
National Service awards will be provided to one Learn and Serve, one AmeriCorps, and one Senior Corps Member in each of the Commission's five service regions across the state (Northeast, Northwest, East Central, West Central and Southern Illinois).

Priority Areas:
Within each age category, applications will be given special priority based on the areas below, in alignment with priority areas as defined by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Economic Opportunity
Education
Environmental Conservation
Disaster Preparedness/Response
Health
Veterans Affairs

A panel of judges from across the state, comprised of Governor-appointed Commissioners, will select the award recipients. Nominations will be accepted until **January 14, 2011** by **5:00 PM CST** at the address below. The winners will be notified no later than March 6, 2011. The Governor and Serve Illinois Commission will host a luncheon at the Executive Mansion in Springfield, Illinois to honor the 2nd Annual Governor's Volunteer Service Award recipients and the organization they serve in April, 2011.

How to Nominate: Submit one complete and typed application form and mail, email, fax, or hand deliver to:

Serve Illinois Commission
Attn: Volunteer Service Awards Committee
Illinois Department of Human Services
815 E Monroe
Springfield, IL 62701
800.592.9896 - phone
217.557.0515 - fax
DHS.ServeIllinois@Illinois.gov

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Guidelines and Application Instructions

Guidelines:

- Volunteers may be nominated by an individual or organization.
- Volunteer service must be performed in Illinois and may not include hours served as part of academic credit (except in regards to the Learn and Serve category) or court-ordered community service.
- Nominee's volunteer organization must serve the community at large (not limited to its own members).
- Nomination essay questions must be limited to the word count provided (200 words each).
- In the event a nominee is submitted multiple times, the review panel will consider only the first nomination form submitted.
- The Commission reserves the right to award one or more honorees and reserves the right to withhold distribution of an award if the Commission deems it appropriate.
- A Member of a National Service program in Illinois (e.g. Learn and Serve (this category includes students completing serve learning activities under a Learn and Serve Illinois Grant), AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps*VISTA, AmeriCorps National Direct, AmeriCorps*NCCC, or Senior Corps programs such as RSVP, FGP, and SCP) is eligible only in the National Service category.
- Previous winners are not eligible for nomination again.
- Serve Illinois staff and members of the Serve Illinois Commission are not eligible to receive an award, or to nominate their own volunteers for awards
- Entries are received in confidence, are scored blindly by a team of Commissioners, and become the property of the Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service and will not be returned.
- Please do not submit any attachments, photos, videos, news clips, etc., unless requested by the Commission. This completed form is all that is required for nomination.

Priority Areas:

The Commission will seek nominations that fall into one of these priority areas.

- **Economic Opportunity:** volunteer service relating to the enhancement of economic opportunity for Illinois citizens, in order to move economically disadvantaged individuals and families toward increased self-sufficiency and independence.
- **Education**: volunteer service in public or private school systems or community-based learning programs at all levels.
- **Environmental Conservation**: volunteer service including environmental education, public awareness, protection and/or enhancement of natural resources and the environment.
- **Disaster Preparedness/Response**: volunteer service involving the planning for or response to a natural or man-made disaster
- **Health**: volunteer service providing physical, mental and/or emotional health care, preventive health care, and/or substance-abuse prevention/rehabilitation.
- **Veterans Affairs**: volunteer service addressing the needs of Illinois' veterans, current members of the Armed Forces, and/or service members' families while they are on active duty.

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Essay Requirements:

Responses may not exceed **200 words per answer** (total essay not to exceed 800 words)**.** Additional materials will not be considered. Questions cover the following topics:

- Need
- Innovation
- Impact
- Sustainability

Judging Criteria:

- Need:
  - The community need was clearly stated in the nomination.
  - The need was directly tied to the focus area (i.e. Education, Environmental Conservation, Economic Opportunity, Health, or Veteran's Affairs).
  - The community need was clearly documented, convincing, or self-evident.

- Innovation
  - The innovation was clearly stated in the nomination.
  - The activities reflect innovative or unique approaches to solving a community problem.
  - The nominee's actions engaged unlikely partners or unusual alliances.
  - The nominee's creativity and creative leadership were evident
  - The volunteer leadership employed contains an element of service-learning for the volunteer participants.

- Impact
  - The impact was clearly stated in the nomination.
  - The application provides evidence of a coordinated/connected approach to problem-solving.
  - The application provides evidence of a commitment to community service and leadership.
  - The nominee's action was well-planned and executed.
  - Other leaders in the community agree that the volunteer's service reaped significant results.

- Sustainability
  - The positive change from the nominee's service was clearly stated in the nomination.
  - The results of the nominee's service reached farther or achieved greater results than intended.
  - The methods used can be reproduced, maintained, or sustained fairly easily.
  - The impact helped reach a long-term solution to a problem, and/or will benefit the community for future generations.

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SERVE ILLINOIS
Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service

Nomination Form

Nominee Information

Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

County: _____ Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy): _____

Where Service Was Performed:

Organization: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

County: _____

Nominator Information

Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

County: _____

Are you the immediate supervisor of the volunteer being nominated? Yes ___ No ___

* If not, immediate supervisor is: _____

Nominator Signature: _____ Date: _____

Select one category in which the nominee's volunteer service most closely aligns:

___ Economic Opportunity
___ Education
___ Environmental Conservation
___ Disaster Preparedness/Response
___ Health
___ Veterans Affairs

If this nominee is a National Service Member, please select one program in which the nominee's volunteer service was performed:

___ Learn and Serve
___ AmeriCorps
___ Senior Corps

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Please complete the final questions and limit your responses to 200 words for each question.

Community Need(s): How has the nominee met an identified community need through volunteer service? (i.e. briefly describe the community need and the type of volunteer activity undertaken to meet the need(s))

Impact: What was the impact of the nominee's volunteer service on the community? (i.e. scope of services, short- or long-term efforts, and any measurable or demonstrated results from the volunteer's service)

Innovation: What innovative approach did the nominee take to meet the need(s) of the community? (i.e. what makes this nominee different, or special, in the method and strategy of volunteer service utilized?)

Sustainability: What steps has the nominee taken to assure continued service delivery in the community?