

# National Recognition Awards

In 1965, the ACA National Board of Directors established a means of paying tribute to those who make an extraordinary contribution to the advancement of the camp movement in the United States and who have played an important role in creating today's association. In 1991 the board updated all award criteria. Six recognition awards are currently presented at our national conference each year: the Distinguished Service Award, the Hedley S. Dimock Award, The Jack Weiner Award (approved in 2002), the Honor Award, the Service Award, and the Special Recognition Award. Another national award, the Eleanor Eells Award that honors outstanding programs, is also presented at that time.

## Nomination and Awards Procedures

1. All members of the association have the right to nominate people for ACA recognition awards.
2. To insure sufficient candidates, responsibility for nominations is held by the field/affiliate office presidents, field/affiliate office nominations chairs, and the national board of directors. Promotion of the awards and requests for nominations from all members will be done through Camping Magazine, Inside ACA, ACA Leadership, and field/affiliate office newsletters, as appropriate.
3. Deadline for ALL nominations is October 26th of each year. None will be accepted after this date. Nominations should be mailed to:  
Awards Committee Chair  
American Camp Association  
5000 State Road 67 North  
Martinsville, IN 46151-7902  
765-342-8456 fax 765-349-0301  
e-mail aca@ACAcamps.org
4. You may request additional forms from the national office or make photocopies of the forms in this packet.

***Summary of Recommended Revisions to the Criteria: This document is a revised version of the current criteria. It incorporates the recommendations already provided by the Awards Committee. Changes/additions are highlighted below.***

## Award Nomination Eligibility

### ***Distinguished Service Award***

The Distinguished Service Award is the highest honor afforded to members by the American Camp Association. Only one award may be given annually unless the committee agrees no candidate is available for that year. To qualify for nomination, the candidate must:

1. Be known for his/her outstanding service in the field. It should be easily recognized that no other award would do justice to the magnitude of the contribution of this nominee.
2. Exemplify the best in service, research, teaching or administration, plus noteworthy leadership within ACA.
3. Be over forty years of age.
4. Have been a member of the American Camp Association for a minimum of ten years.

### ***Hedley S. Dimock Award***

The Hedley S. Dimock Award is given to persons who have made significant contributions to camping through related fields. No more than two awards may be given annually, and the committee may agree no candidates are available for that year. Membership in ACA is not a requirement. To qualify for nomination, a candidate must:

1. Offer significant contributions to camp through related fields such as outdoor education, conservation, recreation, medicine, education, architecture, or the social sciences. Contributions or relationships can be administrative, legislative, professional, or have specific participation in local, state, or national program development.

### **National Honor Award**

The National Honor Award is designed to recognize meritorious service. No more than three awards may be given annually, and the committee may agree no candidates are available for that year. To qualify for nomination, a candidate must:

1. Be a current member of the association or former member who has retired from active participation in the field.
2. Have served in camp programs for a period of at least ten years.
3. Have high moral character, personal integrity, and exemplify a spirit of devoted service to the field.
4. Have made a noteworthy contribution to the advancement of camp through leadership and industry.
5. Have leadership and meritorious service that can be documented in at ~~least four~~ five of the following areas:
  - ~~Member of ACA National Board of Directors~~
  - President or Chair of an ACA field/affiliate office
  - Chair or member of a national ACA committee- or Board for a total of 2+ years
  - Field/affiliate office or region committee work for at least three years
  - Chair or member of a national or regional conference steering committee
  - ~~Employed staff of the association~~
  - Significant addresses before educational or recreational groups, conferences, radio and television presentations, and other meetings held in the interest and promotion of camp
  - Systematic research
  - Author or coauthor of at least one book on camp
  - ~~Author of at least five published articles by a magazine of national scope or brought out in monograph form~~
  - Articles in handbooks, newspapers, or magazines, blogs, social media, websites, etc -not covered above on a regional or national scope.

### **Jack Weiner Leadership Award**

The Jack Weiner Leadership Award is designed to support a young person who is pursuing a career in the camp field. The award ensures professional development by providing financial support for the recipient to attend and fully participate in the ACA national conference. No more than one award may be given annually. Membership in ACA is not required. To qualify for nomination, a candidate must:

1. Be eighteen to thirty years of age.
2. Demonstrate leadership within the camp community or field/affiliate office.
3. Have an interest in pursuing a career in camping.

### **Service Award**

The Service Award is designed to recognize continued and increasing service beyond the field/affiliate office level. No more than eight awards may be given annually. Any field/affiliate office may make a nomination. To qualify for nomination, a candidate must:

1. Be a current ACA member.
2. Have demonstrated service to one or more field/affiliate offices.
3. Be endorsed by two field/affiliate offices or a national board, committee, or national awards committee.

### **Special Recognition Award**

The Special Recognition Award is designed to honor groups, organizations, or individuals for their efforts to promote camp. No more than five awards may be given annually. The committee may agree no candidates are available for that year. To qualify for nomination, candidates must:

1. Have demonstrated efforts that have significance on a national level and do not fall into any other ACA award categories.

### ***Eleanor P. Eells Award for Program Excellence***

The Eleanor P. Eells Award for Program Excellence is designed to honor programs that:

1. Develop effective, creative responses to the needs of people and/or societal problems using the camp environment.
2. Encourage continued development of such ideas.
3. Stimulate the exchange of creative ideas.
4. Present to the public examples of positive contributions camp has made on the well-being of individuals and society.

Nominations are judged on creativity and imaginative planning; relevance to the needs of participants; involvement of the target participants in the planning or implementation; adaptability and potential for replication; cooperative efforts with other organizations, agencies, or camps; and, the program's ability to meet stated objectives. No more than six awards may be given annually. Membership in ACA is not required. To qualify for nomination, a program must (one or more):

1. Have been in operation for at least two years (planning and development time do not count).
2. Understand and make use of intergrouping — combining groups that have differences, e.g., physical abilities, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, religion, and home environment.
3. Develop programs suited to the needs and interests of teenage campers.
4. Broaden the range of services to persons with disabilities.
5. Emphasize awareness of interpersonal relationships and development of interpersonal skills.
6. Conduct continuing innovative and effective staff development programs.
7. Offer support activities or leadership that significantly expands the opportunities for human growth and enrichment through camping (for non-camp organizations).

### ***Other Awards***

Other awards that are given by affiliated groups within the association are the Speedy Altman Award, presented annually by the Association of Independent Camps at its kindred meeting; the Ernest F. Schmidt scholarship, presented to a leader within Boy Scouts of America; and Camping Magazine's J. Wendell and Ruth T. Howe Golden Quill and Lens Awards.

Special awards may also be given by ACA field/affiliate offices and regions.