

Great Eastern District -- District Award of Merit Suggestions for Submitting a Strong Recommendation

The District Award of Merit is the highest award that a District can bestow on a Volunteer. Annually, a Committee of prior award recipients, appointed by the District Chair, reviews nominations and selects awardees. Given the size of the district, it is possible that the only data this committee has concerning a particular nominee is the information contained in the nomination submission. Thus, it is very important that the nomination contain as much information as possible, to ensure the nominee gets appropriate consideration. The number of awards is governed by the number of units in the district. Currently, the Great Eastern District is authorized to award up to four awards in a program year. The suggestions in this document are intended to be of help in ensuring that nominations submitted to the committee are as strong as possible.

- First of all, remember the nomination is confidential. All information must be gathered without notifying the individual that he/she is being nominated. While this may make determining some information difficult, confidentiality is essential to avoid the possible disappointment that could result if a nominee knows they were nominated, but not selected.
- Remember that given the size of the district and the small number (up to five) of selection committee members, it is very possible that the only information the committee may have on the nominee could be that which is contained in the nomination.
- The nominee MUST be a currently registered Scouter. While this can be verified later, we suggest nominators ensure current registration to avoid spending time on an ineligible nomination. Registration status can be confirmed through the Council Office.
- Identifying Scouting recognition received by the nominee is important. To this end, it will most likely be necessary to consult with a number of persons who know the nominee. The more complete this information, the stronger the nomination. In addition, each of these individuals who are consulted should endorse the nomination and clearly identify their own Scouting experience -- see the note below on endorsements.
- Amplifying information, beyond the space allocated on the "one-page" nomination form is essential to a strong nomination. Strong nominations contain one or more "letters of endorsement", or one such letter signed by several individuals, showing support for the nominee. Again remember, the selection committee members may not know the nominee personally.
- Service to youth outside Scouting in particular, and community service in general is considered by the selection committee. While service outside Scouting is not a necessary condition for the award, any such service can make the nominee a stronger candidate. It is highly likely that the selection committee, even if they know the individual through Scouting, may be unaware of community service outside of Scouting. Thus, clear definition of the nominee's service in these areas can add to the strength of a nomination. Again, it may be necessary to consult several individuals to obtain this information. It is important to ask these individuals to maintain confidentiality throughout the nomination process, and again, their endorsement (with note of their own position in Scouting or other community service organizations) adds weight.
- As noted above, multiple endorsements carry weight. While the nomination process is not a "voting campaign" (whoever collects the most endorsements wins), endorsements by several individuals who know the nominee carry more weight than a nomination endorsed by a single individual. In particular, securing endorsements by prior recipients of the District Award of Merit carries weight, since such individuals are familiar with the award criteria.
- Review the requirements on the reverse side of the nomination form, and ensure that each has been addressed. In particular, pay attention to the requirement that "the nominee's attitude toward and cooperation with the district and/or council is to be taken into consideration." Examples demonstrating the nominee's attitude and cooperation in this arena make for a stronger nomination.

While incorporating the above suggestions does mean more time and thought need to go into a nomination, incorporating as many as possible makes the nomination stronger. And since strong nominations are the goal of both the selection committee and the nominator(s), this should be time well spent.