

West Point ARMY VOLUNTEER CORPS



VOLUNTEER AWARD NOMINATION TIPS

- Carefully review the criteria for the award to determine the appropriateness of the award for the person/organization you would like to honor.
- Remember your audience does not know anything about the nominee. The selection committee is relying on your words and examples to “see” your nominee’s attributes and contributions. Thorough explanations are key.
- Don't make the judge read through excessively flowery language to find the information you are trying to convey. Be direct and support what you have to say with observation and fact.
- Don't think you have to keep your nomination a secret or do it by yourself. Most people are highly flattered that a colleague thinks enough of them to nominate them for an award. Talk to your nominee. Ask them the questions and listen for information you can use to support your own thoughts and ideas. Call other colleagues and discuss the nominee with them. Call people that work for and with the nominee. Gather as much information and background as possible. Be accurate. Don't guess or generalize. Give specific examples to reinforce what you are saying. Give several examples to show patterns or professional growth over time.
- Address all parts of each question completely to assure the review committee has all the information they need to know about your nominee.
- Cite specific examples – use descriptive language (“is a terrific team player”) and then give a situation or example that shows the attribute.
- Avoid the use of too many pronouns and run-on sentences. The essay should be clear and easy to read.
- Make sure to proofread your statements. Grammatical errors and misspelled words detract from the quality of the nomination.
- Remember that the selection committee is reading many nominations and think about how you can present your nomination in a way that sets it apart from others. What makes this person outstanding? How have these accomplishments had an impact? Create a unique picture of your applicant. What makes him/her stand out from all the rest? Remember, longevity is often not part of the criteria. Consider how they have taken their position and made an impact, for the organization, the volunteers, and/or the community.
- Describe unique characteristics that are more than just what a great or nice person this nominee is. Choose one or two qualities that make this person truly outstanding and then give specific examples. Talk about difficulties the nominee may have faced and how the applicant dealt with them. Share personal skills such as listening, teambuilding, collaboration, creativity, and professionalism.