



## 2022 Volunteer Spirit Awards (April 8, 2022) Guidelines for Nominations

The **Volunteer Spirit Awards** celebration is the premier volunteer recognition event in our community attended annually by over 600 community leaders. Each spring, Volunteer New York! recognizes a distinguished group of volunteers who have done extraordinary work in our communities. Volunteers are nominated in six categories, and an independent panel of judges selects one person or group for each category.

We especially encourage nominations for volunteers who found new and innovative ways to serve our community in response to COVID-19. Please note that we anticipate celebrating with a hybrid event where all winners attend in-person at the Westchester Marriott in Tarrytown, however we will regularly review CDC guidance to ensure the health and safety of all honorees and guests. Information on this decision will be communicated to all honorees as far in advance as possible.

For additional information about the awards and view last year's virtual event, please visit [volunteernewyork.org/awards](https://volunteernewyork.org/awards).

If you would like to nominate a deserving volunteer for a 2022 Volunteer Spirit Award, please review the nomination guidelines before completing our online application form.

**Note: All applications must be received by Wednesday, November 17, 2021. Letters of support and other attachments are required to be submitted at the same time with nominations, otherwise they may not be accepted.**

1. Nominator will read the Guideline Nominations and confirm on the nomination form their understanding thereof.
2. Volunteer services, including remote due to COVID-19, must be performed in Westchester, Putnam, or Rockland Counties or affiliated with an organization/agency operating in one of these counties.
3. Nominee's volunteer efforts must benefit a nonprofit, and/or serve the community at large. Government agencies, hospitals and other agencies in Westchester, Putnam, or Rockland Counties, which require volunteers to fulfill their mission(s) are also encouraged to nominate their volunteers.
4. Religious, political, fraternal or professional groups providing service exclusively to their members are not eligible.
5. You may nominate only **one** outstanding volunteer or group per category. You may not enter the same volunteer or group in additional categories. Historically, the strongest candidates have been individual volunteers.
6. Nominations from previous years that were not selected can be resubmitted.
7. Volunteer service(s) may be performed on work-release time, without pay, and for student course credit. Reimbursement for expenses such as gasoline is allowed.

8. Sustained volunteer efforts are valued, but at least part of a nominee's volunteer action must have occurred within the previous 12 months.
9. Nominees cannot be selected as a winner for two consecutive years. Nor can the organization that benefits from the volunteer service win for two consecutive years.
10. Nominee must be aware of their nomination and willing/able to accept the honor if awarded, including preparing for and attending the Awards on Friday, April 8, 2022.
11. The awards committee reserves the right to reassign a category for any nominee.
12. Please adhere to the required character count. Additional attachments can be used to further demonstrate impact. We highly recommend providing at least one concrete example or story of the nominee's impact.
13. A maximum of **two** letters of support or other attachments may be submitted for each nominee. These are optional as an additional means to support a nominee.

## **Volunteer Spirit Award Categories**

### **Education and Literacy Award**

Honors volunteers dedicated to education and literacy through activities including, but not limited to, tutoring, adult literacy, library-based initiatives, early childhood education, and intergenerational programs.

### **Going Green Award**

Honors volunteers who work to protect and beautify our environment and natural surroundings, advocate for the preservation of our planet and strive to instill these values for our community.

### **Quality of Life Award**

Honors volunteers who work to improve the quality of life in the following areas, including, but not limited to, working to reduce illness, homelessness and poverty or assisting the disabled, elderly, and veteran populations, as well as those with substance abuse problems or mental disabilities.

### **Social Advocacy Award**

Honors volunteers who advocate for and support the righting of injustice in our community in areas such as, but not limited to, human rights, minority rights, domestic violence, housing, and job preparedness.

### **Resiliency Award**

Honors volunteers whose service for a cause or nonprofit has helped them overcome adversity or personal challenges, such as, but not limited to, intellectual or physical challenges, homelessness, incarceration, illness, or another life-changing event.

### **Youth Leadership Award**

Honors volunteers (age 21 years or under) her/his/their outstanding volunteer service for a cause or nonprofit.

\*All awardees will receive two complimentary guest tickets to the awards. Additional tickets and congratulatory journal ads will also be available for purchase for those who want to honor and celebrate the awardee and nominating organization.