



# College of ACES Alumni Association Award of Merit

Tips for Writing Successful Nominations



College of ACES Alumni Association  
Award of Merit

## Quick Tips for Writing Successful Nominations

### Before you start

- 🏆 The ACES Award of Merit recognizes the outstanding accomplishments of living University of Illinois College of ACES alumni who have excelled in their careers, leadership or service upon graduation from college. This may include examples of ways in which they have significantly enhanced or improved the lives of others. While the ideal candidate has had a successful career, they should demonstrate specific College of ACES and University involvement along with service to their community.
- ✿ Consider: Two letters of reference are required, including one from current or past U of I staff. Please don't use the letters to state what should be, or is already, in the application. The best letters simply give a brief personal story or endorsement of the nominee's excellence. Please provide a copy of the nominee's resume.
- 🕒 Don't be concerned with lengthy narratives, save time by simply including the facts.
- 🕒 Remember the candidate must be a graduate of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES) or a predecessor college receiving a bachelors, masters, and/or doctorate degree(s).
- 🎯 Your target: The nominee will be considered among a pool of highly-accomplished individuals. Your application needs to clearly and completely communicate their excellence and impact.



# Quick Tips for Writing Successful Nominations

College of ACES Alumni Association  
Award of Merit

## Scoring

- 🕒 The target: Scoring is based on a total of 100 points.
  - Two letters of Reference (2 points)
  - Narrative of endorsement (1 points)
  - Professional Achievements
    - Growth in career path (15 points)
    - Impact on others from their professional experience (10 points)
    - Impact on industry (10 points)
    - Leadership exhibited in profession (e.g. position on the organizational chart) (7 points)
    - Service to professional organization membership and roles (6 points)
  - Service to the University and College of ACES
    - Participation in activities (10 points)
    - Engagement with students or alumni (10 points)
    - Leadership exhibited supporting U of I or ACES (7 points)
  - Service to the community
    - Participation in activities (6 points)
    - Leadership exhibited (6 points)
    - Citizenship / humanitarian engagement (6 points)
  - Awards and Honors (6 points)
- 👉 Consider: If you have difficulty completing certain areas, ask the nominee for help. It's difficult to complete an application as a surprise, as it's hard for anyone to know the full story of another's career.
- 🕒 **Don't leave sections empty:** If there is nothing obvious to report in that section, dig into their career for something less obvious that can be considered.



# Quick Tips for Writing Successful Nominations

College of ACES Alumni Association  
Award of Merit

## Biographical Sketch

- 🎯 Your target: Provide a brief summary (1-2 paragraphs) of the nominee's accomplishments in professionalism/education, service to others and community. If the nominee is selected this will be used for the introduction.
- 💡 Consider: Be very concise as this is a high level summary. There will be other parts of the application to provide more specific details for consideration of the nominee's qualifications. *This section is not used for scoring purposes.*
- 🚫 Don't be lengthy, limit the summary to one to two paragraphs.

## Nominator's Narrative of Endorsement

- 🎯 Your target: Use the narrative to answer the question of why the alumni should be recognized. This section serves as a summary of why you personally believe this candidate has demonstrated outstanding accomplishments in professionalism, education, service to the University and College of ACES, and community.
- 💡 Consider: The several components to the nominee's accomplishments and contributions. Assist the reader in understanding the impact the nominee has had in your own words.
- 🚫 Don't add additional pages. This is limited to one page so provide the most impactful and specific examples.



# Quick Tips for Writing Successful Nominations

College of ACES Alumni Association  
Award of Merit

## ***Professional Achievements***

### Growth in career path

- ③ Use either a narrative or bullets to succinctly illustrate how the applicant has advanced in their career. This can be within a single organization or across different employers, but show how they clearly progressed. Sometimes this growth can be demonstrated by titles like intern to CEO. Other times this can be done more effectively by illustrating the increasing levels of impact.
- Include values: To assist with understanding the scope of the candidate's growth, please provide size of budget managed, production increases, expanded production, territory covered, sales achieved, number of persons managed, number of books/chapters/articles authored, etc.
- ③ Don't limit the growth to only titles. Give supporting descriptions to enhance the reader's understanding of their growth.



College of ACES Alumni Association  
Award of Merit

## Quick Tips for Writing Successful Nominations

### Impact on others from their professional experience

- 🎯 Include values where possible: Examples would include number of people managed, students mentored, lives changed or saved, etc.
- 🌱 Their impact may not only be quantitative (number of individuals impacted). In this case show the quality of those interactions. This may require more story-telling to explain how lives have been impacted.
- 🕒 Don't limit their impact to only recent history. Use examples throughout their career.

### Impact on industry

- 🎯 Explain how their work or discovery has influenced their industry: Include new products developed, improved environmental impact, lower cost alternatives, number of patents achieved, other specific awards or recognitions, etc.
- 🕒 Don't use internal company acronyms. Please ensure the audience understands the messaging clearly and plainly.
- 🕒 Don't use the same narrative as previous sections. This is only impact on the industry.



College of ACES Alumni Association  
Award of Merit

## Quick Tips for Writing Successful Nominations

### Leadership exhibited in profession

- 🏆 Successful applications commonly include individuals in leadership positions, including executive officers, college presidents/deans, or owners of successful businesses.
- 🕒 Use either a narrative or bullets to illustrate how the applicant has marched up through the organizational structure or advanced in their career.
- 🌟 Consider: if the nominee has stayed in a relatively stable role, leadership may be indicated by an expanded influence within that role.
- 🌟 If the nominee serves on boards for other businesses or corporations, this is an appropriate spot to indicate that leadership.
- 🕒 Don't use the same information in previous sections. This is specifically to demonstrate to the reader the leadership shown throughout the nominee's career.



## Quick Tips for Writing Successful Nominations

College of ACES Alumni Association  
Award of Merit

### Professional organization membership and roles

- ☉ Include leadership and service activities in professional societies, such as American Society of Agronomy, American Bar Association, American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers.
- ☛ Consider: Roles in organizations including committee participation, leadership roles, and charitable giving.
- ☉ Don't use community activities here, only professional societies and organizations and their service. Save community activities for the Service to the Community section of the application.



College of ACES Alumni Association  
Award of Merit

## Quick Tips for Writing Successful Nominations

### ***Service to the University of Illinois and College of ACES***

#### Participation in activities

- ③ Describe ways the nominee has been engaged or supported the University of Illinois or College of ACES since graduation.
- We understand deep engagement in a career may preclude a high level of activity back on campus. There are other ways a nominee may be involved including financial contributions, recruiting U of I or ACES students, speaking to classes, or engaging U of I researchers, etc.



## Quick Tips for Writing Successful Nominations

College of ACES Alumni Association  
Award of Merit

### ***Service to the University of Illinois and College of ACES***

#### Engagement with students or alumni

- 🕒 Describe ways the nominee has been engaged specifically with students or alumni.
- 🌐 Consider when the nominee has connected with students, alumni, or both. This can be anywhere in the world and doesn't have to be only on campus. Provide details so the reader can understand magnitude and impact.
- 🚫 Don't just count campus visits.

#### Leadership exhibited supporting U of I or ACES

- 🕒 Provide examples of other leadership exhibited outside of their professional achievements. This is leadership for service in support of the U of I or college of ACES.
- 🚫 Don't use previous examples.



# Quick Tips for Writing Successful Nominations

College of ACES Alumni Association  
Award of Merit

## ***Service to the Community***

### Participation in activities

- ⊗ Show impact: This should include activities like being a bell ringer for the Salvation Army Tree of Lights campaign, participating in Habitat for Humanity, or serving meals at the homeless shelter with your church.
- ✿ We realize leaders in industry may not have opportunities to be active in civic organizations, but this is an opportunity to share any community involvement to help differentiate the nominee.
- ⊗ Less impactful: Using coaching experiences for your own child's soccer team, attending Sunday School lessons or public service that is a part of your job description.



College of ACES Alumni Association  
Award of Merit

## Quick Tips for Writing Successful Nominations

### Leadership exhibited in community

- 🕒 Provide examples of other leadership exhibited outside of their professional achievements. This is leadership demonstrated in community or charitable organizations.
- 🕒 Don't use previous examples.

### Citizenship / humanitarian engagement

- 🕒 Show impact: While simply performing community service is valuable to the recipients, those serving often find it beneficial to pause and reflect on how they are changing society for the better. Demonstrate how the nominee is impacting society for the better. This could include service on the school, library, or park board, or being a volunteer leader for your local 4-H club, etc.
- 🕒 Consider, all ways the nominee has selflessly volunteered to improve their local or greater community.



College of ACES Alumni Association  
Award of Merit

## Quick Tips for Writing Successful Nominations

### Awards and Honors

- 🕒 Please share appropriate awards and honors the nominee has received throughout the different sections the application.
- 🌟 Consider: Use awards, honors, special recognitions as a way to build the impact the nominee has had on others.
- 🚫 It is less impactful to use the same award in multiple sections of the application.