



College of ACES Alumni Association
ACES Career Achievement

Tips for Writing Successful Nominations



College of ACES Alumni Association
Career Achievement Award

Quick Tips for Writing Successful Nominations

Before you start

- 🏆 The Career Achievement Award recognizes truly exceptional accomplishment in a professional career, whether in academics, industry, or humanitarian service.
Note: If your nominee's contributions are balanced to a successful career, as well as local and University involvement, consider the Award of Merit.
- ✿ 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 narrative, 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.



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Scoring

- ☉ The target: Scoring is based on a total of 100 points with 78 points coming from professional achievements and 15 points coming from service to others.
 - Two letters of reference (2 points)
 - Narrative of Endorsement (1 point)
 - Growth in career path (35 points)
 - Impact on others from their professional experience (15 points)
 - Impact on industry (15 points)
 - Leadership exhibited in profession (7 points)
 - Professional organization membership and roles (6 points)
 - Participation in community activities (5 points)
 - Engagement/support to the University of IL or College of ACES (5 points)
 - Citizenship/humanitarian engagement (5 points)
 - Awards and honors (4 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.



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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, limited the summary to one to two paragraphs.

Nominator's Letter 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.



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Professional Achievements

Growth in career path

- 🕒 Your target: 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, territory covered, sales achieved, number of persons managed, number of books/chapters/articles authored, etc. You should include honors and special recognitions when possible.
- 🕒 Don't limit the growth to only titles. Give supporting descriptions to enhance the reader's understanding of their growth.



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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.



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Leadership exhibited in profession

- 🏆 Winners will 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.



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Professional organizations membership and roles

- ③ 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 including the various professional organizations the nominee participates in and how they participate. Include various roles or offices held within the various organizations.
- ⊖ Don't use community activities here, only professional societies and organizations and their service. Save community activities for the Service to Others section of the application.



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Service to Others

Participation in community 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.
- ☛ Consider, all ways the nominee has selflessly volunteered to improve their local or greater community.
- ⊖ 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.



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Engagement/support to the University of IL or College of ACES

- 🕒 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.

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.
- 🚫 Don't use previous examples.



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Awards and Honors

- 🎯 Please share appropriate awards and honors the nominee has received.
- 🌟 Consider: Use awards, honors, special recognitions as a way to build the impact the nominee has had on others.
- 🌟 Awards and honors maybe displayed in chronological order or in order of prominence.
- 🚫 It is less impactful to use the same award in multiple sections of the application.