

NASCOE

Awards and Scholarships

Handbook

Booklet of Information & Instruction
(Revised August 2025)

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****The NASCOE scholarship and awards years shall be September 1 to August 31****

******* Associate members are not eligible for Distinguished Service Awards. *******

Distinguished Service Awards

This Program encourages recognition of NASCOE members who make outstanding contributions in the Areas of: Service to NASCOE; Service to FSA-Agriculture; or Service to Community. Nominations for these awards are competitive.

- State winners are eligible to be considered for Area winners. Area winners are eligible to be considered for the National winner in each category.
- Any member of the Association may make a nomination.
- A State approving official of the State Association (which may be the State Awards Chairperson) is required to certify the eligibility of the person being nominated.
- Members of the association in good standing that are members serving under a permanent appointment, members voluntarily retired, or an employee that converted to a GS employee position during the current NASCOE fiscal year are eligible to receive these awards. Eligibility requirements must be met by the January 15th deadline. National judges will have the final determination of any eligibility questions by the judging deadline of April 1st.
- Only members of a State Association which is affiliated with the National Association can be considered eligible at the Area and National levels.
- All current National Officers, National Honorary Officers, Area Executives, Alternate Area Executives, National Committee Chairpersons are ineligible for consideration of a Distinguished Service Award while serving in any of these capacities. Eligibility requirements must be met by the January 15th deadline. National judges will have the final determination of any eligibility questions by the judging deadline of April 1st.
- No member shall be awarded more than one Distinguished Service Award for the same action on the same level. This does not disqualify a member from receiving multiple Distinguished Service Award in one or more categories with different nominations, but rather prevents winning two or more awards with the same nomination on the same level.

Submitting Nominations

*****Nominations are available on the [NASCOE Website](#) under Awards & Scholarship Applications*****

All nominations shall be electronically submitted NO LATER THAN JANUARY 15 on the official nomination format provided on the [NASCOE Website](#).

The nomination form should furnish the following information:

- Name, address, email address, and telephone numbers of the nominee and nominator.

- Certification by an officer of the State Association that the nominee is serving under a permanent appointment and is in good standing.
- Award being recommended.
- Nomination information should be brief, factual and specific.

Area winner nominations will be returned to the Area winners by the National Awards chairperson once all Area winners have been selected. The Area winner in each category will have one week to include any additional information he/she deems beneficial prior to judging by the National Committee.

At the State level:

- Each State Association President shall designate an annual Selection Committee no later than **DECEMBER 15th**. The Committee shall have at least three (3), but not more than five (5), members or officers of the Association.
- If a State does not receive a nomination in a category, but the state did receive a nomination in that category the previous year (and that nomination did not win at the Area level), the state has the option of submitting the previous year's nomination in that category with the current year's nominations.
- The State Selection Committee shall select the most outstanding nomination in each of the three DSA categories no later than **FEBRUARY 15th**.

At the Area level:

- The Selection Committee shall be appointed by the Area Executive. The Committee shall have at least three (3), but not more than five (5), members or officers of the Association
- If an Area does not receive a nomination in a category, but the Area did receive a nomination in that category the previous year (and that nomination did not win at the National level), the Area has the option of submitting the previous year's nomination in that category with the current year's nominations.
- The Area Awards Committee shall select the most outstanding nomination in each of the three DSA categories by **FEBRUARY 20th**.
- If a tie vote occurs at the Area Level, the Area Chairperson shall break the tie by judging the applications that are tied.

At the National Level:

- The Selection Committee for judging DSA nominations at the National Level will be the Area Executives.
- If a nomination is from the Area Executive's own state, the Alternate Area Executive Committee Member will judge that category.
- In the event of a conflict of interest, the President shall designate someone else to judge that nomination.
- If a tie vote occurs at the National Level, the National Chairperson shall break the tie by judging the applications that are tied.
- The DSA nominations selected at the National Level shall, in the judgment of the Committee, be sufficiently outstanding to merit such honorary recognition. For this reason, the Committee may decline to select a winner in any category. The Committee is also authorized to initiate and select DSA winners on their own volition without the requirement of a formal nomination.
- The National Selection Committee shall make the National selections by April 1st.
- National DSA winners will be notified by April 1st and allowed to be recognized at events throughout the year prior to NASCOE Convention. Notification will come from the National Chair and include the state president, state awards chair, Area Executive, and Area Awards Chair.

DSA Area and National level presentations:

- Plaques for Area and National DSA winners will be ordered by the National Awards Chairperson and paid for by NASCOE. The Area plaques will be presented at the Area Rally and show the city of the Area Rally for the winning year, and National plaques will be presented at the National Convention and show the city of the National Convention for the winning year.
- At National Convention, the National President and the Awards Chairperson shall plan for the presentation ceremonies for National winners of the DSA's, including the presence of the award recipients.
- Each National recipient shall be paid the lesser of round-trip airfare from their respective home state capital purchased according to NASCOE travel policy or mileage to the site of National Convention. In addition to the above, \$250 shall be awarded to each winner to assist in defraying the cost of attending the convention. Reimbursement is provided to National recipients that attend the entire National Convention.
- Digital photographs shall be submitted by each Area and National winner to be displayed during the National Convention.

Sick Leave Awards

- Certificates are awarded to permanent employees who are NASCOE members and Associate members in good standing for accumulated sick leave. Sick leave awards are obtained when members accrue 1000 hours and are awarded in increments of 500 hours, up to 4000 hours accrued. These are to be from the NASCOE Awards Chairperson and presented at the Area Rally or National Convention.
- Medallions will be awarded to sick leave award recipients at the 2500, 3000, 3500, and 4000 hour levels.
- The State Awards Chairperson or NASCOE member should complete the awards submission on the [NASCOE Website](#) under Awards & Scholarship Applications.
- To qualify for this award, the member must have the accumulated sick leave hours in the respective category by the last pay period of the leave year.
- All Sick Leave Awards are to be submitted through the NASCOE Website by **July 1st**.
- Certificates shall be requested for shipping to Area Rally through the National Awards Chairperson 60 days prior to the Area Rally, or all certificates will be presented at the National Convention.

Herb Sorley First Timers Award

- Any NASCOE member that is attending their first NASCOE Convention is eligible to participate.
- The instructions to participate will be picked up from the NASCOE Awards Chair during the first break of the National Convention.
- First place winner will receive \$200, second place will receive \$100, and third place will receive \$50. These cash awards will be presented during the National Convention Banquet.
- This award was created in memory of Herb Sorley. He was from Texas and held numerous positions through TASCOE and NASCOE. He was also the convention co-chair in 2011 for the Corpus Christi, Texas NASCOE Convention. He always wanted everyone included and never met a stranger.

Scholarships

- All Scholarship applications must be submitted online no later than **January 15th** using the official application on the [NASCOE Website](#).
- Two Letters of recommendation and the most recent posted transcript shall be required to be submitted with the application no later than **January 15th**. *Applications submitted without these documents will be disqualified.*
- Scholarship applicants must answer all questions on the scholarship application portal. Each question must have an answer with a minimum word count of 50 words to be eligible.
- College/Trade School enrollment information, a Thank You letter, and a digital picture of Area winners shall be required to be emailed to the National Scholarship chair no later than March 15th. Upon receipt of the requested documentation, the National chair will forward those documents to the State Scholarship Chairperson and the Area Scholarship Chairperson.
- Scholarship money shall not be released until a Thank You letter to NASCOE, and a digital photo is received by the National Scholarship Chair for Area and National winners, then Chairperson will notify the NASCOE Treasurer for payment.
- For all scholarship purposes, NASCOE members are defined as full dues paying members.
- Associate members, their spouse, their children / legal dependents, or their grandchildren are only eligible for the Associate Member Scholarship.
- Scholarship applications submitted on the wrong form or without all proper documentation will be disqualified.
- The application must be certified as eligible by an Approving Official of the State Association.
- All applications received will be judged at the Area level by **February 15th**.
- Only Area winners will be forwarded to the National level for judging by **March 1st**.
- All sources of information concerning each applicant will be considered.
- **The awardee must satisfactorily complete at least one semester of schooling or return the money!**
- All scholarship applications are competitive, and all applicants will be evaluated based on:
 - **Ability:** This shall include both mental and physical factors which might affect the applicant's ability to benefit by further education. This will be judged by available school and health records, if applicable, and any other information which may reflect on the student's ability.
 - **Incentive Assistance:** All pertinent information relative to the student's desire to continue his/her education and to other financial resources available to meet the student's desire will be considered.
 - **Personal Characteristics:** Any other personal characteristics such as initiative industry, persistence, leadership ability, and personal and social adjustment which might affect student success will be considered.

Traditional Scholarship

- This award may only be used to defray expenses for a graduating high school senior or first-year college freshman enrolled as a full-time student with a minimum of 12 hours at an accredited college, university or trade school. Applicants must be a NASCOE member's child, or a member's legal dependent. The NASCOE member's dues must be paid, and membership kept current for the past 5 years, or if less than 5 years, continuous membership has been maintained since becoming a NASCOE member within the first 12 months of becoming a permanent employee. This scholarship can only be won once at the Area and National level.
- Once the Area winner has submitted a Thank You letter and a digital photo to the National Scholarship Chairperson, then the National Treasurer will distribute the Area winner the awarded \$1,500 in a one-time lump sum check.
- Once selected, the National winner will receive a one-time lump sum of \$2,500.

Open Continuing Education Scholarship

- This award may only be used to defray expenses for a 2nd year, 3rd year, 4th year, or graduate student continuing their education at an accredited college, university or trade school while carrying 6 or more credit hours per semester. Applicants must be a NASCOE member, member's spouse, member's child, member's legal dependent, or member's grandchild. The NASCOE member's dues must be paid, and membership kept current for the past 5 years, or, if less than 5 years, continuous membership has been maintained since becoming a NASCOE Member within the first 12 months of becoming a permanent employee. This scholarship can only be won once at the Area and National level.
- Once the Area winner has submitted a Thank You letter and digital photo to the National Scholarship Chairperson, then the National Treasurer will distribute the Area winner the awarded \$500 in a one-time lump sum check.
- Once selected, the National winner will receive a one-time lump sum payment of \$1,500.

Member Continuing Education

- The applicants must be a NASCOE member continuing their education at an accredited college, university or trade school. The NASCOE member's dues must be paid, and membership kept current for the past 5 years, or, if less than 5 years, continuous membership has been maintained since becoming a NASCOE Member within the first 12 months of becoming a permanent employee. The Member must be attending, or currently enrolled to attend, an accredited college or participating in a career advancement program designed to increase the skill set and further their employment abilities within the Farm Service Agency. This award can only be won once at the Area and National level.

- Once the Area winner has submitted a Thank You letter and a digital photo to the National Scholarship Chairperson, then the National Treasurer will distribute the Area winner the awarded \$500 in a one-time lump sum check.
- Once selected, the National winner will receive a one-time lump sum payment of \$1,500.

Continuing Education for Adult Children of Members

- This award may only be used to defray expenses for a member's adult child continuing their education as required or encouraged through their employer for 5 or less credit hours a semester. Applicants must be a member's child, member's legal dependent, or member's grandchild. The NASCOE member's dues must be paid, and membership kept current for the past 5 years, or, if less than 5 years, continuous membership has been maintained since becoming a NASCOE Member within the first 12 months of becoming a permanent employee. This scholarship can only be won once at the National level.
- Once the Area winner has submitted a Thank You letter and a digital photo to the National Scholarship Chairperson, then the National Treasurer will distribute the Area winner the awarded \$250 in a one-time lump sum check.
- Once selected, the National winner will receive a one-time lump sum payment of \$500.

Part-Time Scholarship

- This award may only be used to defray expenses for a high school junior or senior currently enrolled in concurrent classes OR a student taking classes to complete a certificate, associate, or bachelor's degree. Student must be enrolled in less than 12 hours at an accredited college, university or trade school. Applicants must be a NASCOE member's child, or a member's legal dependent. The NASCOE member's dues must be paid, and membership kept current for the past 5 years, or if less than 5 years, continuous membership has been maintained since becoming a NASCOE member within the first 12 months of becoming a permanent employee. This scholarship can only be won once at the Area and National level.
- Once the Area winner has submitted a Thank You letter, proof of tuition charges and a digital photo to the National Scholarship Chairperson, then the National Treasurer will distribute the Area winner the awarded \$125 in a onetime lump sum check.
- Once selected, the National winner will receive a one-time lump sum payment of \$250.

Grandchildren Scholarship

- This award may be used to defray expenses for a student continuing their education enrolled at an accredited college, university or trade school while carrying 12 or more credit hours per semester. Applicants must be a member's grandchild. The scholarship application will be submitted and judged by the state the NASCOE member is employed. The NASCOE member's dues must be paid, and membership kept current for the past 5 years, or, if less than 5 years, continuous membership has been maintained since becoming a NASCOE Member within the first 12 months of becoming a permanent employee. The evaluation criteria are based on ability, incentive assistance, and other personal characteristics. This scholarship can only be won once at the Area and National level.

- Once the Area winner has submitted a Thank You letter and a digital photo to the National Scholarship Chairperson, then the National Treasurer will distribute the Area winner the awarded \$250 in a one-time lump sum check.
- Once selected, the National winner will receive a one-time lump sum payment of \$500.

Associate Member Scholarship

- This award may only be used to defray expenses for an associate member, an associate member's spouse, an associate member's child, grandchild or legal dependent enrolled as a student with a minimum of 6 hours of enrollment at an accredited college, university or trade school. The NASCOE Associate member's dues must be paid, and membership kept current for the past 5 years. This scholarship can only be won once at the Area and National level.
- Once the Area winner has submitted a Thank You letter and a digital photo to the National Scholarship Chairperson, then the National Treasurer will distribute the Area winner the awarded \$250 in a one-time lump sum check.
- Once selected, the National winner will receive a one-time lump sum payment of \$500.

Vocational Scholarship

- This award may only be used to defray expenses for a graduating high school senior or first-year college freshman enrolled as a full-time student at a vocational, technical, or trade school. Vocational schools include a form of education that is designed to teach students the valuable skills they need to perform a particular task or job, usually in a practical training that focuses on a single field. Applicants must be a NASCOE member's child, or a member's legal dependent. The NASCOE member's dues must be paid, and membership kept current for the past 5 years, or if less than 5 years, continuous membership has been maintained since becoming a NASCOE member within the first 12 months of becoming a permanent employee. This scholarship can only be won once at the Area and National level.
- Once the Area winner has submitted a Thank You letter and digital photo to the National Scholarship Chairperson, then the National Treasurer will distribute the Area winner the awarded \$250 in a one-time lump sum check.
- Once selected, the National winner will receive a one-time lump sum payment of \$500.

Awards and Scholarship Judges

At the State Level:

- Each State Association President shall designate an annual Selection Committee no later than **December 15th**. The Committee shall have at least three (3), but not more than five (5), members or officers of the Association.
- The State Selection Committee shall select the most outstanding nomination in each of the scholarship categories no later than **February 5th**.

At the Area level:

- The Selection Committee shall be appointed by the Area Executive. The Committee shall have at least three (3), but not more than five (5), members or officers of the Association.
- The Area Scholarship Committee shall select the most outstanding nomination in each of the scholarship categories by **February 15th**.
- If a tie vote occurs at the Area Level, the Area Chairperson shall break the tie by judging the applications that are tied.
- The National chair shall be notified of the Area winners for each category no later than **March 1st**.

At the National Level:

- The Selection Committee at the National Level will be the Area Executives.
- If an application is from the Area Executive's own state, the Alternate Area Executive Committee Member will judge that category. In the event of a conflict of interest, the President shall designate someone else to judge that nomination.
- If a tie vote occurs at the National Level, the National Chairperson shall break the tie by judging the applications that are tied.
- Digital photographs of the National and Area winners will be displayed at the National Convention along with their applications.
- The National Selection Committee shall make the National selections by **April 1st**.

Scholarship Auction Guidelines

Area Rally Scholarship Auctions

Area Rally scholarship auction proceeds will be split with 75% going to the host state or states and 25% going to the NASCOE scholarship fund. If the host state does not currently have a scholarship fund, the host state will have the option to begin scholarship program with the rally proceeds or the whole amount will be donated to NASCOE.

National Convention Scholarship Auctions

The National Convention scholarship auction proceeds will be split with 75% going to the NASCOE scholarship fund and 25% going to the host state's scholarship fund. If the host state does not currently have a scholarship fund, the host state will have the option to begin a scholarship program with the convention proceeds or the whole amount will be donated to NASCOE.

THIS BOOKLET IS INTENDED TO PROVIDE INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES FOR THE NASCOE AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS PROGRAM. THESE PROGRAMS DO NOT REPLACE, ALTER OR CIRCUMVENT THE EXISTING FSA TRAINING OR AWARDS PROGRAMS. NASCOE'S RECOGNITION PROGRAM IS IN ADDITION TO THE FSA PROGRAMS. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT ANY OF THESE PROGRAMS, CONSULT YOUR STATE, AREA, OR NATIONAL CHAIRPERSON.