

# awards tips

## Tips for Successful Nominations

Following are a few hints to help you prepare your award nominations:

### **Be professional.**

Use Adobe® Reader™ or Acrobat™ to fill out the nomination forms electronically, or use a typewriter on a hard copy, rather than filling them in by hand. Typewritten forms are more professional as well as easier to read. Proofread and spell-check your nomination forms and all supporting materials thoroughly.

**NOTE: Use Adobe® Reader™ version 8 or later in order to save your entries.**

### **Get help from experts.**

Consider hiring a professional writer and/or proofreader to compose and edit your nomination documentation. Concise, well-written documents will go a long way in making sure your nominees stand out.

### **Follow the instructions!**

Make sure you have fulfilled all the nomination requirements. Each nomination requires one to two form pages explaining how the nominee meets the criteria. Not including or completing this reflects poorly on your nominee.

### **Talk about the outcome rather than the process.**

The details of how a mission was accomplished are not as important as the benefits and changes it produced.

### **Read the criteria carefully.**

Be aware of all the criteria required for the award, listed at the top of each nomination form. Give specific examples of what the nominee has done. Stay focused on the topic at hand.

### **Use the checklist.**

On the back of each nomination form is a checklist provided to ensure that you have included everything you need to include, such as region approval, criteria explanation pages and supporting documentation.

### **Choose supporting materials wisely.**

You may attach two pages of supporting documentation (five for Robert E. Kelly) to each nomination form, such as letters of support or newspaper articles. If you feel that to do your nominee justice you must include an extra page or two, you can do so. However, only a reasonable number of pages of supplemental material will be submitted to the Awards Committee, so take the time to consider what will have the greatest impact.

### **Submit nominations on time.**

Nominations received by state ACSA after the deadline may not be considered eligible or submitted to the Awards Committee.

### **Generate continuity.**

Develop a binder or file for your district or region in order to store successful nomination forms from past years, list contacts, save tips and provide a record of consistency and success.

### **Review nominations.**

Have someone review every nomination one last time before you submit to your region or to state ACSA. Imagine you are reading as many as 450 nomination forms – what makes your nominee(s) stand out? Does the nomination fully convey how outstanding they are?

### **Follow up.**

Make sure your nomination forms have been received on time. Send the nominations via Fed Ex/UPS and track the delivery, or request that the state awards committee liaison call or email to confirm that they received your nomination(s) by the deadline.

## Pitfalls to Avoid

- Handwritten nomination forms
- Incomplete nomination forms
- Supplemental documents with spelling or grammatical errors
- Including too many pages of supplemental documents
- Including documents that do not clearly communicate a nominee's excellence
- Nominating non-ACSA members for awards requiring membership for eligibility
- Omitting the required form pages explaining how the nominee meets the criteria
- Nominating current ACSA Board members
- Missing the state ACSA deadline
- Submitting nominations that have not been signed by a region president or designee
- Sending the completed nomination forms to an old or incorrect contact at ACSA – the correct address is available online at [www.acsa.org/awards](http://www.acsa.org/awards)

## Online Awards Information

Award information, tips, resources, FAQ and downloadable nomination forms are available online at: [www.acsa.org/awards](http://www.acsa.org/awards).