

GENERAL AVIATION AWARDS TIPS FOR WRITING A NOMINATION

Arlynn McMahon, 2009 National CFI of the Year, gives a few tips on your nomination. Here's your chance to make sure that those who have done so much get the recognition they deserve.

- 1) **Start early.** Don't wait until the last minute. It might take your nominee time to accept the idea of being nominated. It will take time for letters of recommendation to be received, and it will certainly take time to polish, tweak and re-work your nomination package.
- 2) **Use all available resources!** Refer to the document *About Your Aviation CV* to see a sample. Contact us if you get stuck or need encouragement. We won't do the work for you, but it might help to speak with a previous National Honoree as someone who has been through the process. Review the *Nominations Processing Guidelines* to understand the process. Resources are available at www.generalaviationawards.com.
- 3) **Don't surprise your nominee.** Only the nominee can provide detailed information that will make your application authentic and complete. Host a meeting and invite a few friends – make it fun. Interview your nominee and take notes. He may not like “tooting his own horn” so be prepared to draw him out.
- 4) **Help judges “know” your nominee.** Include enough personal information so that your nominee's personality, work ethic, integrity or other positive traits are self-evident. Make it easy for judges to find him interesting and appealing. Make your nominee stand out as unique and special conveying professionalism.
- 5) **Use bullet points.** Don't craft beautiful paragraphs – judges love information in easy-to-read bulleted lists. Don't assume that judges understand what is implied. Offer WHAT was done and WHY it was important and HOW it impacted pilots, planes, the airport, the flight school or the general aviation community at large. Get details. Give facts. Be specific. Be concise but complete. Include dates of accomplishments and any quantifiable results.
- 6) **Judges look for aviation-citizens;** for leaders; for experienced people who can be role models. Judges focus on professional activities outside of the job, continuing education and pro-bono service to the aviation industry. The highest scores go to those with sustained, superior performance and long-reaching contributions to aviation safety, education, and professionalism but focus on activities within the **last five years**. This is an “of the year” award and not a lifetime achievement award.
- 7) **Include measurable results.** Where possible, include measurable results (Examples: 1,500 people attended the safety meeting, student starts increased 20%, five years of accident/incident flying, etc.).
- 8) **Beyond the call of duty.** Include specific ways your nominee went above and beyond normal responsibilities of the job in professional activities, continuing education and pro-bono service to the aviation community.
- 9) **Finish early.** Don't wait until the last minute to submit your application. Give our verifiers the time needed to review your application. If a component is missing, you may get a one-time chance to resubmit the entire package again, before the deadline. Combine all pages into one document to ensure nothing gets lost.
- 10) **Keep recognizing.** OK, so your nominee doesn't win big this year. Most people don't. Try again next year. If you submitted a nomination last year, revise it citing most recent, specific examples, and – resubmit it! It only shows the nominee's sustained performance.
- 11) The average national-winning nomination is between 50 and 75 pages. If yours is more than 75 pages, you've gone overboard. Reduce bulk to just facts. On the other hand, if yours is less than 25 pages you haven't given enough information and examples for judges to choose your nominee to stand on the national stage - but it is more than enough to qualify for local recognition and appreciation. Visit www.generalaviationawards.com. Read the guidance materials and begin. If you get stuck, reach out to us for help.