



State University of New York

Memorandum to Presidents

Date: January 12, 1981 Vol. 81 No. 1

From: Office of the Chancellor

Subject: Guidelines for the Awarding of the Distinguished Citizen Awards by the Board of Trustees of State University of New York

At the September 24, 1980 meeting of the Board of Trustees of State University, the Board approved the establishment of a Distinguished Citizen Award whereby the Trustees will honor citizens of the State of New York who exemplify the highest standards of public service. At that time, we were requested to develop the guidelines for the implementation of this program.

I am now pleased to bring to your attention the attached set of guidelines and invite your suggestions for individuals you consider to be eligible for this Award. I would appreciate it if you would forward such suggestions and supporting documents to Miss Martha J. Downey, Secretary of the University, State University Plaza, Albany, New York 12246 by March 9, 1981.

I would like to emphasize that in order to maintain the strictest of confidentiality, the Trustees have urged that the campuses and systemwide constituencies avoid structuring the process whereby suggestions are solicited. This attention to the matter of confidentiality is most important in order to avoid unwarranted expectations on the part of individuals recommended and embarrassment of any of the parties concerned.

The suggestions will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees Distinguished Citizen Awards Committee, and the Awards will be presented during the Chancellor's Forum in Cooperstown on May 7 and 8, 1981.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Clifton R. Wharton, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Clifton R. Wharton, Jr.
Chancellor

Attachment

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This memorandum addressed to:

Members, Board of Trustees of State University
of New York
Presidents, State-operated Campuses
Presidents, Community Colleges
Deans, Statutory Colleges
Chairmen, College and University Councils and
Boards of Trustees
President Neville
Vice Provost Spencer
President, Association of Boards of Trustees of
the Community Colleges of State University of
New York
President, Association of Council Members and
College Trustees of State University of New York
President, Faculty Council of Community Colleges
President, SUNY Confederation of Alumni Associations
President, Student Assembly of SUNY
President, University Faculty Senate
Executive Council, Central Administration

Guidelines for the Awarding of the Distinguished
Citizen Awards by the Board of Trustees of
State University of New York

PURPOSE

The Board of Trustees of State University of New York created the Distinguished Citizen Awards Program to provide recognition to persons whose unselfish devotion of time and energies to make New York State or a community within the State a better place in which to live exemplifies the service aspect of the University's motto, "To Learn-To Search-To Serve." The Board believes that while the many formal award programs which the University has instituted to acknowledge the significant achievements of individuals in an academic setting are exceedingly important, the Board should also have a program to honor individuals who take on public service commitments as a personal, civic or professional responsibility to public needs beyond the classroom and the laboratory.

ELIGIBILITY

1. A candidate for the Distinguished Citizen Award must have performed the public service in the State of New York or have his or her primary residence or business in this State. The public service may have been performed on a full-time professional basis and/or as a voluntary activity.
2. Suggestions of holders of elective or appointive public office will be accepted; however, to be considered, nominees should have particularly outstanding records.
3. Persons having an affiliation of any kind with the University are eligible, but since this particular award is not designed to recognize outstanding contributions to the University, recommendations of such individuals must document significant public service contributions outside of the University community.

CRITERIA

1. There must be positive and specific evidence that the candidate has made significant contributions of public service on a Statewide and/or local basis in such areas as cultural, educational, business, philanthropic, civic, religious or social service activities.
2. There must be specific or unusual evidence that the candidate's contributions exemplify the highest standards of public service and are in direct relationship to the public good.

THE NATURE OF THE AWARD

1. Persons who win a Distinguished Citizen Award will be appropriately recognized at an annual ceremony, the date and place of such to be announced each year by the Board of Trustees.
2. Presence of the recipient at the ceremony to receive personally the award is a condition of its bestowal.
3. An award may be given posthumously in the event that a recipient dies following notification of selection.
4. The "Distinguished Citizen Award" itself will be a plaque bearing the name of the recipient and the Chairman of the Board and the Chancellor.

NUMBER OF AWARDS

Not less than three and no more than five Awards will be made each year.

PROCEDURES WHEREBY SUGGESTIONS WILL BE RECEIVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND PROCEDURES WHEREBY AWARD RECIPIENTS ARE SELECTED

1. There is no formal nomination process. Suggestions for the Award may be made by anyone affiliated with State University and should be forwarded to the Secretary of the University, State University Plaza, Albany, N.Y. 12246. In order to maintain the strictest of confidentiality, the Trustees urge that the campuses and systemwide constituencies avoid structuring the process whereby suggestions are solicited, i.e., the forming of committees, etc. This attention to the matter of confidentiality cannot be emphasized too strongly. It is designed to prevent unwarranted expectations on the part of individuals recommended and embarrassment to any of the parties concerned. The support file for any suggested candidate should include:
 - a. A summary paper describing how the candidate meets the criteria and any additional information which demonstrates why he or she merits the award.
 - b. A resume of the candidate or a descriptive account of his or her background, including mailing address and telephone number.
 - c. Copies of any citations, awards or other tangible acknowledgement of the candidate's contributions, such as feature articles in newspapers or magazines.

2. a. Nominations will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees Distinguished Citizen Awards Committee, which will consist of three members of the Board. The Secretary of the University will serve as Secretary to the Committee.

b. The Chairman of the Committee will submit the Committee's final list of recommendations on a confidential basis to the full Board, which will make the final selection of Award recipients.

c. The Chairman of the Board will communicate with the prospective Award recipient to invite the nominee to accept the Award.

January 2, 1981