

# 2026 NIRSA Achievement Awards

**Application Deadline:** November 12, 2025

There are four awards under the NIRSA Achievement Awards umbrella:

- [William N. Wasson Student Leadership & Academic Awards](#)
- [Horace Moody Awards](#)
- [Regional Award of Merit](#)
- [NIRSA Annual Service Awards](#)

*If you haven't already, please read the 2026 updated eligibility and selection criteria for each award so that you can prepare the strongest nomination possible. You can find specific award information, including eligibility and selection criteria, at [nirsa.net/awards](https://nirsa.net/awards).*

What to expect in this nomination form:

- Step 1: Provide your information as the nominator.
- Step 2: Select the award you are nominating for.
- Step 3: Provide information for your nominee(s).
- Step 4: Provide a nomination letter and, if desired, upload additional letters of support. Additional letters are optional and not required for consideration.

If you have any questions or encounter difficulties with this form, please reach out to [leadership@nirsa.org](mailto:leadership@nirsa.org).

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\* Indicates required question

1. Email \*

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## Nominator Information

Please provide your contact information. If any additional information about your nominee is needed, or your nominee does not fit the award eligibility or criteria, we will contact you.

2. First Name \*

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3. Last Name \*

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4. Institution/Organization \*

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5. Phone \*

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## Award Selection

Full award descriptions, along with eligibility and selection criteria details, can be found on the webpages below. Please use these webpages to ensure you create the strongest nomination possible.

### [William N. Wasson Student Leadership & Academic Awards](#)

This award recognizes top students in collegiate recreation who participate in or are employed by the Department of Recreational Sports.

**Updated Eligibility for William N. Wasson Awards:** Applicants must meet all of the following criteria to be nominated.

- Be a full-time undergraduate or graduate student at a college or university at the time of nomination, or have graduated within the same academic year in which the award is given.
  - If the nominee has graduated and is no longer enrolled at the time of nomination, a letter from a member of the institution's campus recreation staff must be submitted with the nomination materials. This letter should confirm that the nominee graduated during the same academic term as the award nomination.
- Be actively involved with their school's Recreation Department through student employment, participation, or volunteering.
- Undergraduate and graduate nominees must hold a current NIRSA membership at the time of nomination.
- Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale or 3.75 on a 5.0 scale.
- A student may only receive this award once per academic level (i.e., once as an undergraduate and once as a graduate student).

### **Updated Selection Criteria for William N. Wasson Awards:**

- Scholarship or professional development through research, honors, self-improvement, continuing education, certifications, presentations, participation in professional organizations (e.g., internships, NIRSA membership, CPR/First Aid).
- Involvement in department service through participation in student organizations, employee/campus recreation advisory board representative, committee work, community/campus activity, or leadership in employee training or orientation programs, etc.
- Campus or community involvement through volunteerism.
- Promotion or participation in campus diversity as demonstrated through inclusion, recruitment, and/or retention of diverse student populations into recreational sports programs, through participation in orientation, multicultural affairs, or related programs.

### [NIRSA Annual Service Awards](#)

This award recognizes up to six professional members, up to three student members, and up to two groups for their outstanding contributions to NIRSA and the field of collegiate recreation.

**Updated Eligibility for the NIRSA Annual Service Award:**

The NIRSA Annual Service Award recognizes one-time or cumulative contributions at the Association level. For the 2026 awards cycle, the eligibility period for recognized service will be expanded to account for the reality that meaningful volunteer work that impacts the Association may span longer than a one-year period of time.

***The work of the nominee or group must have occurred between May 1, 2023 and April 30, 2025.***

To be eligible for nomination, the individual or group member must meet all the following criteria:

- Nominee must have a current NIRSA membership at the time of nomination and have been a member for all or part of the term of service recognized by the award.
- Have not previously received a NIRSA Annual Service Award for the same contribution.
- Nominee must be a member in good standing and be in alignment with the [NIRSA Member Code of Ethics](#).

**Updated Selection Criteria for the NIRSA Annual Service Award:**

To illustrate how your nominee or group exemplifies outstanding service to NIRSA, please describe how your nominee or group contributed to one or more of the following areas during the past two years.

- Significant contribution and involvement in leadership and development of NIRSA programs, policies, publications, strategic values/priorities, or the Association's administrative or financial structure.
- Significant contributions made to the Association that directly impact a NIRSA-sponsored tournament or educational event; accomplishment of a NIRSA-endorsed special project/assignment; or service in a student leadership role within NIRSA.
- Significant contributions made to the Association in the form of written publications or presentations (virtual or in-person).

**[Horace Moody Award](#)**

This award recognizes one professional member from each NIRSA region who has made a lasting difference in mentoring students and guiding them in their professional development.

**Updated Eligibility for the Horace Moody Award:**

- Nominations must come from a student or professional who is either a current or former NIRSA member.
- Nominee must have a current NIRSA professional membership at the time of nomination and have been a member for all or part of the term of service recognized by the award.
- Nominee must not have received this award within the last two years in the same region.
- Nominee must be a member in good standing and be in alignment with the [NIRSA Member Code of Ethics](#).

**Updated Selection Criteria for the Horace Moody Award:**

Exceptional nominees should have contributed to student mentorship in one or more of the following ways during the past year.

- Active participation in Regional Student Lead-Ons.
- Active participation in the Emerging Recreational Sports Leadership Conference.
- Presenting student-focused activities or educational sessions at the annual NIRSA Conference or state/regional conferences and workshops.
- Serving in a volunteer or leadership role at NIRSA Champ Series events.
- Mentoring students who are exploring or pursuing careers in recreation and wellbeing, serving as a guide and role model for the profession.

### **Regional Awards of Merit**

This award recognizes one professional member from each NIRSA region who demonstrates exceptional performance or dedication to NIRSA or the field of collegiate recreation on a state or province-wide or regional basis.

#### **Eligibility for the Regional Awards of Merit:**


- Hold current membership in NIRSA.
- Have held continuous membership in NIRSA for five years preceding the nomination for award.
- Have worked or resided in the region during the period of time for which the award is based.
- Receive a nomination from a current member of the individual's region.
- Be a member in good standing and exemplify standards of ethical behavior, consistent with the [NIRSA Member Code of Ethics](#).

*It is recommended that the regional representative for each region not be nominated strictly because they occupy that position and the award is to recognize other contributions made to the region or state.*

#### **Selection Criteria:**

- Leadership of a pioneering nature in the formulation or development of regional/state/provincial activities.
- Significant contributions to the establishment, development or operation of a NIRSA endorsed regional or state/provincial conference, workshop or tournament.
- Significant contributions to the cultivation of individual or institutional NIRSA membership within the state/province or region.
- Extraordinary dedication or creativity exhibited as a member of a regional/state/provincial NIRSA committee.
- Significant contributions to NIRSA publications, media presentations or special projects conducted on a regional or state/provincial wide basis.
- Significant contributions to the implementation of the Association's affirmative action objectives, conducted on a regional or state/provincial wide basis.

6. For which award are you submitting a nomination? \*

 Dropdown

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ William N. Wasson Student Leadership & Academic Awards      *Skip to question 17*
- ☐ Regional Awards of Merit      *Skip to question 7*
- ☐ Horace Moody Award      *Skip to question 7*
- ☐ NIRSA Annual Service Award: Individual Nominee      *Skip to question 7*
- ☐ NIRSA Annual Service Award: Group Nominee      *Skip to question 14*

### Individual Nominee Information

Please provide information for the individual you are nominating.

7. First Name \*

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8. Last Name \*

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9. Title \*

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10. Institution \*

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11. Email \*

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12. NIRSA Region \*

 Dropdown

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ I

☐ II

☐ III


☐ IV

☐ V

☐ VI

☐ Canada

13. Number of years in recreation profession \*

 Dropdown

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ 0-5

☐ 5-10

☐ 10+

*Skip to question 31*

### **NIRSA Annual Service Award - Group**

Please provide information for your group nominees. Nominate those individuals from the group who made the strongest contributions to the distinguished work of the committee.

14. Group Title: \*

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15. Group Member Names: \*

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16. Group Member Emails (if known):

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*Skip to question 31*

### **William N. Wasson Student Leadership & Academic Awards**

17. Wasson Nominee's First Name \*

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18. Wasson Nominee's Last Name \*

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19. Wasson Nominee's Institution \*

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20. Wasson Nominee's Title \*

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21. Wasson Nominee's Email Address \*

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22. Wasson Nominee's NIRSA Region \*

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ I

☐ II

☐ III

☐ IV

☐ V

☐ VI

☐ Canada

23. Indicate student status and check all applicable boxes: \*

*Check all that apply.*

☐ Undergraduate student

☐ Graduate student (must be a NIRSA member)

☐ December 2024 graduate

☐ Spring 2025 graduate

☐ Full-time status

☐ Part-time status

24. Declared Major \*

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25. Please provide their overall GPA \*

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26. Please provide the GPA scale used (ex: 4.0 or 5.0) \*

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27. Scholarship & Professional Development: What is your nominee's approach to development opportunities? Do they participate in professional organizations? Do they seek out continuing education?

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28. Leadership: How does your nominee demonstrate leadership within and outside of the recreation department? How engaged are they in advisory boards, committees, organizations, etc.?

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29. Campus Involvement & Volunteerism: What volunteering/community service opportunities & initiatives does your nominee participate in, either in the recreation department or other campus/community areas?

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30. Recruitment & Retention: How does your nominee actively promote campus and community involvement for the recreation program with the goal of including, recruiting, and/or retaining a diverse student population? Do they volunteer for rec department activities?

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*Skip to question 31*

## Nomination Letters

Please provide your nomination letter and attach up to three additional letters of support below. Letters of support are optional but can improve your nominee's chances of receiving an award. *When writing your nomination letter, please refer to the Selection Criteria listed on the [Awards website](#) and make sure those criteria are addressed in your letter.* Awards committee members use those criteria to rank the nominations.

A strong nomination will include details and be as specific as possible. Examples of potential details to include are dates of service, committees served on, leadership roles and attributes, contributions to the Association, etc. Find tips on how to write a good nomination at [nirsa.net/nirsa/awards/writing-a-nomination](http://nirsa.net/nirsa/awards/writing-a-nomination).

31. Nomination Letter

Required with submission of nomination.

Files submitted:

32. Letter of Support #1

Files submitted:

33. Letter of Support #2

Files submitted:

34. Letter of Support #3

Files submitted:

35. May these nomination letters be shared with the nominee after the award recipients have been chosen?

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*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Yes, share the letters as I have provided them.
- ☐ Yes, share the letters anonymously.
- ☐ No, please do not share these letters with the nominee.

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