

Department Americanism Committee
Americanism Awards
September 2019

The Americanism Awards has been updated for clarity on eligibility and the types of documentation needed for judging. By these revisions we hope that more Counties nominees will be submitted on the various categories. We feel that giving out the Americanism Award plaques to the respective winning departments, we are increasing the visibility of the American Legion and could help our membership growth.

We are looking towards the future by including some of the requirements from the American Legion National awards (currently Law Enforcement and Fireman of the Year Award). National's goals on these Americanism awards is to select a well-rounded nominee who has exceeded, above and beyond the duty requirements expected of their position and has demonstrated a distinct pattern of community service coupled with professional achievement. National judging is based on community service, professional career, heroism and documentation such as letters of recognition, newsletter clippings, etc. Documentation must show proof that the submission occurred during the specified period.

Here are some of the changes that have been made for each award:

- * **Legionnaire Individual Awards** has been consolidated into two awards - Dept Distinguished Service and Dept Medal of Valor Award.
- * **Post Awards** has been consolidated into two awards - Dept Community Service Post Award which requires a detailed Post report on the project/event being submitted and the Dept Americanism Post Award.
- * We created a separate award - **First Responders Lifetime Achievement Award**. We moved the continuous service of the year award for firefighters and law enforcement officers from their original award to the new First Responders Lifetime Achievement award and submissions can also include nominees from the emergency medical services and unarmed public safety fields.
- * **Law Enforcement of the Year Valor Award** consolidated the NJ Law Enforcement and NJ State Police into one award - individual or team from any law enforcement unit. Moved the continuous service award to the lifetime achievement award. In the event of a tie, we will consider the off-duty community service documentation that has been recognized by their respective department.
- * **Firefighter of the Year Valor Award** - Moved the continuous service award to the lifetime achievement award. In the event of a tie, we will consider the off-duty community service documentation that has been recognized by their respective department.
- * **Emergency Medical Services of the Year Award:**
Revise the EMT/Team of the Year Award to include non-certified EMT members that are members of the EMT/First Aid Responder Squad Team and change the name to the Emergency Medical Services of the Year Award. In the event of a tie, we will consider the off-duty community service documentation that has been recognized by their respective department.
- * **Unarmed Public Safety Personnel of the Year Valor Award:** has been revised for better judging and has given more examples of qualified nominees. In the event of a tie, we will consider the off-duty community service documentation that has been recognized by their respective department.
- * **Educator of the Year** has been expanded to include two awards - one award for the educator and the second award for a team of educators working together to promote Americanism programs to the students.
- * **Spirit of Americanism Award:** A newly nominated Award as of December 16, 2017. The award submission requires a recommendation letter from the community, School, Youth Organization or Veteran(s) who benefitted from the service or event.
- * **Good Samaritan of the Year Award:** A newly nominated Award as of December 16, 2017. The award submission requires a recommendation letter from a Community member or family member describing the nominee(s) act of heroism and a letter from the sponsoring Post explaining why they should be considered for this award.

If your county's submission for any one of the Americanism awards has been selected the winner, we will need a short bio and picture of your candidate asap. Thank you.