How to Write a Winning Sammies Nomination

WHAT WE LOOK FOR IN NOMINEES

SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENT
• Articulate how the nominee’s work benefits our nation.
• Accomplishments may relate to a specific event or reflect the cumulative results of many years of work on a particular challenge or mission.
• Be sure the primary focus of the nomination is on the nominee’s work as a federal employee, and not on his or her volunteer or military service outside the agency.

INNOVATION
• What is bigger, better, more effective or more efficient than what has been done before?
• Has the nominee developed a new model or process adopted agency-wide or in the private sector?
• Perhaps he or she is leading collaboration between agencies or departments where it did not occur before.

LEADERSHIP
• How does the nominee achieve results from his or her team?
• Does the nominee help recruit and inspire the next generation of agency employees?
• Does he or she mentor younger employees to help them advance and take on new challenges?

COMMITMENT TO PUBLIC SERVICE
• What inspired the nominee to work in government or perhaps leave another sector to take a federal job?
• Has he or she remained committed to government service despite more lucrative opportunities?

WHAT WE LOOK FOR IN NOMINATIONS

SIMPLICITY
• Be sure the nomination explains the nominee’s role in achieving the stated accomplishment.
• Avoid acronyms or insider jargon.
• Assume our review teams have little expertise or familiarity with specific topic areas.

ATTENTION-GRABBING HEADLINES
• Capture the reviewer's attention in the first few sentences with bold statements about what the nominee has done.
• Start with the conclusion or outcome of the nominee’s work and fill in the details behind it.
• Read profiles of past honorees at servicetoamericamedals.org to use as models for writing the nomination.

GOOD REFERENCES
• Include a supervisor or higher level official who can verify the nominee’s employment status and give the agency’s stamp of approval.
• Include someone who really knows the nominee, can verify the nomination details, and help us better understand the true nature and scope of the accomplishment. This person may also be a beneficiary who can personally speak to value of the nominee’s work.
• Consider name recognition. If possible, include an agency head, corporate representative or foundation head. This person might not have a personal relationship with the nominee, but is willing to give a strong endorsement.

PERSONAL TOUCHES
• Sometimes a good human interest story—either about the nominee or the community he or she serves—helps advance the nomination.
• What inspired this person to pursue his or her field of work?

QUANTIFY THE ACCOMPLISHMENT
• If possible, include numbers that demonstrate the significance of the nominee’s work or accomplishments, such as the number of participants or recipients, or the amount of money or energy saved.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT US:
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