



USNA Alumni Association *Thriving As Leaders* Award Program Guidelines

Effective 9-24-24

The USNA Alumni Association *Thriving As Leaders* Award program was established in 2024 to honor Association members who have distinguished themselves and brought credit upon the community either through distinct acts of achievement or through volunteer service and leadership. Through the example of their achievement, leadership, and service, these members bring to life the Alumni Association mission to recognize and honor members who are “thriving as leaders.”

Purpose of the Thriving As Leaders (TAL) Award

The purpose of the award is to recognize the exemplars who are "thriving as leaders in and out of uniform" through outstanding achievement, volunteer leadership, and service who inspire others in our community toward greater heights of achievement. Over time, the program should serve to elicit community-wide recognition for the great variety of endeavor pursued by our members. Qualifying achievements and volunteer service and leadership for these awards may or may not directly benefit the alumni community, though all qualifying achievements, service and leadership must be of the nature to bring credit upon the alumni community.

Categories of Annual TAL Awards

Two categories of TAL awards are bestowed annually:

- 1) The Alumni Outstanding Achievement (AOA) awards:
 - a. Athletic achievement in professional athletics (Pro Athlete Award).
 - b. Athletic achievement in amateur athletics (Amateur Athlete Award).
 - c. Professional (non-athletic) achievement in paid work.
- 2) Volunteer Leadership and Service (VLS) award in volunteer or pro-bono work.

A third category of TAL award – the Superintendent’s Outstanding Alumni Performance (SOAP) award – is not an annual award and is described later in these guidelines.

Description of Annual TAL Awards

1. Alumni Outstanding Achievement (AOA) Awards

Description. The Alumni Outstanding Achievement (AOA) award is given annually to up to three living USNA alumni whose achievements have made a distinctive contribution to the field, industry, or organization in which the achievement takes place and brings credit to the alumni community. Any member of the Association in good standing can nominate any living USNA alumni. Awardees are selected by the Alumni Association Board of Trustees and the Athletic and Scholarship Programs Board of Trustees. Each year, up to three AOA awards will be granted, up to one in each of three categories of achievement:



1. Athletic achievement in professional athletics.*
2. Athletic achievement in amateur athletics.
3. Professional (non-athletic) achievement in paid work.

* The selection committee may select two amateur athlete or one professional and one amateur athlete in a given year.

AOA-Athletic awards are intended to recognize acts of athletic achievement that:

- 1) Are noteworthy within the nominee's athletic community, professional or amateur;
- 2) Occurred over a 5-year span of their athletic career;
- 3) Are a significant achievement among USNA alumni and in athletics;
- 4) Evoke a feeling of esprit de corps among fellow alumni.

AOA-Professional (non-athletic) awards are intended to recognize acts of achievement in the course of professional (non-athletic) work. The intent is to recognize acts of achievement that:

- 1) Are noteworthy within the profession of the nominee;
- 2) Are a significant achievement among USNA alumni;
- 3) Evoke a feeling of esprit de corps among fellow alumni;
- 4) Are an act of achievement rather than a span or career of achievement;
- 5) Are an important contribution or benefit to the nominee's organization or profession at the time of the achievement.

Eligibility. USNA alumni are eligible for a single AOA award in their lifetimes. The qualifying achievement must clearly demonstrate how the awardees are "thriving as leaders" in the spirit of the mission of the Alumni Association. Distinguished Graduate Award recipients are not eligible for these awards. Once an individual is recognized for any of the awards of this instruction, they are ineligible for additional TAL awards in any category.

Nominating committee members who select awardees are not eligible for these awards until two years after they have served as committee members.

Nomination Procedure. The Association staff will solicit AOA award nominations from Association members via the [online form](#). Nominations may be submitted at any time; all nominations submitted or resubmitted by 1 July are considered for that calendar year's award. Any Association member in good standing may nominate any USNA alumni for the AOA award. Self-nominations for these awards are not permitted.

Nominees will be considered up to three times in a four-year period. If a nominee is not selected after a third nomination, they are ineligible for future consideration.

For a nominee who is not selected to be considered in a future award cycle, that nominee must be renominated. All nominations will be screened by Association staff for background and eligibility and turned over to the appropriate selection body by 15 July of each year.

Selection Procedure. AOA-Athletic Award category will be selected by the Athletic and Scholarship Programs Board of Trustees awards committee and approved by the Alumni Association Board of Trustees. The A&SP Board of Trustees governs the process it uses to select this awardee.



The AOA-Professional/Non-Athletic category will be selected by the Alumni Association Board of Trustees nominating committee and approved by the Alumni Association Board of Trustees.

In each calendar year, up to three achievement awards can be conferred:

- Up to one Pro Athlete award.
- Up to one* Amateur Athlete award.
- Up to one AOA-Professional/Non-Athletic award.

* If in any given year the A&SP selection committee decides not to confer an athletics award in the professional athletics category, it has the option to confer up to two awards in the amateur athletics category.

For the AOA-Professional (Non-Athletic) award, the nominating committee may choose to identify, along with the selectees, up to three honorable mentions. Honorable mention achievement will be highlighted in communications channels as appropriate in that same award. Once selected as an honorable mention, the awardee becomes ineligible for future consideration for these awards. Honorable mentions will not be identified for athletics awards.

2. Volunteer Leadership and Service (VLS) Award

Description. The Volunteer Leader and Service (VLS) award is given to living Association members, including non-voting members, whose volunteer leadership and service have made a distinctive contribution to those served and brings credit to the alumni community. Qualifying service may occur in support of a specific cause or causes, or cumulatively across a lifetime of volunteer service. No more than one VLS award is conferred in each calendar year.

VLS awards are intended to recognize leadership and service in the course of volunteer or pro-bono work for which the nominee receives no remuneration.

Qualifying leadership and service must:

- 1) Be noteworthy within the community or communities being served;
- 2) Be an important contribution or benefit to the community or communities being served;
- 3) Evoke a feeling of esprit de corps among fellow members.
- 4) In the case of non-voting members of the Alumni Association, the qualifying leadership and service must benefit the alumni community.

Eligibility. All Association members, including non-voting members, are eligible for a single VLS award in their lifetimes. Distinguished Graduates Award recipients are not eligible for the VLS award. Once an individual is recognized for any of the awards of this instruction, they are ineligible for additional TAL awards in any category. The qualifying service must have been provided without remuneration for the nominee and clearly demonstrate how they are “thriving as leaders” in the spirit of the mission of the Alumni Association.

Nomination Procedure. The Association staff will solicit VLS award nominations from Association members via the [online form](#). Nominations may be submitted at any time; all nominations submitted or resubmitted by 1 July are considered for that calendar year’s award.



Any Association member in good standing may nominate any other Association member for the VLS award. Self-nominations for these awards are not permitted.

Nominees will be considered up to three times in a four-year period. If a nominee is not selected after a third nomination, they are ineligible for future consideration.

For a nominee who is not selected to be considered in a future award cycle, that nominee must be renominated. All nominations will be screened by Association staff for background and eligibility and turned over to the Alumni Association nominating committee by 15 July of each year.

Selection Procedure. VLS awardees will be selected by the Alumni Association Board of Trustees nominating committee and approved by the Alumni Association Board of Trustees.

In each calendar year, up to one VLS award can be conferred:

The nominating committee may choose to identify, along with the selectee, up to three honorable mentions in the VLS category. Honorable mention leadership and service will be highlighted in communications channels as appropriate in that same award cycle. Once selected as an honorable mention, the awardee becomes ineligible for future consideration for these awards.

Thriving As Leaders Calendar Year Awards Nomination, Selection and Announcement Timeline

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
NLT 1 June	Chair precept letter provided to nominating committee chair for calendar year AOA and VLS award selection.
1 July	Nomination window closes for CY AOA and VLS awards. Staff review of AOA and VLS nominations for background and eligibility. Nominating committee convenes for calendar year TAL award selection.
15 July	Nominating committee begins review of nominations for AOA-Professional/Non-Athletic and VLS awards. A&SP awards committee begins review of nominations for AOA-Athletic awards.
NLT 1 September	Nominating committee chair provides names of selectees for AOA-Professional/Non-Athletic and VLS awards to BOT Chair, President, and Secretary.



A&SP Board of Trustees chair provides name of selectee for AOA-Athletic awards to BOT Chair, President, and Secretary.

Mid September	BOT vote to approve selectees
Late September	BOT Chair notifies/congratulates selectees for AOA and VLS awards. Nominating committee chair notifies nominators of non-selects for AOA and VLS awards.
Early October	Announcement of selectees to all Alumni Association & Foundation boards and class, chapter, SIG, and club leadership. Selectees publicly announced.
October/November	Communications plan executed for TAL awardees.
December	Ceremony and related events.



Superintendent's Outstanding Alumni Performance (SOAP) Award

Description. Superintendent's Outstanding Alumni Performance (SOAP) award is a TAL award conferred once during each USNA Superintendent's tour at the Naval Academy. It is awarded to an alumnus or alumna on the USNA faculty or staff who has best *thrived as a leader* during that tour. No more than one SOAP award is conferred in any Superintendent's tour. This means the SOAP award is conferred at most every four years.

Eligibility. SOAP awardees must be living USNA alumni who have served on the USNA faculty or staff for at least a portion of the selecting Superintendent's tour. The qualifying performance should clearly demonstrate how the awardee "thrived as a leader" in the spirit of the mission of the Alumni Association.

Nomination Procedure. As developed by USNA staff, based on eligibility criteria above.

Selection Procedure. As developed by USNA staff. The USNA Chief of Staff is asked to provide the Superintendent's selectee to the Board secretary for the Alumni Association Board of Trustees no later than September 1st of the proposed year of selection.

SOAP Award Nomination, Selection and Announcement Timeline

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
NLT 1 March	Superintendent notifies AA Board of Trustees Chair of intent to select a SOAP awardee in current calendar year TAL award cycle.
NLT 1 September	Superintendent's Chief of Staff provides name of SOAP selectee to BOT Chair, President, and Secretary.
Late September	Superintendent notifies SOAP awardee of selection, to coincide with notification of annual TAL awardees.
Early October	SOAP awardee included in announcement of TAL award selectees to all Alumni Association & Foundation boards and class, chapter, SIG, and club leadership. Selectees publicly announced.
October/November	SOAP awardee included in communications plan executed for TAL awardees.
December	SOAP awardee included in TAL award ceremony and related events.