

The 2026 Alumni Awards for the NCCU Alumni Association

Welcome to the 2025–2026 NCCUAA Alumni Awards Season. This year, we elevate our celebration of Eagle excellence with a Hollywood-inspired, red-carpet experience under the theme: Lights. Legacy. Leadership.

This theme reflects the brilliance of our alumni community and leaders whose legacy is defined by service, innovation, and resilience. Like stars on a premiere night, our alumni step into the spotlight as examples of how 'Truth and Service' continue to shine across generations. Through these awards, we honor not just individual achievements but also the collective story of NCCU alumni who soar, lead, and inspire.

Awards Season Timeline

The Eagle Preview: **September 25th, 2025**

Public release of award packet
Awareness campaign with award spotlights
Info sessions for nominees and chapters

The Eagle Awards Season Kickoff: **November 1st, 2025**

Official opening of the nomination window

The Eagle Landings & Announcements

Alumni Founder's Award: The Legacy Award

- The Eagle Landing: January 8, 2026
- Announcement: February 14, 2026

Recent Graduate Award: The Rising Eagle Award

- The Eagle Landing: February 13, 2026
- Announcement: Awards Night, June 2026

Truth & Service Award: The Truth & Service Champion

- The Eagle Landing: February 13, 2026
- Announcement: Awards Night, June 2026

Volunteer of the Year Award: The Impact Award

- The Eagle Landing: March 13, 2026
- Announcement: Awards Night, June 2026

Distinguished Alumni Award: The Trailblazer Award

- The Eagle Landing: March 13, 2026
- Announcement: Awards Night, June 2026

Alumnus of the Year Award: The Eagle Excellence Award

- The Eagle Landing: April 10, 2026

- Announcement: Awards Night, June 2026

Chapter of the Year Award: The Chapter Innovation Award

- The Eagle Landing: May 15, 2026
- Announcement: Awards Night, June 2026

What is The Eagle Landing?

The Eagle Landing represents the official closing date for nominations in each award category. Just as every Eagle eventually returns to the ground after soaring, this date marks the final opportunity for nominations to be received.

Important Note: All nominations must be submitted via email to awards@nccualumni.org by 11:59 p.m. on the date of The Eagle Landing to be considered. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Award Categories and Criteria

Alumni Founders' Award (Lifetime Achievement): The Legacy Award

Why it Matters: This award serves as the pinnacle of recognition within NCCUAA. It honors alumni who have carried the Eagle spirit across decades, weaving Truth and Service into every part of their lives. Their legacy reminds us that alumni are not only keepers of history but also architects of NCCU's future.

Who it Celebrates: Alumni whose lives stand as a living legacy and mentors who poured into others, leaders who consistently represented NCCU with pride, and visionaries whose influence reshaped communities.

Criteria:

- Must be financially active at the national level for at least 10 years
- Sustained financial contributions to NCCU in the past 5 years
- Demonstrated mentorship and intergenerational leadership
- Notable civic, cultural, political, or societal achievements
- Narrative or testimony reflecting Truth and Service submitted by the nominator and at least one community or organization impacted by the nominee

Recent Graduate Award: The Rising Eagle Award

Why it Matters: Greatness does not wait. This award celebrates young alumni who are already creating waves of impact within their first decade after graduation. They remind us that the Eagle legacy thrives when fresh voices bring energy, innovation, and resilience to today's challenges.

Who it Celebrates: Alumni within 10 years of graduation who are rising stars in their fields and communities and dreamers who act, innovators who disrupt, and leaders who embody Eagle pride from the very beginning of their journey.

Criteria:

- Undergraduate degree from NCCU within the past 10 years
- Must be financially active at the national level for at least 1 year
- At least 2 years of alumni involvement at the chapter, regional, or national level
- Evidence of innovation, creativity, or advocacy
- Documentation of impact (photos, projects, initiatives)
- Letters of support confirming leadership potential

Additional Note: There will be up to four awards presented in this category — one winner representing each region.

Truth & Service Award: The Truth & Service Champion

Why it Matters: This award affirms that true leadership is often humble, quiet, and deeply rooted in service. It honors those whose consistent work uplifts others, sustains traditions, and embodies the motto of Truth and Service. Impact isn't measured in applause but in lives touched.

Who it Celebrates: Alumni who are the backbone of the association and their communities and those who say “yes” without hesitation, carry responsibilities behind the scenes, and embody service without expectation of recognition.

Criteria:

- Consistent grassroots action aligned with NCCU’s mission
- Behind-the-scenes contributions that advanced initiatives
- Commitment to service without seeking recognition
- Testimonies from at least 2 individuals or groups impacted
- A 350-word narrative capturing dedication to service provided by the nominator

Eligibility Clarification: Nominations may be submitted for alumni regardless of their financial status with the alumni association. This expands our reach to alumni who may not currently be affiliated with a local chapter, while also increasing awareness of alumni engagement and creating opportunities for future membership growth.

Additional Note: There will be up to four awards presented in this category — one winner representing each region.

Volunteer of the Year Award: The Impact Award

Why it Matters: The Impact Award shifts focus from hours served to the outcomes created. It elevates service that transforms communities and builds opportunities. By honoring measurable results, this award amplifies the belief that Eagles don't just serve time — they change lives.

Who it Celebrates: Alumni who see service as a calling and responsibility, rolling up their sleeves to create lasting transformation in their communities.

Criteria:

- Minimum 30 volunteer hours annually outside elected duties
- Evidence of measurable outcomes (growth, funds, participation)
- Story of transformation resulting from service
- At least one testimony from a direct beneficiary

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Distinguished Alumni Award: The Trailblazer Award

Why it Matters: NCCU has always produced pioneers, and the Trailblazer Award keeps that tradition alive. It celebrates those who open doors, redefine what is possible, and elevate the Eagle name on state, national, and international stages.

Who it Celebrates: Alumni who are firsts, innovators, or bold leaders whose courage, creativity, and conviction have elevated their personal journey while advancing NCCU's visibility.

Criteria:

- Must be financially active at the national level for at least 8 years
- Recognition at community, state, national, or global level
- Evidence of pioneering efforts in profession or civic engagement
- Documentation of awards or significant achievements
- Biography highlighting cultural pride and resilience
- Evidence of mentorship or advocacy that opened doors for others

Alumnus of the Year Award: The Eagle Excellence Award

Why it Matters: This award honors alumni who are the lifeblood of NCCUAA, giving their time, talent, and treasure to keep the Eagle spirit strong. Excellence is not a moment but a consistent pattern of leadership and contribution.

Who it Celebrates: Alumni who embody Eagle pride by uplifting chapters, communities, and the national association through sustained service and civic leadership.

Criteria:

- Must be financially active at the national level for at least 5 years
- Leadership roles in chapters or NCCUAA nationally
- Organization of major initiatives or events
- Contribution or fundraising of at least \$1,000
- Documented civic or cultural impact within the fiscal year
- One-page overview of contributions and leadership style

Chapter of the Year Award: The Chapter Innovation Award

Why it Matters: The strength of NCCUAA lies in its chapters, and this award celebrates those that are not only thriving but also innovating. It reflects the belief that alumni engagement must evolve to meet the needs of new generations while honoring tradition.

Who it Celebrates: Alumni chapters that push boundaries in fundraising, events, and engagement while sustaining the Eagle spirit.

Criteria:

- Report outlining chapter goals, achievements, and membership growth
- Evidence of creative engagement (digital, hybrid, or collaborative events)
- Documented participation in regional and national activities
- Support of Mister and Miss NCCU Alumni Campaign by entering a contestant or submitting the associated fee
- Supplemental materials: photos, financials, reports, testimonials, video reel
- Demonstrated sustainability and long-term focus

Submission Guidelines

- Compile all nomination materials into a single PDF
- Email to awards@nccualumni.org with subject line: "2026 Award Nomination – [Award Name] – [Nominee Name]."
- Include cover sheet, documentation, testimonies, and required narratives.
- Late submissions will not be accepted after The Eagle Landing.