

OFFICE OF STUDENT
ENGAGEMENT

AWARDS GALA

a tradition of leadership

SAVE THE DATE

APRIL 15, 2024

6:00PM

GRAND BALLROOM

The Western Illinois University Office of Student Engagement (OSE) will host the 2024 Student Awards Ceremony on Monday, April 15th at 6pm in the University Union Grand Ballroom.

Through these awards, the OSE acknowledges outstanding student leaders and organizations from across campus who have exemplified what it means to be a leader and a Leatherneck. You are able to nominate an organization, advisor, and/or individual student for various awards.

Nominations will be accepted until Sunday, March 17th, 2024.

These letters can be for the same student/advisor/organization or multiple. A maximum of 3 letters per nomination (student/organization/advisor) can be accepted for each award.

Awards are submitted via Leatherneck Link

Here is a full list of the awards available this year:

The William E. Brattain Award*

The W. Garry Johnson Award for Excellence in Student Governance*

The Gordon A. Taylor Student Leadership Award*

The Ralph H. Wagoner Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service on Behalf of WIU

The Ronald D. Gierhan Award for Outstanding Quiet Influence by an Individual

The Patience Thomas Emerging Student Leader Award

Outstanding Executive Board Member in an Organization

Outstanding Student Organization Advisor (up to three)

Outstanding Student Organization (up to three)

Most Improved Student Organization

Inclusive Community Award

Advancing Social Justice by an Individual Award

Advancing Social Justice Program Award

Outstanding Community Service by an Organization

Outstanding Philanthropy by an Organization

Outstanding Marketing & Social Media

Outstanding Collaborative Program

Outstanding Student Program

*Students nominated for one of these awards will be considered for all three.

The William E. Brattain Award

The William E. Brattain Award was established to give recognition to an outstanding student who has shown excellence in academic growth and achievement. Nominees should hold a minimum of a 3.5 cumulative GPA and be a senior who will graduate in May, August, or December 2024. In addition to their academic accomplishments, nominees should have shown outstanding contributions to the WIU campus and Macomb community through leadership and participation in various activities and organizations. The overall quality of the contributions made by the student will be taken into consideration along with the presentation of those contributions to the awards committee. Past nominees may be considered for this award again if they have not already won the Brattain, Taylor, or Johnson leadership awards.

Dr. Brattain served as the Director of the University Union for over twenty-four years and is a former Associate Vice President for Student Services at Western Illinois University. He was active in providing leadership opportunities for hundreds of students who saw success in their campus activities. Additionally, Dr. Brattain served as the chair of the Board of Directors for the National Association of Campus Activities and authored the textbook *The Administration of College Unions and Campus Activities*. Aside from his professional duties, Dr. Brattain was very active in community leadership and service. He has served as the chair of the Carl Sandburg Community College Board of Trustees and served on the Bureau of Cultural Affairs and the Performing Arts Society. During his tenure at Western Illinois University Dr. Brattain served as one of the leaders in constructing the first new building made exclusively for student use, the Donald R. Spencer Student Recreation Center.

The recipient of this prestigious award will be announced at the annual Leadership Awards Ceremony and at a special lunch for the recipient and his/her parents/guardians prior to commencement. The recipient's name will also be engraved on a nameplate that is displayed on a permanent plaque on the University Union Wall of Honor.

Nominators will be required to upload a letter of nomination to [Leatherneck Link](#)

The W. Garry Johnson Award for Excellence in Student Governance

The W. Garry Johnson Award for Excellence in Student Governance recognizes five (5) graduating seniors (May, August, December 2024) showing excellence in a student governance organization on campus (Student Government Association, Inter-Hall Council, Student Tenant Union, Black Student Association, Latin American Student Organization, Inter-Fraternity Council, Panhellenic Council, United Greek Council, and/or International Friendship Club). Recipients will be selected based on their proven leadership abilities, their input on various campus issues, and their dedication to bettering Western Illinois University's campus community. Nominations will also be reviewed on the quality and depth of a nominee's work on campus as opposed to the number of activities in which the nominee has been involved. Additionally, this award is not intended to be based on academic achievement but GPA will be taken into consideration if there are two or more candidates with equal qualifications. Past nominees may be considered for this award again if they have not already won the Brattain, Taylor, or Johnson leadership awards.

W. Garry Johnson served as Vice President for Student Services and Adjunct Associate Professor of Counselor Education and College Student Personnel at Western Illinois University until his retirement in 2011. Previous to being appointed Vice President, Garry served as Associate Vice President for Student Services, Assistant Vice President for Student Services-Student Life, and Director of Residence Life at Western. Prior to coming to Western, he served as Assistant Director of Housing at the University of Missouri-Columbia. He received his B.A. (1970) from the University of Southern Colorado in Physical Education and History and his M.S. (1972) and Ph.D. (1982) degrees from the University of Missouri-Columbia in Counseling Psychology with a support area in group dynamics. He teaches graduate courses at WIU in Group and Organizational Effectiveness, Issues in Higher Education, Special Problems in College Student Personnel: Budgeting in Student Services, Organization and Administration of College Student Personnel Services, and Higher Education in the United States.

The recipient of this prestigious award will be announced at the annual Leadership Awards Ceremony. The recipient's name will also be engraved on a nameplate that is displayed on a permanent plaque on the University Union Wall of Honor.

Nominators will be required to upload a letter of nomination to [Leatherneck Link](#)

The Gordon A. Taylor Student Leadership Award

The Gordon A. Taylor Student Leadership Award recognizes outstanding leadership and accomplishments within registered student organizations and clubs. This award, also known as the James M. Grigsby Student Leadership Award, is awarded to five (5) graduating seniors (May, August, December 2021) who have made substantial contributions to their respective organization by not only holding a leadership position but by stepping above the minimum requirements of their position. Additionally, applicants will be reviewed based on the overall quality of their contributions to their organization, not simply the quantity. Past nominees may be considered for this award again if they have not already won the Brattain, Taylor, or Johnson leadership awards.

Gordy Taylor served Western Illinois University for over 35 years, serving as the director of Western's award-winning alumni program for 28 of those years. During his tenure, WIU received numerous awards from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). The awards included recognition for student involvement programs, specific alumni awards and the grand gold award for overall alumni programs in 1994. In addition, Gordy also initiated the WIN (Western Illinois Now) alumni fundraising program.

Although Gordy retired in 2006, he still continues to serve Western Illinois University as well as the Macomb community. Gordy still conducts interviews with people from the surrounding area on WIUTV3, Western's student-run television station, and also does motivational speaking. Additionally, he continues to put in countless hours into making Western Illinois University a better institution and Macomb a better place to live through various community service and charity events.

The recipients of this prestigious award will be announced at the annual Leadership Awards Ceremony. The recipient's name will also be engraved on a nameplate that is displayed on a permanent plaque on the University Union Wall of Honor.

Nominators will be required to upload a letter of nomination to [Leatherneck Link](#)

The Ralph H. Wagoner Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service on Behalf of WIU

This award will be given to an individual who has demonstrated outstanding and extensive volunteer service to Western Illinois University, the Macomb community, and the surrounding area. Nominees will be reviewed on criteria such as their proven personal growth through giving back to their community and the extent of their work. The quality of the volunteer service will be taken into consideration in addition to the quantity. Additionally, nominees should have exhibited care and respect through their work with others and encouraged others to give back to their community as well.

Dr. Ralph Wagoner served Western for seventeen years; ten years as the Vice President for Public Affairs and Development and seven years as President. He was highly involved in community affairs and served as a Board Member for the Macomb Area Chamber of Commerce and served on the Macomb Area Industrial Development Corporation as well. Dr. Wagoner believed strongly in the development of positive relationships between the University and the Macomb community and enthusiastically promoted volunteerism to the community and his students.

The recipient of this prestigious award will be announced at the annual Leadership Awards Ceremony. The recipient's name will also be engraved on a nameplate that is displayed on a permanent plaque on the University Union Wall of Honor.

Nominees will be reviewed on the following criteria:

- Utilization of community service as a means of personal growth
- Involvement in meaningful community service outreach
- Their level of care and respect for others in the campus and local community
- How they have inspired others to act within the campus community

The Ronald D. Gierhan Award for Outstanding Quiet Influence by an Individual

The Ronald D. Gierhan Award for Outstanding Quiet Influence by an Individual is given to a student who has served as a quiet influence within an organization on campus. The nominee does not have to be one that has held an executive office, but through their commitment and interaction within the organization has made a significant difference. The quality of their contribution will be taken into consideration over the quantity of activities in which they have been involved in.

Nominees will be reviewed on the following criteria:

- The impact they have had on their organization through the creation of new ideas, services, and programs
- Utilization of a team atmosphere in his/her role in the organization
- Their level of personal growth through their experiences and reflection on co-curricular and extracurricular activities.
- Ability to lead by example
- Their demonstration of personal commitment through a significant dedication of both time and energy to the organization

The Patience Thomas Emerging Student Leader Award

The award will go to a student in the first three semesters with an organization who demonstrates a strong potential to be a quality student leader on campus through their commitment to their respective student organization(s). Nominees are not required to hold a leadership position within their respective student organization(s), and they will be evaluated based on the quality of their impact on other students and their organization(s).

Nominators will need to provide the following information:

- List of all the organizations the nominee is involved with on campus and how long they have been involved with each
- Examples of how the nominee is making an impact on other students and their respective student organization(s)
- Explain the leadership skills/qualities/abilities the nominee is currently developing and how those skills will help them become a strong student leader

Outstanding Graduate Assistant Practitioner

This award will recognize a Graduate Assistant who has made a significant contribution to student engagement and success at Western Illinois University. The main goal of this award is to recognize a Graduate Assistant who has gone above and beyond in their job description of their assistantship.

Nominators will need to provide the following information:

- A brief introduction of the nominee
- Description of the nominee's contributions to their assistantship site
- Examples of contributions that the nominee has made to student engagement and success

Outstanding Executive Board Member in an Organization

The Award for Outstanding Executive Board Member in an Organization is given to an individual who has served as a strong, inspirational, influential leader within their organization. To be considered, applicants must have held an executive office within the 2023-2024 school year. Additionally, they should display excellent communication skills and show a strong commitment to the organization. Applicants will be reviewed on the quality of their contributions and not just the quantity of activities in which they are involved.

Nominators will need to provide the following information:

- How has the nominee impacted the organization through the creation of new ideas, services, and programs?
- How has the nominee demonstrated effective team leadership?
- How has the nominee demonstrated their personal commitment of time and energy to the organization?
- How has the nominee grown personally from involvement in this organization?

Outstanding Student Organization Advisor

This award serves as a way to recognize advisors that have gone above and beyond their student organization's expectations and have been a significant resource for its officers and members throughout the year. Up to three full-time faculty and professional staff advisors may receive this recognition.

If you are interested in nominating a Graduate Assistant for an award, please consider nominating them for the Outstanding Graduate Assistant Practitioner Award.

Nominators will need to provide the following information:

- How has this advisor exceeded the normal expectations of what an advisor is supposed to do for its organization?
- How has this advisor facilitated growth of both individual members and the organization?
- Specific examples of how this advisor has been a significant resource to both members and officers of the organization through the year

Outstanding Student Organization

This award recognizes and honors up to three student organizations for the success and support of the student development, leadership, and campus involvement. Student organizations will be judged based on the extensiveness of their contributions to the campus community, the quality of their work, and the presentation of their success. Applicants should provide specific examples of work done to show they are deserving the recognition. Any student organization registered and in good standing with the Office of Student Engagement is eligible to apply.

Nominators will need to provide the following information:

- How has the organization encouraged student development (academically, socially, in the community, etc.)?
- How does the organization work to build leadership in the group and on campus?
- How has the organization made an impact on the campus and Macomb community?
- How does the organization promote the university mission and vision?

Most Improved Student Organization

Each year organizations strive to improve their membership, their involvement on campus, and try to reach the other goals they set for themselves. This award recognizes those organizations that are successful in improving their organization as a whole. Those organizations nominated will be reviewed on the overall quality and presentation of their work and proof of improvement. All student organizations registered and in good standing with the Office of Student Engagement are eligible and encouraged to apply.

Nominators will need to provide the following information:

- How has the organization improved their members and involvement on campus?
- How have they tried to reach the other goals they set for themselves?
- How has the organization made a significant advancement toward organizational goals?
- List any outstanding accomplishments for the organization

Inclusive Community Award

This award recognizes an organization whose overall mission strives to create a space in our community that is inclusive to varying identities and perspectives. Organizations must show a dedicated effort working within both the WIU community as well as the larger Macomb community.

Nominees will need to provide the following information:

- How has the organization created opportunities for members to foster respect across differences?
- How has the organization advocated for the interests of underrepresented and minoritized groups?
- Descriptions of events in the WIU and Macomb community that promote inclusivity
- Evidence that the organization intentionally invited all voices to the table

Advancing Social Justice Student Award

This award will be presented to an undergraduate student that has sought to address marginalization, oppression, and/or privilege. This award will honor those who have shown their passion and commitment to the work of fostering human dignity and compassion to all with a social justice focus.

Nominators will need to provide the following information for the student nomination:

- Explain how this student has addressed marginalization, oppression, and/or privilege
 - How did this students' actions impact the greater community and the advancement of social justice?
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Advancing Social Justice Program Award

This award will be presented to a program that has sought to address marginalization, oppression, and/or privilege. This award will honor those who have shown their passion and commitment to the work of fostering human dignity and compassion to all with a social justice focus.

Nominators will provide the following information for the program nomination:

- Explain how this program has addressed marginalization, oppression, and/or privilege
- Provide specific details of the event
- Describe the student population served by the event
- How did this program impact the greater community and the advancement of social justice?

****Please note: these are two separate awards that call for separate nominations***

Outstanding Community Service by an Organization

This award recognizes a registered student organization for their community service efforts and contributions. Organizations nominated for this award demonstrate volunteer service that benefits the larger community. This community could be the WIU community, the Macomb community, or the global community. This award is to recognize a student organization that has gone above and beyond the normal or required amount of community or volunteer service.

Nominators will need to provide the following information:

- Explain in detail what community services the organization took part in
- How did the organization and its members grow through community service?
- How did these services inspire others to act within the organization and campus community?

Outstanding Philanthropy by an Organization

This award is given to an organization that has exceeded the expectations of their philanthropy. This could be achieved in a number of ways; an increase in funds raised, an increase of the outreach of the philanthropic event(s), a more innovative way to present or market the philanthropic event(s), and etcetera.

Nominators will need to provide the following information:

- How has the organization's involvement in meaningful contributions to benefit an outside organization, group, or individual increased?
- How has the organization improved their ability to inspire others to act within the organization and campus community?
- List improvement(s) in the organization's philanthropic programs

Outstanding Marketing & Social Media

This award recognizes an organization that has made great efforts to not only brand itself uniquely, but promote its values. This award is presented to an organization that demonstrates successful and intentional PR/marketing to promote membership or a specific event/program through any social media outlet (Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, etc.)

Nominators will need to provide the following information:

- Letter of recommendation providing a description of the organization's social media presence and campaigns utilized during the current academic year (2023-2024). Please include the context of the marketing and how it helped or influenced participation in your organization's events.
- Organizations can include the marketing plan created by the organization that was utilized to promote a positive organization image
- Provide examples (images/posts) for easy reference for the judges

Outstanding Collaborative Program

This award is intended to recognize two or more organizations for their combined efforts to plan and implement a successful *in-person or virtual* program on campus. Nominations will be evaluated based on their ability to explain how the collaborating organizations worked together to successfully plan and implement the event. Nominations will also be evaluated based on how collaboration impacted the relationships among the collaborating organizations.

Nominators will need to provide the following information:

- A thorough explanation of the event
- How did the collaborating organizations work together to make this event successful before, during, and after the event?
- How has this collaboration impacted the relationships among the collaborating organizations?

Outstanding Student Program

This award will recognize a student organization that has planned and implemented a program that has made a positive impact on the campus community. Programs being considered for this award can involve live performances, special events, games and activities, educational experiences, and other forms of entertainment or student involvement. The main goal of this award is to promote the active participation of students in the planning and implementation of programs that positively contribute to the quality of campus life. *These programs could be in-person or virtual.*

Nominators will need to provide the following information:

- Thorough description of the program (included but not limited to inspiration, purpose, location, attendance, student population served, etc.)
- Explain the level of involvement of the student in the planning and implementation of the program
- Explain how the program positively contributed to the quality of campus life