Volunteer Iowa
321 E 12th St
Des Moines, IA 50319
volunteeriowa.org

EXCELLENCE IN MENTORING AWARDS

RECOGNIZING OUTSTANDING MENTORS IN IOWA

Established 2009

Nomination materials, including a photo and letter(s) of recommendation, must be postmarked or submitted electronically by **January 21, 2026**.

Incomplete forms, misdirected mail, or materials received after the deadline will not be considered.

Questions? E-mail mentor@volunteeriowa.org or call (800) 308-5987.

ELIGIBILITY

- Any Iowa mentor who has been mentoring for at least two years with a currently certified Iowa MENTOR youth mentoring program partner may be nominated.
- Qualified nominees will possess a compelling mentoring story that exemplifies both the spirit and positive benefits of mentoring.
- Current employees and members of the boards of directors of Iowa MENTOR or Volunteer Iowa, along with current employees of the Governor's Office, are not eligible to receive this award.

CRITERIA

FOR THE NOMINATION TO BE ACCEPTED AND REVIEWED, ALL REQUESTED INFORMATION, INCLUDING TWO LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION, MUST BE SUBMITTED TOGETHER.

- **Advocacy and Leadership** – How has the nominee gone above and beyond their expected mentoring duties by serving as a mentoring advocate in the local community? How has the nominee demonstrated leadership in engaging others to become involved with mentoring?
- **Innovation** — How does the nominee stand out among others in exhibiting creativity and tenacity surrounding their work in mentoring? How does the mentor take an active approach to support their mentee by connecting them to community resources, partnerships, and/or other diverse experiences?
- **Impact** — Highlights of the mentoring relationship should illustrate how positive experiences have altered the life of the mentee for the better. Have quantitative and/or qualitative improvements been observed in the mentee in regard to their academic achievement, relationships, etc.?
- **Commitment** — How does the nominee consistently demonstrate an extraordinary commitment and passion toward their mentee and the mentoring program?

SELECTION PROCESS: A review panel will evaluate submissions and make selections based on the criteria listed above.

NOTIFICATION: The individuals selected will receive a congratulatory letter from the Governor's Office inviting them to accept their award in person; a copy will be sent to the person who submitted the nomination.

RECOGNITION: Awards are presented during a special ceremony in the State Capitol Building. The award winner's mentee and the person who submitted the nomination will also be invited to attend the ceremony.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS: It is strongly recommended that nominations first be prepared in a word processing document. Use the following pages to help collect and organize the information so it can be easily copied and pasted into the online form. Not only does this let the nominator collect, write, edit, and check character counts but it also ensures that any disruptions (e.g., loss of internet connection) do not mean loss of time and work.

One photo of the nominee and two letters of recommendation should be included with the nomination, but do NOT include CDs, DVDs, newspaper articles, notebooks, or other materials. Late, incomplete, or misdirected nomination forms will be disqualified. *NOTE: Permission from a parent or guardian will be required for any photo(s) submitted that includes a child under 18. Permission will be requested once nominations are made.*

Nominations must be postmarked, submitted online, or e-mailed by **January 21, 2026.**

BY EMAIL (PREFERRED)

To: mentor@volunteeriowa.org
(Completed Word or PDF form attachment)
Include "ATTN: EMA" in the subject line
Attach a jpg or png photo

BY MAIL

To: Volunteer Iowa
ATTN: Iowa MENTOR
321 E 12th St
Des Moines, IA 50315
Include one photo

NOMINATION FORM: EXCELLENCE IN MENTORING AWARD

NOMINEE INFORMATION

Nominee Name: _____
EXACTLY as it is to appear on the award plaque if they are selected.

Nominee Mailing Address: _____

Nominee City, State, Zip Code: _____

Nominee's County of Residence: _____

Nominee's Length of Service (number of years): _____

Nominee's Daytime Phone Number (include area code): _____

Nominee's E-mail address: _____

NOMINATION SUBMITTED BY

Name: _____

Organization/Company: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Daytime Phone Number (include area code): _____

E-mail Address: _____

ASSURANCE

- ❑ I hereby certify that the information being submitted is an accurate representation of the service performed by the nominee.

Nominator's Signature: _____
Nominator's typed or printed name: _____
Date: _____

Don't forget! You MUST include a good quality photo with your submission.

Provide concise and specific answers for each question below. Every component of each question must be addressed; there is a 500-word limit for each section. *Use specific examples* to illustrate the scope and extent of the nominee's activities as a mentor.

Summary — Provide a brief statement describing the nominee's history with mentoring, and why they are worthy of being selected for an Excellence in Mentoring Award.

Advocacy and Leadership — Explain how the nominee has gone above and beyond their expected mentoring duties by serving as a mentoring advocate in the local community. Provide at least one specific example of how the nominee has demonstrated leadership in engaging others to be involved with mentoring.

Innovation — Describe how the nominee stands out among others in exhibiting creativity and tenacity surrounding their work in mentoring. Provide specific examples of how the mentor takes an active approach to support their mentee by connecting them to community resources, partnerships and/or other diverse experiences.

Impact — Share one or two highlights of the nominee's mentoring relationship to illustrate how positive experiences have altered the life of the mentee for the better. Provide specific examples of quantitative and/or qualitative improvements that have been observed in the mentee in regard to their academic achievement, relationships, etc.

Commitment — Describe how the nominee demonstrates an extraordinary commitment and passion toward their mentee and the mentoring program.

Two letters of recommendations from persons familiar with the nominee who can verify the scope and extent of their mentoring activities (letter cannot come from the nominee or a relative). Letters to “Dear Selection Committee” must include the full name, organization, e-mail address and daytime phone number of the person submitting the letter, and should address the following:

- How long and in what ways have you known the nominee?
- Why do you think this nominee is worthy of being selected for an Excellence in Mentoring Award?
- What would you like the selection committee to know about this nominee and their efforts that’s not included elsewhere in the nomination form?
- ***LETTER(S) MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE NOMINATION FORM AND NOT SENT SEPARATELY.***