



APR 15 2011

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of the
Assistant Secretary
for Administration

1400 Independence
Avenue SW

Washington, DC
20250-9600

TO: Subcabinet Officials
Agency Heads

FROM: Karen A. Messmore 
Director
Office of Human Resources Management

SUBJECT: President's Volunteer Service Awards and Call to Service Award

NOMINATIONS DUE MAY 23, 2011

The Secretary of Agriculture invites employees to submit nominations for the President's Volunteer Service Awards and Call to Service Award. The President's Council on Service and Civil Participation (PCSCP) created the President's Volunteer Service Award program as a way to thank and honor Americans who, by their demonstrated commitment and example, inspire others to engage in volunteer service. Recognizing and honoring volunteers sets a standard for service to others. It encourages a sustained commitment to civic participation and inspires others to make volunteering a central part of their lives.

The President's Volunteer Service Award recognizes those who have achieved a certain standard- measured by the number of hours served over a 12-month period or cumulative hours served over the course of a lifetime. At USDA, we want to highlight our extraordinary volunteers by honoring their efforts at a special presentation during the Annual Secretary's Honor Awards ceremony.

Qualifying Organization/Activity:

All USDA employees are eligible for an award based upon their hours of volunteer service to a qualifying organization. To be recognized, volunteer service activities must meet national or community needs in the area of youth achievement, parks and open space, health communities, and public safety and emergency response. Activities must be unpaid and may not include court-ordered or disciplinary-related community service.

The majority of "faith-based" volunteer activities are considered acceptable service for the President's Volunteer Service Award including, but not limited to, volunteering to teach Sunday school; volunteering at Vacation Bible School; painting and cleaning at a church, mosque, or synagogue; collecting canned food; mentoring children after school; and volunteering at a shelter. Activities that take place during the normal worship service such as ushering, participating in the choir, or other activities practiced during worship hours are considered outside the President's Volunteer Service Award guidelines.

Activities associated with influencing legislation or elections to a public office, engaging in protests, engaging in union activities, and participating in events that are likely to include political advocacy are not considered acceptable service for purposes of these awards.

Criteria:

For a bronze Presidential Volunteer Service Award, the employee must have served a minimum of 100 hours and a maximum of 249 hours of service with a qualifying organization over the 12-month period beginning July 1, 2009, and ending June 30, 2010.

For a silver Presidential Volunteer Service Award, the employee must have served a minimum of 250 hours and a maximum of 499 hours of service with a qualifying organization over the 12-month period beginning July 1, 2009, and ending June 30, 2010.

For a gold Presidential Volunteer Service Award, the employee must have served 500 hours or more of service with a qualifying organization over the 12-month period beginning July 1, 2009, and ending June 30, 2010.

For a President's Call to Service Award, the employee must have served 4,000 hours or more of service with a qualifying organization over the employee's lifetime.

Certification:

All applicants will be required to certify that they have, in fact, served the number of hours for which they are claiming credit.

Recognition:

Each award recipient will receive an official President's Volunteer Service Award pin, a personalized certificate of achievement, a congratulatory letter from the President of the United States, and a letter from the PCSCP. The top five applicants, based upon their number of hours of service in both the Call to Service and gold Presidential Volunteer Service Award categories, will be recognized at the Secretary's Honor Awards Ceremony. One person, in each of the bronze and silver award categories, will be randomly selected to receive their award at the Secretary's Honor Awards Ceremony in recognition of their efforts and those of their colleagues in that award category.

Submission:

Human resources offices must complete the attached application form along with a listing of nominations. The format and instructions for the listing of nominations can be located at: http://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov/downloads/forms/PVSA_CertificationSheet.xls#Certification!A1.

Submit both the application form and the listing of nominations electronically to 2011honorawards@dm.usda.gov. **Please note that altered forms will not be accepted.** If you have any questions, please contact Anna Johnson-Yeargins at 202-690-5991, or email anna.johnson-yeargins@dm.usda.gov.

Attachment

cc: Mission Area Human Resources Directors
Deputy Administrators for Management
Employee Recognition Program Coordinators



Presidential Volunteers Service Award Application Form

Employee Name: _____
(First, Last)

Agency: _____
(e.g., ARS, AMS, FSA)

Agency Address: _____

Office Telephone Number: _____

Volunteer Record:

Please identify the qualifying organization, activity performed, date, and hours.
Please attach additional sheets, as necessary.

Qualifying Organization! Activity (i.e., Girl Scout Council of The Nation's Capital)	Date	Hours
Total Hours		

Certification:

I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is accurate and, based upon my service record, am eligible for the following award:

- Call to Service Award** (4,000 hours or more of volunteer service over a lifetime.)
- Silver Presidential Volunteer Service Award** (A minimum of 250 hours and a maximum of 499 hours of service to a qualifying organization over the 12-month period beginning July 1, 2009 and ending June 30, 2010.)
- Bronze Presidential Volunteer Service Award** (A minimum of 100 hours and a maximum of 249 hours of service to a qualifying organization over the 12-month period beginning July 1, 2009 and ending June 30, 2010.)
- Gold Presidential Volunteer Service Award** (500 hours or more of service to qualifying organization over the 12-month period beginning July 1, 2009 and ending June 30, 2010.)

Applicant's Signature

Date