

25th Annual Student Leadership Excellence Awards

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

How to submit a nomination:

- Any currently enrolled student, faculty, or staff member may submit an Individual Award nomination or an Organization/Program Award nomination.
- All nominations must be received by the Office of Spartan Experiences in the Department of Student Development & Leadership by **Saturday, February 21, 2026**.
- Nominations can be submitted at <https://studentlife.msu.edu/leadership/leadership-awards-reception.html>.
- All additional materials (Nomination essay, resume, and additional letters of support (limit 6 additional pages) need to be in a Word document and submitted in the on-line nomination form. No additional materials will be accepted through any other format.

Website: <https://spartanexperiences.msu.edu/leadership/leadership-awards-reception.html>.

Materials needed for nomination submissions:

- A completed Nomination Form at <https://spartanexperiences.msu.edu/leadership/leadership-awards-reception.html>.
- **Required:** A Nomination Essay following the specific award criteria (in a Word document double-spaced, 12 pt. font, maximum of 3 pages) submitted with the nomination form.
- *Optional additional materials: in a Word document a resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each) submitted with the nomination form.*

Awards Selection Process

- **The Student Leadership Excellence Awards** program provides an opportunity to recognize excellence in leadership across the campus. We seek to provide balance in the recognition of leadership excellence and know there are many outstanding leaders and programs across the campus. **Please support our effort to recognize and award the many valuable contributions from various individuals and groups by limiting the number of categories in which you nominate a particular organization or individual.**
- **NOMINEES CAN ONLY BE NOMINATED FOR ONE INDIVIDUAL AWARD CATEGORY, ONE ORGANIZATIONAL AWARD CATEGORY, AND ONE PROGRAM AWARD CATEGORY. NOMINATIONS SUBMITTED NOT ADHERING TO THIS STANDARD WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**
- Following the nomination deadline, all nominations will be sent to a selection committee comprised of MSU students, faculty, and staff.
- Nominations will be evaluated according to the specific award criteria established and addressed in the nomination essay. Selections will be made based on the strength of alignment with the criteria as evidenced in the nomination essay and supporting materials.
- In each category, the selection committee reserves the right to choose the person(s) or organization(s) to receive each award and up to two honorable mentions in that category. The committee also reserves the right to determine that the standards set in the awards criteria have or have not been met. In the event that none of the nomination packets sufficiently meet the criteria for a specific category, the committee reserves the right to make no award in that category.

Award winners will be announced at the Student Life Leadership Awards Reception, April 16, 2026 – Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center at 7:00 p.m.

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INDIVIDUAL AWARD CATEGORIES

- *Campus Impact Award (Individual)
- *Emerging Leader Award
- *Graduate Student Leader Award
- *Leader of the Year Award
- *New Advisor Award
- *Outstanding Spartan Parent Award
- *Student Veteran of the Year Award (Individual)
- *Student Veteran Supporter of the Year Award (Individual)
- *Walter Adams Advisor of the Year Award

ORGANIZATION AWARD CATEGORIES

- *Campus Impact Award (Organization)
- *Emerging Student Organization Award
- *Internationalizing the Student Experience Award
- *Outstanding Academic Organization Award
- *Outstanding Greek Organization Award
- *Outstanding Professional Organization Award
- *Outstanding Service Organization Award
- *Student Organization Achievement Award

PROGRAM AWARD CATEGORIES

- *Civic Responsibility Program Award
- *Innovative Program Award
- *Multicultural/Cross-Cultural Program Award

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INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

General Individual Awards Criteria

- Individuals may be **nominated** by any currently enrolled student or University faculty/staff member.
- Student nominees must be currently enrolled in the University and in good academic standing.

Campus Impact Award (Individual)

The Campus Impact Award (Individual) is presented to an MSU undergraduate who has significantly impacted the campus community and has served as an inspiration to other students.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Describe how the nominee has made a significant difference in the lives of others in the community.
 - Give an example of how the nominee has inspired other students to take action
 - Describe how the nominee has demonstrated commitment and passion to his or her beliefs.
 - Give an example of how the nominee has served as an advocate by increasing the campus community's awareness and knowledge of a specific issue.
- Optional: In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

Emerging Leader Award

The Emerging Leader Award is presented to a MSU undergraduate who displays exceptional leadership potential.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Describe the nominee's involvement experiences both on and off campus.
 - Give an example of how the nominee has grown and developed as a leader.
 - Give an example of how the nominee has been proactive in taking on more leadership responsibilities.
 - Describe how the nominee builds and maintains positive relationships with others.
 - Describe how the nominee has maintained a balance between involvement activities and academics.
- Optional: In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

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Graduate Student Leader Award

The Graduate Student Leader Award is presented to a MSU graduate or professional student who has displayed exemplary leadership and academic excellence.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - How has the nominee enhanced the campus community, the Greater Lansing community, and the community of their academic discipline?
 - Give an example of how the nominee has significantly contributed to scholarship within his or her field.
 - How has the nominee maintained balance between academics, involvement activities, and his or her personal life?
 - Give an example of how the nominee has fostered collaboration and cooperation amongst groups and individuals.
- **Optional:** In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

Leader of the Year Award

The Leader of the Year Award is presented to a MSU undergraduate who has made significant contributions to MSU and has served as an exemplary role model to his or her peers.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Describe the nominee's involvement experiences both on and off campus, and the leadership roles he or she has held.
 - Describe how the nominee has maintained a balance between involvement activities and academics.
 - Give an example of how the nominee has empowered others.
 - Give an example of how the nominee is inclusive of others.
 - Describe how the nominee has contributed to the MSU community.
 - Give an example of how the nominee has demonstrated commitment and passion in his or her activities.
- **Optional:** In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

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New Advisor Award

The New Advisor Award is presented to a MSU graduate student, faculty, or staff member in recognition of their excellent service and dedication as a first-time advisor to a student organization.

Additional Eligibility Criteria

- Must be a new advisor to a registered student organization or a student group officially recognized by the University in Fall 2025 or Spring 2026.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Describe how the nominee has made outstanding efforts during his/her first year of advising.
 - Give an example of how the nominee has empowered students.
 - Describe how the nominee actively participated with the group's activities and development.
 - How has the nominee demonstrated enthusiasm and support for the student group?
- Optional: In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

Outstanding Spartan Parent Award

The Outstanding Spartan Parent Award is presented to an undergraduate student who has demonstrated a deep commitment to his or her dependent(s) while maintaining academic excellence and commitment to the university.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Describe how the nominee has demonstrated a deep commitment to his or her dependent(s).
 - Describe the academic success achieved by the nominee.
 - Describe the nominee's commitment to the university.
- Optional: In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

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Student Veteran of the Year Award (Individual)

The Student Veteran of the Year Award is presented to a Student Veteran at the undergraduate or graduate level for service to their nation, state and MSU community.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Describe the nominee's involvement experiences both in the military and on-campus
 - Describe how they have made a significant difference in their communities by promoting volunteerism and a sense of service to the Nation;
 - Give an example of how the nominee has grown and developed as a leader during their time at Michigan State University;
 - Give an example of how the nominee has been proactive in taking on more leadership responsibilities;
 - Describe how the nominee advocates for student veteran issues on campus.

Eligibility Criteria

- Meet one of the following requirements:
 - Any veteran who has been honorably discharged from either active or reserve component duty
 - Retired from any United States of America branch of military service
 - Currently serving in the Reserve Component
 - Please share a listing of where the veteran has served.
- Optional: In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

Student Veteran Supporter of the Year Award (Individual)

The Student Veteran Supporter of the Year Award is presented to a MSU faculty or staff member who has displayed an exemplary level of commitment and dedication to supporting student veterans at MSU either on a personal level (e.g. professor so-and-so helped me...) or on an institutional level (e.g. administrator so-and-so organized...).

Eligibility Criteria

- Must have worked at MSU for a minimum of one year.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - How has this person assisted to integrate veterans into university life/academics?

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- How has this person created a welcoming atmosphere for veterans at the university?
 - How has this person prioritized student veteran academic success?
- Optional: In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

Walter Adams Advisor of the Year Award

The Walter Adams Advisor of the Year Award is presented to a MSU graduate student, faculty, or staff member who has displayed an exemplary level of commitment and dedication to the organization he or she has advised for more than one academic year.

Additional Eligibility Criteria

- Must have been an advisor for more than one year to a registered student organization or a student group officially recognized by the University in Fall 2025 or Spring 2026.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- Required: In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Give an example of how the nominee has supported the development of the organization and its members.
 - Describe how the nominee actively participated with the group's activities and development.
 - How has the nominee demonstrated enthusiasm and respect for the student group?
 - Describe how the nominee helped the group successfully transition between membership cycles.
- Optional: In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

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ORGANIZATION AWARDS

General Organization and Program Awards Criteria

- Organization award recipients must be registered student organizations or student groups officially recognized by the University.
- Organizations may self-nominate, or may be nominated by advisors and others outside the group.

Campus Impact Award (Organization)

The Campus Impact (Organization) Award is presented to a student organization that has significantly impacted the campus community and has demonstrated an incredibly amount of dedication to an issue affecting the community.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Describe how the organization increased the community's awareness and knowledge of a specific issue.
 - Give an example of how the organization has empowered students to take action.
 - Describe how the organization has made a significant difference in the community.
- Optional: In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

Emerging Student Organization Award

The Emerging Student Organization Award is presented to a newly-formed student organization for outstanding effort and achievement in its first year.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Describe how the organization serves a purpose not previously served by other student organizations.
 - Describe how the organization has laid the foundation for continued growth and success.
 - Give an example of how the organization has demonstrated excellent leadership.
 - What are some of the significant achievements of the organization?
- Optional: In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

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ASMSU & RHA Award for Internationalizing the Student Experience Award

The award is presented to a student organization for planning and implementing programs that fostered relationships among domestic, international, and/or racial-ethnic students — whether within MSU or external to our University. At the heart of Internationalizing the Student Experience is "impacting lives," and this award is given in recognition of a program that helps students impact other students, such that students then view themselves and their world in a broader global context.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Give a brief description of the program and its intended goals and outcomes
 - Describe how the program helped to raise awareness of a specific issue or enhanced relationship and communication between domestic and international students.
 - Describe how the program helped either international students to experience "slices" of American cultures and/or how domestic students experienced "global perspectives" on issues that "touched their lives."
- Optional: In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

Outstanding Academic Organization Award

The Outstanding Academic Organization Award is presented to academic-based organization which has demonstrated a deep commitment to academic programming and educational development of its members. The organization's mission statement and/or purpose must mention some form of academic/educational programming and/or enhancement as one of the organization's main functions.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Describe how the organization has enhanced its member's college educational/academic experience.
 - Describe one major activity or event that the organization has sponsored or co-sponsored.
 - Describe how the organization has enhanced a current academic program on campus.
- Optional: In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

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Outstanding Greek Organization Award

The Outstanding Greek Organization Award is presented to a fraternity or sorority that belongs to one of the four Greek Councils that has displayed a deep commitment to community service, academic success, and leadership development among its members.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Describe how the organization has participated in community service activities.
 - Describe how the organization has enhanced the academic success of its members.
 - Describe how the organization has developed the leadership skills of its members.
- **Optional:** In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

Outstanding Professional Organization Award

The Outstanding Professional Organization Award is presented to a career-based organization that has demonstrated a strong commitment to the professional development of its members through leadership development, programming, and professional outreach. The organization's mission statement and/or purpose must mention some form of career-oriented development as one of the organization's main functions.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Describe how the organization has assisted members in their career goals/development.
 - Describe one major activity or event that the organization sponsors or co-sponsors.
 - Describe how the organization has assisted its members in career networking.
- **Optional:** In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

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Outstanding Service Organization Award

The Outstanding Service Organization Award is presented to a service-based organization that has demonstrated a strong commitment to its cause and growth of its members. The organization's mission statement and/or purpose must mention some form of service as one of the organization's main functions.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Describe the organization's activities on and off campus.
 - Give an example of how the organization's service activities have impacted its member's growth and development.
 - Describe how the organization has made a significant difference in the community.
- **Optional:** In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

Student Organization Achievement Award

The Student Organization Achievement Award is presented to a student organization that has demonstrated outstanding leadership and service to the MSU community.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Describe some of the organization's significant achievements.
 - Give an example of how the organization has effectively operated as a team?
 - Describe how the organization has displayed outstanding leadership.
 - How has the organization collaborated with other groups?
 - How has the organization improved and/or enhanced the MSU community?
- **Optional:** In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

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PROGRAM AWARDS

Additional Eligibility Criteria

- Program awards will honor a registered student organization or student organization officially recognized by the University for an outstanding program during the 2025-2026 academic year.
- Programs are defined as a one-time event or a series of events sponsored by a registered student organization, or student organization officially recognized by the University.

Civic Responsibility Program Award

The Civic Responsibility Program Award is presented to a student organization for planning and implementing a program which demonstrates and encourages civic responsibility.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Give a brief description of the program and its intended goals and outcomes.
 - Describe how the program encouraged social, ethical, and/or civic responsibility.
 - Describe how the program promoted students to become active, informed citizens.
 - Give an example of how the program incorporated community service and involvement.
- Optional: In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

Innovative Program Award

The Innovative Program Award is presented to a student organization for planning and implementing a program which demonstrates innovative ideas and methods.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Give a brief description of the program and its intended goals and outcomes.
 - Describe how the program engaged students in unique learning settings.
 - Give an example of how the program used unique methods.
 - Give an example of how the program introduced thought-provoking topics and ideas to the MSU community.
- Optional: In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

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Multicultural/Cross-Cultural Program Award

The Multicultural/Cross-cultural Program Award is presented to a student organization for planning and implementing a program which promotes the recognition and understanding of multiculturalism, cross-cultural interaction, and/or diversity issues.

Nomination Components

- Completed Nomination Form
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.
- **Required:** In a Word document of no more than (3 typed, 12 pt, double-spaced pages), please describe why the nominee should be considered for this award using the following criteria as a guide:
 - Give a brief description of the program and its intended goals and outcomes.
 - Describe how the program promoted the celebration and understanding of multiculturalism and/or diversity.
 - Give an example of how the program engaged people from different cultures around a shared issue.
 - Describe how the program promoted student activism surrounding multicultural, cross-cultural, and/or diversity issues.
- **Optional:** In a Word document a Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each).

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I submit a nomination?

Nominations should be submitted to the Office of Spartan Experiences' website at https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6JQQmapQZxaZXeK.

Additional Nomination Materials:

- **Required** - A Nomination Essay following the specific award criteria (in a Word document double-spaced, 12 pt. font, maximum of 3 pages) submitted with the nomination form.
- **Optional** - additional materials in a Word document: a resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each) submitted with the nomination form. **No additional materials will be accepted through any other format.**

When are nominations due?

- All nominations must be received by the Office of Spartan Experiences in the Department of Student Development and Leadership by **Saturday, February 21, 2026**.

Who can submit nominations?

Any currently enrolled student, faculty, or staff member may submit an Individual Award nomination or an Organization/Program Award nomination. Self nominations are not, however, accepted for Individual Awards. Nominations will only be accepted for Registered Student Organizations. Can I submit more than one nomination?

Yes, you are encouraged to submit as many nominations as you like for both Individual and Organization/Program Awards.

Can I submit additional documents?

Resumes and additional letters of support will be accepted in a Word document. Resume (1 page limit) and up to two letters of support (limit 1 page each) additional Photographs, DVDs, fliers, pamphlets, program materials, and other documents which are not a resume or letter of support **will not** be considered in the selection process.

What does good academic standing mean?

Good academic standing is defined by the University as a cumulative GPA of at least 2.00.

How are the academic records used?

Academic records will be used to identify students who are ineligible for award nominations. Ineligible students' nominations will not be submitted to the selection committee for review.

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What is the difference between organization and program awards?

A student organization is defined as a Registered Student Organization or another student organization that is officially recognized by the university (for example: the Associated Students of Michigan State University or the Bryan Hall Government).

A program is defined as a one-time event or series of events that is sponsored and planned by a student organization. An example of a “one time event” program could be bringing a major speaker to campus. An example of a “series of events” program could be a voter registration drive that spanned multiple days, or a speaker series that focused on a specific issue and spanned the course of a semester.

Can individuals or organizations be nominated for multiple awards?

Yes, individuals and organizations may be nominated for multiple awards so long as they meet the requirements of each award category.

How are recipients selected?

Nominations will be evaluated according to the specific award criteria addressed in the nomination essay. Selections will be made based on the strength of quality and quantity evidenced in the nomination essay and supporting materials.

How can I increase the chances of the person or organization I am nominating to be selected for the awards?

While there are no guarantees that your nominee will be selected, you can strengthen your nomination by following the selection criteria, addressing all of the points listed in the specific award criteria, and writing a strong, compelling essay.

Who selects the award recipients?

A selection committee comprised of undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and staff will be assembled to review nominations and select award recipients.

Can there be more than one award recipient per category?

It is up to the selection committee’s discretion to select more than one award recipient if two nominees are outstanding.

How are award recipients recognized?

All nominees are invited to the Student Leadership Awards Ceremony held on **April 16, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. to be hosted at Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center**. Award recipients and honorable mentions will be announced at the ceremony. Honorable mention recipients will receive certificates, and award recipients will receive engraved plaques.

What if I have a question not answered here?

If you have additional questions, please contact Infer Khalid Baig at baiginfe@msu.edu

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