



MSU ALUMNI OFFICE

ALUMNI GRAND AWARDS

Awards Overview and How to Submit a Nomination

About the Alumni Grand Awards

Spartans strive to address the world's most pressing problems each and every day. Each year, the MSU Alumni Office recognizes Spartans who positively reflect and enhance the prestige of Michigan State University with an Alumni Grand Award. Alumni Grand Awards are among the highest awards that the university bestows on alums.

Many Spartans have experienced tremendous success. Alumni Grand Awards are intended to be given to the select few who rise above the accomplishments of most. In many cases, their life's work has influenced industry, innovation, the arts, science, research, etc., on a national or global level and they are making an impact in their professions, their communities and for MSU.

Award Categories

Awards are presented in the following categories.

- **Distinguished Alumni Award**
Presented to alumni who have differentiated themselves by obtaining the highest level of professional accomplishment in their field.
- **Alumni Service Award**
Presented to alumni who have demonstrated service to MSU and/or meritorious public service on a local, state, national or international level.
- **Young Alumni Award**
Presented to alumni age 40 or younger who have distinguished themselves through a high level of professional accomplishment early in their career. (The individual must be 40 or younger during the selection year, e.g., for 2025, the individual must be 40 or younger as of December 31, 2024.)
- **Honorary Alumni Award**
Presented to non-alumni who have made an outstanding impact on behalf of Michigan State University on a local, state, national or international level.

Timing

When considering a nomination, think about timing:

- For the Distinguished Alumni category, has the individual reached a pinnacle or is the individual still climbing? The Distinguished Alumni Award is our most significant award, so it's best awarded when there won't be a need at a later date for more substantial recognition.
- The Young Alumni Award has an age cap of 40. The individual must be 40 or younger during the selection year, e.g., for 2025, the individual must be 40 or younger as of December 31, 2024. It's

important to be mindful of individuals with an impressive post-graduation trajectory who may age out of the category if they aren't nominated in a timely fashion. Also, as with the Distinguished Alumni Award, it's important to consider if the nomination is being done prematurely. Is this individual beginning a climb, with years of eligibility remaining in the category, where a more significant story could be told if the nomination comes later?

Submitting a Nomination

Individuals, MSU colleges/units or other campus entities and alumni clubs or affinity groups may submit nominations for consideration.

All nominations are submitted online at go.msu.edu/aga.

A high-quality nomination should provide the selection committee with a complete, well-written and well-organized summary of the individual's merits, detailing how this matches the award criteria and the specific reasons why the individual deserves the recommended honor.

To submit a nomination, the following is required:

- The category, or categories, for which the individual should be considered.
- A primary email and/or phone number for the individual. *The MSU Alumni Office will notify individuals by either email or phone if they are selected as an award recipient, so it's important that we have this information and that it be current.*
- Individual's MSU affiliation, e.g., alumnus/alumna, retired faculty/staff. *An individual may have more than one affiliation.*
- MSU college and/or program the individual graduated from and/or is affiliated with. *If you don't know the college or program, their MSU degree(s) will suffice.*
- If the individual is an MSU alumnus/alumna, the year(s) they graduated from MSU.
- Three - five cases for nomination. See the "Cases for Nomination" section below for full details.
- Brief summary of individual. *The nominator should review the cases for nomination and then write a brief summary – five - ten sentences – of the individual to "introduce" them to the Alumni Grand Awards selection committee and justify why they are being nominated.*
- Nominator's contact information and their connection to the individual. *If there are any questions about the nomination, the MSU Alumni Office will contact the nominator. And, once award recipients are chosen, we will notify the nominator of the individual 's status. There is no weight or added value to the nomination based on who the nominator is and/or what their title or affiliation is, so nominations should come from those who can best speak to the individual 's qualifications.*

What is a case for nomination?

Nominators must do their best to assist selection committee members fully appreciate the individual's merits. Often, the committee members do not know the individual and it's often unclear to committee members why the nominator feels the individual is uniquely qualified for the recommended honor.

Each nomination must include three - five cases for nomination. A case for nomination can be:

- Written biography/vitae
- Relevant article/story that features the individual – print or online
- Letter of support

- A document with links to supplemental information such as articles, videos, biographies and social media posts featuring or mentioning the individual and their accomplishments, awards and/or MSU involvement.

To receive the strongest possible consideration, cases for nominations should speak to the following:

- Why is the individual being nominated?
- How has the individual demonstrated the characteristics outlined in the category description?
- How has the individual improved the community, the state, the nation and/or the world?
- How has the individual personally engaged with Michigan State University, or engaged others in doing so?

*****Important*****

- Do not provide the individual's resume as a case for nomination.
- A maximum of two letters of support will be accepted from MSU colleges/units.
- With the exception of an article/story, cases for nomination should not exceed 500 words, which is approximately one, single-spaced page.
- Cases for nomination should either be a document (.doc, .docx or .pdf format only) that can be uploaded or a URL link (typically for online articles/stories).

To submit a nomination, go to go.msu.edu/aga. **Do not begin the nomination until you have all materials collected as you are not able to save the form and return to complete it later.**

Timeline for Nomination

April/May – Nomination period opens

September 1 – Nomination deadline

Early November – Alumni Grand Awards selection committee convenes to recommend award recipients

By February of the following year – Award recipients notified

Selection

Award recipients are recommended by the Alumni Grand Awards selection committee. The committee is composed of previous award recipients, MSU administrators and staff, and alumni advisory board members. The field of nominations is strong each year. With eight - 12 awards granted, it's impossible to recognize everyone. If your nominee is not selected, know it's because there were other impressive Spartans in contention.

Questions

If you have questions, contact Elizabeth Wheeler at szufnar@msu.edu.