



UNIVERSITY SYSTEM of MARYLAND

2025 – 2026 Board of Regents Staff Awards

NON-EXEMPT NOMINATION GUIDELINES

A Council of University System Staff (CUSS) initiative, the University System of Maryland Board of Regents Staff Awards represent the highest honor for achievements of staff employees from institutions within the system who demonstrate extraordinary achievements in five non-exempt and five exempt categories.

The nominee's achievements should focus on the **impact** they have had on their department, institution, and/or campus community within one of five categories:

- ◇ Making a Difference to the Campus
- ◇ Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging
- ◇ Excellence in Performance
- ◇ Excellence as a Team Player
- ◇ Outstanding Role Model

Eligibility:

1. Nominee must be a staff employee of the University System of Maryland community, including all staff employees in Regular and Contingent II status.
2. Nominee must have been employed within the USM for at least five (5) consecutive years, and in a non-exempt position at the time these awards guidelines are released (approximately July). Award recipients must still be employed in the USM at the time awards are announced (approximately March).
3. Any USM employee or student may nominate an eligible staff employee with their knowledge and consent. Self-nominations are accepted.

Submission and Selection Process:

1. Each USM institution sets a deadline for receipt of preliminary submissions (cover sheet, nomination letter, position description, and two (2) reference letters). Refer to each institution's shared governance body for non-bargaining staff employees for specific guidance, procedures, and deadline(s).
2. Each USM institution selects no more than one applicant in each category and requests support letters from their president. Complete applications (all materials included in one PDF file per applicant) are **due to CUSS by 12pm on Monday,**

November 24, 2025 via email to CUSSBOR@usmd.edu. CUSS will confirm receipt of all applications within three (3) business days.

3. CUSS reviews all applications and submits final recommendations to the Board of Regents. Recipients will be announced in early 2026, with a formal presentation of awards by the Board in the spring. Each awardee will receive a \$2,000 stipend and plaque.
4. Direct any questions to CUSS Awards & Outreach Committee Co-chair Brian Jara via email at CUSSBOR@usmd.edu.

AWARD CATEGORIES & CRITERIA

Making a Difference to the Campus:

- This award showcases staff who have impacted the broader campus community, reaching outside of their department.
- Impact could include contributions such as: improving the campus environment, fostering cross sectional collaboration, enhancing campus life, or initiating successful projects that benefit the campus as a whole.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging:

- This award highlights a staff member who has put forth effort to cultivate an environment where all employees feel valued, respected, and supported, regardless of their position, status, identities, or other personal attributes.
- Recipients of this award actively promote multicultural understanding, equitable practices, and a sense of belonging emphasizing the importance of diverse perspectives in achieving common goals.

Excellence in Performance:

- This award highlights exceptional work specific to their position or department, demonstrated by effectiveness in job performance, resulting in significant contributions to their department's goals.
- Recipients of this award consistently meet/exceed expectations, display a high level of professionalism, and set a benchmark for quality and excellence within their field.

Excellence as a Team Player:

- This award celebrates an individual who consistently demonstrates outstanding collaboration, communication, and support within a team.
- Recipients of this award go above and beyond to foster a positive work environment, contribute to collective goals, and uplift their peers. They strive in showcasing a commitment to the success of the entire team rather than just individual achievements.

Outstanding Role Model:

- This award recognizes individuals who not only embody admirable qualities and behaviors but also actively engage in formal or informal mentoring of others.
- Recipients of this award embody the values and standards of the organization, inspire colleagues through their actions and attitude, and positively influence the workplace culture.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

For the preliminary submission at the institutional level, the following materials are required:

1. **Cover Sheet:** completed in full and signed by the nominator. Contact information (email and work phone number) is required.
2. **Nomination letter** (1000-word maximum): addressed to the Board of Regents, this must identify the specific award category and document the nominee's exemplary performance in that area. Signature and contact information (email and work phone number) are required.
3. **Position description** (500-word maximum): must include the purpose and specific job duties listed in detail. The position description must be signed by the nominee's direct supervisor.
4. **Two (2) recommendation letters** (500-word maximum each): addressed to the Board of Regents, each letter must identify the specific award category and document the nominee's exemplary performance in relation to the award category. Signature and contact information (email and work phone number) are required.

Each USM institution, through their staff shared governance body, is responsible for:

- Developing their own internal institutional process and deadlines for reviewing preliminary nominations.
- Selecting no more than one applicant in each category as the institutional nominee for submission to CUSS.
- Soliciting the **President's Endorsement** (1000-word maximum) for all institutional nominees.
- Ensuring that all materials listed above are complete and adhere to the guidelines provided in this document.

BOARD OF REGENTS STAFF AWARDS (NON-EXEMPT)

NOMINATION COVER SHEET

NOMINEE INFORMATION

Name: _____

Email: _____ Office phone: _____

USM Institution: _____ Department / Unit: _____

Position Title: _____

Years in current position: _____ Years at current institution: _____ Years in USM: _____

Award category (select one):

- ☐ Making a Difference to the Campus
- ☐ Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging
- ☐ Excellence in Performance
- ☐ Excellence as a Team Player
- ☐ Outstanding Role Model

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Name: _____

Email: _____ Office phone: _____

USM Institution: _____ Department / Unit: _____

Position Title: _____

The nominator should collect the following materials for the preliminary deadline:

- ☐ This cover sheet, completed and signed
- ☐ Nomination letter (see attached form)
- ☐ Position description (see attached form) completed and signed by nominee's direct supervisor
- ☐ Recommendation letter #1 (see attached form), completed and signed
- ☐ Recommendation letter #2 (see attached form), completed and signed

NOMINATION LETTER

Nominator name:

Signature:

Date:

NOMINEE POSITION DESCRIPTION

Supervisor name:

Signature:

Date:

RECOMMENDATION LETTER #1

Recommender name:

Signature:

Date:

RECOMMENDATION LETTER #2

Recommender name:

Signature: Date: