



## **VSCA Professional Recognition Awards Guide**

Annually, the Virginia School Counselor Association recognizes the outstanding and exemplary work of school counselors, counselor educators, and the administrators, and division-level directors that support the school counseling profession. At the annual conference, awards will be given to those nominees who best exhibit the implementation of the ASCA National model and show evidence of a comprehensive school counseling program. Award recipients are recognized on the last day of the conference at the Awards Luncheon. The VSCA conference is scheduled for October 18 - 20, 2023.

### **Elementary and Secondary School Counselor of the Year (SCOY)**

#### *Award Criteria*

The school counselor of the year award recognizes two outstanding professionals (elementary and secondary) who have made a positive impact in their school community. Contributions to the profession can be measured by the use of the ASCA National model, evidence of data-driven practices, and the implementation of a comprehensive counseling program. In order to receive full consideration for the award the following items must be shown within the application packet:

- The nominee must be currently employed as a full-time counselor and have completed three years of counseling service at the time of nomination.
- The nominee must be a current VSCA member. Membership will be verified.
- The nominee cannot be a current elected member of the VSCA Board of Directors.
- The nominee must hold a master's degree and be certified as a school counselor.
- The nominee must show evidence of innovations in counseling, provide leadership on school committees and within the counseling office.
- The nominee must demonstrate the implementation of the ASCA National Model.
- The nominee must demonstrate leadership in the field of counseling such as program advocacy (local and/or state level), program development and collaboration with stakeholders to address community needs, and/or provide professional development, sharing resources and skills with others in the field.

- The activities or accomplishments referenced in the application must have taken place within the last five years.

### *Directions for Nominator*

1. Review the Award Criteria. The nominee must meet all criteria to be considered for this award.
2. Complete the Nomination Form and Nomination Letter and send to both Professional Recognition Chairs, Rebecca Chalmers Ginnetti at [chalmersrebecca65@gmail.com](mailto:chalmersrebecca65@gmail.com) and Kim Sterling at [ksterling@hcps.us](mailto:ksterling@hcps.us)
3. Visit the SCOY Online Awards Portal at <http://va.schoolcounselorawards.org/scoy>
4. Click “Nominate Someone” to login or register and complete the online nomination form. **Completed nominations are due by February 18, 2024 at midnight.**

The nomination form and the information submitted in the portal will be reviewed to determine the SCOY award winner. Upon receipt of completed nominations, nominees will be notified by the Professional Recognition Committee.

### *Directions for Nominee*

1. Once you have received notification that you have been nominated for SCOY, please visit SCOY Online Awards Portal at <http://va.schoolcounselorawards.org/scoy> and click on “Apply Today.” Follow the online directions to complete the application process. **Completed applications are due by March 18, 2024 at midnight.**
2. During the application process, you will need the following information:
  - a. Number of students at your school
  - b. Number of students in district
  - c. Number of staff at school
  - d. Number of school counselors
  - e. Percentage of special education students
  - f. Percentage of students on free or reduced lunch
  - g. Percentage of students who are Asian, Black, Hispanic, Native American, White, and Other
  - h. Your resumé as a Word document or PDF. Resumé must include name, current position, school name, years at current school, education,
  - i. professional experience, leadership experience, memberships,
  - j. awards/certifications/publications
  - k. Three letters of recommendation, including one from an immediate or direct supervisor (maximum of two pages each). Only three letters of
  - l. recommendation will be scored even if more than three are submitted. The nomination letter submitted with the initial nomination form does not count as a letter of recommendation.

3. During the application process, you should be prepared to address the following prompts/questions:
  - a. Give examples of ways you have advocated for the profession throughout your career.
  - b. What were two or three of your school counseling program goals last year, and how did you address them? Use data to show your progress in meeting these goals.
  - c. Give an example of a particularly effective collaborative effort you spearheaded with a stakeholder population (administrators, faculty, parents and/or the community).
  - d. What types of professional development opportunities have you participated in throughout your career, and how has this contributed to your continual learning?
  - e. How does your comprehensive school counseling program use advocacy, leadership, systemic change and collaboration to make a difference for students?

## Leadership Award

### *Award Criteria*

The Leadership award recognizes those individuals who supervise, support, and/or educate current or future school counselors by their leadership and advocacy for the field of counseling. These individuals have had a positive impact on the school counseling field, and improving the services offered by those they supervise. The following criteria must be met for this nomination:

- The nominator must be a VSCA member. Membership will be verified.
- The nominee must be currently employed as an administrator, district-level school counseling director, or a school counseling educator, and has served in this capacity for at least five years at their present position or a combination of positions.
- The nominee cannot be a current elected member of the VSCA Board of Directors.
- The nominee should have primary responsibility for working with current and/or future counselors and other student support personnel.
- The nominee must demonstrate evidence of providing training programs and in services to keep counselors abreast of current trends in counseling such as the ASCA National Model.
- The nominee must show the implementation of innovative counseling programs and, where applicable, provide support for pursuing ASCA RAMP status.
- The nominee must recognize the importance of school counselors within the schools and support attendance at workshops and conferences.
- The nominee must demonstrate evidence of supporting the implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program(s) utilizing ASCA National Model.
- The activities or accomplishments referenced in the application must have taken place within the last five years.

## *Directions for Nominator*

1. Review the Award Criteria. The nominee must meet all criteria to be considered for this award.
2. Complete the Nomination Form and Nomination Letter and send to both Professional Recognition Chairs, Rebecca Chalmers Ginnett at [chalmersrebecca65@gmail.com](mailto:chalmersrebecca65@gmail.com) and Kim Sterling at [ksterling@hcps.us](mailto:ksterling@hcps.us)
3. Visit the SCOY Online Awards Portal at <http://va.schoolcounselorawards.org/scoy>
4. Click "Other Awards" and login or register.
5. Complete the Leadership Award Nomination Form and upload it as a single Word Document or PDF file to the portal. **Completed nominations are due by March 19, 2024 at midnight.**

## **Additional Information**

VSCA is not required to grant an award if there are fewer than three (3) nominees in any category. All nominations and applications must be complete. Incomplete nominations or applications will not be considered.

Award Winners will be notified by **April 21, 2024**. Awards will be presented at the VSCA Fall Conference on October 9 - 11, 2024 during the Awards Luncheon.

For more information, contact the Professional Recognition Co-Chairs:  
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[chalmersrebecca65@gmail.com](mailto:chalmersrebecca65@gmail.com)

Kim Sterling  
[ksterling@hcps.us](mailto:ksterling@hcps.us)