



# 2014 Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals

## HOW TO WRITE A WINNING SAMMIES NOMINATION

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### WHAT WE LOOK FOR IN NOMINEES

#### Significant accomplishment

- Articulate how the nominee's work benefits our nation.
- Accomplishments may relate to a specific event or reflect the cumulative results of many years of work on a particular challenge or mission.
- Be sure the primary focus of the nomination is on the nominee's work as a federal employee, and not on his or her volunteer or military service outside the agency.

#### Innovation

- What is bigger, better, more effective or more efficient than what has been done before?
- Has the nominee developed a new model or process adopted agency-wide or in the private sector?
- Perhaps he or she is leading collaboration between agencies or departments where it did not occur before.

#### Leadership

- How does the nominee achieve results from his or her team?
- Does the nominee help recruit and inspire the next generation of agency employees?
- Does he or she mentor younger employees to help them advance and take on new challenges?

#### Commitment to public service

- What inspired the nominee to work in government or perhaps leave another sector to take a federal job?
- Has he or she remained committed to government service despite more lucrative opportunities?

### WHAT WE LOOK FOR IN NOMINATIONS

#### Simplicity

- Be sure the nomination explains the nominee's role in achieving the stated accomplishment.
- Avoid acronyms or insider jargon.
- Assume our review teams have little expertise or familiarity with specific topic areas.

#### Attention-grabbing headlines

- Capture the reviewer's attention in the first few sentences with bold statements about what the nominee has done.
- Start with the conclusion or outcome of the nominee's work and fill in the details behind it.
- Read profiles of past honorees at [servicetoamericamedals.org](http://servicetoamericamedals.org) to use as models for writing the nomination.

#### Good references

- Include a supervisor or higher level official who can verify the nominee's employment status and give the agency's stamp of approval.
- Include someone who really knows the nominee, can verify the nomination details, and help us better understand the true nature and scope of the accomplishment. This person may also be a beneficiary who can personally speak to value of the nominee's work.
- Consider name recognition. If possible, include an agency head, corporate representative or foundation head. This person might not have a personal relationship with the nominee, but is willing to give a strong endorsement.

#### Personal touches

- Sometimes a good human interest story—either about the nominee or the community he or she serves—helps advance the nomination.
- What inspired this person to pursue his or her field of work?

#### Quantify the accomplishment

- If possible, include numbers that demonstrate the significance of the nominee's work or accomplishments, such as the number of participants or recipients, or the amount of money or energy saved.