

**STATE COUNCIL ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**  
**2026 State Council on Affirmative Action Impact Awards**  
**Lifetime of Service Award**

**I. Introduction**

The State Council on Affirmative Action (SCAA) established its Awards Program in 2000 to recognize the achievements of outstanding Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Affirmative Action (AA) practices across Wisconsin state service. Pursuant to Wisconsin Statute, chapter 230.46, the SCAA is an appointed body that advises the Division of Personnel Management Administrator on the progress of affirmative action programs throughout the Wisconsin civil service system. The Council also promotes compliance with state and federal regulations and recommends improvements to the state's affirmative action efforts as an employer.

As part of this Awards Program, the SCAA created the **Lifetime of Service Award** in 2019 to honor long-term state employees from state agencies, Wisconsin Technical Colleges, and University of Wisconsin System campuses. This award recognizes individuals who have demonstrated sustained leadership and an enduring commitment to fairness and justice, access and opportunity, and the cultivation of healthy work environments throughout their careers. Recipients are recognized for their purposeful and consistent efforts to recruit, retain, and promote the public service workforce over the course of their professional lives.

**II. Eligibility**

Permanent, classified, or unclassified employees with at least 15 years of state service (including university and technical college) are welcome to apply. Additionally, a person recently retired, or who has voluntarily separated from state service, with at least 15 years of service, is eligible for nomination if the last day of employment is within 12 months of the nomination deadline of September 11, 2026 (On or after September 11, 2025). Nominations can also be submitted by team members, employees supervised by the nominee, or the nominee's supervisor. Nominations submitted by the nominee's subordinate employees or team members must be accompanied by a letter from the nominee's supervisor endorsing the nomination. The nominee's supervisor submits the nomination to the State Council on Affirmative Action and courtesy copies the division and agency head.

**III. Application and Selection Criteria**

The Council will accept nominations for the 2026 State Council on Affirmative Action Impact Awards until **Friday, September 11, 2026**.

A Council committee will review the submissions by agencies and universities against the selection criteria for each nomination. The nominations for consideration must include:

- a. A letter from the nominee's supervisor with optional supporting statements from the nominee's team or subordinate employees to the State Council on Affirmative Action. The letter should

introduce the nominee, the nominee's position and work history with the state, and describe the initiatives, programs, or practices the nominee has developed, assisted in developing, or played a significant participating role to promote fairness and justice, access and opportunity while supporting and cultivating healthy work environments. The letter and accompanying statements should be no more than three to five (3-5) double-spaced, typed pages.

- b. The letter(s) should describe the nominee's involvement promoting fairness, inclusivity, and wellness initiatives at work and within their community but should focus primarily on the workplace. The nominee's efforts should span the duration of their career with the state for at least 15 years. Supporting statements from subordinates or coworkers can provide personal testimonials to how the nominee's actions led them to feel included and supported in the workplace. Supervisory statements can provide information on how the nominee's efforts have positively impacted productivity and employee engagement.
- c. Submissions will be evaluated based on information that describes the nominee's individual efforts and achievements, which addresses the following:
  - i. Strong commitment to inclusiveness through any of the following: broad reaching recruitment of candidates; retention and/or promotion activities to support the expanding workforce landscape; creation of or participation in programs, initiatives, and practices aimed at increasing innovation, inclusion and/or promoting employee wellness.
  - ii. Innovative recruitment, retention, and/or engagement efforts and initiatives may include components that explore various regional and personal experiences implemented to attract and provide access for a broader base of people, including veterans, persons with disabilities, and applicants of all racial and ethnic backgrounds.
  - iii. Dedication to promoting employee wellness and a healthy (emotional and/or physical) workplace.
  - iv. Facilitation of training opportunities that lead to upward mobility for all persons in leadership positions.
- d. Email applications to **Briann Padrutt** at [briann.padrutt@wisconsin.gov](mailto:briann.padrutt@wisconsin.gov) with the subject line: "2026 State Council on Affirmative Action Impact Awards."

#### IV. Judges

A three (3) or five (5) person committee from the State Council on Affirmative Action members, representing various communities across the state will review all nominations and rate them according to the selection criteria.

#### V. Award Presentation

The secretaries, chancellors or CEO/president of the selected agencies or universities, the individual receiving recognition for their outstanding service and their supervisor will be notified of the awards no later than **September 28, 2026**. Awards will be presented on **Friday, October 23, 2026, in the Assembly Chambers of the State Capitol**.

**VI. Contact Information**

For additional information about the State Council on Affirmative Action Impact Awards program, email: [briann.padrutt@wisconsin.gov](mailto:briann.padrutt@wisconsin.gov)