

STATE COUNCIL ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

2024 Outstanding Leadership Award

I. Introduction

In 2019, the State Council on Affirmative Action (SCAA) created the **Outstanding Leadership Award** as part of its **Diversity Awards program** to recognize state employees in leadership roles, employed by state agencies, Wisconsin Technical Colleges and University of Wisconsin system campuses who have exhibited exemplary service in the areas of inclusion, diversity, equity, and wellness. This award includes individuals who have created and maintained an inclusive, healthy, and positive work environment, promoting diversity, acceptance and understanding of different backgrounds.

The Council established the Diversity Award program in 2000 to recognize the achievements of outstanding Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Affirmative Action (AA) practices among State Agencies, Wisconsin Technical Colleges and University of Wisconsin system campuses. Pursuant to Wisconsin Statute, chapter 230.46, the Council advises the Division of Personnel Management's Administrator on the progress of affirmative action programs throughout the Wisconsin civil service system. The Council also seeks compliance with state and federal regulations and recommends improvements in the state's affirmative action efforts as an employer.

II. Eligibility

Permanent, classified, or unclassified employees with leadership roles are welcome to apply. Nominations can also be submitted by team members, coworkers, employees supervised by the nominee, or by the nominee's supervisor. Nominations submitted by nominee's subordinate employees or team members must be accompanied by a letter from the nominee's supervisor endorsing the nomination.

III. Nomination and Selection Criteria

The Council will accept nominations for the 2024 Diversity Award until **Friday, September 27, 2024**.

In the selection process, the Council will review the nominations submitted by agency and university personnel. The nomination submitted to the Council for consideration must include:

1. A letter from nominee's supervisor with optional supporting statements from the nominee's team and/or subordinate employees to the State Council on Affirmative Action. The letter should introduce the nominee, the nominee's current position with the state, and provide a description of the initiatives, programs, or practices the nominee has led in developing, or played a major role in facilitating, while fostering a healthy, inclusive, and diverse work environment. The nominee's supervisor submits the nomination to the State Council on Affirmative Action and courtesy copies the division and/or agency head. The letter and accompanying statements should be no more than three to five (3-5) double-spaced, typed pages.

2. The letter(s) should describe the nominee’s leadership in inclusivity, diversity, equity and wellness initiatives in the workplace. Community leadership and engagement in these categories will also be considered, but leadership in the employee’s professional role is of primary consideration. The nominee’s efforts should include engagement and promotion of employee wellness, participation in wellness committees/activities, and conduct that models respect and value for inclusion, diversity, and wellness efforts in the workplace. Supporting statements from subordinates or coworkers can provide personal testimonials to how the nominee’s leadership helped them to feel included and supported in the workplace. Supervisory statements can provide information of how the nominee’s leadership has had a positive impact on productivity, employee engagement, and overall workplace wellness.
3. Submissions will be evaluated based on information that demonstrates the nominee’s individual efforts and achievements, which addresses the following:
 - Dedication to employee engagement and inclusiveness through any of the following: valuing and incorporating diversity and diverse perspectives in the workgroup; modeling a respectful and inclusive workplace atmosphere; recruitment of diverse candidates; retention and/or promotion of a diverse workforce; creation of or participation in programs, initiatives, and practices aimed at increasing diversity and/or promoting employee wellness.
 - Leadership in efforts to increase and maintain representation of diverse populations.
 - Promotion of employee wellness and a healthy (emotionally and/or physically) workplace, including but not limited to participation in the EEO and Wellness Committees, activities, training, and professional development.
 - Providing or promoting training opportunities which may lead to upward mobility for racial and ethnic minorities, women, veterans and persons with disabilities in leadership positions.

Please email applications to: Paege Heckle at paege.heckle@wisconsin.gov with the subject line: “**Diversity Awards**”.

IV. Judges

The members of the State Council on Affirmative Action, representing diverse communities across the state, will review all nominations and rate them according to the selection criteria.

V. Award Presentation

The secretaries/chancellors of the selected agencies/universities, the individual receiving recognition for their outstanding service and their supervisor will be notified of the awards no later than September 27, 2024. Awards will be presented in December 2024 in the Assembly Chambers of the State Capitol. The exact date will be shared once the Assembly schedule has been finalized.

VI. Contact Information

For additional information about the Diversity Award program email: paege.heckle@wisconsin.gov