



Volunteer Tennessee's
**2023 GVSA County
Resource Guide**

What are the Governor's Volunteer Stars Awards?

Since 2008, Volunteer Tennessee has hosted the Governor's Volunteer Stars Awards (GVSA), which is an annual recognition that honors the volunteer efforts of Tennesseans in every county.

The Purpose:

- Recognize Tennessee's exceptional volunteers who are making a lasting impact in their communities through volunteer and community service
- Showcase the combined impact of volunteers throughout Tennessee
- Inspire people of all ages to get involved and make a difference in their communities

The Honorees:

The goal is to have 2 honorees from all 95 Tennessee counties.

- A Youth (Age 25 and under)
- An Adult

The Process:

- Identify County Coordinator volunteers to lead the process in each county.
- Assemble a county team
- Solicit and evaluate nominations
- Select an adult and a youth honoree by November 17, 2023
- Submit honoree information
- Recognize recipients locally
- Celebrate recipients at state-wide recognition on Feb. 18, 2024

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Recognition Criteria

The four key criteria to be used for selecting GVSA nominees.

1. **Need:** The nominee's service addresses a specific, compelling need in the community.
2. **Action:** The nominee was actively involved and took initiative.
3. **Innovation:** The nominee used unique or creative methods to solve community problems.
4. **Impact:** The activity or service produced positive changes and provided an example to others.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Any individual whose volunteer activities in Tennessee benefit the community or the State of Tennessee in a substantial, important, or unique way. If a nominee is age 25 or under, please select Youth as the category on the nomination form.
- Individuals **MUST** reside in the county for which they are being honored.
- Students receiving course credits are eligible only if the volunteer service extends beyond course requirements. This must be clearly indicated in the nomination letter.
- National Service program participants (AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps VISTA, RSVP, Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, etc.) are encouraged to apply based on their volunteer involvement in their national service assignment.

Who is NOT Eligible:

- Individuals who do NOT reside in the county for which they are being honored.
- Individuals involved in court-mandated community service or those serving as "loaned executives."
- Persons who receive compensation for service rendered (except National Service participants noted above).
- Individuals who have previously received a Governor's Volunteer Stars Award.
- Groups or families. Each individual will need to be submitted as separate nominations.

Note: A separate recognition is available for Businesses and Nonprofit Organizations. More information on those awards is available at www.tn.gov/volunteer-tennessee/.

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Recognition Process Checklist

This list of things can help your volunteer recognition process run smoothly!

- 1) Choose Your Team
 - a) Identify County Coordinator and GVSA Selection Committee Members
 - b) Formulate a plan, leverage existing recognition programs
- 2) Determine What and How to Celebrate
 - a) Confirm your guidelines and judging criteria
 - b) Develop your nomination form. Volunteer Tennessee provides sample Word, fillable PDF and Google Form options for your use.
 - c) Decide how to recognize your “Stars” in your county
- 3) Rock the Nomination Process
 - a) Publicize the award and the call for nominations
 - b) Engage the local media as promotion partners
 - c) Utilize social media. Tag Volunteer Tennessee and utilize the GVSA hashtags: #VolunteerTennessee, #TennesseeServes, #GVSA, and #GVSA2023
 - d) Contact civic clubs, local nonprofits, chambers of commerce, schools and other community organizations to increase awareness and encourage nominations
- 4) Select your honorees
 - a) Recruit your judges and review judging criteria
 - b) Evaluate volunteer nominations
 - c) Select your winners
 - d) Notify your honorees
- 5) Submit your honorees to Volunteer Tennessee by **November 17, 2023**
Adult submission: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2023GVSA-Adult>
Youth submission: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2023GVSA-Youth>
- 6) Make a big deal about your honorees locally
 - a) Host a local recognition event and present any awards or prizes (if possible)
 - b) Notify the media who your honorees are
 - c) Ask your mayor(s) to issue proclamations recognizing your honorees
 - d) Publicize on social media
- 7) Celebrate your Stars at the GVSA celebration on **February 18, 2024**
in Franklin at the Cool Springs Marriott
- 8) Promote volunteerism in your community

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