



Public Law 96-114, The Congressional Award Act

# Congressional Award

## PARTNER TOOLKIT

The Congressional Award is a non-competitive program for all young people (ages 14-23) designed by the United States Congress to recognize initiative, service, and achievement. Through our office, Members of Congress work with a number of national, state, and local partners to deliver this opportunity to young Americans and help to enhance existing programs and opportunities in every state and congressional district.

### BENEFITS

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- The Congressional Award has **bipartisan support** and the backing of the U.S. Congress.
- **Award presentations** raise the profile of the organization and attract media attention.
- The Congressional Award provides a "**ready-to-use**" **accessible program** of activities geared to the development of the individual. For over thirty years, it has been finely tuned into an efficient and effective tool.
- Implementing the Congressional Award can **complement the many activities that are already taking place in your organization**. Students engaged in activities such as improving musical skills, developing athletic abilities, or volunteering in the community could use these and many other pursuits to earn a Congressional Award.
- Six levels of the Congressional Award provide **tangible evidence of success** and effort on the part of young people.
- The Congressional Award **attracts a large number of volunteers** who derive great satisfaction from sharing their enthusiasm, experience, and skills. **The program can bridge many gaps** – cultural, socioeconomic, gender, and age.
- Operating the Congressional Award encourages the **establishment of community networks** and links. The Congressional Award has thrived over the years due to the enormous contributions of local and national entities.
- Participation **develops qualities in youth** such as enterprise, teamwork, commitment, and leadership which are highly regarded by employers.
- The **flexibility** of the Congressional Award enables it to be used by agencies working with targeted groups of young people. Young people with disabilities, at-risk youth, and honor societies can all gain significant benefits from participation in the program.

- The program can be **molded to satisfy the needs of special interest groups**. The Congressional Award can effectively harness young people's passion for (or encourage an interest in) the arts, science, sports, or the environment.
- The program can be **effectively targeted to specific geographical areas**. The challenges of working with young people in remote rural areas or disadvantaged inner city areas can be successfully overcome with vision and imagination.

## RESOURCES

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### Online Registration

Participants are encouraged to register online. The day they submit their registration is the day they may begin counting activity towards the program. A [hard copy registration form](#) may also be downloaded and distributed.

### Program Book

This is the overview of the entire program including program requirements, sample activities, and frequently asked questions.

### Record Book

The document used by all participants to record activities and track hours (after they register).

### Marketing Brochure

Learn more about program participation throughout the nation, highlights from the recent year, and information about events in Washington, D.C.

## PROMOTING THE PROGRAM

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There are a few easy and effective ways to promote this program among youth you may work with, including:

- 1) Link to the Congressional Award [website](#).
- 2) Designate someone within your office to work as our **point of contact**.
- 3) Connect your audience with the program on **social media** - Facebook, Instagram, & Twitter.
- 4) Create a **press release** about the opportunity.
- 5) Send an **informational letter or packet** to your youth and parents.
- 6) Keep **materials on display** for youth and parents. You can request them from our D.C. office.
- 7) Hold a **kick-off event** for stakeholders to increase local participation.

There are youth in your community already participating in various programs and activities that can earn them a Congressional Award. Do not let them miss out on the recognition, scholarships, and opportunities this award can bring. Your organization can benefit from the invaluable contribution Congressional Award participants can make through their citizenship and service.

For more information, contact us at [information@congressionalaward.org](mailto:information@congressionalaward.org) or (202) 226-0130.