

Dear Esteemed Member,

It's June which means it feels like summer is either already here or is soon to arrive across the United States. June 14 is the 250th birthday of the U.S. Army with the Army Warrant Officer being a key component for 107 of those years. For the US Army Warrant Officers Association (USAWOA), June also marks the final month of our annual awards season which runs from 1 July to 30 June. This month, I want to re-familiarize our members with our USAWOA awards and the importance of recognizing our members and chapters.

I cannot stress enough, the importance of recognizing the efforts and accomplishments of our nearly 6000 members and 68 chapters around the world. Our members and chapters volunteer countless hours of their personal time working within their communities. With events ranging from building ramps to aid wheelchair bound citizens, picking up trash alongside roads and highways, or reading to young school age children, our members are actively involved in their chapter activities.

Our governing USAWOAM 500-1, National Awards Manual (<https://docs.usawoa.org/awards/awards.html>), provides three objectives of the USAWOA Awards Program.

1. Foster morale, incentive, esprit de corps, and recognition to members and non-members.
2. Formalize a program by which the National Board of Directors, Regions, and Chapters can recognize outstanding performance or service by individuals and chapters.
3. Recognize the dedication, service, and professionalism of members and non-members who have contributed to the goals of the USAWOA. Service is for the United States Army, the United States Army Warrant Officer Cohort, the USAWOA, and/or the surrounding military communities.

Chapter 3 of the manual outlines all USAWOA awards, eligibility criteria and required approval levels. Members may be surprised by the number and types of region, chapter, and individual member awards we have. The selection of all chapter, region and select national awards is done by the USAWOA Awards Committee led by CW4(Ret) Rebecca Isaac. This is a time-consuming task and starts with her team reading and reviewing all submitted chapter meeting minutes for the past year. That's right....every chapter's meeting minutes, submitted to the headquarters office. As you can imagine, if all 68 chapters submitted at least quarterly, if not monthly minutes, that is a lot of reading to do.

Unfortunately, and is often the case, submitted chapter minutes lack specificity on the actions the chapter and its members did. We often see highlights and photos posted to chapter social media pages, but that information never makes it into the official minutes. It is extremely important chapters take the time to accurately record what they are doing in their minutes as this is the only way the award committee can review and ultimately reward chapters and their members for their hard work.

Individuals are primarily recognized with the awarding of USAWOA Award for Excellence (AFE). Chapter presidents may award the bronze level, region directors the silver level, and the gold level is approved by the national president, with endorsement from the region director. The AFE nomination form can be found at <https://docs.usawoa.org/forms/forms.html>.

I fully realize our members do not commit their valuable time to volunteering with the goal of getting an award. However, I also know that we have dedicated members going back 30 or 40 years who have never been recognized for their role and efforts. I encourage chapter presidents and region

directors to utilize the AFE to provide a form of recognition. It's truly as simple as articulating the impact the member had on the chapter, in the community and for USAWOA.

At the national level, members can be nominated for the Don Hess Lifetime Achievement Award, President's Award, Warrant Officer of the Year and Spouse of the Year. Guidelines for submission for these awards are found in the manual, and I solicit and encourage those nominations be forwarded.

All awards are presented on the last day of the Annual Meeting of the Members (AMM) and at the Warrant Officer Ball. And speaking of the AMM, registration is open and ongoing at <https://amm.usawoa.org/>. We're going to Tacoma, Washington for the very first time the host Bigfoot Silver Chapter is working hard to make this an event to remember.

Thank you for what each of you does for USAWOA and our Warrant Officer Cohort.