2022 Governor's Outstanding Leadership in Disabilities (GOLD) Awards

The Governor's Office of Disability Affairs is excited to host the 2022 Governor's Outstanding Leadership in Disabilities (GOLD) Awards. The GOLD Awards is an opportunity for Louisiana to pay tribute to the achievements and dedication of individuals in the disability community.
Here are the award categories:

Distinguished Merit Award	Patsy Barrett Memorial Award
Ken Vince Memorial Award	April Dunn Youth of the Year
Educator of the Year	Family of the Year
Volunteer of the Year	Employer of the Year
Service Provider of the Year	Direct Support Professional of the Year
Veteran of the Year	Service Animal of the Year
Elected Official of the Year	Public Servant of the Year

The Governor's Office of Disability Affairs strives to structure the awards ceremony to celebrate all Louisiana citizens who have inspired positive changes within the disability community. With your help, the 2022 GOLD Awards will honor the devotion and talents of those who have worked diligently to make Louisiana a better place for all people. Nominations of any person or group deserving of such recognition is encouraged.

The following pages include a description of each award as well as the criteria for each. The last page is the nomination form. All nominations must include a completed nomination form, letter of recommendation describing the nominee's achievements and contributions, and letters of support from others.

Submissions for nominations are due by Monday, October 31, 2022. Nomination packets must be completed and mailed to the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs, 1051 N 3rd St., Suite 136, Baton Rouge, LA 70802. Nomination forms, supporting documents, and photographs will not be returned.

All questions should be directed to disability.affairs@la.gov or 225-219-7550.

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Distinguished Merit Award

This award is given in recognition of extraordinary service by an individual, organization, or firm working in the disability field that has consistently presented opportunities in Louisiana for people with disabilities to utilize their capabilities in achieving full participation in society.

Examples of nominee attributes:

- Makes strides in expanding educational opportunities.
- Creates initiatives to improve access to housing, buildings, and transportation.
- Participates in recreational, social and cultural activities.
- Advocates for greater opportunities for employment for people with disabilities.
- Enhances rehabilitation programs/facilities for people with disabilities.
- Increases the application of technology on behalf people with disabilities.

Patsy Barrett Memorial Award

Patsy Barrett was a human rights activist, and she initiated the GOLD Awards in 1982 to recognize people who work for equality, justice and dignity for people with disabilities. Ms. Barrett was also involved in policy development at the national level and she worked with leaders who helped formulate the Americans with Disabilities Act into Federal Law.

Examples of nominee attributes:

- A female with disabilities recognized for her leadership abilities and achievements as a disability advocate.

Ken Vince Memorial Award

Ken Vince was a rehabilitation counselor who touched the lives of hundreds of people in Louisiana through his advocacy for people with disabilities. His commitment generated a greater public awareness of the needs of people with disabilities and fostered a greater participation in society for the disability community.

Examples of nominee attributes:

- A male with disabilities who is recognized for his leadership abilities and achievements as a disability advocate.

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April Dunn Youth of the Year

April Dunn was the Senior Coordinator in the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs and Chairperson of the Developmental Disabilities Council. April was a vocal and respected advocate and leader. She advocated on many issues, including education, employment, healthcare, home and community based services, housing, transportation, and recreation. She was known for her ability to share her experience as a person with a disability in a way that was very impactful and led to many laws and policies benefitting people with disabilities.

Examples of nominee attributes:

- Must be between 13-25 years of age.
- Participates in activities for the benefit of people with disabilities.
- Demonstrates outstanding exceptional achievement and leadership.
- Promotes disability pride and acceptance.
- Contributes toward increased awareness for people with disabilities.

Educator of the Year

This award is given in recognition of an outstanding individual who has contributed significantly in educating people with disabilities in our community.

Examples of nominee attributes:

- Demonstrates outstanding leadership within the field of education for people with disabilities.
- Advances the importance of education and awareness through strong advocacy and programs.
- Motivates and inspires others including students, colleagues, and members of the community.
- Positively influences students with disabilities.

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Family of the Year

This award is given in recognition of a family who has a family member(s) with disabilities and who, by involvement in the community, and mutual support of one another, are an example of courage, strength, and unity for other families in Louisiana. Traditional and non-traditional families are encouraged to apply.

Examples of nominee attributes:

- Meets the challenges of a disability and recognizes the beauty.
- Maintains outstanding efforts in achieving a dynamic and cohesive family unit.
- Recognizes the contributions of each family member.
- Participates in community.
- Recognized in the community for quality of family life and participation in community.

Volunteer of the Year

This award is given in recognition of extraordinary service by a volunteer or organization that has substantially enhanced the opportunities in Louisiana for people with disabilities to use their skills and develop their potential as members of society.

Examples of nominee attributes:

- Demonstrates outstanding or exceptional contributions as a volunteer.
- Participates in activities for the benefit of people with disabilities.
- Exhibits selflessness and a willingness to devote time, talents, and efforts on behalf of people with disabilities.
- Makes contributions that increase public awareness and understanding of people with disabilities.

Employer of the Year

This award is given in recognition of outstanding achievement in providing integrated competitive employment and career opportunities for people with disabilities.

Examples of nominee attributes:

- Maintains an excellent history of hiring people with disabilities in integrated, competitive employment.
- Provides meaningful integrated competitive employment and career opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Supports and promotes people with disabilities to succeed in their career field.

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Service Provider of the Year

This award is given in recognition of service above and beyond the call of duty by an individual or organizational provider of services to people with disabilities.

Examples of nominee attributes:

- Demonstrates outstanding or exceptional contributions as a provider of services.
- Participates in activities for the benefit of people with disabilities beyond the scope of compensated services.
- Exhibits selflessness and a willingness to devote uncompensated time, talents, and efforts on the behalf of people with disabilities.
- Makes contributions that increase public awareness and understanding of people with disabilities.

Direct Support Professional of the Year

This award is given in recognition of extraordinary service by a direct support professional that has substantially enhanced the life for people with disabilities to live more independently and productive, as well as support self-determination and individual development.

Examples of nominee attributes:

- Shows unconditional respect for the daily choices and life goals of the person(s) they assist.
- Exhibits dependability.

Veteran of the Year

This award is given in recognition of a veteran with a disability who has served honorably in the United States Armed Forces, and has a record of exemplary service in the disability community.

Examples of nominee attributes:

- Contributes towards increased awareness for veterans with disabilities in the community.
- Devotes outstanding volunteer efforts in their community.
- Works continually to inspire others.
- Honorably discharged veteran of the United States Armed Forces.

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Service Animal of the Year

This award is given in recognition of a service animal who has exhibited exceptional assistance to a person with a disability.

Examples of nominee attributes:

- Pulls wheelchairs, carries and/or retrieves things.
- Assists persons with mobility impairments with balance.
- Assists with behavioral, emotional, and mental health.
- Assists with other health-related tasks.
- Both owner and service animal have demonstrated perseverance in facing barriers.

Elected Official of the Year

This award is given in recognition of extraordinary service by an elected official that has substantially supported or enhanced the opportunities for people with disabilities.

Examples of nominee attributes:

- Demonstrates outstanding or exceptional contributions as an elected official.
- Participates or supports activities for the benefit of people with disabilities.
- Exhibits selflessness and a willingness to devote time, talents, and efforts on behalf of people with disabilities.
- Makes contributions that increase public awareness and understanding of people with disabilities.

Public Servant of the Year

This award is given to a government employee in recognition of outstanding achievement in hard work and dedicated service for people with disabilities.

Examples of nominee attributes:

- Maintains an excellent history of serving and working for people with disabilities.
- Exhibits selflessness and a willingness to devote time, talents, and efforts on behalf of people with disabilities.
- Supports and promotes individuals with disabilities to succeed, have better outcomes, and improved quality of life.

2022 GOLD Awards Nomination Form

(Please Print)

Nominee's Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____, LA Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Is the nominee aware they are being nominated? ____ Yes or No ____

Circle award for which you are nominating the person/organization/animal:

Distinguished Merit Award	Patsy Barrett Memorial Award
Ken Vince Memorial Award	April Dunn Youth of the Year
Educator of the Year	Family of the Year
Volunteer of the Year	Employer of the Year
Service Provider of the Year	Direct Support Professional of the Year
Veteran of the Year	Service Animal of the Year
Elected Official of the Year	Public Servant of the Year

Your Information:

(Nominators must be present at ceremony and provide introduction if the nominee is selected.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____, LA Zip: _____

Phone: Email:

Nominations are due by Monday, October 31, 2022.

Submit nominations online at https://bit.ly/GOLDnomination.
or mail to:
Governor's Office of Disability Affairs
1051 N 3rd St., Suite 136, Baton Rouge, LA 70802

All nomination packets must include the following:
1. Completed nomination form.
2. Letter of recommendation describing the nominee's achievements and contributions.
3. Letters of support from others.