

For: FAS and FSA Employees

**2013 President’s Volunteer Service Awards and Call to Service Award**

**Approved by:** Associate Administrator for Operations and Management



**1 Overview**

**A Background**

The Secretary of Agriculture has invited USDA employees to submit nominations for the President’s Volunteer Service Awards and the Call to Service Award. The President’s Council on Service and Civic Participation (PCSCP) created the President’s Volunteer Service Award program as a way to thank and honor Americans who, by their demonstrated commitment and example, inspire others to engage in volunteer service. Recognizing and honoring volunteers:

- sets a standard for service to others
- encourages a sustained commitment to civic participation
- inspires others to make volunteering a central part of their lives.

The President’s Volunteer Service Awards recognize those who have achieved a certain standard, measured by the number of hours served over a 12-month period or cumulative hours served over the course of a lifetime. USDA will highlight extraordinary volunteers by honoring their efforts at a special presentation during the annual Secretary’s Honor Awards ceremony.

**B Purpose**

This notice informs employees of the opportunity to submit nominations for the President’s Volunteer Service Awards and the Call to Service Award. All applications shall be submitted to **FFAS.PVSANominations@wdc.usda.gov** by **5 p.m. e.t. on Thursday, March 28, 2013**. See paragraph 3 for additional guidance.

<b>Disposal Date</b>	<b>Distribution</b>
October 1, 2013	All FAS and FSA employees; State Offices relay to County Offices

## Notice PM-2880

### 2 Award Information

#### A Eligibility

All USDA employees are eligible for the award based on their hours of volunteer service to a qualifying organization.

#### B Qualifying Organization/Activity

To be recognized, volunteer service activities must be with an organization that is legally established in the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or 1 of the territories, and volunteer service activities must meet national or community needs in the area of youth achievement, parks and open space, health communities, or public safety and emergency response. Activities must be unpaid and may not include court-ordered or disciplinary-related community service.

The majority of faith-based volunteer activities are considered acceptable service for the President's Volunteer Service Awards including, but not limited to, volunteering to teach Sunday School; volunteering at Vacation Bible School; painting and cleaning at a church, mosque, or synagogue; collecting canned food; mentoring children after school; and volunteering at a shelter. Activities that take place during a normal worship service such as ushering, participation in the choir, or other activities practiced during worship hours are considered outside the President's Volunteer Service Award guidelines.

Activities associated with influencing legislation or elections to a public office, engaging in protests, engaging in union activities, and participating in events that are likely to include political advocacy are **not** considered acceptable service for purposes of these awards.

#### C Criteria

For a:

- Bronze Presidential Volunteer Service Award, the employee must have served a minimum of **100 hours** and a maximum of **249 hours** of service to a qualifying organization over a 12-month period that began on or after July 1, 2011, and must end by March 31, 2013
- Silver Presidential Volunteer Service Award, the employee must have served a minimum of **250 hours** and a maximum of **499 hours** of service to a qualifying organization over a 12-month period that began on or after July 1, 2011, and must end by March 31, 2013
- Gold Presidential Volunteer Service Award, the employee must have served **500 hours or more** of service to a qualifying organization over a 12-month period that began on or after July 1, 2011, and must end by March 31, 2013
- President's Call to Service Award, the employee must have served 4,000 hours or more of service to a qualifying organization over the employee's lifetime.

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### 2 Award Information (Continued)

#### D Certification

All applicants will be required to certify that they have, in fact, served the number of hours for which they are claiming credit.

#### E Recognition

Each award recipient will receive an official President's Volunteer Service Award pin, a personalized certificate of achievement, and a congratulatory letter from the President of the United States. The top 5 applicants, based on their number of hours of service in both the Call to Service and gold Presidential Volunteer Service Award categories, will be recognized at the Secretary's Honor Awards Ceremony. One person in each of the bronze and silver award categories will be randomly selected to receive their award at the Secretary's Honor Awards Ceremony, in recognition of their efforts and as a representative of their colleagues in that award category.

### 3 Nomination Submissions and Contact Information

#### A Submitting Nominations

Each nomination will consist of the application form (Exhibit 1) that **must be typed, signed, scanned**, and submitted to **FFAS.PVSANominations@wdc.usda.gov** by **5 p.m. e.t. on Thursday, March 28, 2013**. Late submissions and FAXed applications will **not** be accepted. If needed, additional attachments that are typed will be accepted.

**Notes:** The service activity shall be listed in chronological order. Therefore, the ending date of the applicant's last service activity will be recorded as the applicant "Award Period Ending Date." The "Award Period Ending Date" will be displayed on the recognition certificate.

The nomination form can be accessed from the FFAS Employee Forms/Publications Online Website at **<http://fsaintranet.sc.egov.usda.gov/dam/ffasforms/forms.html>**. Click "**Find Current Forms Using Our Form Number Search**" and ENTER "**Notice PM-2880 Exhibit 1**" in the "**Form Number**" box.

FAS or FSA employees shall submit applications by e-mail to **FFAS.PVSANominations@wdc.usda.gov** by 5 p.m. e.t. Thursday, March 28, 2013.

#### B Contact Information

If there are questions or additional information is needed, contact Kedra Watts by either of the following:

- e-mail at **kedra.watts@wdc.usda.gov**
- telephone at 202-401-0678.

**President’s Volunteer Service and Call to Service Award Application Form**

The nomination form can be accessed from the FFAS Employee Forms/Publications Online Website at <http://fsaintranet.sc.egov.usda.gov/dam/ffasforms/forms.html>. Click “Find Current Forms Using Our Form Number Search” and ENTER “Notice PM-2880 Exhibit 1” in the “Form Number” box.

		
<b>President’s Volunteer Service Award Application Form</b>		
<b>Employee Name:</b>	_____	
<b>Agency: (e.g., ARS, AMS, FSA)</b>	_____	
<b>Duty Station:</b>	_____	
<b>Office Telephone Number:</b>	_____	
<b>Volunteer Record:</b>		
Please identify the qualifying organization, activity performed, dates, and hours. Please attach additional sheets, as necessary.		
<b>Qualifying Organization and Activity</b> <small>(e.g., Girl Scout Council of The Nation's Capital, Scout Leader)</small>	<b>Dates</b> <small>(in chronological order)</small>	<b>Hours</b>
<b>Total Hours:</b>		
<b>Certification:</b>		
I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is accurate and, based upon my service record, am eligible for the following award:		
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Call to Service Award</b> (4,000 hours or more of volunteer service over a lifetime)		
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Gold Presidential Volunteer Service Award</b> (500 hours or more of service to qualifying organization over the 12-month period)		
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Silver Presidential Volunteer Service Award</b> (A minimum of 250 hours and a maximum of 499 hours of service to a qualifying organization over the 12-month period)		
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Bronze Presidential Volunteer Service Award</b> (A minimum of 100 hours and a maximum of 249 hours of service to a qualifying organization over the 12-month period)		
_____	_____	
Applicant's Signature	Date	