

# 2026 Communicator of Achievement Rules

The Communicator of Achievement Award, National Federation of Press Women's highest honor for members, is given to an individual nominated by his or her state affiliate for highest achievement in the communications field and service to the affiliate, NFPW and the community.

Traditionally, each affiliate honors its nominee in its own way. All affiliate nominees for NFPW Communicator of Achievement are recognized individually, and the winner is announced at the COA Banquet at NFPW's annual conference. Our 2026 event will be held during our conference September 24-26 at the Turf Valley Resort in Ellicott City, Maryland. Watch email and NFPW website for information.

## Nominate Your State's COA!

We strongly encourage each affiliate to select a COA every year, recognizing individual achievement and sharing it at the national level. Judging criteria balance both professional accomplishments and service, so any nominee has an excellent chance of being recognized as NFPW's national COA.

Affiliate presidents and COA directors, please see the information provided below:

- Nomination Criteria
- Judging Criteria
- Entry Requirements
- Submission/Fee
- COA Banquet Attendance

**Deadline: Entries must be submitted by Monday, April 13, 2026**

## Nomination Criteria

- Each affiliate may choose one COA nominee.
- A previous nominee can be named by an affiliate again, as long as he or she has not been honored as NFPW's national COA winner.
- All nominees must be living members, in good standing for at least two years in an affiliate and NFPW. To check on a member's status, please email [membership@nfpw.org](mailto:membership@nfpw.org).

## Judging Criteria

Nominees will be judged on these four elements:

- **Professional achievement: 50%**  
All nominees should have high professional qualifications and achievements in their areas of communications (any field that has qualified the nominee for NFPW membership).
- **Community service: 20%**  
Each nominee should have made some impact on the world beyond his or her profession — some contribution to humanity. That impact or contribution may be through the profession or beyond it.
- **NFPW service: 15%**

- Since this is NFPW's highest award, each nominee should have been active in the national organization. This could include attendance at previous NFPW conferences, volunteering or giving presentations at NFPW conferences, or other activities deemed by the judges to have been of service to NFPW.
- **State affiliate service: 15%**  
Each nominee should have made a definite and important contribution to his or her affiliate, as the state affiliates are important for carrying out the mission of NFPW.

## Entry Requirements

### Entry format

- Nomination packages should be submitted electronically to the COA director at [nfpwcoa@gmail.com](mailto:nfpwcoa@gmail.com).

### Entry contents

Nomination packages must contain all of the following contents. Send a brief cover note with separate file attachments of each element of the package. Label each file with your state's abbreviation, the nominee's last name, and the file name, as indicated in the examples below.

- Official entry form (**VA-LastName-Entry.doc** or **.docx**)
- A brief summary in resumé-style list form of vital information about the nominee divided among professional, community and NFPW / affiliate service. (*One page – 500 words maximum*) (**VA-LastName-Bio.doc** or **.docx**)
- A narrative about the nominee (*Up to four pages – 2,400 words maximum*) (**VA-LastName-Narrative.doc** or **.docx**)
- Endorsements of the nominees. You may excerpt from full-length endorsements. (*Two pages – 1,200 words maximum*) (**VA-LastName-Endorsements.doc** or **.docx**)
- Two samples of the nominee's work (such as published stories or on-camera appearances) to prove he or she has been a professional communicator. This gives the judge an idea of the type of work done by the nominee; the quality of the work isn't being judged here. Print samples can be PDF scans or website URLs or links to bylined stories (or portions of stories). (*Two pages – may include copy excerpts, graphic images/clips or digital links*) Broadcast samples should be limited to 10 minutes. An MP3, MP4 or other electronic files may be uploaded to a website or to YouTube or Vimeo and the URL submitted. (**VA-LastName-Sample1.doc**); (**VA-LastName-Sample2.doc** or **.docx**)
- In addition, include:
  - A 150-word biography for AGENDA (**VA-LastName-Agenda.doc** or **.docx**) – this information will also be edited to 75 words for the conference program
  - A color photograph of the nominee in jpg format at least 300-dpi resolution (**VA-LastName-Photo.jpg**)

*The biography will be subject to editing in the interest of consistency and space. The materials will be used for PR and print purposes.*

## Submission / Fee

- Email all materials outlined above by **April 13, 2026**, to COA contest director Karen Stensrud at: [nfpwcoa@gmail.com](mailto:nfpwcoa@gmail.com).

- The entry fee is \$60. This covers COA expenses and flower corsages or boutonnieres for the nominees to wear at the COA awards banquet. The COA director will provide the flowers. Visit [nfpw.org/coa](http://nfpw.org/coa) to make an electronic payment, or mail a check made out to NFPW to:

**NFPW**  
**140B Purcellville Gateway Dr., Suite 120**  
**Purcellville, VA 20132**

#### **Double-check**

Before mailing, please consult the **2026 COA Checklist** for a complete and succinct list of nomination packet requirements.

Questions? [Email Karen Stensrud](mailto:karen.stensrud@nfpw.org) or call her at 701-237-2822.

#### **Confirmation**

Once the packages and emailed material have arrived, a confirmation email will be sent to the person submitting the nomination.

### **COA Banquet Attendance**

Affiliate COA nominees must inform the contest director **by June 5, 2026**, if they will be attending the COA banquet, scheduled during the national conference to be held September 24-26 at the Turf Valley Resort in Ellicott City, Maryland (watch email and website for more details).