Athena Young Professional Award Nomination Requirements

Nominator Directions:

The online application form (available here), should be accurate and completed in detail. Attach no more than 3 (three) Letters of Recommendation, with at least one of those letters focusing on the mentorship/assistance/support of women.. The more detailed information provided in the application allows the selection committee to more fully understand the contributions made by the applicant. Use specific examples, metrics, scenarios, names and dates when possible. The nominator is responsible for soliciting and submitting the required letters of recommendation. Recommendation writers should keep in mind the 8 Principals of Enlightened Leadership when writing their letter and the content must tie directly to the scoring criteria.

The nominator may or may not choose to inform the nominee that they are being nominated. Nominees are not formally notified of their nomination by the Athena Selection Committee.

** Applications will be carried over 1 year. The Women's Network Director will reach out to the nominator to see if they would like for the nominee to be considered again, and if there is anything to be added or updated to the nomination. In year 2 and beyond, a new nomination will be required.*

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Applicant Eligibility Criteria:

- **Must be 21-45 years of age on date of application submission**
- **Must live or work in Boone County for its betterment**
- **Must demonstrate mentorship/assistance/support of women** (score weight 1/3)
    - Provide 1-3 specific examples of how the applicant is contributing to developing other women and/or how the applicant exhibits encouragement and/or growth to other women as evidenced by:
        - Influencing and/or providing or encouraging career development of women
        - Volunteering with women's centric organizations whose mission is or is related to the advancement of women
        - Providing formal or informal encouragement and/or mentoring (please provide specific examples)
- **Must demonstrate business/professional excellence in their field/organization** (score weight 1/3)
    - Provide specific examples of how the nominee has demonstrated excellence, creativity and initiative in their profession or industry.
    - Include 3-5 ways the applicant has impacted their organization, this could include but is not limited to:
        - Demonstrated interest in professional development
        - Demonstrated interest in personal growth opportunities

- Demonstrated personal accountability and/or results
- Impact on the quality of products/service
- Impact on customer, client, vendor and/or employee satisfaction
- Organization or industry awards/recognition (please provide specific examples)

- **Must demonstrate support/involvement in improving the community** (score weight 1/3)
  - List a minimum of 3 specific examples in which the applicant has demonstrated leadership roles in service to the community and how the contributions have benefited the community.
- **Must submit letters of recommendation**
  - All letters of recommendation (maximum of 3) must tie directly into the scoring criteria
  - At least one letter of recommendation must focus on the mentorship/assistance/support of women.

THE SELECTION PROCESS

- An in-person Initial Kick Off meeting of all past Athena and Athena Young Professional recipients chaired by the immediate past chair of Women's Network will convene to review all applications. Meeting has two purposes:
  - 1. To discuss the nominees and add any additional information which has not been included in the original nomination. Discussion will be limited to first person experience/knowledge by being directly involved in any interaction or substantiated by awards/recognition, policies, processes, procedures or documented instances that a past recipient is involved in. This first person information can be submitted in writing or verbally at the Initial Kickoff Meeting. No third party or hearsay information will be allowed. All information provided must align with the scoring rubric.
  - 2. The past Athena and past AYP winners will select one representative each from those present for the Final Selection Committee. They will be selected based on a rotational order with the ability to decline, they must be present at the Initial Kick Off meeting.
- ATHENA/AYP Final Selection Committee (7 members) will select this year's Athena and Athena Young Professional. A rubric will be used to score the qualitative characteristics of the two awards, with priority given to information provided in the nomination packet. Additional information will only be considered if it is detrimental to the integrity of the award. Committee consists of the following seven (7) members:
  - Immediate Past Chair of Women's Network (who will serve as chair of this Selection Committee)
  - Immediate Past Chair of the Chamber

- Most recent Athena Award Recipient
- Most recent Athena Young Professional Award Recipient
- Past Athena Representative* (as selected at the Kick Off meeting outlined above)
- Past Athena Young Professional Representative* (as selected at the Kick Off meeting outlined above)
- Community Member At-Large appointed by Current Women's Network Chair
- *Of note – if Past Chair of Women's Network or Past Chair of Chamber is nominated for one of these awards, their nomination will automatically be held until the following year.*
- *For 2025 first year selection only – Karen Taylor and/or Sarah Dubbert, as Co-Chairs of this Athena Task Force, will be present at this Final Selection Committee meeting as observers to provide guidance and clarity to the process. They will have no vote in the selection process. The Athena Task Force will reconvene in 2025 following the award selection process to review, revise, and update the process and procedures as appropriate.*

- Finalists are determined based on the **award criteria**, the **level of detail** in the application form submission, and the relevance of the information provided in the reference letters as it relates to the criteria.
- Any first hand experience or knowledge of the selection committee members relevant to the rubric criteria **will** be considered as part of the selection.
- *Final Selection Committee Members are excluded from submitting nominations or writing letters of recommendations.*
- *Final Selection Committee members will use the attached evaluation rubric when evaluating each nominee.*

** Applications will be carried over 1 year at the nominator's discretion. The Women's Network Director will reach out to the nominator to see if they would like for the nominee to be considered again, and if there is anything to be added or updated to the nomination. In year 2 and beyond, a new nomination will be required.*

Timeline:

- First Monday of December – Final Selection Committee Kickoff Call #1 - zoom
- First Business Day of January – Application link goes live on Chamber website
- First Friday of February – Nominations close
- First Monday of March – Final Selection Committee Kickoff Meeting #2 – in person
- Second week of March – Final Selection Committee finalizes selection and notifies the nominator
- April - AYP Finalists announced at Chamber Small Business Showcase Event
- May – ATHENA Banquet