

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

TAMHO 2025 Awards and Recognition Program

DEADLINE: September 1, 2025

Leaders and Longevity

Frank G. Clement Community Service Award

Dorothea Dix Professional Service Award

Andrea R. Chase Impact Award

Emerging Leader Award

Distinguished Service Award

Peers

Personal Courage Award

- *Category 1: Courage to Overcome One's Own Mental Health Challenges*
- *Category 2: Advocacy and Support of a Loved One Who Has Overcome Mental Health Needs*

Community Engagement and Outreach

Media Award

Outreach and Engagement Award

Direct Service

Innovation and Creativity Award

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It's time to shine a spotlight on the outstanding efforts and contributions within the behavioral health field!

On behalf of the TAMHO Board of Directors and staff, we are pleased to announce the Call for Nominations for the 2025 TAMHO Awards & Recognition Program. An annual celebration of excellence, compassion, and innovation in the field of behavioral health.

We invite you to nominate individuals, programs, or organizations that exemplify outstanding dedication to serving those with behavioral health needs. Whether it's a clinician who consistently goes above and beyond, a program making a tangible difference in the community, or a visionary leader driving meaningful change, we want to recognize their impact.

The 2025 Awards Ceremony and Luncheon will be held on December 4th during the TAMHO Annual Conference at the Franklin Cool Springs Marriott Hotel in Franklin, Tennessee.

Let's come together to honor those who inspire hope and transformation across Tennessee. Your nominations shine a spotlight on the exceptional work being done every day to uplift the lives of individuals and families across our state.

Thank you for your continued commitment to advancing mental health and well-being in our communities.

Warm regards,



Brian Buuck

*President, Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations
Chief Executive Officer, Ridgeview Behavioral Health, Oak Ridge, Tennessee*



Alysia Smith Knight

Executive Director, Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations

The TAMHO Awards & Recognition Program offers our membership a meaningful opportunity to celebrate and honor outstanding individuals and organizations with the Association's highest accolades. Thanks to the efforts of the TAMHO Awards Ad Hoc Committee, there are four distinct award categories this year. We encourage you to thoroughly review each recognition opportunity and consider submitting nominations. Presented annually, these awards spotlight excellence and remarkable achievement in the behavioral health field. We invite you to set aside time to explore the award categories and reflect on the people, programs, and milestones that are helping advance behavioral healthcare across Tennessee.

Award Criteria / Eligibility

Each award listing within this document includes an overview, the intended recipient focus, and detailed criteria for selection.

Nomination Procedures

Before submitting a nomination, please carefully review the criteria and eligibility requirements for each award category. Thoughtfully consider the individuals and organizations within your community, or across the state, who have made a meaningful impact on behavioral healthcare and are deserving of recognition.

All nominations must be submitted online. To ensure consideration, please complete and submit the official nomination form before the stated deadline.

To maintain a fair and consistent review process, supplementary materials such as letters of recommendation will not be considered by the selection committee.

Recipient Selection

All nomination forms will be received by the TAMHO office and compiled for review by the Awards Review Committee. The Committee will evaluate each entry based on the published selection criteria and determine the award recipient(s).

The Awards Review Committee reserves the right to withhold an award in any category if no nomination reflects the standard of exceptional service. A minimum number of nominations is not required for an award to be granted.

Final recommendations will be submitted by the Chairperson of the Awards Review Committee as part of a complete list of proposed recipients for approval by the TAMHO Executive Committee.

Official Notification of Recipient Selection

Once final approval has been obtained from the TAMHO Executive Committee, all nominators will be notified of the status of their respective nominee.

Nominee and recipient information will remain confidential, and no public announcements are allowed until the official awards program takes place.

Once a nominator is informed that their nominee has been selected as an award recipient, it will be the nominator's responsibility to determine how and when the recipient is informed.

Award recipients, or their designated representatives, are expected to attend the ceremony to formally accept the award. Each recipient will be honored as a guest and provided with complimentary registration to the Awards Ceremony and Luncheon.

"Nominations may be submitted by any staff member of a TAMHO member organization for consideration in any of the award categories."



LEADERS AND LONGEVITY

FRANK G. CLEMENT COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD



Governor Frank
G. Clement

AWARD OVERVIEW | Established in honor of Governor Frank G. Clement who led Tennessee from 1953 to 1967 and was instrumental in creating the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, this award recognizes individuals or organizations within Tennessee who have made significant contributions to TAMHO, its member organizations, and/or the broader community-based behavioral health system.

RECIPIENT FOCUS | This award honors individuals or organizations who have demonstrated exemplary leadership or outstanding volunteer service on behalf of TAMHO or a TAMHO member organization. Nominees will have exhibited effective community-wide leadership and achieved accomplishments that positively impact behavioral healthcare in Tennessee, advancing the missions of TAMHO and its members.

AWARD CRITERIA | Recipients are selected based on the significance and overall impact of their service or accomplishments. Consideration is given to how their efforts have increased public awareness of the challenges faced by individuals with mental illness, emotional disturbance, or substance use disorders, including co-occurring conditions, and/or contributed to the enhancement or expansion of behavioral health services in the community.

DOROTHEA DIX PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AWARD



Dorothea Dix

AWARD OVERVIEW | Dorothea Dix was a national and international pioneer for mental health reform, widely recognized as one of the most influential figures in bringing attention to the care and treatment of individuals living with mental illness. This award honors her legacy by recognizing individuals whose efforts echo her vision and impact.

RECIPIENT FOCUS | This award celebrates outstanding professionalism in the field of behavioral health. It is presented to individuals who have made significant contributions to Tennessee's behavioral health system either through a sustained record of service or a singular, transformative achievement that has had enduring and far-reaching effects on the quality or accessibility of services across the state.

AWARD CRITERIA | Nominees will be evaluated based on the significance and lasting impact of their contributions to the advancement of behavioral health in Tennessee. Consideration will be given to professional excellence, visionary leadership, and innovation as demonstrated either through direct service or through efforts to initiate or expand systems of care. The nominee's ability to work collaboratively with colleagues and professional organizations to improve behavioral health services will also be a key factor in the selection process.

ANDREA R. CHASE IMPACT AWARD



Andrea R. Chase

AWARD OVERVIEW | Established by TAMHO in 2021, the Andrea R. Chase Impact Award honors the legacy of Andrea R. Chase who was a passionate, tireless leader devoted to improving the lives of individuals living with mental illness. Andrea championed system transformation through collaboration, believing deeply in the power of recovery and the importance of every role within the behavioral health system.

She led the nation's first rural ON TRACK program, revolutionizing care for individuals with psychotic disorders. She ensured clinicians had access to evidence-based treatments, advocated for children and youth through behavioral health homes, and pioneered walk-in/open access models of care. Often working behind the scenes, Andrea was the quiet force making systems work—leading, mentoring, and supporting with unwavering dedication. Her impact continues to resonate statewide.

RECIPIENT FOCUS | This award recognizes individuals from TAMHO member organizations whose essential contributions often go unnoticed but are vital to the success of the behavioral health system. Inspired by Andrea's legacy, the award honors both clinical and administrative staff who, like her, embody the belief that recovery is possible and that everyone deserves the chance to lead a meaningful, productive life.

AWARD CRITERIA | Nominees will be evaluated based on the significance of their contributions in supporting system success. Submissions should include personal stories or examples that illustrate the individual's meaningful and lasting impact on their organization, colleagues, and the communities they serve.

EMERGING LEADER AWARD

AWARD OVERVIEW | Established in 2020, the Emerging Leader Award recognizes individuals who have made meaningful contributions to TAMHO and/or a TAMHO member organization, while demonstrating strong potential for leadership and continued service within the behavioral health field.

RECIPIENT FOCUS | This award honors front-line professionals such as therapists, case managers, or other direct service providers whose dedication to client care continues to benefit their communities. It is intended to celebrate an individual who is making a significant difference while actively pursuing professional growth.

AWARD CRITERIA | Nominees must have a minimum of five years of service and an exemplary track record of delivering high-quality care. Selection will be based on the nominee's impact on the individuals they serve, their demonstrated commitment to improving behavioral health in Tennessee, and their potential for future leadership within their organization and the field at large.



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

AWARD OVERVIEW | First established in 1999 and updated in 2020, the TAMHO Distinguished Service Award honors an individual who has demonstrated extraordinary, long-standing dedication and achievement in service to TAMHO or a TAMHO member organization.

RECIPIENT FOCUS | Recipients are selected based on two key criteria: the longevity of their service and the significance of their overall contributions to TAMHO or a member organization.

AWARD CRITERIA | This award recognizes individuals whose professional journey reflects distinguished and sustained service. Nominees may have served in a direct care role, an administrative capacity, or a combination of both. Selection is based not only on the duration of their service, but also on the breadth and depth of their contributions and accomplishments over the course of their career.

PEERS

PERSONAL COURAGE AWARD

AWARD OVERVIEW | This award honors individuals across Tennessee who have demonstrated exceptional courage, resilience, and leadership in advocating for behavioral health either through their own personal journey or by supporting a loved one facing behavioral health challenges.

Nominees may be individuals who have faced and overcome significant obstacles related to mental health, substance use, or co-occurring disorders, and who have turned those experiences into powerful advocacy for change, awareness, and support within their communities.

RECIPIENT FOCUS |

Category 1: Courage to Overcome One's Own Mental Health Challenges

An individual who has demonstrated exceptional courage in facing the challenges associated with a behavioral health disorder including, but not limited to, mental health conditions, substance use, or co-occurring disorders. Through their lived experience, the honoree has emerged as a powerful source of leadership, advocacy, or support for others navigating similar journeys.

Category 2: Advocacy and Support of a Loved One Who Has Overcome Mental Health Needs

An individual who has provided unwavering support and advocacy on behalf of someone in recovery from significant behavioral health challenges. Through their dedication, encouragement, and active involvement, the nominee has helped empower that individual to overcome adversity and pursue recovery whether related to mental health, substance use, or co-occurring disorders.

AWARD CRITERIA | All nominations are considered deserving and will be considered for selection.

The Personal Courage Award is not limited to one winner per category.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

MEDIA AWARD

AWARD OVERVIEW | The Media Award recognizes outstanding contributions by members of the print and electronic media whose professional work has positively influenced Tennessee’s behavioral health system and the individuals it serves. Established to honor those who amplify key issues, reduce stigma, and engage the public in meaningful dialogue, this award celebrates the power of media to inform, inspire, and drive change.

RECIPIENT FOCUS | Nominees may include, but are not limited to:

- Journalists and reporters whose storytelling captures the essence of behavioral health topics;
- Local or statewide media outlets (TV, radio, print, or online) that consistently cover behavioral health issues;
- Reporting that fosters informed public discourse around behavioral health;
- Coverage that effectively challenges stigma associated with mental illness, addiction, and co-occurring disorders.

AWARD CRITERIA | Evaluation considers the size and reach of the nominee’s coverage area, the overall impact of their work, and the depth of their commitment to elevating behavioral health issues. Nominations are reviewed collectively to determine if an individual or organization stands out for exceptional contributions.

All submitted work must have been published or aired during the current calendar year. Supporting materials should be submitted electronically in formats such as PDF, MP4, etc.

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT AWARD

AWARD OVERVIEW | Instituted in 2020, the Outreach and Engagement Award was born out of the unprecedented challenges the behavioral health community faced during a global public health crisis. As service delivery models were upended, TAMHO member organizations stepped up with innovation and resilience to remain accessible to the individuals and families who needed them most.

This award recognizes member organizations that have demonstrated ongoing creativity and innovation in reaching and engaging their communities to ensure continuity of behavioral health services.

RECIPIENT FOCUS | Honorees may include individuals, programs, or organizations that have developed, implemented, and sustained inventive approaches to service delivery—particularly those that overcome barriers to care and meet people where they are.

AWARD CRITERIA | Recipients will be selected based on the measurable impact of their outreach and engagement efforts, and the degree to which they eliminated or reduced barriers that might have otherwise prevented access to behavioral health services.

DIRECT SERVICE

INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY AWARD

AWARD OVERVIEW | First established in 2002 as the Program of Excellence Award and renamed in 2020, the Innovation & Creativity Award recognizes TAMHO member organizations that have gone beyond conventional methods to deliver groundbreaking, high-quality behavioral health services. Honoring these efforts reinforces that innovation, excellence, and impact are thriving within Tennessee's public behavioral health system.

RECIPIENT FOCUS | Nominees may include programs or initiatives that:

- Demonstrate a strong commitment to recovery-oriented, person-centered care;
- Apply creative strategies in fiscal, administrative, or clinical operations;
- Deliver services through a comprehensive, coordinated, community-based system of care;
- Provide timely and cost-effective services that meet evolving community needs.

AWARD CRITERIA | Submissions will be evaluated based on the program's measurable impact on clinical or social mental health outcomes. Consideration will be given to innovations that address previously unmet needs, remove barriers to care, leverage technology creatively, or exhibit broad community reach. Additional factors include the number of individuals served, demonstrated sustainability, and the potential for continued growth and replication.

Nominations must be submitted online no later than close of business, September 1, 2025.

ONLINE SUBMISSION LINKS

Official Nomination Forms are accessible online at:

General Awards: <https://form.jotform.com/252165241772152>

Innovation and Creativity Award: <https://form.jotform.com/251805225311143>

PAST RECIPIENTS

A LISTING OF PAST AWARD RECIPIENTS FOR EACH AWARD CATEGORY IS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT

<https://irp.cdn-website.com/156ba6c2/files/uploaded/Past+Recipients+1984-2024.pdf>

NOTE:

We are currently finalizing the ceremony's format and the method of award presentation. It is crucial that nominations include detailed context and narratives, as these will likely inform the remarks made in honor of the awardees. Please include supporting photographs of individuals, organizations, programs, and your organization's corporate logo with your nominations.

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