



ILLUMINATE

2021 APSE VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

Lighting the Path Forward for Employment First | June 14-18 | Register Now

Each year, APSE honors individuals, organizations and employers for their individual and collective contribution to Employment First. We invite nominations for the 2021 National APSE Virtual Conference: Illuminate: Lighting the Path Forward for Employment First, June 14-18, 2021.

Award Categories:

- Employer Award
- Wendy M. Wood Award
- Rebecca McDonald Award
- Lois Curtis-Person with a Disability
- Best Practice Award
- Public Policy Leader
- Dave Hammis Innovation Award
- Certified Employment Support Professional™ (CESP) of the Year Award

Please submit nominations in as many of the categories as you would like.

All award submissions are due by 5 PM (EST) on Sunday, March 23, 2021.

If you need assistance with this process, please contact APSE at info@apse.org. All awards are to be submitted online: https://apse.smapply.io/prog/apse_awards

APSE encourages the nominations of advocates in all award categories. All nominations must be submitted by a nominator other than the nominee themselves. We will recognize all award nominees at the 2021 National APSE Virtual Conference. Nominees will be made aware of their nomination by the end on May 31st.

Reviewers will consider each proposal on the quality of the narrative provided by nominator, strong letters of support, adherence to APSE mission and vision for employment equity. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed. Please ensure you get an email confirming your submission, otherwise your application may not be received.

Thanks in advance for your consideration; we look forward to receiving your submissions!

Respectfully,

The 2021 National APSE Program and Award Committee

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APSE National Awards Nomination Directions

1. Login at www.apse.smapply.org and under “Programs” select the APSE Awards to begin your application. (Direct link: https://apse.smapply.io/prog/apse_awards)
2. Confirm your email address - the confirmation email will come from info@apse.org. This is required in order to fully submit the application form.
3. Add contributors - if you'd like to have others participate in the completion of the nomination form you can add them as contributors!
4. Select the award category in which you are submitting your nomination online.
5. Answer the narrative questions addressing the award criteria under each award description. (250-word maximum per question)
6. Attach at least one individualized letter of support for your nominee. The letter of support must address the 2021 National APSE award criteria.
7. Upload a photo of the nominee in jpg form on the application. This should be a high-quality photo of the nominee.
8. Submit your nomination by the deadline of 5 pm EST Sunday, May 23, 2021.

Once you've submitted you will receive a confirmation email. If you do not receive a confirmation email, your nomination has not been received.

If you have questions, please contact National APSE at info@apse.org or 301-279-0060.

2021 National APSE Awards Categories and Descriptions

Rebecca McDonald Award

To honor Rebecca's contributions to APSE and the employment of people with disabilities, this award is presented to an APSE Chapter Leader who demonstrates exceptional leadership, tireless volunteerism and extraordinary commitment to the mission and vision of APSE within their state chapter.

Rebecca McDonald was a tireless advocate for supported employment and a dedicated friend and champion of APSE. Rebecca deeply believed in the principles APSE was founded upon and she supported and encouraged others to give and share resources to make those principles a reality. She was one of supported employment's greatest advocates and served APSE in various ways for 11 years as the founding Vice-President, President for three years, and was an officer for the APSE Foundation.

Narrative Questions for Response:

- Describe how the nominee demonstrated strength in promoting the principles of APSE in their state.
- What specific actions demonstrate how the nominee has influenced changes in statewide policy?
- Describe how the nominee has advanced their chapter's role in promoting inclusive employment in their state.

Please note: Nominations for the Rebecca McDonald Award also require a second letter from the Chapter Board of Directors addressing how the nominee demonstrates the award criteria.

APSE Best Practice Award

To recognize a provider organization that has successfully implemented strategies to support those with disabilities to work and further their career path in an inclusive workforce.

Narrative Questions for Response:

- What specific achievements (organizational changes, community leadership, etc.) has this organization made in the area of Employment First?
- What activities does this organization do to promote inclusive employment and work to build partnerships with others to advance Employment First?
- What do the people they support, employers, and family members say about this organization's accomplishments?

APSE Employer Award

To recognize businesses who value and demonstrate the importance of an inclusive workforce by employing people with disabilities.

Nominated businesses should have values consistent with APSE. Nomination materials should demonstrate the business's commitment to APSE's view that everyone can and should work.

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Narrative Questions for Response:

- Describe the employer's Employment First practices and contributions.
- What has the employer done to ensure that employees with disabilities are fully included and supported in their workforce?
- What has the employer done to encourage other employers to hire candidates with disabilities and model their businesses after their own inclusive model?
- What efforts has the employer made at the local, state, and/or national level to encourage the hiring of individuals with disabilities (e.g., working with legislators, developing partnerships with VR or provider agencies, etc.)?

Lois Curtis Award-Person with a Disability

To recognize an individual's personal achievement in advocating for inclusive, individualized, community-based employment and/or independent living.

Lois Curtis paved the way for people with disabilities to live in their own communities while receiving the services they need after spending 18 years living in an institution. Lois Curtis and Elaine Wilson brought a case that rose to the level of the Supreme Court and the court decided that "unjustified isolation" of a person with a disability is a form of discrimination under Title II of the ADA. This is known as the Olmstead Decision.

Narrative Questions for Response:

- Provide examples of how Employment First played a role in the nominee's advocacy success.
- Describe how the nominee advocates for equitable employment and full social inclusion.
- Describe how the nominee embraces risk and constantly challenges the status quo to improve inclusive employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

Public Policy Leader

To distinguish an individual who has excelled in advocacy work around Employment First. The Public Policy Leader is someone who inspires others to make a difference by engaging with elected officials and key stakeholders in discussions to promote policies that support the mission of Employment First.

Narrative Questions for Response:

- Describe the specific advocacy actions the nominee has taken to advance Employment First at the local, state, regional and/or national level in the past year.
- Describe how the nominee has built awareness and improved outreach for Employment First and how these efforts have improved employment opportunities in their state.

Wendy M. Wood Award-Emerging Leader

To recognize emerging leaders who are developing a vision and creating action toward full inclusion of citizens with disabilities in our society.

Wendy M. Wood is the founding Executive Director of APSE. To begin this organization took great vision, effort, determination and risk. To honor her contribution to this organization and to the overall field of supported employment and Employment First, APSE's Board of Directors established this award.

Narrative Questions for Response:

- Describe an activity, process, or action the emerging leader has accomplished to improve services locally that could be applied regionally or nationally.
- Describe how the nominee advocates for equitable employment and full social inclusion.
- Describe how the nominee embraces risk and constantly challenges the status quo to improve inclusive employment outcomes for people with disabilities.
- Describe how the nominee partners with others (employers, agencies, the community at large) to create the energy needed to continue the Employment First movement.

Dave Hammis Innovation Award

To honor Dave's contributions to APSE and Employment First, this award is offered to individuals or organizations who demonstrate innovation in the area of technology, customized strategies, and/or self-employment for individuals with significant disabilities.

Dave Hammis was an incredible innovator in the field of community-based and customized employment. His creativity and fresh approach to supporting people in inclusive workplaces---whether at a business or through self-employment---inspired many of us to see beyond the realities of what we thought possible. To honor his contributions to APSE and to the overall field of customized employment, APSE has established this award.

Narrative Questions for Response:

- Describe the specific actions the nominee has taken that demonstrate the belief that all people, regardless of the significance of their disability, can work.
- Describe one or more specific examples of how the nominee has taken an innovative approach and applied it to enhance community-based employment opportunities for people with disabilities using technology, customized strategies, or self-employment.
- Provide at least one example of a specific job or self-employment opportunity the nominee has worked to customize with a person who experiences a significant disability.

Certified Employment Support Professional™ (CESP) of the Year Award

To distinguish a Certified Employment Support Professional™ (CESP) who has excelled in raising awareness of the benefits of certification. The CESP of the Year is given to a current credential holder who advocates for competency among Employment Support Professionals and inspires others in their own professional development.

Narrative Questions for Response:

- Describe the specific actions the nominee has taken to raise awareness of the value of certification and advocate for competency among Employment Support Professionals.
- Describe one or more specific examples of how the nominee has supported one of the following areas with regard to certification: expanding opportunities for professional development, advocacy/policy change at the state level, or has shown considerable dedication to professionalizing the field.

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