

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

Board of Governors Awards Committee

[Adopted July 2019](#)

Process and Criteria to Name an Award in Honor of a Person

The Washington State Bar Association annually recognizes luminaries of the Washington legal profession through its APEX (Acknowledging Professional Excellence) Awards. The awards are meant to illustrate and inspire legal professionals to advance WSBA's mission.

In general, each award should be named for the aspect of the legal profession the award highlights, and not after an individual due to the potential subjectivity of the naming process, need to appeal broadly to nominees in each award category, and the possible diminishing of name recognition through the years. However, in exceptional cases, an award may be named after an individual who exemplifies the spirit of the award category and embodies the WSBA mission.

The APEX Awards Committee is responsible for receiving and responding to requests to name awards, screening the request using the criteria below, and making a recommendation to the Board of Governors, which will make the final decision.

Although no single factor is determinative, in order to accomplish the purpose of the Apex Awards and maintain consistency, the Board of Governors decision to approve a recommendation to name an APEX Award should be governed by the following criteria:

To name an APEX Award after an individual, the individual should:

- Be deceased.
- Be a legal "giant" known to, and significant to, the WSBA legal community—preferably across the state—generally considered an upstanding recognizable name within the profession.
- Have an array of professional and personal achievements that epitomize the spirit and characteristics of the award category and are distinguished even among other leaders in his/her practice area.
- Have a personal story and/or philosophy that inspires WSBA members to follow in his/her footsteps.

Procedure for naming an APEX Award:

- The APEX Award should not be renamed until the following fiscal year if the Board of Governor's action is less than 9 months before the APEX Award ceremony, although the Board of Governors may act on less notice when it deems appropriate and if it is practical to do so
- Any WSBA member or group of members may make a recommendation to name an existing APEX Award after someone they believe meets the above criteria. The recommendation should be made in writing to the WSBA with more information about the nominee's qualifications and the level of membership outreach and support for the proposal.
- The APEX Awards Committee will determine whether the nominee meets all of the above criteria. It may be necessary for Committee members to consult with legal leaders in the area of the award category to make an informed decision.
- A quorum of the Committee must be present to vote on the recommendation, and 75 percent of Committee members present must vote in favor of the recommendation for it to pass to the Board of Governors.

- If the Committee moves forward with a recommendation to the Board of Governors, and the board votes in approval, committee members will make a good-faith effort to contact and seek input from the closet relatives and colleagues of the nominee.