



# Awards Rewards of Service

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Lions club members do not serve others in order to receive financial rewards. The rewards they seek are less tangible, but no less real. Their rewards lie in the satisfaction of helping people in need; improving numerous communities; acquiring leadership skills; associating with professional, business and government leaders; and in making loyal and lifelong friends.

There is perhaps no greater reward for a Lion's service than a simple "thank you," sincerely expressed. As a leader, displaying this small gesture of gratitude will be appreciated by the Lions who have helped make activities and projects a success.

At every level of the association, awards are available to provide a more permanent form of appreciation. The following is information on the importance of recognizing special efforts and the proper procedure for doing so. A list of the current awards and contests is available in the District Governor's Manual.

## **CLUB AWARDS**

Club presidents and secretaries are in the best position to know which awards their club is eligible for because they receive the publications that describe Lions awards. Before they officially take office, incoming club presidents and secretaries should review these materials to determine which recognition their club or members may be eligible for in the upcoming year. This information may come from International Headquarters, the district governor or the council chairman.

## **Members**

Perhaps the most important award that a club can give is recognition to its own members. A look at the Club Supplies Catalog will suggest the many awards and gifts that can be given for service and achievement. An outgoing club president who has done a superior job should be recognized with an appropriate plaque, as should an outstanding club secretary. If a member has led a successful fundraising event, it may be appropriate to present him or her with a plaque or a special gift item adorned with the Lions emblem. Many clubs have a **Member of the Year Award**. A club should seek opportunities to recognize its members on a regular basis.

## **Community**

Many clubs give small gifts to their speakers, such as a pen. Other clubs have developed programs for recognizing distinguished non-Lions in the community. The **Citizen of the Year Award** is perhaps the most common of these awards. However, clubs also routinely recognize fire fighters, police officers and other public servants. Teachers are also often recognized. These award presentations should be as visible as possible, with the public and media being invited to attend.

## **Membership and Extension**

Most of these awards are sent automatically, provided the club sends accurate reports to International Headquarters in a timely manner. The **Year-Round Growth Membership Program Award** depends on the club assuring that new members added during the year are reported on the Monthly Membership Report (MMR).

**Membership Key Awards** are also distributed automatically, provided that the sponsor's name and membership number are included on the MMR. The **Membership Key Program** includes credit for sponsorship of charter members by individual Lions.

**Anniversary Banner Patches** are available at 10 and 25 years and in 5-year increments thereafter. If a club sponsors a new Lions club, it will automatically receive the **Sponsor's Patch** for the club banner.

Watch for special award programs, which may be initiated by the international president as part of the International Program for his year in office. While these may also be automatic, most require action by the club during a specific period.

### **Activities**

There are numerous awards available for Lions and clubs who support the service activities of Lions Clubs International. In most cases, simply completing a form and forwarding it to the proper person is all that is required. Many Lions and clubs otherwise eligible do not receive their well-earned recognition because the club president or secretary either wasn't aware of the award or simply didn't fill out the required paperwork. Do not be one of those clubs!

An example of these awards is the **Club Twinning Recognition Award** (see pages 32-34 of IAD 65, *International Cooperation and Understanding Chairman Guide*). Other examples (for which the applications must be submitted to the district governor) include the **Outstanding Club Patch**, the **Club Excellence in Effort Award (Sight Conservation and Work with the Blind)**, the **New Horizons Award In Diabetes Education** and the **Lions Club Community and Cultural Activity Award**.

### **Youth**

There are numerous awards available for participation within Leo clubs, Youth Exchange and Youth Outreach. Many of these awards are for Leos themselves, such as the **Outstanding Service Award**, the **Leo Environment Project Award**, the **Leo Award of Honor** and many others. Awards may also be given to Leo clubs, including the **Leo Club Excellence Award** and the **Leo Club Anniversary Award**. The **Top Ten Youth Exchange Chairman Award** may be given to any club, district or multiple district youth exchange chairman who has performed outstanding service. The **New Horizons Award in Youth Outreach** may be awarded to a Leo, a Lion or even a non-Lion who introduces youth to humanitarian service within their community. A full listing of all youth awards may be obtained by contacting the Youth Programs Department.

### **DISTRICT AND MULTIPLE DISTRICT AWARDS**

Many of the awards available to clubs are also available to districts and their leaders. As at the club level, the governor and cabinet secretary should review awards prior to the beginning of the Lions year, so that proper plans can be made. One of the most coveted awards of the association is the **100% District Governor Award**, which recognizes district governor achievements during their term. An application form must be submitted.

Districts and multiple districts should also consider ways to recognize clubs and individual members. Both can have a **Lion of the Year Award**. Many also have a **Club of the Year** program to encourage administrative excellence, service and fundraising accomplishments. The Citizen of the Year program covers a larger geographical area and often has clubs nominate potential honorees.

Examples of district awards are the **District Hearing Chairman Award** and the **District Diabetes Awareness Chairman Award** (for both of these, applications must be submitted to the district governor). Examples of multiple district awards are the **Top Ten International**

**Understanding and Cooperation Chairman Award** (any Lion at the club, district or multiple district level must be nominated by the multiple district council of governors or the governor of a single district. Nominations are to be received by the Program Development Department no later than September 15) and the **Multiple District Diabetes Awareness Chairman Award** (given through the council chairman).

### **District and Club Administration Award**

The association recognizes accomplishments of club presidents each year by presenting the **Club President Excellence Award** to qualifying club presidents. An application form must be submitted.

### **INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT'S AWARDS**

The highest awards presented by the association to its members are given at the discretion of the international president. The most important and prestigious award is the **Ambassador of Good Will Award**. This is followed by the **International President's Award**, the **Leadership Award** and the **International President's Certificate of Appreciation**. While each international president may have slightly different criteria for these awards, the awards are generally presented to Lions who have distinguished themselves by particularly noteworthy service. If you know of a Lion who may be deserving of a special recognition, you should communicate detailed information on the candidate and his or her accomplishments to your council chairman (or your district governor if you are in a single district). These Lions, along with present and past officers, will make recommendations to the international president.

### **AWARD PRESENTATIONS**

Awards should be presented in public and with due ceremony. Imagine the difference between a club president handing a longevity award to a member while he or she is eating and a club president presenting the award from a podium after saying, "Fellow Lions, I am pleased today to honor our fellow member who has given many years of dedicated service to our club." An item called "Awards Presentations" should be part of your regular meeting agenda. If you do not have a specific award to present, find a way to recognize one or more members for their hard work. Simply thanking a Lion for his or her contributions goes a long way toward keeping morale and achievement at a high level. It is also important to recognize newer members. If the club immediately involves them in committees and activities, as it should, then there should be many opportunities to recognize them. *Awards should never be mailed to recipients.*

### **PROPER DISPLAY OF AWARDS**

#### **Medals**

In most countries, military officers only wear medals with full-dress uniforms. When wearing service uniforms, they may wear ribbons representing the medals. The same policy is generally true for medals presented by the international president. The medals should generally be displayed with formal wear only, unless other instructions are specifically given prior to the event. Medals should never be worn with casual dress, which includes the vests, jackets and other uniform-like apparel often worn by Lions. Nor should they be removed from the ribbon or ribbons provided, as these are integral to the award.

The **Ambassador of Good Will Award** medal is presented with both a neck and chest ribbon. Because it is the highest award a member can receive, most Lions use the neck ribbon to make it stand apart from other medals worn. The award also comes with a miniature lapel pin, which can be worn with business attire.

Recipients of the current president's **International President's Award** should wear the award on formal occasions during that president's year in office and not others that they may have received in past

years. If a past international president from whom an **International President's Award** was received is present, then it is permissible to wear his medal also. However, Lions should avoid wearing multiple medals.

Medals should be worn on the left chest of the coat. If multiple medals are worn, the **Ambassador of Good Will Award** (if being worn with the chest ribbon and not the neck ribbon) should be first in line (from left to right when facing the wearer). This should be followed by the **International President's Award(s)**, beginning with the most recently serving international president in order to the most distant. The **International Leadership Award** (which may be worn on formal wear at any time) can then follow.

If a Lion has received other medals from the club, district or multiple district, these awards must follow any international awards. Local custom may permit them to be worn with non-formal attire.

### **Certificates**

The **International President's Certificate of Appreciation** is an important and unique award. The award comes in a folder, but those who present it often frame it prior to the presentation. This is the recommended policy to follow for all certificates, since it makes it easier for the recipient to display the award in his or her office or home. Most certificates presented at the club, district, multiple district and international levels are of standard sizes and suitable frames are easily available at relatively low cost from Club Supplies.

### **Plaques**

Like certificates, plaques are particularly suitable for individual member awards and non-Lion dignitaries. Displayed at work or at home, they not only illustrate achievement, but also proclaim to all who see them that the recipient is a proud and recognized member or has been otherwise recognized by Lions Clubs International. Club Supplies (or licensed suppliers in some parts of the world) has an extensive selection of plaques for both specific and general purposes.

### **Banner Patches**

Because most Lions clubs do not have their own meeting facility, they are generally unable to display plaques or framed certificates. For this reason, the association often provides recognition in the form of a patch that can be affixed to the club's banner. Active and successful clubs have often received numerous patches and have purchased a separate "Lions Clubs Awards" banner from Club Supplies. Patches should always be neatly sewn or otherwise affixed to the banner.

### **SUMMARY**

All Lions who have served as international president began as new members. Had they not been properly motivated, it is unlikely that they would have persevered as they did. It is important as a club leader that you recognize the efforts of your members to encourage the prosperity of the club. By being aware of the many awards that may be offered to Lions, presenting awards in a proper manner and simply saying "Thank you," you are giving the positive push needed to help your club move into the future.