Clear Form

SECRETARY of STATE
ALEXI GIANNOULIAS

John Lewis Youth Leadership Award — Nominee Form

About the Award

The John Lewis Leadership Award honors young Illinoisans who have made outstanding civic contributions to their communities. Established by the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) in 2021, the award recognizes the legacy of Congressman John Lewis, a lifelong advocate for voting rights and youth engagement in democracy.

Award Criteria

As a nominee, your work should demonstrate the following strengths:

Leadership

- Shows empathy, inspires others, and courageously faces challenges
- Involves community members in decision-making, keeps them informed, and includes them in your work

Commitment to Social Justice

- Advances civil and human rights, such as voting rights, fair access to resources and opportunities, and freedom from discrimination

Quality of Life Improvement

- Raises awareness of problems about community issues
- Promotes solutions and improves access to basic needs (food, education, healthcare, voting, transportation or employment)
- Strengthens community connections and belonging

Application Requirements

Include the following with your application:

- Your completed Nominee Form (this form)
- A completed Nominator Form
- 2 to 10 exhibits that show your work and impact

Email all materials to jlyouthaward@ilsos.gov. For the current deadline and detailed instructions, visit ilsos.gov/special/john-lewis-award.

Note: Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. You must be an Illinois resident, and your work must benefit at least part of an Illinois community.

Nominee Information (Complete this section with your own information)

First and Last Name: _____

Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Mailing Address (Street): _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Current School (if attending high school, trade school, college, or university):

_____

Current Grade (if attending): _____

Organization where you work or volunteer (if applicable): _____

Questions for Nominee

1. In 5 sentences or less, briefly summarize why you deserve this award based on your social justice work.

2. Check the main social justice issue that your work addresses.

☐ Poverty	☐ Immigration	☐ Housing
☐ Environment	☐ Voting Rights	☐ LGBTQ+ Rights or Gender Equity
☐ Food or Nutrition	☐ Education	☐ Health Care (Including Reproductive Rights)
☐ Safety	☐ Racial Justice	☐ Other: _____

3. Identify the community you serve or advocate for. A community can be geographic (example: low-income residents of Mt. Vernon) or issue-focused (example: LGBTQ+ teens' rights and safety). Why did you choose this community?

4. Describe how you have worked to improve the quality of life for your community. Give specific examples, including dates, places, and results, if possible.

5. Share 1 success or outcome you helped achieve for your issue or community.

6. Describe at least 1 challenge you faced and how you overcame it while working on your issue or with your community.

7. Reflect on the legacy of the late Congressman John Lewis. How do his values influence your work and the community or issue you focus on?

Nominee Signature (Electronic signature accepted)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Contact Us

If you have any questions, contact us at 312-814-1148 or jlyouthaward@ilsos.gov.