



NWMAF Awards Process

Revised March 15, 2011

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1 Introduction

The NWMAF presents awards to recognize and honor women martial artists who have distinguished themselves by their attitudes and actions. This document provides information on the awards process and the information needed to submit a nomination.

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2 Revision History

Revision Number	Description of changes
0	Initial release based on Award of Excellence Guidelines created by the Awards Committee in 2009 combined with material developed during the October 2010 Board meeting.
1	Criminal Background Check removed from Appendix A (in order to allow full development of the idea this was removed from the main document before the initial release but was overlooked in the appendix)



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3 Bylaws

Refer to the NWMAF Bylaws for information on Awards Conferred, Awards Guidelines, and Awards Benefits (please note – this material is currently contained in Appendix C – Related Bylaws Sections, as the Bylaws revision process is not yet complete).

4 Award Descriptions

4.1 The Award of Excellence

The Award of Excellence recognizes women who have demonstrated martial arts technical expertise, a remarkable teaching career, inspirational leadership, and meaningful contributions to community. These women promote healthy martial arts practice for women and girls, build self-defense skills to support personal safety, and assume leadership roles beyond their individual school by reaching out to their community and to a broader martial arts family. Those selected for this award exemplify a life of integrity and martial arts skill and serve as a role model for our membership.

4.2 The Coleen Gragen Award of Inspiration

The Coleen Gragen Award of Inspiration is given to NWMAF members who have influenced and motivated other women martial arts by their actions, attitudes, and response to adversity in their lives. This award was created in 2001 and formally named during Special Training 2002:

Last year NWMAF created the Award of Inspiration to honor Coleen Gragen. Considering the severity of her illness we were concerned we would not have the chance to offer this honor in the future.

We decided on this particular, special award because of the many women martial artists Coleen inspired through her teaching, her martial arts skill, her philosophy, her vision, and her charisma. But we had not formally named it after her. We do so now, the Coleen Gragen Award of Inspiration, to remember the martial artist, teacher, and friend who inspired so many of us.

5 Awards Committee

The recipient of this award shall be selected by the Awards Committee. The committee will consist of no less than three and no more than five women from the NWMAF membership who are appointed by the Board of Directors for a term of one to three years. The Board will ensure that the committee represents the membership through diversity in martial arts style, age, ethnicity, and experience. Each member of the committee shall have 15-25 years of consistent training in order to serve.

6 Nominee Minimum Qualifications

Candidates will have the following minimum qualifications:



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6.1 Award of Excellence

- At least 30 years martial arts experience
- Actively teaching and training
- Contribution to the culture of integrity of women in the martial arts
- Demonstration of excellence in martial arts leadership

6.2 Award of Inspiration

- Minimum of 5 years of training
- Currently training and/or teaching
- NWMAF member for at least 5 years
- Current NWMAF member

6.3 Posthumous Awards

In extraordinary circumstances an award may be made posthumously. The lifetime contribution and expectations of would be identical to those of a living candidate.

7 Nomination Process

Candidates may be nominated by individual NWMAF members. Awards Committee members may conduct outreach to invite nominations from members, but may not put forward nominations themselves. If a candidate is declined she can not be nominated again for 2 years.

7.1 Submission Guidelines

- A nomination must be submitted as a complete package (i.e. all of the contents submitted at one time), unless other arrangements have been made with the Awards Committee.
- A nomination must be accompanied by a cover sheet. Please use the outline in Appendix A – Cover Page Outline to create your cover sheet.
- Whenever possible, file formats should be plain text or pdf. Photos and other graphics should be of the best quality available, and in formats easily opened, such as jpg and tif (avoid proprietary formats such as Photoshop psd files)

7.2 Nomination Contents

- Contact information for the woman making the nomination – phone, email, and postal address, at a minimum
- Nomination Letter - letter of support from the woman making the nomination. Letter must include description of how the nominator and nominee are related, and a statement of why the nominator believes this woman should receive the award she is being nominated for.
- Contact information for the nominee (except in the case of a posthumous nomination) – phone at a minimum, email and postal address also desired
- A resume of the nominee's martial arts career and accomplishments
- A photograph(s) of the nominee – high quality preferred, in common formats (jpg,



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- Letter(s) of recommendation– must include contact information for writer
- A list of references with contact information for people who know the nominee and can speak to her accomplishments in the community and as a leader and teacher in the martial arts
- (Optional) Other materials, which may include electronic media, audio-visual media, web links, magazine articles, publications, or any other additional material in support of the woman being nominated. This is a key area in the nomination where you can highlight the nominee's qualifications as they relate to the items in the evaluation grid.

8 Nominee Evaluation Process

Nomination materials will be delivered to all Awards Committee members. The committee is obligated to review all nominations in accordance with the criteria set forth in this policy.

8.1 Evaluation Grid

The Awards Committee will use the evaluation grid (Appendix B – Nominee Evaluation Grid) to score each nominee. The same evaluation criteria are used for both awards, but the criteria are weighted differently for each award to emphasize the corresponding characteristics. A minimum score of 85 is required for the nominee to be considered further.

8.2 References

The committee will collect information and validate the credentials of all the candidates to establish that the nomination criteria have been fulfilled. Reference checks will be conducted to ensure that the candidate's record is free from actions and associations that may do harm if associated with the NWMAF. The Awards Committee will interview the references to deepen their knowledge of the work performed by the candidates and the impact on their communities. References will be asked identical questions and the answers will be documented to become a part of the archive of the selection process.

8.3 Record Keeping

The Awards Committee shall create a file for each nominee and retain all the nomination and vetting materials for each nominee. At the end of the award evaluation process the Awards Committee Chair shall turn these files over to the Board so they may be referenced in the event of the same person being nominated in future years.

8.4 Decision Deadline

The committee will make their selection no later than April 1st each year. The Board of Directors will reserve the right to review the decision and veto the selection if they deem it inappropriate. The winner of the award will be notified no later than April 15th.

If the committee is not satisfied that any of the candidates meet the Award of Excellence criteria, they may opt to not make an award that year. In addition, the committee will provide full documentation to the Board as to why an award will not be given.



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9 Presentation

Awards shall be presented at Special Training the year that they are conferred. NWMAF will provide pictures and a DVD of the award acceptance to the recipient.

NWMAF will invite the press to the award ceremony to bring public attention to the recipient's accomplishment, to the mission of NWMAF, and to integrity and greatness of women practicing and teaching martial arts.



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10 Appendix A – Cover Page Outline

Use the following list, in the order given, to create your application cover page. Include all items in bold. If you compile your application into 1 file, insert the page number of the corresponding section where it indicates to insert the file name.

- **Nomination of** <insert nominee's name> **for the** <insert name of award you are nominating her for>
- **Nominated by:** <insert your contact information – phone number(s), email, and postal address, at a minimum>
-
- **Nominee's Contact information:** <insert nominee's phone number at a minimum, email and postal address also desired> (except in the case of a posthumous nomination)
- **Nominee's martial arts resume:** <insert file name of resume>
- **Photograph(s) of nominee:** <insert file name(s) of photograph>
- **Letter(s) of recommendation:** <insert file name(s) of letter's of recommendation. Each letter must contain contact information for the writer>
- **References:** <insert file name that contains the list of references. Include as much contact information as you have available for each reference>
- **Other Materials:** <insert file name(s) and descriptions of any additional materials you are submitting in support of the application. If you are not submitting additional information indicate that here>



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11 Appendix B – Nominee Evaluation Grid

The following criteria are used by the Awards Committee to score each nominee. The same criteria are used for both awards, but weighted differently. Letters of recommendation, optional support materials, reference interviews and other sources can be used to show how the nominee meets these criteria. The examples given are not meant to be all-inclusive, and the Awards Committee may have additional interpretations.

Evaluation Criteria	Weighting	
	Award of Excellence	Award of Inspiration
Service to NWMAF (membership and contribution) This may include actions such as support of NWMAF through membership, participation in volunteer or leadership roles, public support of NWMAF, and other related activities	5	10
Martial arts skill Technical performance in her martial art(s)	9	3
Demonstrates Ethical Behavior Shown by following the laws and rules of the organizations she belongs to and the societies she lives in	7	10
Demonstrates Personal Integrity Relating to her personal code of conduct, the rules she holds herself accountable to	7	10
Teaching experience (depth and duration) Formal martial arts teaching experience	7	1
Community service What has she done to give back to her communities? Could include things like volunteer activities, financial support, or organizational efforts	3	7
Positive impact on others in martial arts Does she inspire other women to continue their martial arts training or to start it? Have other women martial artists benefitted from associating with her, or benefitted from actions that she has taken?	5	12
Peer recognition Do her peers know her and her accomplishments? This may or may not include awards or other formal recognition.	7	5
Response to adversity and demonstrable personal growth Has she shown strength and perseverance in the face of adversity? Did she start or continue her martial arts training even though she faced adversity?	3	11
Prior recognition and honors received Recognition could include awards given to the nominee and	5	1



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articles published about her, internal or external to NWMAF		
Mentoring of other teachers		
Does she support other teachers?	5	1
Compassion and fostering of safe environments		
Can be demonstrated in the class room, in meetings, in leadership roles, and in organizations that she runs or creates	5	9
Demonstration of leadership		
This may include formal leadership roles (elected or volunteer positions in organizations) or informal roles	7	9
Publications authored/martial arts scholarship		
	2	1
Level in organization and rank		
Does she hold advanced rank or position in her martial arts organization?	7	3
Martial arts lineage		
Is she a member of an established martial arts organization?	2	0
Mentoring students to high levels in the style		
Does she support her students and develop their martial arts skills and attitudes? Does she motivate her students in their training and encourage their continued martial arts training?	7	1
Innovation in martial arts		
Examples could be developing new ways for differently-abled students (or herself) to work within her style, or finding new ways of reaching out to underserved populations, or development of new curriculum within her style	5	5
Martial arts service to country		
Participation on national martial arts teams, promotion of martial arts within and external to her country	2	1
Total	100	100



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12 Appendix C – Related Bylaws Sections

The following material will become part of the NWMAF Bylaws during the next revision of that document. This information is included here for reference, and shall be superseded by the Bylaws when the amendment corresponding to this topic is adopted

Awards Conferred: The NWMAF confers the following awards:

- The Coleen Gragen Award of Inspiration
- The Award of Excellence

Awards Guidelines: The following guidelines shall govern The Coleen Gragen Award of Inspiration and The Award of Excellence:

- 1) Nominations for these awards must be received by the Awards Committee Chair by January 31. Nominations may be submitted electronically and the current Awards Committee Chair contact information shall be posted on the NWMAF website.
- 2) A nomination shall be deemed complete when the Awards Committee Chair acknowledges receipt of complete information. Acknowledgement shall be sent no later than 14 days from initial submission of nomination packet. Materials required will be listed in the Process Document which shall be posted on the NWMAF website.
- 3) All candidates shall be evaluated by the Awards Committee utilizing the evaluation tool set established for this purpose and approved by the Board of Directors.
- 4) The Director-at-Large for Member Relations shall notify the nominators of the final decision of the Awards Committee by April 15th.

Award of Excellence Benefits: The following tangible benefits will be given to each Award of Excellence recipient:

- Transportation, lodging, and tuition for the recipient to attend NWMAF's annual conference to accept the award the year the year it is conferred
- At-cost tuition rates for all future annual NWMAF conference's
- An invitation to lecture and/or to teach an all camp session at NWMAF's annual conference
- A scroll or other suitable award
- Lifetime NWMAF membership

Award of Inspiration Benefits: The following tangible benefits will be given to each Award of Inspiration recipient:

- Transportation, lodging, and tuition for the recipient to attend NWMAF's annual conference to accept the award the year the award is conferred
- Free tuition at all future annual NWMAF conference's
- An invitation to lecture, teach, or meet with attendees of NWMAF's annual conference
- A scroll or other suitable award
- Lifetime NWMAF membership