

Rural Health Awards

Each year the Rural Health Association of Tennessee recognizes individuals and groups of individuals from across the state of Tennessee who have dedicated themselves to the service of others within the field of rural healthcare. Below is a description of the award categories. For past recipients and the nomination form, visit RHA's [webpage Rural Health Awards](#).

Rural Health Professional of the Year

Recognizes an RHA member who has made an outstanding contribution to rural health. Nominees should demonstrate service and achievements that exceed normal expectations and reflect a strong commitment to improving public health.

Eloise Q. Hatmaker Distinguished Service Award

Recognizes an individual who has provided exceptional service to rural health and the Association over many years. The award honors Eloise Q. Hatmaker, a founder of Tennessee's State Office of Rural Health and a key leader in establishing the Rural Health Association of Tennessee.

Special Exemplary Project Award*

Recognizes an organization or group that has developed and implemented an innovative program or project that advances rural health.

Award of Merit*

Recognizes an individual, group, or organization that has made a significant contribution to the rural health movement. Nominees need not be RHA members. Selection is based on broad health impact, innovation, exceptional contributions, and alignment with the Association's mission and goals. Longevity, popularity, routine job performance, or pending retirement are not considered.

Rural Health Practitioner of the Year

Recognizes a physician or advanced practice provider who demonstrates excellence in delivering healthcare to rural Tennesseans. Nominees should provide outstanding patient care, demonstrate community involvement, and make lasting contributions to Tennessee's rural healthcare system.

Al Grant Award

Recognizes an individual whose career reflects extraordinary leadership, initiative, and advocacy in advancing rural health in Tennessee. Nominees should demonstrate a sustained commitment to improving the health of rural communities and a proven ability to unite diverse stakeholders to achieve meaningful change. Named in honor of Al Grant, a pioneer of the rural health movement and advocate for state rural health associations. This award may not be presented annually.

Rural Health Hero Award

Recognizes an individual in rural Tennessee who has gone above and beyond in service to others through exceptional courage, leadership, compassion, or commitment. The award is presented at the discretion of the Awards Committee and may not be awarded annually.

Connie Givens School Health Award

Recognizes an individual serving in a K-12 school, school district, or department of education who has demonstrated outstanding leadership in advancing student health and wellness initiatives.

Caregiver Support Award

Recognizes an individual, organization, or program that provides exceptional support to family and unpaid caregivers through training, respite services, care navigation, education, advocacy, or emotional support. Nominees should demonstrate a meaningful impact on the well-being of caregivers and the individuals they serve.

Age-Friendly Facility Award

Recognizes a hospital, clinic, long-term care facility, or other healthcare organization that has demonstrated a commitment to age-friendly care by implementing evidence-based practices that promote the health, independence, dignity, and well-being of older adults. Nominees should foster a culture that supports age-friendly principles, such as the 4Ms Framework.

Rural Age-Friendly Champion Award

Recognizes an individual who has made a lasting impact on advancing age-friendly care in Tennessee's rural communities. Nominees should demonstrate leadership, innovation, and a commitment to improving the health, well-being, and quality of life of older adults.

Collaboration Award*

Recognizes an individual, organization, business, governmental entity, or coalition that has demonstrated exceptional collaboration to improve rural health. Nominees should show how partnerships have successfully leveraged resources, bridged sectors or regions, and produced measurable benefits for rural communities

Legislator of the Year Award

Recognizes a Tennessee State Legislator who has demonstrated outstanding leadership and advocacy on issues impacting rural healthcare and rural communities. The recipient is selected by the Rural Health Association of Tennessee's Legislative Policy Council. Public nominations are not accepted.

**This award may be given to more than one recipient. All other awards are for one person/group only.*

Note: Not all awards are given every year.

Nominations are accepted between July 1 and September 30th each year.

Please complete the Nomination Form and send to info@tnruralhealth.org.