

**THE THOMPSON-RAVITZ AWARDS
FOR EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS 2014
GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA FOR ENTRY & JUDGING**

1. Program Objectives. The Thompson-Ravitz Awards Program is designed to:

a. Recognize and reward the accomplishments and achievements of command public affairs programs and personnel.

b. Encourage Navy units to conduct public affairs programs designed to inform internal and external publics about Navy policies, programs and operations, support community outreach, recognize or honor deserving groups, and commemorate holidays and historic events.

c. Be part of evaluating the level of excellence in Navy Public Affairs.

2. Eligibility. All Navy commands and activities, with the exception of CHINFO, are eligible to submit unit entries. Entries must be submitted by the unit that planned and executed the program. Personnel who perform public affairs duties as a primary or collateral duty are eligible for an individual award if they meet the category criteria.

3. Competition Year and Performance Periods.

a. The competition year is January 1 through December 31 of the calendar year prior to judging. All entries will be submitted electronically NLT 2359 on 2 February 2015 using the guidance below.

b. All entries in the individual categories will be based on performance during the competition year.

c. Because research, planning, implementation and evaluation of a PA program might take more than one year, a unit entry can include combined performance during the competition year and the year preceding it.

4. Unit Awards.

a. Winners will be selected in each category except for any categories with no entries deemed to be of good quality.

b. If two entries in a category are deemed to be of good quality or better and their judging results are extremely close, an Honorable Mention may be awarded to the second best entry.

c. Unit category winners will receive a trophy and certificate. Honorable mentions will receive a certificate.

d. CHINFO OI-8 will recommend to the CHINFO one of the category winners as "Best in Show."

5. Unit Categories. The Thompson-Ravitz program has twenty unit categories. Each category is identified by the combination of type of command, size of PA staff, and type of PA program.

a. The command types are Afloat and Shore. Afloat commands are deployable units. Shore commands include those in the U.S. and overseas.

b. The PA staff sizes are Large and Small. Large staffs are four or more people. Small staffs are three or less people. PA staff personnel who are not a 165X designator, MC rating or 1035 civilian series, but do perform PA work must be included in determining staff size.

c. The types of PA programs are described below.

1) Community Outreach. This category recognizes standing programs aimed at direct contact with the community to achieve good relations and cooperation with the citizens, leaders and organizations in surrounding communities. Examples are visiting programs, speaking programs, community service projects, and committees or other bodies with command and community representatives formed to collaborate on issues of mutual interest.

2) Special Events and Projects. This category recognizes programs such as national or local observances; heritage celebrations; anniversaries; special recognition of military and civilian personnel, families, veterans and similar groups; commissionings; and other activities.

3) Public Information. This category recognizes planned short- or long-term public information programs not considered community outreach. This will generally include media relations activities, but those are not a required element of the program. Examples are communicating about the command and its missions, noise abatement, command accomplishments, outstanding command

members, supporting a healthy command environment, and business or employment opportunities.

4) Crisis Communication. This category recognizes responses to emergent situations. Emergent situations are defined as sudden, unpredictable events with high potential for adverse public reaction. Examples are accidents, disasters, fires, explosions, outbreaks of contagious or fatal diseases, protest demonstrations, and allegations of improper actions or conduct on the part of individuals in a command.

5) Internal Communication. This category recognizes specific programs organizations use to establish and maintain communication with its military and civilian personnel and their families.

6. Unit Entry Submission. A command or activity may submit one entry per applicable category.

a. Submission Process. Unit entry forms and program guidance are available at the following link:
<http://imagery.navy.mil/AwardsPrograms.html>

The Unit Entry Form, OPNAV 5305/5, and all supporting documentation will be submitted via a link available on this site. Each section of the entry form is expandable to allow additional space for documentation. Be certain to list any supporting documents/products in the "Supporting Documents/Products" block and include a list of the print, audio or video news products as necessary.

Once the entry form is filled out, clicking the "Submit" link on the Thompson-Ravitz Awards website will open a new window, which contains step-by-step instructions for submitting all required documentation.

Each Unit entry category includes a dropdown menu allowing submissions into Large Shore, Small Shore, Large Afloat and Small Afloat subcategories.

b. Cover Letter. All entries should be submitted under a single cover letter signed by the commander, commanding officer, officer in charge, or by the public affairs officer with "by direction authority." The letter should be scanned and submitted as a ".pdf" file. If an entry doesn't meet the description of the category submitted, the judges may recommend to CHINFO OI-8 the entry be moved into another category. If the

command already has an entry in that category, the command's entry will be judged and the entry recommended for moving will be disqualified.

7. Unit Entry Judging. Judging will be based on the unit's performance on research, planning, implementation and evaluation. The following criteria will be used:

a. Research. The judges will evaluate how well the unit did to:

- 1) Research the issue and present findings.
- 2) Concisely and clearly define and describe the program or issue.
- 3) Demonstrate the importance of the issue to the unit's mission/goals/objectives and the need for communicating about the program or issue.
- 4) Analyze stakeholders/publics, identifying relevant characteristics such as demographics, existing knowledge of the issue, attitudes, opinions, and motivations.
- 5) Identify stakeholders'/publics' preferred and trusted means of exchanging information.
- 6) Apply the research to planning, including how relevant factors will influence communication strategy, tactics and products.

b. Planning. The judges will evaluate how well the unit did to:

- 1) Identify the communication goals/objectives for the program or issue and how they relate to those of the unit.
- 2) Make objectives specific, measureable, attainable, relevant and time-specific (SMART), and include appropriate and useful quantitative and qualitative measurements.
- 3) Describe how and when measurements would be taken.
- 4) Develop strategies designed to accomplish objectives.
- 5) Develop themes and messages to communicate with each of the stakeholders/publics.

6) Identify appropriate channels and information products to communicate with each of the stakeholders/publics.

7) Identify the actions non-PA parts of the unit must take.

8) Create an effective execution/synchronization matrix/timeline integrating the command's implementation and, if applicable, that of partner organizations.

9) Identify factors and obstacles that may be encountered and what action to take if encountered.

10) Identify the man-hour, funding and other resources required to implement the plan and conduct the evaluation.

c. Implementation. The judges will evaluate how well the unit did to:

1) Take the actions identified in the execution/synchronization matrix/timeline.

2) Remain on the timeline identified in the execution/synchronization matrix/timeline.

3) Perform the actions identified in the execution/synchronization matrix/timeline.

4) Coordinate implementation inside the unit and with partner organizations.

5) Use the information and media products called for in the plan and, if necessary, adapt them.

6) Observe, listen, measure and assess during implementation.

7) Keep leadership informed and advised as necessary.

8) Make use of unforeseen positive opportunities and adapt to unforeseen problems.

9) Seek, gain and maintain the initiative.

10) Efficiently execute in relation to resources (personnel and budget).

d. Evaluation. The judges will evaluate how well the unit did to:

- 1) Collect the required quantitative measurements.
- 2) Collect the required qualitative measurements.
- 3) Collect other feedback/lessons learned.
- 4) Analyze the required measurements and other feedback/lessons learned.
- 5) Determine and display relevant findings.
- 6) Inform leadership and others about the results.

e. Judge's Scoresheet. Judges will use OPNAV 5305/6 Thompson-Ravitz Unit Scoresheet - Unit Award at <https://navalforms.documentservices.dla.mil/web/public/home> for compiling the scores for each unit entry. Criteria are scored using a 5-point or 10-point scale.

8. Individual Awards.

a. The individual awards recognize those who made outstanding contributions to the promotion of excellence in Navy public affairs operations or programs in the competition year. The nominees will have demonstrated exceptional initiative, commitment, competence and accomplishment.

b. A winner will be selected in each category with an entry unless no nominee in that category is deemed to have performed at an exceptional level. No Honorable Mention awards will be given.

c. The winner in each category will receive a trophy, certificate, and letter of commendation from the CHINFO.

9. Individual Categories. The Thompson-Ravitz program has five individual categories. Four are for PA professionals, and one is for non-PA professionals who were assigned to collateral duties in public affairs.

a. Junior Public Affairs Officer of the Year. (Active duty O-1 to O-3, designators 165X or 647X.)

b. Junior Reserve Public Affairs Officer of the Year.
(Reserve O-1 to O-3, designator 1655.)

c. Civilian Public Affairs Specialist of the Year.(GS-11 equivalent or below, series 1035.)

d. Enlisted Public Affairs Officer of the Year. (Mass Communication Specialist (MC) of any grade who served in a public affairs officer billet.)

e. Collateral Duty Public Affairs Officer of the Year. (O-1 to O-4 any designator other than 165X or 647X, E-1 to E-9 any rating other than MC, and civilian GS-13 or below who was assigned to collateral duties in public affairs.)

10. Individual Entry Submission. A command or activity may submit one entry per category. All individual entries will be submitted electronically using the guidance below.

a. Submission Process. Individual entry forms and program guidance are available at the following link:
<http://imagery.navy.mil/AwardsPrograms.html>

The Unit Entry Form, OPNAV 5305/4, and all supporting documentation will be submitted via a link available on this site. Each section of the entry form is expandable to allow additional space for documentation. Be certain to list any supporting documents/products in the "Supporting Documents/Products" block and include a list of the print, audio or video news products as necessary.

Once the entry form is filled out, clicking the "Submit" link on the Thompson-Ravitz Awards website will open a new window, which contains step-by-step instructions for submitting all required documentation.

b. Cover Letter. All entries should be submitted under a single cover letter signed by the commander, commanding officer, officer in charge, or by the public affairs officer with "by direction authority." The letter should be scanned and submitted as a ".pdf" file.

c. Each nomination should be accompanied by a summary (no more than four pages) of the accomplishments in clear, complete and concise terms illustrating why the candidate warrants selection. Appropriate supporting documentation, including written products (e.g., communication plans, news releases,

responses to media or public queries, event notices and scripts, speeches and published articles), audio, visual, and multimedia products may be included in the nomination package.

11. Individual Entry Judging. Judging for the individual award categories will be based on the nominee's contribution to unit communication objectives, effort and initiative, leadership and management skills, and professional development. The following criteria will be used:

a. Contribution to Communication Objectives.

1) What were the impacts of the nominee's contributions to achieving communication objectives?

2) How important were the nominee's impacts on achieving communication objectives and how well did the nominee demonstrate understanding of the linkage between command goals and communication objectives?

3) How did the nominee contribute to communication research?

4) How did the nominee contribute to communication planning?

5) How did the nominee contribute to conceptualizing, creating, reviewing and using communication products?

6) How did the nominee contribute to implementing communication plans?

7) How did the nominee contribute to evaluating communication performance?

b. Initiative and Effort. Judges will consider the individual's consistency of initiative and effort throughout the competition year. Superior performance on a single project is noteworthy, but true value comes from consistently strong performance on multiple projects over long periods.

1) How did the nominee demonstrate consistent effort throughout the year?

2) How did the nominee demonstrate consistent initiative throughout the year?

c. Leadership and Management.

1) How did the nominee demonstrate leadership skills with people in the unit during the year?

2) How did the nominee demonstrate leadership skills with people outside of the unit during the year?

3) How did the nominee demonstrate skills in advising and counseling seniors?

4) How did the nominee demonstrate skills in managing projects, programs, and administrative and resourcing requirements?

d. Professional Development.

1) What did the nominee do for professional development of their abilities directly related to communication expertise?

2) What did the nominee do for professional development of their leadership and management abilities?

3) What did the nominee do to meet periodic training requirements such as information assurance, sexual harassment/assault prevention and response, and operations security?

4) How did the nominee support the professional development of others?

e. Judge's Scoresheet. Judges will use OPNAV 5305/7 Thompson-Ravitz Award Scoresheet - Individual Award at <https://navalforms.documentservices.dla.mil/web/public/home> for compiling the scores for each individual entry.