



Award of Honor

LeadingAge Iowa's highest award honors the late Francis Lackner, the association's first executive director, and pays tribute to his distinguished service, dedication and foresight in aging services. This award is given to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the field of aging services as a representative of a LeadingAge Iowa member organization and is a recognized leader within their community, the state and national level.

Criteria: An extended history of commitment, leadership and involvement in the association and their community which positively impacted the advancement of services to older adults. The nominee's cumulative and ongoing achievements and positive impact on the field are notable and worthy of statewide recognition.

Candidates: CEOs, executive directors, administrators, leaders of LeadingAge Iowa member organizations.

Excellence in Leadership Award

This award recognizes a long-term care, housing and services professional's contributions to the wellbeing of older adults in his or her community or within the state. This professional demonstrates excellence in management and leadership, professional dedication, accomplishment, and field expertise.

Criteria: Demonstration of leadership actions that enrich and enhance the lives of older adults, characteristics of a strong motivator and mentor for others, and specific actions that create a supportive team culture.

Candidates: Leaders or upper management of a LeadingAge Iowa member organization.

Caregiver of the Year Award

This award recognizes the extraordinary dedication of direct care staff and will be presented to a caregiver employed by a LeadingAge Iowa member organization who has demonstrated an exceptional proficiency in the delivery of quality resident care and services to the residents, tenants or clients of the organization.

Criteria: The recipient of this award will have demonstrated skills, both professional and interpersonal, that exceeded expectations. The nominee will have positively affected the quality of life of those served, significantly improved a service or program, or demonstrated a strong and rare commitment to the organization and those served.

Candidates: Direct Caregivers including RNs, LPNs, CNAs, CMAs, and assisted living caregivers employed at a LeadingAge Iowa member organization.

Support and Service Professional of the Year Award

This award celebrates the dedication and value of the contributions made by support and service staff and will be presented to an individual who has demonstrated an exceptional proficiency in the performance of his or her job responsibilities and exceeded expectations with a positive impact on the lives of the residents, tenants, or clients of the member organization.

Criteria: The recipient of this award will have demonstrated skills, both professional and interpersonal, that exceeded expectations. The nominee will have positively affected the quality of life of those served, significantly improved a service or program, or demonstrated a strong and rare commitment to the organization and those served.

Candidates: Support and services staff of LeadingAge Iowa member organizations. Candidates may include dietary, housekeeping, laundry, maintenance, social services, pastoral care, activities, wellness and office support staff but not upper management.

Volunteer of the Year Award

This award will be presented to a resident, group, individual or outside volunteer of a LeadingAge Iowa member organization. This honoree will have performed significant volunteer services to residents or clients of a member organization.

Criteria: A demonstrated and unique commitment to preserving the dignity, well-being, health, independence and fullness of life of residents or clients of LeadingAge Iowa member organizations.

Candidates: An individual or a group, as identified above, serving as an unpaid volunteer for a LeadingAge Iowa member organization.

Board Member of the Year Award

This award is bestowed on an individual who has served unselfishly and with distinction on the board of trustees of a LeadingAge Iowa member organization. The honoree will have contributed a significant amount of time and effort toward the betterment of his or her organization and to enrich the lives of older adults.

Criteria: Demonstrated exceptional commitment and actions to enhance and enrich the lives of aging persons, exceptional service to the member organization and residents, and specific evidence of leadership in helping achieve the organization's goals and objectives attained during their leadership.

Candidates: An individual who serves as a trustee/director on the board of a LeadingAge Iowa member organization.

Leading Life Award

This award celebrates a resident or client of a LeadingAge Iowa member organization who has demonstrated an extraordinary attitude and level of resilience as they have grown older. The honoree transforms views on aging through their continued learning, engagement, and contributions. They inspire others to re-define their perspectives of "old" and to embrace aging, advocating for all to enjoy life no matter the age and setting an example for others to aspire to.

Criteria: This individual through their extraordinary attitude and/or engagement transforms perspectives on aging and serves as an inspiration to others.

Candidates: A resident or client of a LeadingAge Iowa member organization.

Excellence in the Workplace Award

This award recognizes a LeadingAge Iowa member organization that demonstrates effectiveness in fostering and advancing a healthy work-place culture, promotes diversity and an environment that supports the recruitment, retention and development of staff at all levels of the organization.

Criteria: The recipient of this award will demonstrate in policy and practice that investing in the staff and workplace environment are critical to the delivery of quality care and services. Nominees shall demonstrate innovation in workforce development policies and practices and ensure that all levels of staff obtain training. The organization's values shall include and promote diversity, and the recipient will show noteworthy achievements as evidenced by professional growth of employees and/or longevity.

Candidates: A LeadingAge Iowa member organization.

LeadingEdge Care and Services Award

Innovative approaches to care and services for seniors are a hallmark of mission-driven organization, and this award recognizes programs that stand out because of their creativity, vision, success and ability to replicate. Programs that improve the quality of service and life for residents and utilize creative problem solving are the types of initiatives that this award celebrates. This award will be bestowed upon a member organization who has implemented a creative new program or service that dramatically benefited the residents and or clients of the member organization and serve as models of innovations and excellence or an existing or planned community or single project that has been repositioned or reinvented in an innovative way to address new opportunities or serve a new function and improve the lives of residents.

Criteria: The program or design is innovative, new or different and has improved and changed lives. Additionally, the program or design has a strong potential for others to replicate the program or design to drive innovation to other communities and benefit additional lives.

Candidates: A LeadingAge Iowa member organization

Public Trust Award

This award celebrates a LeadingAge Iowa member organization that goes beyond its health service or housing role to advance public trust and confidence by supporting and/or improving the greater community demonstrating the organization's commitment to mission and social responsibility.

Criteria: The honoree will have demonstrated a specific initiative or service that fills a demonstrated community need beyond the traditional resident care and services and is an example of the organization's mission in action and social responsibility.

Candidates: A LeadingAge Iowa member organization.

View more and submit your nominations [here](#). The deadline for nominations is January 14, 2026. For any questions, email Michelle Rybicki at mrybicki@leadingageil.org.