# 2027 FORWARD TOGETHER AWARDS

## AWARD CRITERIA & DEFINITIONS

**Recognizing Leadership • Advancing Progress • Strengthening Community**

Recognizing contributions to civic engagement and community progress during the 2026 Midterm Election cycle.

## AWARD CATEGORIES & WHAT THEY RECOGNIZE

### ★ FORWARD TOGETHER IMPACT AWARD | THE HIGHEST HONOR

**Honors an individual or organization whose exceptional leadership, vision, and sustained commitment produced extraordinary, measurable, and lasting impact on civic engagement, voter participation, and community progress throughout Volusia County.**

- Exceptional leadership and consistent commitment throughout the 2026 Midterm Election cycle.
- Significant, measurable or well-documented results in voter education, registration, voter access, outreach, or civic participation.
- Volunteer mobilization and meaningful participation across multiple communities or organizations.
- Countywide or multi-community influence beyond a single event, activity, or organization.
- Strong partnerships, innovation, responsiveness to community needs, and initiatives with lasting civic value.

### PROGRESS IN ACTION AWARD

Recognizes meaningful growth, expanded outreach, and effective approaches to civic engagement.

- Expanded voter education, registration, or community outreach.
- Increased volunteer participation and reached new, underserved, or less-engaged communities.
- Introduced effective strategies and demonstrated measurable improvement or continued momentum.

### ORGANIZING EXCELLENCE AWARD

Recognizes strong planning, coordination, execution, and operational effectiveness.

- Built and mobilized effective volunteer teams; coordinated outreach consistently.
- Demonstrated reliable communication, planning, and follow-through.
- Used resources responsibly and delivered organized, accessible, effective activities.

### COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP AWARD

Honors partnerships that bring diverse groups together to strengthen civic participation and collective impact.

- Established or strengthened partnerships across organizations and communities.
- Shared volunteers, resources, information, or expertise and co-hosted engagement activities.
- Improved countywide coordination, promoted unity, and reduced duplication of effort.

### POSSIBILITY AWARD — EMERGING COLLEGE LEADER SCHOLARSHIP

Recognizes an emerging college leader whose service, civic involvement, and initiative show promise as a future community leader.

- Currently enrolled at an accredited college or university.
- Connected to Volusia County through residence, education, or community involvement.
- Demonstrates leadership, service, civic engagement, and commitment to continued community contribution.
- Must be nominated by another person; student self-nominations are not accepted.

## COMMON EVALUATION FRAMEWORK — 100 POINTS

| DEMONSTRATED IMPACT & RESULTS | LEADERSHIP & INITIATIVE | COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICE | COLLABORATION & VCDBC ALIGNMENT | NOMINATION QUALITY & SUPPORT |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 30% | 25% | 20% | 15% | 10% |
| Outcomes and documented contribution. | Responsibility, initiative, and leadership. | Participation, reach, and service. | Partnerships and alignment with VCDBC priorities. | Specific examples and supporting information. |

**Category-specific criteria also apply. The common scoring framework is used consistently across all five awards.**