

2020 Restaurant Industry Awards Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What are the Restaurant Industry Awards?

A. One of the key roles of the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF) is to help raise awareness of the positive impact restaurants have on their communities and the role the industry plays in improving the quality of life for all we serve. The Foundation has three key award programs that help promote the restaurant industry and the impact on the communities it serves.

1. **The Restaurant Neighbor Award** honors restaurants for outstanding community involvement and innovative community programs.
2. **The Faces of Diversity Award** raises awareness about the important role restaurants play providing opportunities to all. This award honors individuals from diverse backgrounds who have realized the American dream through hard work and determination.
3. **The Ambassador of Hospitality Award** is bestowed upon an individual who has shown extraordinary achievement and exemplary leadership in the restaurant and hospitality industry.

Q. How many restaurants and individuals are honored each year?

A. There are seven national winners in the following three categories:

Three Restaurant Neighbor Award winners one small business, one mid-size business and one large business/national chain.

Three Faces of Diversity Award Winners

One Ambassador of Hospitality

Q. Does the restaurant need to be a member of the Association to apply?

A. No. The program must be open to members and non-members. However, membership is one of the factors the judges will consider when reviewing the applications.

Q. Is there a fee to apply?

A. There is no entry fee for the award.

Q. What do the winners receive?

A. All winners receive an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, DC to receive the award at the annual Public Affairs Conference. A video is also produced of each winner to showcase his/her achievements, filmed and paid for by the NRAEF.

Additionally, winners of the Restaurant Neighbor Award receive a \$10,000 donation to the non-profit organization of their choice.

Winners of the Faces of Diversity Award receive a \$2,500 scholarship in their name given to a student from their state pursuing a career in hospitality. NRAEF will select the scholar through a special application process in collaboration with state restaurant associations and administer the award.

Q. Who is eligible for one of the Restaurant Industry Awards?

A. Any restaurant or foodservice company is eligible to apply or be nominated. Industry suppliers are not eligible for the award.

Q. How are the winners chosen?

A. **Step 1** – Restaurants apply for the award through an online portal at www.chooserestaurants.org/awards.

Step 2 –All applications sent to participating State Restaurant Associations for review/comment.

Step 3 - State Restaurant Associations identify winners from their state who will compete for one of seven national awards and submit their state selections to the NRAEF.

Step 4 - NRAEF convenes an in-person panel of judges representing the restaurant industry, the award-founding partner, NRAEF trustees, an SRA partner and the media to select the national winners.

Q. What are the criteria for the Restaurant Neighbor Award?

A. Applicants should be involved in a community program, have their own project that has a strong impact in their community, through funds raised, or direct volunteer involvement. Factors taken into consideration include:

- **Commitment/Involvement**
 - How long has the restaurant been involved in the project or program?
 - How did the program evolve?
 - How is the staff involved?
- **Measurable Impact** - dollars raised, people fed, volunteer hours, etc.?

Q. What are the criteria for the Faces of Diversity award?

A. Applications will be judged using the following criteria:

- **Achievements:** What obstacles, adversities and/or challenges has this person had to overcome in order to achieve the American Dream?
- **Impact on others:** In what ways has this person helped or is helping others to achieve the American Dream? How has this person been a leader in his/her community?

Q. What are the criteria for the Ambassador of Hospitality award?

A. Individuals eligible for this award should demonstrate the following:

1. Possesses high stature and recognition in the hospitality industry
2. Shown extraordinary leadership and advocacy on behalf of the industry
3. Is a respected spokesperson and a positive role model to young people considering careers in the restaurant/foodservice/hospitality industry?
4. Is an advocate of the NRAEF mission and uses his/her leadership in the industry to enhance the stature of the industry through community service and philanthropy.

Q. When will the winners be announced?

A. National winners will be honored at the National Restaurant Association’s Public Affairs Conference Gala Awards Dinner on March 4, 2020 in Washington, DC.

Q. If I have questions about the award, who should I contact?

A. All questions for the program should be addressed to awards@nraef.org or contact Alyssa Prince at aprince@nraef.org