INSTITUTIONAL PARTICIPATION GUIDE

Participating in DEAC's Outstanding Graduate and Famous Alumni Award Program is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate student success and inspire others.

Each DEAC-accredited institution has the opportunity to select and recognize both an Outstanding Graduate and a Famous Alumni.

DEAC Outstanding Graduate Awards recognize exceptional graduates whose academic accomplishments, personal growth, and post-graduation success and impact reflect the mission and values of their institution.

DEAC Famous Alumni Awards honor those who, in addition to the above, have achieved positive public recognition and serve as models of the long-term impact of distance education.

Institutions themselves (rather than the Award Committee) determine their selection criteria based on each award's purpose and use the entry form below to begin the recognition process.

This guide is intended to help you understand the recognition process start-to-finish and gather the needed materials to complete the recognition entry form.

Visit https://www.deac.org/annual-awards-program/ to see past award recipients and locate the current entry form.

Submit the form to recognize your selected Outstanding Graduate and Famous Alumni no later than January 15, 2027.

Important: DEAC reserves the right to remove incomplete, inappropriate, or late entries from the program.

To complete the recognition entry form, you will need to:

- **Identify one award contact person for the institution.** All program-related communications and materials will be sent to this individual.
- **Select your award recipient(s).** Institutions may determine their own specific selection criteria in keeping with the purpose of each award (see full descriptions at end of this document).
- **Choose your recognition level:** Determine whether you would you like to recognize your graduate with an engraved, commemorative award and a professionally-produced video to be featured during the awards ceremony at DEAC's Annual Conference. The video will be made available for the institution and the graduate to share on social media or other platforms. Cost for both is $200, and the entry form will collect a $200 credit card payment for each Outstanding Graduate and/or Famous Alumni you recognize.
- **Discuss In-Person Attendance:** Determine whether you would you like to invite/sponsor your award-winners to attend the DEAC Annual Awards program to receive their award in person (Tuesday, April 20, 2027 in Salt Lake City).

  Note: Travel/lodging are at the institution's expense. The luncheon is included in Annual Conference attendees' registration and is complimentary for all award recipients who attend. Additional guests of awardees and their institutions can be purchased through the Annual Conference registration page when it goes live in January.

  The entry form will ask whether you are interested in your award recipients attending in person. Checking "yes" does not commit the institution to sponsoring your honorees' attendance; we will reach out to you for further information and confirmation. Note: there is no online participation option for the Annual Awards Luncheon.

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- **Collect the required information for each selected recipient.** You will complete one entry form per recipient, and the form does not allow saving work in progress):
  - ☐ Name (including any relevant honorifics such as Dr., etc.)
  - ☐ Program Completed*
  - ☐ Year Graduated *
  - ☐ Graduate's Current City and State
  - ☐ Email Address
  - ☐ Optional media

    If your institution wishes to share photos of the award recipient from school events or of the graduate working in their field of study, you may optionally share them here. DEAC will request a preferred headshot directly from your selected award recipient.
  - ☐ Description of your Outstanding Graduate or Famous Alumni, including, including a headline and summary to assist DEAC in developing recognition materials.

    Headline: brief statement of who the award recipient is today (125 characters max)

    Example: Lifelong learner building a demanding career in regulatory trade compliance. (Imagine this entry as the headline of a PowerPoint slide featuring your graduate.)

    Summary: In 1-2 sentences, describe what makes their journey or their impact inspiring (250 characters max)

    Example: After completing three degree programs while working full-time, Joshua is a respected manager of regulatory risk in major import-export compliance programs, bringing measurable leadership impact to a complex field. (Imagine this text on a Powerpoint slide with the graduate's name, degree, institution, headline, and photo.)

    Narrative: A longer-form description of the achievements of your Outstanding Graduate or Famous Alumni that make them deserving of this award (about 500 words).

    Purpose: Shared with DEAC staff, videographer, and Awards Committee to guide video interviews (if the institution selects the $200 recognition option), program remarks, and longer-form recognition.

After you complete the form:

- Please reach out to your selected awardees with congratulations on their selection, and to let them know DEAC will be contact them about next steps. If you will be inviting/sponsoring them to receive their award in person (see above), invite them to save the date and await further details from you.
- DEAC will reach out to your selected award winner(s) to confirm details and begin next steps of the recognition process:
  - Confirming name spelling, titles, etc. as they wish for it to appear in recognition (and engraved on award, if institution has chosen that option)
  - Requesting the graduate's preferred headshot
  - Obtaining permission to use their details in DEAC Annual Award publications
  - Inviting them to schedule time with the videographer (if institution has chosen that option)
  - Confirming award shipping address (if not receiving the award in person)
- Once the Annual Conference registration opens (January 2027), DEAC will communicate with the institution's identified contact person to confirm which (if any) award recipients will attend the Award Luncheon to receive their award in person.

DEAC OUTSTANDING GRADUATE AWARD

Purpose: Recognizes an exceptional graduate whose academic accomplishments, personal growth, and post-graduation success reflect the mission and values of their institution. Celebrates graduates whose perseverance and ability to apply their education toward positive impacts professionally, personally, or within their community embody the transformative potential of distance education.

Who can be nominated? Graduates of DEAC-accredited institutions.

Who can nominate? DEAC-accredited institutions, which may select one Outstanding Graduate per year using their own process.

Criteria: Institutions determine their own selection criteria, such as:

- **Academic excellence:** Strong academic performance.
- **Perseverance:** Demonstrated persistence in achieving their goals.
- **Positive impact:** Applies their education to benefit their career, personal growth, or community.
- **Personal achievement:** Notable personal achievement.
- **Other indicators:** Other indicators of student excellence.

DEAC FAMOUS ALUMNI AWARD

Purpose: Honors a graduate whose accomplishments have brought positive recognition to their alma mater and exemplify the long-term impact of distance education. Celebrates alumni who serve as role models through personal success, professional achievement, public recognition, or service to their communities, demonstrating the transformative power of education in real-world settings.

Who can be nominated? Graduates of DEAC-accredited programs (timing of graduation at the institution's discretion).

Who can nominate? DEAC-accredited institutions, which may select one recipient per year using their own nomination process.

Criteria: Institutions determine their own selection criteria, which may include:

- **Professional achievement:** Notable professional achievement, such as entrepreneurial success or leadership in their field.
- **Public recognition:** Public recognition, media presence, or noteworthy visibility.
- **Community impact:** Significant community impact or service, including civic engagement.
- **Broader contribution:** Contributions to their industry, profession, or society.