

## **CALS/MAFES OPPORTUNITY EXCELLENCE AWARDS**

The CALS/MAFES Opportunity Excellence Awards will enhance the awareness and participation of its faculty, staff and student body in promoting inclusivity within the college, university and surrounding community. The criteria for each of The three award categories are 1) faculty/staff, 2) student, and 3) team, and the criteria for each is provided below.

### **Faculty and Staff Awards**

The CALS/MAFES Faculty and Staff Opportunity Excellence Award recognizes individual faculty and staff for excellence in promoting access, opportunity, equity, and/or inclusion in our campus and/or community. This award will be based on actions and participation that are beyond the scope of what is expected from its faculty and staff. All nominees must currently be holding a CALS and/or MAFES faculty and/or staff appointment (faculty engaged in administrative appointments or positions are also eligible for nomination and consideration). To be nominated for the CALS/MAFES awards, faculty and staff candidates should have:

1. A demonstrated commitment to the spirit of inclusivity through participation in extra-curricular activities and/or formal or informal initiatives at the institutional, community, state, regional, national or international level,
2. Shown leadership through positive interaction among persons of different backgrounds, and
3. Behavior which illustrates commitment to inclusion of persons within the institution who are members of traditionally under-represented groups.

### **Student Award**

Nominees for the student award can come from either the undergraduate or graduate student body in CALS. To be considered for the student award, individuals should have:

1. A demonstrated commitment to the spirit of inclusivity through participation in extra-curricular activities and/or formal or informal initiatives at the institutional or community level,
2. Made inclusivity an integral part of their life and furthered a spirit of inclusivity among peers,
3. Shown leadership on formal or informal inclusivity initiatives in the community, and/or on the Mississippi State University campus.

### **Team/Department Award**

This award was designed to recognize small groups of faculty, staff, and student organizations, or university departments, stations or centers for their commitment to inclusivity initiatives on the MSU Campus, within MAFES R&E Centers and Stations, or in the community. To be considered by the CALS/MAFES Opportunity and Equity Advisory Council, nominees would likely have (as examples):

1. Developed and received grant funding to further opportunities of students and/or staff in specific fields of study that lack individuals of traditionally under-represented groups, or
2. Developed formal or informal programs that seek to improve the lives of youth and/or adults in traditionally under-represented communities or schools.

## Nomination Packets

For each Individual Nominee or Team Nominee, nominators should prepare a packet that includes the required material (see below), but that is no more than 25 pages (i.e., if optional/additional materials are included):

1. Nomination forms are included in this packet or can be found on the CALS website at: [http://www.cals.msstate.edu/docs/awards/CALS\\_MAFES\\_diversity\\_awards.pdf](http://www.cals.msstate.edu/docs/awards/CALS_MAFES_diversity_awards.pdf) If nomination is for a TEAM, then a nomination form needs to be completed for each member of the team.
2. Cover letter from the nominator summarizing how the individual or team nominee(s) has demonstrated the specified criteria for the respective category. This cover letter should refer to supporting letters and materials, and clearly state how the Nominee or Team:
  - a. Demonstrates a commitment to the spirit of inclusivity through activities related to the promotion of diversity in the CALS/MAFES community and elsewhere,
  - b. Cite specific examples of Nominee or Team's commitment, leadership, positive interactions, and behavior that show innovative and creative initiatives or actions to effectively remove barriers to inclusion,
  - c. Describe how the CALS/MAFES has benefited from Nominee or Team's work,
  - d. Cite any civic and community involvement of the Nominee or Team outside of MSU,
  - e. Cite any professional inclusivity-related memberships of the Nominee or Team members, and
  - f. Cite inclusivity-related publications or programs of the Nominee or Team members.
3. Up to three (3) supporting letters from colleagues or supervisors can be included,
4. Nominee should prepare a one (1) page letter explaining why they might be deserving of the CALS/MAFES Opportunity Excellence Award.
5. Additional information including pictures, newspaper articles, magazine articles, diversity-related publications, and/or diversity program materials produced by the nominee that would further support the nomination.

## Nomination and Selection Process

One (1) Adobe portable document file (pdf) of the entire packet must be submitted by **5:00 p.m. on February 21** to [nominations@cals.msstate.edu](mailto:nominations@cals.msstate.edu). Nomination packets will be reviewed by the CALS/MAFES Opportunity and Equity Advisory Council for each award, and award recommendations will be presented to the CALS/MAFES Dean/Director for final selection/approval. Award recipients will be recognized at the CALS/MAFES Awards Banquet in the Spring. Each recipient of the Faculty, Staff, Student and/or Team Award will receive a plaque recognizing their achievement, and Faculty recipients will also receive a monetary award.