# The Congressional Award

## About the Award - Who We Are

The Congressional Award is the U.S. Congress' award for young Americans. It is non-partisan, voluntary, and non-competitive. The program is open to all 14- to 23-year-olds. Participants earn Bronze, Silver and Gold Congressional Award Certificates and Bronze, Silver and Gold Congressional Award Medals. Each level involves setting goals in four program areas: Volunteer Public Service, Personal Development, Physical Fitness, and Expedition/Exploration. Earning the Award is a fun and interesting way to get more involved in something you already enjoy or something you'd like to try for the first time. You move at your own pace - on your own or with your friends. This is not an award for past accomplishments. Instead, you are honored for achieving your own challenging goals.

Regardless of your situation, you can earn The Congressional Award. The Congressional Award has no minimum grade point average requirements. It accommodates young people with special needs or disabilities who are willing to take the challenge. The Congressional Award is open to all.

## About the Award - History

Congress established The Congressional Award in 1979 to recognize initiative, achievement and service in young people. It began as a bipartisan effort in both the United States Senate and the House of Representatives. The enabling legislation (Public Law 96-114) established the Congressional Award as a private-public partnership, which receives all funding from the private sector, and was originally signed into law by President Jimmy Carter. Presidents Ronald Reagan, George Bush and Bill Clinton have signed continuing legislation.

# Youth - Program Requirements

The Congressional Award Program is about challenge. The Award offers young people the opportunity to set a personal goal and achieve it. Along the way, you will learn about yourself and about qualities like responsibility, trust and the ability to plan and organize. There are six levels of Award -- Bronze, Silver, and Gold Certificates and Bronze, Silver, and Gold Medals. Each level is cumulative -- this means time spent on one award is carried with you to the next level. Start today!

| **Certificate Level** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Min. Hours per Program Area** | **Bronze** | **Silver** | **Gold** |
| Voluntary Public Service | 30 | 60 | 90 |
| Personal Development | 15 | 30 | 45 |
| Physical Fitness | 15 | 30 | 45 |
| Expedition/Exploration | 1 day | 2 days | 3 days |
| **Min. Total Hours** | 60 | 120 | 180 |
| **Min. Time to Earn the Award** | - | - | 6 months |

| **Medal Level** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Min. Hours per Program Area** | **Bronze** | **Silver** | **Gold** |
| Voluntary Public Service | 100 | 200 | 400 |
| Personal Development | 50 | 100 | 200 |
| Physical Fitness | 50 | 100 | 200 |
| Expedition/Exploration | 1 overnight | 2 consecutive overnights | 4 consecutive overnights |
| **Min. Total Hours** | 200 | 400 | 800 |
| **Min. Time to Earn the Award** | 7 months | 12 months | 24 months |

*The miminum age to register is 13 $^{1/2}$ and you must accomplish your goals by your 24$^{th}$ birthday.

http://www.congressionalaward.org/congress/about/about_who.htm