



These awards were established to recognize outstanding performance by Illinois YMCA staff. Past award recipients have exemplified exceptional levels of work performance and displayed high regard for the YMCA's mission and work in their communities. Nominations are accepted annually, and recipients are chosen by the awards sub-committee of the Fall Staff Rally planning committee.

INDIVIDUAL STAFF AWARDS

Joseph Roknich Award for Outstanding Fitness-Wellness Director of the Year Award

Joseph Roknich was Executive Director at the Irving Park YMCA before becoming the Vice President of Operations for YMCA of Chicago and MRC Director.

The Joseph Roknich award recognizes a Y staff person who displays exceptional leadership, commitment, and the attributes of being a cause driven leader in the area of health, fitness/wellness.

Matt Ottaviano Outstanding Program Director of the Year Award

Matt Ottaviano served as the Executive Director of the Lawson YMCA in Chicago before becoming Vice President of Operations at the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago. During this time Matt also led many MRC services. He exemplified the characteristics of a cause-driven leader. He was honest, fair, intelligent, and friendly. His philanthropic spirit and dedication to the movement allowed him to relate to major donors and staff, as well as connect to the everyday Y members.

The Matt Ottaviano award recognizes candidates who display exceptional leadership, commitment and the attributes of being a cause driven leader in their program areas. Two program directors may be recognized, one in the areas of childcare, camp, before and after school, or early learning and one in the areas of arts & humanities, youth services, youth sports, gymnastics and teen programming.

Outstanding Facilities, Building, and/or Properties Director of the Year Award

The Outstanding Facilities Director of the Year Award recognizes a full-time Facility Director in the Y movement for outstanding efforts in managing and maintaining a YMCA facility or facilities.

Outstanding Membership-Marketing Director of the Year Award

The Outstanding Membership/Marketing Director Award recognizes the Membership or Marketing Director who is committed to the member experience, displays leadership, creativity and exceptional customer service.

Outstanding Support Services or Admin of the Year Award

The Outstanding Admin Award recognizes an administrative or support staff in the YMCA movement who provides exemplary service to his/her YMCA operation or department and is a dedicated team member that has demonstrated the core values of the YMCA movement.

Rookie of the Year Award

The Rookie of the Year Award recognizes a new employee (6-24 months of employment) in the YMCA movement for exceptional leadership, outstanding job achievements, and the demonstrated ability to operate and manage successful programs, membership management or fundraising efforts.

ILLINOIS STATE ALLIANCE OF YMCAS AWARDS 2025

Stormy Webster Award for Outstanding Aquatic Director

Stormy Webster began as a volunteer at the B.R. Ryall YMCA in 1952 teaching swimming and lifesaving at rented facilities as the Y did not have its own building. During her 38 years of commitment to the Y as a volunteer and staff member, Stormy was dedicated to providing training and staff development to improve the quality and safety of aquatics programming for youth in Illinois and Indiana. She was a master at working with volunteers. Under her leadership, Stormy recruited more than 100 aquatic volunteers that taught more than 1,500 hours per week. Some of her accolades included Volunteer of the Year at the B.R. Ryall Y, SCUBA Commissioner for the Midwest Field and the Midwest Field Physical Director of the year in 1978. Stormy retired from the YMCA in 1990 as the Program Executive of the B.R. Ryall YMCA.

The Stormy Webster award recognizes a Y Aquatics Director who displays exceptional leadership, commitment, and the attributes of being a cause driven leader in aquatics at a local, neighborhood or alliance level and is employed by a YMCA in the Illinois Alliance.

Tom Stoll Award

Tom Stoll, who passed away May 1, 2003, spent nearly 40 years in a love affair with the Y. Beginning in 1953 as a part-time volunteer at Oak Park Y Camp Douglas, Tom touched the lives of staff, volunteers, and members with the Oak Park, Aurora, Streator, and Naperville Ys.

Tom was well known and respected for both the volunteer and staff leadership that he attracted and nurtured in the movement. As CEO of both the Streator and Naperville Ys, he built boards that were able to take good Ys and make them great. Tom recognized the importance of developing staff outside of his Y through active participation in both APD - now YPN - and as an instructor at Waubensee Valley Community College and George Williams College.

In recognition of Tom Stoll's Y legacy, the Tom Stoll Award has been established as an annual recognition presented to a Y professional on the ascending edge of service who has developed outstanding executive or operational leadership and loyalty.

CEO LEADERSHIP AWARD

Leadership Legacy Award (formerly Illini Chief Award)

The Leadership Legacy Award recognizes a current Chief Executive Officer that provides extraordinary leadership to a corporate YMCA in Illinois by exemplifying the YMCA's values and mission. This award recognizes cause-driven leaders in their association, community, and the Y movement and among his or her peers across the State.

PROGRAM AWARDS

Program Excellence Award

The Program Excellence Award celebrates Y programs that are innovative and making a difference in local communities. Up to three (3) awards will be given annually. Each program honored will receive a stipend of \$250. Note: nominations must be accompanied by a 1-3 video overview of the program. Videos of selected programs will be shared during Fall Staff Rally.