NATIONAL AWARDS

54 Founders Award

Considered the League's highest honor, this award is bestowed to an individual or organization for outstanding contributions to the conservation of America's natural resources.



Leslie Monostory (New York):

Les is the president of the New York Division, founder of the Central New York Chapter and a League Life member for over four decades. His commitment to the League's mission and his years of engagement in numerous initiatives have been hugely impactful in his region. His 32-year professional career as an environmental planner allowed him to inform the public, particularly young people, through nature-related programming, especially his Chapter's Project Watershed that trained high school teachers about stream biology and water monitoring techniques. He worked tirelessly to pass legislation that would require the New York Department of Environmental Conservation to recognize legitimate citizen-science programs for water quality data collection.



Dale Braun (Iowa):

Dale is recognized posthumously for his unwavering dedication, vision and leadership. In his short three decades as a League member, he served in multiple leadership roles as the president of the Linn County Chapter and the Iowa Division, as a national director and chairman of the Executive Board. He also led the Resolutions Committee. He was one of the League's most ardent clean water champions. Whether it was Clean Water Act rollbacks, nitrogen fertilizer spills in waterways or dredging issues on the upper Mississippi River, his lifelong plan—although cut short—was to make the water a little bit cleaner for the next generation.

Stanford M. Adams Memorial Award for League Leadership

This Executive Board award recognizes the national director or director-at-large for continued commitment to the duties and responsibilities that come with their elected leadership position.



Jodi Labs (Wisconsin):

Jodi joined the League more than two decades ago embracing the League's mission right from the start. She had served on the Brown County Chapter board, eventually becoming president. Jodi continued to rise in the League leadership while providing expertise in communications, management and legal matters as a Wisconsin Division national director. Jodi served on the national Executive Board, including as chair, and then led the organization as national president.

Hall of Fame Award

Recognizes a member's outstanding accomplishments in furthering the mission and goals of the League.



Patrice Kistner (South Dakota):

For over two decades Pat served the League locally at the McCook Chapter and at the state- and national-levels including once as a regional governor. As a national director, she served on multiple national-level resources and standing committees.



Michael Masters, Jr. (West Virginia):

For the past three decades Michael served at various leadership roles including Berkeley County Chapter president and currently as the West Virginia Division president and national director. He has long dedicated his work to protecting natural resources and promoting responsible outdoor recreation.



Luann Noll (Illinois):
A national director, member of several Illinois chapters and an Illinois Division officer, Luann has been active in the League 1972. She's best known for her promotional and organizational work for the division's Giant Goose Education Workshop, the "Kids In The Woods" chapter program and the League's 100th anniversary celebration held in Peoria in 2022.



Dr. William B. Gordon (Maryland):
Bill served in various leadership roles including Bethesda Chevy-Chase Chapter president, board of governors' member, Maryland Division executive secretary, national director and regional governor. He worked closely with EPA and various local League chapters to form Environmental Stewardship Plans for safe and environmentally responsible shooting range operations. He also helped establish the Izaak Walton Cottage Chapter in England.



Dorothy Harrington (Minnesota):
Dorothy, a League member for over 70 years, supported and partnered with her late husband Fay's work to establish Deep Portage Conservation Reserve next to Deep Lake near Hackensack, Minnesota. Now with the creation of the Resources Heritage Center, 5,000 annual visitors from over 70 schools, benefit from their vision to protect the land, water and wildlife.

Conservation Award

Recognizes member contributions to conservation in the name of the League.



Barbara Hanson (Minnesota):
For two decades Barb served on Friends of the Minnesota Valley Board supporting watershed education, habitat restoration, volunteer engagement and citizen initiatives. She shared her organizational expertise working statewide with League chapters and their advocacy projects, as well as with the regional Upper Mississippi River Initiative.



Matthew J. Norton (Minnesota):
As a League member and the policy and science director for the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters, Matt, shares his expertise and guidance with the Minnesota Division on this issue. Through his job, he helped guide the conservation strategy through some significant legal and policy battles affecting this natural wonder located on our northern border.



Jamie Buteyn (South Dakota):
A retired law enforcement officer and an avid upland gamebird hunter, Jamie is a hunter education instructor, who has incorporated wildlife habitat and conservation as a regular part of his course presentations at the Sioux Falls Chapter. As a conservation showcase on his property, he planted over 250 trees in shelterbelts and multiple three-acre food plots as habitat for wildlife to thrive on.



Robert Pitner (Virginia):
At Virginia's Roanoke Valley Chapter—next year's national convention host—Robert's local conservation work spanned over 40 years. That work included his family's addition of land to the Blue Ridge Land Conservancy and the Chapter's acquisition of their 226-acre conservation grounds in Roanoke County—complete with streams, pond, hiking trails, managed timberlands and recreational shooting range.

Outdoor Ethics Award

Recognizes individuals, groups or organizations judged to have done outstanding work in outdoor ethics.



Wendy Reigel (Indiana):
A Porter County Chapter member, Wendy is recognized for her work to inform citizens about the ethical use of our natural resources and foster a better understanding of the damaging impact of data centers in terms of water and air quality, noise and light pollution and harms to public natural areas.

Save Our Streams Award

Recognizes outstanding work in environmental education and citizen activism for clean water.



Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chapter (Maryland):

When one enters this chapter's Poolesville, Maryland grounds, they are greeted with a "Conservation Is Our Mission" sign. No doubt that this chapter is also fully invested in the League's Clean Water Program with their extensive stream monitoring efforts on waterways located throughout upper Montgomery County, Maryland.

Thelma "Pete" Reed Award

Recognizes the member who has volunteered in many conservation projects, educational efforts, community service or chapter leadership development, and is not serving as a national leader of the League but is considered an "up and coming" future League leader.



Griffth Pugh (Minnesota):

While he was previously recognized with the Outdoor America's Future Award, Griffth is currently the vice president of this Minnesota Valley Chapter. He was a founding member of this Chapter's Scouting Green Crew and is active in the Minnesota Division. He played key support and often lead roles in the chapter's on-the-ground conservation projects and is best known as a communication innovator with his podcast "The Young Ike." He's now recognized as an "up and coming" future League leader.

Outdoor America's Future Award

Recognizes the Izaak Walton League youth or student member who has volunteered in conservation projects, educational efforts, community service or chapter leadership development and is considered a young "up and coming" future League leader.



Jayden Haywood (Ohio):

Jayden is best known as the previous president of the National Youth Convention Chapter and an active member back home of the Medina Chapter. He's involved in sports at school, is a local Earth Day ambassador, promotes the League's conservation message to other youth and at the county fair, and volunteers at a camp for terminally ill children. Jayden's many life experiences and message to other young people to "reach out and not to give up on life" have been published and broadcasted worldwide on social media.



Hannah Barisonzi (Minnesota):

Hannah is founder and co-president of the nationally recognized Green Crew at the Minnesota Valley Chapter, a Scouting America unit. At this youth-led conservation engine, Hannah has clocked hundreds of service hours on water monitoring, tree planting and trail and habitat restoration. She has conducted many Leave No Trace training sessions. Hannah was a keynote speaker at the 2026 national convention banquet.

Honor Roll Award

Recognizes outstanding accomplishments in conservation, public education and/or publicity in keeping with the League's goals by an individual or organization.



Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters (Minnesota):

Formed in 2013 by the Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness, the Campaign is recognized for their tireless efforts to educate the public and protect this natural wonder on the U.S.-Canadian border that has been under the threat of mining pollution in recent years.

Three Rivers Park District (Minnesota):

As one of the state's premier conservation education, outdoor stewardship and recreation agency, the Three Rivers Park District manages 27,000 acres, conducting fisheries and wildlife habitat restoration and ecosystem protection across the Mississippi, Minnesota and Crow River watersheds.

Minnesota Coalition of Residential Environmental Learning Centers (CRELC):

CRELC coordinates efforts of six local centers that provide opportunities for all "to experience nature directly, understand ecological systems and develop a sense of responsibility toward land, water and wildlife." It is comprised of the Audubon Center of the North Woods, Deep Portage Conservation Reserve, Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center, Laurentian Environmental Learning Center, Long Lake Conservation Center, and Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center.



Nancy Schuldt (Minnesota):

As the former Fond du Lac Band Water Project Coordinator for the Lake Superior Chippewa tribe, a sovereign Ojibwe Native American nation, Nancy has earned recognition for her outstanding work to protect and manage Minnesota's waters.



James Wisker (Minnesota):

For his efforts to develop balanced urban ecology policy for connecting land, water and people, this award goes to James for his ongoing work at the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, one of the state's largest urban watersheds.

Seneca Valley Trout Unlimited (Maryland):

This local TU Chapter has coordinated ongoing educational events at the Rockville Chapter and conducted many watershed protection efforts and fisheries habitat work in central Maryland.



Carmen and Sally Fernholz (Minnesota):

From the A-Frame Farm located in Madison, Minnesota, the Fernholz family has long promoted productive organic farming, sustainable agriculture, environmental stewardship and soil health. Carmen helped to establish the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, a partnership between the University of Minnesota and public stakeholders. Carman was a keynote speaker at the League's 2026 national convention

Shooting Sports Award

Presented to individuals, groups or organizations judged to have done outstanding work to promote shooting sports.



Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chapter Rifle and Pistol Committee (Maryland):

This League Chapter manages and maintains their shooting range with a volunteer group of dedicated and skilled recreational shooters. The chapter hosts a variety of competitions and educational events—including for Scouting merit badges—as well as fun shoots and hunter sight-in-days as a benefit to members and others in the community.



Duval Crist (Maryland):

An active member of the Rockville Chapter, Duval oversees the Chapter's ranges as the chair of their Range Safety Committee and maintains the ranges for compliance inspection by the county government. His committee conducts safety, use and procedure orientation, and he restored the Chapter's firearms training classes with certified NRA instructors.



Jeff Rawlinson (Nebraska):
As a longtime member of the Lincoln Chapter, Jeff, an avid hunter and shooter, worked for the state fish and wildlife agency as outdoor education coordinator. He worked on creating and passage of statewide shooting range protection laws and advocating for the R3 Initiative—the recruitment, reactivation and retention of participants. He also brought his knowledge to be part of the Chapter's Range Safety Committee.



Todd Taylor (South Dakota):
From the Sioux Falls Chapter, Todd, is a knowledgeable trap shooting coach who designed and conducts a gun safety and technique course for local homeschooled children and their parents. He has helped to recruit many new members and supporters of the League.

James Lawton Childs Award

Recognizes chapter accomplishments in conservation.

Berkeley County Chapter (West Virginia):
This Chapter in the eastern panhandle of West Virginia on the banks of the Potomac River, conducts roadside and stream litter clean-up events to protect watersheds and improve water quality and aquatic habitat. The Chapter also advocates responsible hunting and boating and hosts state-sanctioned educational courses open to the public.



Rockville Chapter (Maryland):
This Chapter is known locally for its total conservation package. Activities have included their nationally recognized American chestnut tree farm, wood duck and bluebird nesting box management, Save Our Streams waterways monitoring, pollinator gardens, Christmas bird counts and adopt-a-highway clean-ups.

Robert C. O'Hair Award

Recognizes outstanding chapter youth programs.



Emerson Hough Chapter (Iowa):
For years, one of the Chapter's priorities has been working with youth and getting them to spend more time outdoors. They founded the Jasper County Youth Fishing Club. The Chapter hosts meetings, educational clinics and sanctioned catch-photo-release fishing tournaments that grew to more than 80 middle and high school participants. Young anglers learn about fisheries biology and habitat, lure making, fly-tying and kayaking.



Fairfield Chapter (Ohio):
Over the course of seven years, the Chapter hosts biannual adopt-a-tree events for local schools, where students learn how to properly plant trees in public parklands. The Chapter organizes gathering places for training, provides lunches and sponsors what-they-learned-about-trees essay writing contests. To date, the youth have planted 2,328 trees in the community valued at well over $33,000.



Rockville Chapter (Maryland):
This Chapter makes a point of hosting many events and sponsored projects for young people within the membership and throughout the community. The Chapter charters multiple Scout units and offers a youth conservation program including stream monitoring for macroinvertebrates, conservation and environmental scholarships, junior air rifle and BB gun training and 4-H awards.