



38th Annual Conference

**Exploring New Horizons
in Community Corrections**

Thursday and Friday
October 9 and 10, 2025

also presenting the

*2025 ODRC Cliff Skeen Awards &
OJACC Achievement Awards*

The Ohioan (formerly Nationwide) Hotel & Conference Center
100 Green Meadows Drive S., Lewis Center, OH
614.880.4300

Conference Overview

The Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections (OJACC) is pleased to present its 38th annual conference, *“Exploring New Horizons in Community Corrections,”* to be held at the *Ohioan (formerly Nationwide) Hotel and Conference Center, Lewis Center, Ohio, on October 9th and 10th, 2025.*

The general session on Thursday morning, *“How Can AI Help Us Build Better Community for Tomorrow?”* will feature four panelists: Myrinda Smith, Ph.D., Executive Director, University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute (UCCI); Joseph Arvidson, Executive Director, The Paragon Group; Jennifer Scott, Director of Innovation and Outreach, UCCI; and Vineela Kunapareddi, Assistant Professor, University of Cincinnati Information Technology Solutions Center (ITSC). This dynamic session will explore the intersection of proven practices and emerging technologies—especially artificial intelligence (AI) - to envision a more connected, responsive, and resilient future.

In the closing general session, Karen Vadino, trainer and consultant, will provide a presentation intended to enable participants to identify and recognize the symptoms of stress and ultimately learn techniques for coping, entitled, *“Mind Over Monsters.”*

You will also find many workshops focused on providing tools to improve the work of community corrections, both adult and juvenile.

The OJACC Achievement Awards and the ODRC Clifford Skeen Awards, recognizing excellence in community corrections, will be held during the Thursday luncheon.

OJACC has applied for continuing education credits in the area of Changing Offender Behavior (COB), CLE, RCH and Counselor/Social Work.

Please make plans to attend this highly informative conference. Registrations may be made at www.ojacc.org/event/annual-conference/ or by completing the attached Registration Form and sending it to ojacc.director@gmail.com.

THURSDAY, October 9, 2025

7:30 a.m.— 4:45 p.m.

Registration

7:30 a.m.— 8:30 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

8:30 a.m.—10:00 a.m.

Opening Session

10:00 a.m.—10:15 a.m.

Break

10:15 a.m.—11:45 a.m.

Opening Session Continues

11:45 a.m.—Noon

Break

Noon — 1:30 p.m.

Lunch, OJACC Achievement & ODRC Clifford Skeen Awards

1:30 p.m. —1:45 p.m.

Break

1:45 p.m. — 3:15 p.m.

Afternoon Workshops

3:15 p.m. — 3:30 p.m.

Break

3:30 p.m.— 5:00 p.m.

Afternoon Workshops

8:00 p.m.—9:30 p.m.

Hospitality Suite

FRIDAY, October 10, 2025

8:00 a.m.— Noon

Registration (for new registrants)

7:30 a.m.— 8:30 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

8:30 a.m.— 10:00 a.m.

Workshops

10:00 a.m.—10:30 a.m.

Break

10:30 a.m.—Noon

Closing Session

Featured Speakers

Thursday Opening Session & Keynote: 8:30 a.m.—10:00 a.m. and 10:15 a.m.—11:45 a.m.

How Can AI Help Us Build a Better Community for Tomorrow?

*Myrinda Smith, Ph.D., Exec. Dir.
University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute*



*Joseph Arvidson, Exec. Dir.
The Paragon Group*

*Jennifer Scott, Dir. of Innovation and Outreach
University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute*



*Vinella Kunapareddi, Assistant Professor,
UC Information Technology Solutions Center*



In the evolving landscape of community corrections, one question stands out: How can we harness innovation to strengthen the communities we serve? This dynamic session explores the intersection of proven practices and emerging technologies—especially artificial intelligence (AI) - to envision a more connected, responsive, and resilient future.

We'll begin by grounding ourselves in what works: the hard-earned progress made through evidence-based practices, human-centered engagement, and the dedication of community corrections professionals. From there, we'll explore where we can lean in further—through peer engagement initiatives, technology integration, and smarter tools that support both staff and the people they serve. We'll take a balanced look at how AI can contribute—examining its potential, real-world applications, and the risks and challenges that come with it.

This session will also integrate findings from a survey on current AI use distributed to OJACC members to offer first-hand accounts, usage trends, and insights from the field as we feature live AI demonstrations, video examples, and data visualizations. Whether you're curious, cautious, or already experimenting with AI, this session will offer practical insights and a collaborative space to imagine what's next.

Friday Closing Session 10:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

Mind Over Monsters

Karen Vadino, MSW, LPCC, OCPSII



It is amazing how many monsters get built in our brains when we're stressed. Stress is the perception that we cannot cope with life's challenges and demands. As we are faced with the event, our fear begins to exaggerate the demand, and monsters are created in our minds.

The tools used to build the monsters include worry, fear, and rumination. Somehow, in the end, what we actually experience is almost never as bad as what we built in our heads.

Workshops

Thursday Afternoon Workshops

1:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

(A-1) Ensuring Compliance: Medicaid Requirements for Youth in Congregate Care

Courney Alcott, ODYS

January 2025 saw the commencement of new requirements for juvenile justice youth in congregate care settings, including detention centers, correctional facilities, and state-run deep-end placements. This session will outline those requirements and share how jurisdictions and facilities are complying with the new Medicaid requirements.

(A-2) AI and the Human Element: Enhancing Supervision Through Generative Tools

Jennifer Scott, UCCI; Joseph Arvidson, The Paragon Group; and Vineela Kunapareddi, ITSC

In a world increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence, how can we ensure that technology enhances—rather than replaces—human connection in supervision and corrections work? This interactive workshop explores the evolving role of generative AI tools in supporting, not supplanting, the human element in supervision. Participants will gain a foundational understanding of AI types and tools, including hands-on demos of

platforms like ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, and Canva. We'll explore when and where AI is most appropriate—highlighting tasks best suited for automation versus those requiring empathy, ethics, and professional discretion. Through real-world examples from a “day in the life” mapping exercise, attendees will discover how AI can boost productivity, streamline documentation, and support decision-making—while keeping human judgment at the center. Whether you're curious, cautious, or already experimenting with AI, this session will equip you with practical insights and ethical frameworks to integrate AI meaningfully into your work.

(A-3) The Window of Detection: What Urine Drug Screens Really Tell You

Susan Tulley, Oriana House, Inc.

This session explores how prolonged fentanyl clearance can alter the window of detection for some individuals. It delves into the nuances of interpreting drug screens, moving beyond just positive or negative results, and emphasizes the importance of adapting our approach to better serve clients.

(A-4) Trauma-Informed Care in

Corrections

Nicolle Brooks-Willis and Williams Salas, ODRC

The goal of this session is to educate correctional staff and administrators on the importance, principles, and implementation of trauma-informed practices in a correctional setting.

(A-5) Invisible Injuries: Traumatic Brain Injury, Strangulation, and Domestic Violence

Rachel Ramirez, Ohio Domestic Violence Network

Domestic violence often causes harm to the head, neck, and face—yet brain injuries from such violence remain widely overlooked, under-identified, and untreated. This session shares key findings from Ohio's ground breaking research and introduces practical strategies to raise brain injury awareness in your services, including the CARE framework (Connect, Acknowledge, Respond, Evaluate). Integrating these tools can help agencies better support program participants and address the full impact of violence and abuse.

Workshops

Thursday Afternoon Workshops

3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

(B-1) Right Sizing Youth Justice

Brittany Neal and Cecilia Ko, ODYS

Over the past few decades, extensive research has been conducted to identify best practices for justice-system-involved youth. From educational support, facility construction, and make-up, to appropriate therapeutic intervention and length of stay, the youth justice system has the capacity to provide youth with necessary and beneficial interventions that reduce recidivism and bring about wholeness for children and teens and the communities from which they come. This session will highlight best practices from across the country and give practical tools on how systems in Ohio can implement those practices in their own jurisdictions.

(B-2) Ease on Down the Road: Understanding Social Determinants that Lead to Recidivism and How to Help Others Navigate Them

Alex Harper, Oriana House, Inc.

Get ready to hit the yellow brick road of insight, empathy, and action! This lively and interactive workshop takes a fun spin on the serious issue of recidivism. Using engaging storytelling and real-world scenarios, we'll explore the

social determinants—like housing, employment, education, and healthcare—that often trip people up after incarceration. You'll laugh, learn, and maybe even dance a little as we discover how community support and practical tools can help break the cycle. Perfect for community corrections professionals, advocates, and change-makers, this session isn't just informative, it's transformational. So grab your ruby slippers (or comfy sneakers) and join us as we ease on down the road to understanding and making a lasting impact. There's no place like a supportive community—and this workshop shows you how to help build one.

(B-3) Making Change Work: Practical Strategies for Bringing New Tools into Community Corrections

Jennifer Scott, UCCL; and Vineela Kunapareddi, ITSC

Change doesn't have to be overwhelming—especially when it's done with your team, your clients, and your mission in mind. This hands-on workshop is designed for community corrections professionals who are exploring how to bring new technology, like AI tools, into their work in a way that supports—not disrupts—their day-to-day responsibilities. Together, we'll walk through a step-by-step ap-

proach to introducing change, from identifying key stakeholders and understanding compliance needs to piloting new tools and building team buy-in. You'll hear real stories from agencies that have been through this journey—including how a state university shifted from resisting AI to embracing it, and how a county probation department led a successful rollout in their department. We'll also reflect on your own agency's readiness for innovation and share strategies to build a culture that welcomes new ideas. Whether you're a supervisor, frontline staff, or just curious about what's next, this session will give you practical tools, relatable examples, and a supportive space to think through what change could look like in your agency.

(B-4) Reentry Simulation

Nicholas Emmons, Lanaya McDonald, Richard Schmidt, ODRC

Participants will participate in a simulation as a justice-involved person released from incarceration. They will go through stations such as ID/License, probation, filling out applications for employment, gaining employment, paying bills/fines, obtaining and paying for housing, etc. The simulation is designed to

Workshops

help participants understand the barriers faced by justice-involved individuals upon release from incarceration or during their involvement with the justice system.

(B-5) Reducing the Risk of Homicide in Cases of Intimate Partner Violence

Erin Becker, High-Risk Domestic Violence Court in Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court

Attendees will gain foundational knowledge of the dynamics of intimate partner violence, how to identify cases that are high risk for homicide, and will gain practical skills to apply to their work to reduce the risk of homicide and serious re-assault in these cases.

Friday Morning Workshops

8:30 a.m. –10:00 a.m.

(C-1) Building Resilience: Combatting Secondary Trauma and Compassion Fatigue in Youth Justice Work

Lisa Fleisher, Franklin County Children's Services

Professionals who work in youth justice experience high levels of secondary trauma, frequently because of the exposure to the traumas that children who are system-involved experience. If we aren't careful, we can experi-

ence burnout, compassion fatigue, and exit this work without learning keys to developing resilience and wellness. This session will examine the causes of secondary trauma and provide practical tools for youth justice workers to use to be able to build into themselves to do this work and maintain well-being in the long run.

(C-2) From Courtroom to Career: Vocational Pathways Supporting Justice-Involved Ohioans with Disabilities

Mallory Pitts and Julie Lasher, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, and Meghan Patton, Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas

This informative session will explore how vocational services can be a powerful tool for recovery, stability, and reducing recidivism among individuals with disabilities involved in the justice system. The presentation will spotlight the OOD Jobs for Recovery program, a collaborative initiative with specialized dockets across the state, highlighting the critical role employment plays in building recovery capital. Mallory Pitts and Julie Lasher from Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) will demonstrate how strategic partnerships with state and community correc-

tions, specialized dockets, and employer partners are driving meaningful outcomes. Meghan Patton from the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court will share firsthand how OOD Jobs for Recovery has positively impacted participants on their specialized dockets, providing a local perspective on the initiative's success. Attendees will gain insight into OOD's approach to developing employer relationships, supporting participants through job placement, and sustaining long-term success beyond the justice system.

(C-3) The Danger on the Roads: Understanding Alcohol and Drug-Impaired Drivers

Honorable Mary Huffman, Second District Court of Appeals

In 2022, 13,524 people died on the roadways in the United States as a result of impaired driving incidents, representing 32% of overall traffic fatalities - all preventable deaths. Despite the known risk associated with driving under the influence, impaired driving continues at an alarming rate, even among those previously convicted of an offense. Recent studies reveal that 13.5 million people aged 16 or older reported driving under the influence of alcohol in the past year, and 11.7 million reported driving under the influ-

Workshops

ence of an illicit substance. Alcohol, illicit drugs, prescription drugs, and even some over-the-counter medications, including combinations of substances, impact the critical divided-attention skills necessary to drive safely. Research makes clear that many impaired drivers share risks and needs different from other criminal offenders. This program begins with a discussion of the psychological, physiological, and psychomotor effects of substances on driving skills and the critical differences between impaired drivers and other offenders, and the risks and needs common among impaired drivers. The program will also review various screening and assessment tools validated for impaired drivers to assist courts in determining appropriate supervision levels and sanctions. To both contribute to public safety and assist offenders, the program will conclude with a discussion of the evidence-based practices judges, probation officers, and treatment team members may utilize with impaired drivers, specific sanctions appropriate for impaired drivers included in specialized dockets or while on supervision.

(C-4) Where Justice Meets Health: Integrating SDOH in Community Supervision

Jennifer Martinez and Daniel King, Volunteers of America, Ohio and Indiana

Success in community corrections depends on more than compliance—it depends on meeting fundamental human needs. This session will explore how social determinants of health (SDOH)—including housing, transportation, food security, employment, education, and access to care—directly impact a person’s ability to comply with supervision, engage in treatment, and build a life outside the justice system. Drawing from behavioral health and social work perspectives, as well as key findings from the Ohio Supreme Court’s Task Force on Reentry Final Report, the session will highlight how systemic barriers and stigma prevent many individuals from achieving stability. Without a safe place to live, reliable transportation, or access to healthcare and income, even the best evidence-based programs may fall short.

(C-5) Preparing for a BCS Program Review and What to Expect

Krista Burke, ODRC/BCS

It’s a new era, and the program review process is changing! Attendees will be able to identify which standards can be prepared throughout the year and which ones they need to “wait on”. What standards still apply in relation to an organization’s FY25 POAs? Creating audit files? Maybe not so much anymore. This training will empower programs to make a smooth transition into the new review process. The importance of routine policy monitoring and WHY is included. This presentation is appropriate for all program directors, QA personnel, and anyone closely involved in the review process.

Registration Information

Conference Location

The Ohioan (Nationwide) Hotel & Conference Center

100 Green Meadows Drive, S.

Lewis Center, OH 43035

614-880-4300

Registration Fee

Full conference registration cost is \$350 for non-members and \$325 for OJACC members. Agency membership includes discounted conference registration (\$325) for up to 7 staff from the agency. If you are unsure whether your membership is current, please contact Alicia Handwerk at ojacc.director@gmail.com.

Checks should be made payable to the Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections and mailed to **OJACC, P.O. Box 79, New Albany, OH 43054**

Cancellations made after September 25, 2025, or no shows to the conference are subject to the full registration fee. You may substitute another person by contacting Alicia Handwerk at ojacc.director@gmail.com.

Registration fee includes participation in the education sessions, continuing education credits, conference materials, continental breakfasts, breaks, and lunch on Thursday.

Continuing Education Credits

CEUS have been applied for the following:

- Recognized Clock Hours (RCHs)
- Counselor/Social Worker Board
- Continuing Legal Education
- Hours that qualify for ODRC "Changing Offender Behavior" (COB) requirements

Attendees must attend the entire conference to receive full CEUs/CLEs.

Certificate of Attendance:

Participants will be given a "Certificate of Continuing Professional Education" form at registration. At the end of each session, participants will be provided with an attendance validation code. Record the codes and return the yellow copy of the form to the registration desk before leaving the conference.

Hotel Reservations

All hotel reservations MUST be made directly with the Hotel and Conference Center through this link: [Hotel Link](#):

or by calling 614-880-4300.

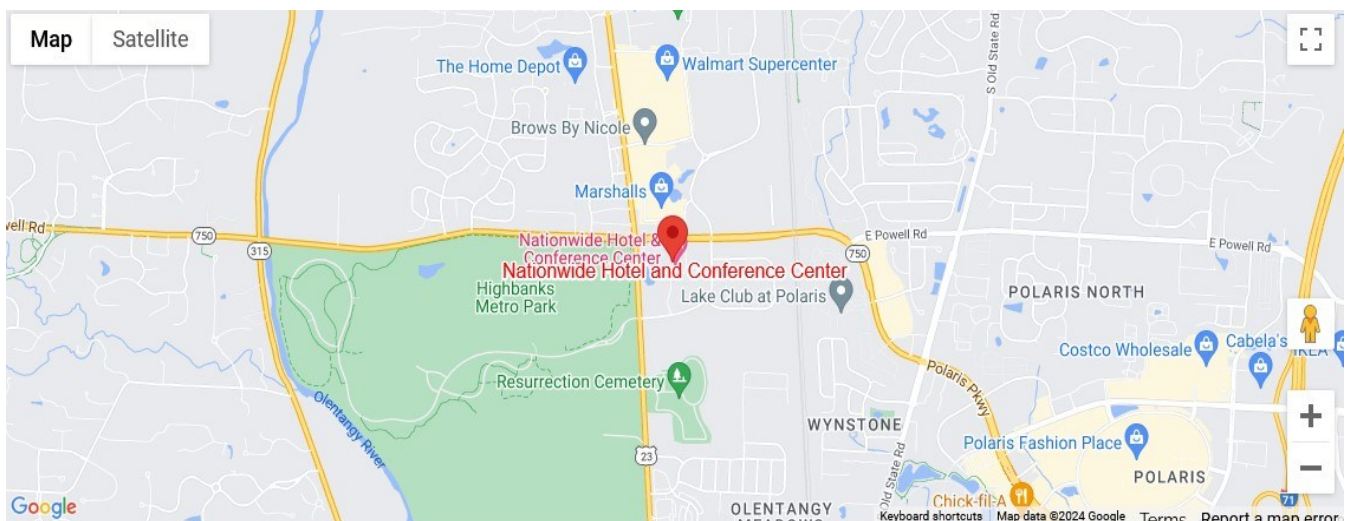
State you are with the OJACC Conference **Group Code: 400466** to receive group rate of \$151 /night.

Reservation cut-off date is Monday, September 8, 2025. The hotel will accept reservations after the cut-off date if rooms are available, however, the **group room rate may not be available after September 8, 2025.**

OJACC Annual Awards

OJACC created 4 awards to be given to Ohioans whose work has contributed to the improvement of community corrections.

The nomination form is attached to this registration brochure or you can obtain a copy by emailing ojacc.director@gmail.com.



Registration Form

38th Annual OJACC Conference October 9 and 10, 2025

You may register online at ojacc.org OR submit this registration form to:
ojacc.director@gmail.com

(Complete one form per participant. All fields are required.)

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Name as you would like it to appear on nametag _____

Agency/Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Work Phone _____

Email _____

Workshop Selection (Please circle one for each session so we may determine appropriate room size for workshops—Please keep for your record).

Thursday A Session 1 2 3 4 5

Thursday B Session 1 2 3 4 5

Thursday C Session 1 2 3 4 5

Friday D Session 1 2 3 4 5

Special Meal Requests: _____ Vegetarian _____ Gluten-free _____ Other

Registration Cost: \$325 for members, \$350 for non-members.

Agency membership includes up to 7 registrations at the member rate.

Method of Payment:

_____ Purchase order is attached P.O. # _____

_____ Personal/Agency check is enclosed.

_____ Credit Card (**a 3% fee will be assessed for credit card payment**)

Name as it appears on card: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Account Number: _____

Check card type: _____ MasterCard _____ Visa

Verification # (3 numbers on signature line in back). _____ Expir Date: _____

Email credit card receipt to: _____

Please make checks payable to Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections and mail with a copy of the registration form to: **OJACC, P.O. Box 79, New Albany, OH 43054**

OJACC Federal ID #: 31-1255020

Questions: Alicia Handwerk, Executive Director, (740) 420-6444 ojacc.director@gmail.com

PLEASE COMPLETE :

Job & Jurisdiction

- ☐ Federal
- ☐ State
- ☐ County
- ☐ City
- ☐ Private Firm/Business
- ☐ Academic Institution
- ☐ Nonprofit Organization
- ☐ Other

Professional Category

- ☐ Line Personnel
- ☐ Commissioner/Director
- ☐ Administrator
- ☐ Consultant
- ☐ Trainer
- ☐ Sheriff
- ☐ Judge
- ☐ Attorney
- ☐ Educator/Researcher
- ☐ Private Sector/Corporate
- ☐ Chief Probation Officer
- ☐ Other

Primary Work Area

- ☐ Adult Probation & Parole
- ☐ Adult Probation Only
- ☐ Adult Parole Authority
- ☐ Juvenile Parole/Aftercare
- ☐ Pretrial
- ☐ Residential
- ☐ Other

Geographic Area

- ☐ Urban
- ☐ Rural

Experience in Corrections

- ☐ Less than 2 years
- ☐ 2-5 years
- ☐ 6-10 years
- ☐ 11-15 years
- ☐ 16-20 years
- ☐ 21-25 years
- ☐ More than 25 years

Past Attendance at our Conference

- ☐ First time
- ☐ 2-4 times
- ☐ 5-6 times
- ☐ 7-9 times
- ☐ 10 + times



OJACC Achievement Awards

OJACC created four awards to be given to Ohioans whose work has contributed to the improvement of community corrections. Please consider nominating someone you feel is deserving of one of these awards. Below are the descriptions of each award. An Achievement Award Nomination Form is attached. The awards will be presented at the OJACC Annual Conference on October 9, 2025.

Representative C.J. McLin Award

The late Representative C.J. McLin, Jr., during his tenure in the General Assembly, actively worked to improve community corrections through funding and legislative change. The award is given annually to an elected official in Ohio who has worked towards the improvement of community corrections in Ohio.

Dr. Bennett J. Cooper Award

Dr. Bennett J. Cooper was the first Director of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction in Ohio. During his lifetime, he has created many improvements in public policy towards corrections. He has worked on a national level to try to institutionalize needed changes. This award is given to a correctional administrator or policymaker who has shown a lifetime commitment to the improvement of community corrections.

Dr. Simon Dinitz Award

Dr. Simon Dinitz, through his work at the Ohio State University, has dedicated his life to improving the knowledge base of corrections. He has served on state and national commissions whose purpose was to improve corrections. As an educator, he has also been responsible for training many correctional practitioners in the state. This award is given to a community correctional practitioner who has made contributions to the improvement of community corrections in Ohio.

Wichtman/Gauntner Award

Jim Wichtman was a founding member of the Ohio Community Corrections Organization—now the Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections (OJACC)—and served on its Board of Trustees for many years. Molly Gauntner faithfully served on the OJACC Board for more than a decade. Both Jim and Molly devoted their careers to the progressive advancement of community corrections, approaching their work with vision, passion, and unwavering commitment. They were leaders who sought to transform the field, improve outcomes, and enhance the lives of those we serve. Through their tireless efforts, they strengthened OJACC and left a lasting impact on community corrections in Ohio.

The Wichtman/Gauntner Award celebrates an OJACC Board Member whose leadership, service, and vision embody the legacy of Jim Wichtman and Molly Gauntner, ensuring their commitment to collaboration, innovation, and compassion continues to guide our work.

To see a listing of former recipients, go to www.ojacc.org/awards/



Achievement Award Nomination Form

Please utilize this form to nominate a professional who has positively impacted the field of community corrections. Descriptions for each award are attached.

Please send completed form to: ojacc.director.com or OJACC, Post Office Box 79, New Albany, OH 43054 by September 5, 2025.

For questions, contact Alicia Handwerk at (740) 420-6444 or ojacc.director@gmail.com

Award: McLin: _____ Cooper: _____ Dinitz: _____ Wichtman/Gauntner: _____

(Please indicate which award you are nominating this person for)

Nominee: _____ **Position:** _____

Agency: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Email: _____

Nominator: _____

Agency: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ E-mail: _____

Please indicate why you feel the nominee should receive the award (attach additional pages as needed) _____

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.