



## 2026 Award Citations

### **Community Impact Award - Center for Youth & Family Advocacy (CYFA)**

The Center for Youth and Family Advocacy strengthens our Arlington community by empowering children, youth, and families through restorative practices, education, and advocacy. Its innovative programs help young people develop leadership, accountability, and resilience while addressing systemic barriers that limit opportunity. Through collaboration and community-based initiatives, the organization promotes equity, prevents youth involvement in the justice system, and works to ensure every young person has the support needed to thrive.

### **Community Impact Award - Arlington Jaycees**

For decades the Arlington Jaycees have worked to develop emerging leaders through leadership and community service by creating opportunities for local volunteering, networking, and professional growth across our County. The Jaycees have sustained a lasting community impact through their support of Arlington organizations and events such as AFAC, the Arlington County Fair, and numerous other organizations. They faithfully epitomize their motto: *“Service for today, leadership for tomorrow, friendships for a lifetime.”*

### **Community Impact Award - Arlington Food Assistance Center**

In the past year Arlington has rallied inspiringly around friends and neighbors who have been uprooted and displaced as the federal government remained in turmoil. No organization helped more than AFAC. AFAC depends on the help of thousands of volunteers. Volunteers bag, distribute, drive, glean, grow, help in the office and warehouse and organize and assist at special events. Volunteers donated more than 51,000 hours in the last fiscal year.

## **Community Impact Award - Celina Penovi & Francine Friedman**

Celina and Francine have no special role with CivFed, but for most of this spring they have embodied the best in civic activism. They have worked tirelessly to rally support against Virginia state legislation that would remove or reduce Arlington's authority in key zoning matters. They have built a coalition of dozens of civic associations in an effective, spontaneous effort to push back against a measure that had been inadequately publicized.

## **Civic Hero Award – Police Chief Andy Penn**

When CivFed reached out for periodic security updates last year, Chief Andy Penn immediately responded. A leading advocate for community policing, he brought key staff to our meetings and was always a hit. Over a distinguished 34-year career with the Arlington County Police Department and in very senior leadership for the past 11 years, Andy epitomizes a progressive, engaging top law enforcement official. He has proven to be just what Arlington needs in difficult times.

## **President's Award - Lizi Papinashvili**

A senior at Washington-Liberty High School, Lizi Papinashvili has distinguished herself as the Arlington County Civic Federation's first student intern in recent memory. A quick learner and consistently dependable, she expertly managed audio and video for general membership meetings, ensuring smooth and accessible civic engagement. Always punctual, attentive, and a pleasure to work with, Lizi's contributions have strengthened the Federation's mission to support informed, nonpartisan community dialogue in Arlington.

## **President's Award - Nicole Merlene Toulouse**

Nicole's tireless, selfless, and supportive demeanor as the chair of the Civic Federation's Transportation Committee has revived this vital committee. Nicole has juggled her own busy job and family priorities to make time to support our shared goal of increased transportation safety and equitability across Arlington County. She has passionately worked to ensure that each member of the committee was heard as she developed the final resolution package.

### **President's Award - Jacqueline Snelling**

CivFed's longest-serving active leader, Jackie has continued her determined efforts to restore the organization's critical committee structure, crowned this year with the revival of the critical Transportation Committee. And while she immerses herself in myriad sensitive county-community issues, often offering drafting and networking assistance, she has also taken the lead in membership services and helping member organizations organize, reorganize and join our ranks.

### **President's Award - David Smith**

Now in his second year as chair of CivFed's Board of Directors, David has successfully instituted many time-saving and accountability procedures in the group's operation, ensuring a significantly more efficient board. His influence is also evident at monthly membership meetings, where David reliably serves as principal technical troubleshooter. He has also reintroduced the practice of engaging a local high school student to assist in meeting management. David moves our organization forward.

### **President's Award - Dave Schutz**

Dave is an idealist about government, remaining steadfast in his commitment to high ideals despite widespread current confusion and doubt. As CivFed legislative committee chair, he will offer Arlington voters a real public discourse and perhaps vote on this county's best form of government. Objective in considering the many current alternatives, Dave remains committed to his ideal and to the Civic Federation as the best means of achieving it.

### **President's Award - Todd Truitt**

Now in his fourth year as chair of CivFed's education committee, Todd has led the effort to keep our organization, with its more mature membership, relevant to young parents for whom Arlington Public Schools are the primary local focus. Streamlining his committee operations and fine-tuning CivFed's annual public meeting with the APS superintendent and school board, Todd has led lively, informative discussions and developed relevant resolutions on key issues.

## **ARLNow Cup - Nicholas J. Giacobbe, Jr.**

Long an influential force and consensus builder in his Aurora Highlands community, Nick joined the Civic Federation's board of directors three years ago. His initiative, vision and leadership have marked him for executive positions, and he has rapidly risen to vice president and now president of CivFed. But even as he has led our county-wide organization, he continues to ably advocate with the county for local issues across Arlington.