

How to Write Up a Submission for a State Award

The biggest difference between submissions for Supreme awards and state-level awards is that the former deals with single events or activities while state-level awards are based on the totality of a council's efforts over the course of the fraternal year.

Because councils have different membership levels, it would be unfair for a council of 60 members to compete with one that has 800. Thus, the state has placed councils in one of six divisions, based on membership levels. By competing against similarly-sized councils, you have a better chance at an award.

Judges need information to evaluate submissions. The more detail – within reason -- you provide about your activities, the better understanding the judges will have. One-line descriptions of activities are easy to write, but they are rarely informative or memorable and are unlikely to result in an award.

The most important action that you can take to prepare for your award submission is to keep track of each council activity or event throughout the year. For each, determine which of the seven categories the event belongs in -- i.e. who benefits? The categories are *church, community, council, family, pro-life, public relations, and youth*. You might want to set up a file or folder for each category and add notes on each qualifying event as it occurs. That will save you time when it comes to preparing your award submission since you can just refer to the notes in writing up the event.

Please note that *special* cover sheets have been created for each category of state-level award. Do not use the forms in the forms book. The special forms will be provided to your District Deputy at the January seminar. You must fill out all the requested information at the top of each form and then answer the questions that follow. PLEASE NOTE: *I am revising the forms this year. There will be fewer yes/no questions and more narrative details requested.*

You, as Grand Knight, do not have to write up your submission. If you have someone in the council (or even a spouse) who is a good writer, ask them to

put together your final submission. Poorly-written activity descriptions will hurt your chances.

The more important part of your submission will be the descriptions of the activities of your council in the category. It is not necessary for you to write a three-page description of each event, but do provide enough detail – at least one or two paragraphs -- so that the judges have a good idea of the event. (*See the example below.*) For each activity or event being described, identify the number of people involved (Knights, family members, friends, guests) as workers or as attendees. Tell the judges if it is a first-time event for the council or perhaps one revived after a lapse of many years. If it is an annual event, mention that fact. Note any special guests or speakers. Feel free to include pictures (with captions, please) that provide some details about the event.

Describe why this activity took place. Was it for a specific purpose or just a social get-together? If a fund-raiser, was it successful? If it is an annual fund-raiser, how do the results compare to previous years? Did the council initiate this activity or just provide manpower for the parish or other sponsoring group. Is there any evidence that it positively affected the view of parishioners or other non-members toward the council? Was there any feedback from the parish or community? Did the activity generate any press coverage? What was the ultimate value?

EXAMPLE: The council held its eighth annual Bishop's Seminarian Support Dinner on (date). Five Knights, under the chairmanship of (name), planned and promoted the event over a four month period and then twelve Knights, along with six spouses, prepared the food and worked at the event, which had a total attendance of (number). This year's dinner raised \$1,260, and a check for that amount -- an amount nearly double last year's profit -- was presented to the bishop that evening. Bishop (name) expressed his gratitude to the council both in his speech that evening and in a follow-up letter the following week. Television station (name) and the (newspaper name) both covered the dinner and produced positive stories about the dinner and the council. (See attached photos and newspaper articles of the event in Appendix 1.)

As you can see, you need not give every last detail, but all the important information is there: the event, the fact it is an annual function, number of

Knights (and others) involved, comparative results, special guest and speaker, and the public relations effect. This is the kind of description that will get the attention of the judges and make your report stand out.

Three final reminders:

1. Make sure that you mail your entries to me. I package the entries and forward them to the judges. Do not send them to the State Deputy or State Program Director. They will just have to turn around and mail them to me, and the delay may cost you if it means your entry doesn't reach me in time.
2. Remember the deadline. If you have activities/events that will occur after the reporting deadline, you can do one of two things. If your activity is something new, discuss the planning you are doing and what you are looking to achieve. It will give the judges some information. If the event or activity is an annual one, recap what happened last time and how, if pertinent, you expect this year's activity will compare -- but don't exaggerate.
3. Make sure each event is reported in the correct category. The question that needs to be asked is "Who benefits?" Also, do not report events or activities in more than one category. If the event benefits the council, do not also include it as part of your community submission, even if it involves the community in some way.

If you follow this guide for each of your events/activities through the year, you will have a decent chance to win an award. I wish you the best of luck.

Richard L. Corriveau
State Award Forms Chairman
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