

PILLARS OF SHEPHERD AWARD: Criteria and Guidelines

DESCRIPTION:

The Pillars of Shepherd Award is a distinguished honor bestowed upon alumni whose unwavering commitment, leadership, and philanthropy have served as a foundation for the continued growth and strength of Shepherd University.

This prestigious recognition is reserved for individuals who embody the qualities of strength, support, dedication, and enduring service. Honorees have demonstrated a long-term investment in the life of the university through sustained volunteerism, active leadership, and meaningful philanthropic contributions.

Unlike other alumni awards, the Pillars of Shepherd is not presented annually. Instead, it is awarded only when a truly exceptional alumnus or alumna emerges whose legacy of service and impact warrants such a high distinction. Recipients are not selected through a public nomination or voting process, but are thoughtfully identified by a select committee composed of representatives from the Foundation, Development, and Alumni Affairs offices, in consultation with the President's Office.

The award is formally presented during the Outstanding Alumni of the Year and Finest Under 40 Award Reception, held annually on the Thursday evening of Homecoming Week. If a recipient is to be honored in a given year, they must be identified no later than July 1.

CRITERIA FOR CONSIDERATION:

To be eligible for the Pillars of Shepherd Award, alumni should meet the majority, if not all, of the following criteria:

1. Longevity of Service
 - a. Demonstrates a consistent and long-standing history of engagement with Shepherd University over time.
 - b. Involvement reflects a deep and ongoing commitment to the university's mission, extending well beyond a single event or campaign.
2. Volunteerism and Leadership
 - a. Active participation in university-affiliated boards, committees, or advisory councils (e.g., Alumni Association, Foundation Board, Board of Governors, and/or academic or affinity group leadership).
 - b. Meaningful contributions of time and expertise that have advanced Shepherd's mission and strategic goals.
 - c. Acts as a visible ambassador for Shepherd in the wider community, helping to strengthen the university's reputation and outreach.
3. Philanthropic Impact
 - a. Financial support of the university, including consistent giving or major gifts that have led to the advancement of key programs, scholarships, or facilities.
 - b. Demonstrated leadership in fundraising or campaign initiatives.
4. Foundational Contribution
 - a. Played a pivotal role in initiatives, partnerships, or projects that have left a lasting impact on Shepherd University.
 - b. Their legacy reflects a deep-rooted commitment to the university's core values and long-term success.