

## JUSTICE CHAMPION AWARD

**Purpose:** This award recognizes a practicing paralegal whose conduct, actions and activities demonstrate extraordinary dedication to diversity and inclusion as defined in NFPA's Position Statement on Diversity.

**Nomination Process:** Any individual or association may nominate a practicing paralegal for this award. Submissions can also be self-nominating. All nominees must be practicing paralegals at the time of nomination and selection. Nominations shall be submitted by letter, consist of no more than three (3) pages, and include, but not be limited to:

- Name and contact information of the practicing paralegal being nominated.
- Name and contact information of the nominating individual or nominating association (if applicable).
- A comprehensive summary including clear identification and documentation of the activities and accomplishments of the nominee in furtherance and support of the causes of civil, equal and human rights, diversity and inclusion.
- Three (3) letters of recommendation from current or past employers, professional colleagues or instructors attesting to the nominee's demonstrated work ethic and professionalism.
- Posthumous nominations may be considered.
- The letter may also be accompanied by the following:
  - Articles from newspapers, professional publications, etc.;
  - Photograph of the nominee;
  - Resume or curricula vitae of the nominee.

**Eligibility/Criteria for Selection:** This award is open to all practicing paralegals. The nominee need not be a member of NFPA or a NFPA member association. The determination of the award recipient will be at the sole discretion of the Judges. The general criteria to be considered includes, but are not limited to:

- The nominee must have a confirmable paralegal educational background such as a paralegal degree (associate, bachelor, master), a certificate from an ABA approved or other recognized paralegal program, or a paralegal certification from a nationally recognized paralegal association.
- The nominee must exhibit consistent encouragement and understanding between persons of different races, genders, age groups, ethnicities, religious origins, national origins, indigenous heritages, socio-economic statuses, disabilities, and sexual orientations and identities.
- The nominee must demonstrate outstanding efforts to promote bias and discrimination free environments where all are valued, respected and have the same opportunities.
- The nominee must enhance inclusion through positive communication between diverse populations and promote healing between those in conflict.
- The nominee must establish extraordinary achievement or long-term commitment to diversity and inclusion.
- The nominee must validate genuine dedication to the advancement of civil and equal rights, civil liberties, and domestic and/or international human rights.

- The Judges will consider the dedication and motivation of the individual paralegal who has demonstrated a quantifiable and outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion.
- Greater weight will be given to those nominees who demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusion over and above actions taken through the nominee's course of employment.
- The Judges will consider nominees' actions and activities in the following areas:
  - Extraordinary steps taken to promote diversity and inclusion.
  - Mentoring diverse populations.
  - Encouraging inclusion in the paralegal profession of underrepresented populations.
  - Participating in speaking engagements to champion diversity and inclusion and taking proactive steps to encourage diversity and inclusion.
  - Writing articles or books promoting diversity and inclusion.
  - Ensuring the voices of paralegals from diverse backgrounds are heard and included in NFPA's leadership.
  - Working on pro bono matters that have a significant impact on diversity and inclusion objectives.
  - Espousing initiatives to ensure policies are established in the nominee's local association or legal community to promote diversity and inclusion.

**Award Presentation:** Heather Heyer was a member of our community who "was a very strong woman," said Alfred A. Wilson, manager of the bankruptcy division at the Miller Law Group in Charlottesville, Virginia where she worked as a paralegal. She stood up against "any type of discrimination," he said. "That's just how she's always been." Friends described Heather as a passionate advocate for the disenfranchised who was often moved to tears by the world's injustices. That sense of conviction led her to join demonstrators protesting a rally of white nationalists in Charlottesville on August 12, 2017.

The award includes a crystal award or commemorative plaque incorporating purple, Heather's favorite color. If a sponsor is secured or at the Board's discretion, and with the approval of the selected recipient, the award may also fund a \$1,000 donation in the nominee's name to the Heather Heyer Foundation or a charity of the recipient's choosing.