



NAYDO

North American YMCA Development Organization
in partnership with YMCA of the USA and YMCA Canada
inspires and strengthens the philanthropic culture of the YMCA.

2027 NAYDO Communications Awards

Communications Awards Criteria

- Follows YMCA graphic standards applicable to their country.
- Used in previous 23 months (January 2025-November 2026).
- Reflects the development of a strategic approach to communications.
- Successfully supported a financial development effort or positively impacted the financial circumstances of a Y.
- Graphic and digital design and/or videography is clean and easy to follow.
- Content reflects the Y's mission and voice.
- Strong imagery supports the content and purpose.
- Clear qualitative or quantitative measures that demonstrate communications and/or philanthropic success.
- Possesses a distinctive caliber of excellence or an extraordinary or insightful approach or result.

YMCAs of all sizes may submit entries for:

- Strategic Communications Excellence (multiple categories)
- Cause Communicator of the Year (one award)

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The NAYDO Strategic Communications Excellence Awards recognize exemplary YMCAs that have developed a multi-faceted communications campaign designed to inform, educate, or persuade specific audiences about the Y's cause, impact, or an initiative. Awards can be given to small, mid-size and large Ys in these categories of communications excellence:

- **Best Overall Campaign Excellence** recognizes a YMCA for developing the best overall strategic campaign within its budget size. This campaign (philanthropic, member recruitment, camp, etc.) must have been successful in meeting or exceeding its initial targets including people impacted, financial goals if associated with this campaign, and people/donors reached through awareness.
- **Communications for Inclusion** recognizes a Y that has showcased its extraordinary communications work that is welcoming to those of an underserved group(s) including minorities, those of all abilities, or targeted demographics. It should be clear that elevating the commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion was a focal point of these communications pieces.
- **Philanthropic Communications** recognizes YMCAs for a clear and creative strategic approach to the development of communications fundraising campaign and tools. Entries should include a compilation of 3-5 pieces that best demonstrate your philanthropic strategy in action which may include annual report, impact reports, annual support or capital campaign materials, endowment or planned giving, general donor cultivation materials.
- **Small Budget Star** recognizes YMCAs that have developed a multi-faceted communications campaign designed to inform, educate, or persuade specific audiences about the Y's cause, impact or an initiative WHILE SPENDING \$5,000 OR LESS ON THEIR CAMPAIGN.

- **Excellence in Strategic Collaboration** recognizes a group of YMCAs (3 or more) who come together to share assets and resources for a common strategic campaign or communication design to raise funds, educate or persuade audiences about the Y cause, impact or initiative. Only one award is given in this category.

Judges will be looking for:

- A clearly defined strategy that is based on addressing a YMCA philanthropic and/or communications challenge with measurable goals and objectives
- Alignment of the campaign with YMCA national brand standards
- High professional standards
- Originality and creativity
- 3-5 communications pieces that were part of this campaign
- Demonstrated results and a clear explanation of return on investment (ROI)

Submission Requirements

Each category has its own entry and submission forms. Only online submissions are accepted. If you win, you will need to supply actual copies of winning materials (where applicable).

Uploading electronic versions of all materials (i.e., PDF version of print materials) is required for all entries.

To be valid, your award submission must include 2 components:

1. Complete the **Strategic Communications Category Entry Form**

This is a summary that clearly explains your Y's rationale, organization and measurable impact of your campaign.

[Strategic Communications Excellence Entry Form](#)

2. Portfolio of Communications Pieces

A portfolio of 3-5 communications pieces that best demonstrate your communications strategy in action with no more than 1 per category. These may include any of the following: annual report/community impact report, annual support campaign materials, capital campaign materials, endowment/planned giving materials, general donor cultivation tools, media or public service campaigns, websites and/or social media.

Note on Video Submissions: Please send videos in original file format instead of YouTube.

CAUSE COMMUNICATOR OF THE YEAR (only one entry selected)

Is there someone in the YMCA movement who is truly moving the dial on communicating the YMCA mission, vision and or purpose? This is your chance to nominate them! Reminder: This person does not have to come from your YMCA.

This award recognizes efforts by a YMCA leader (does not have to be an employee) to inform, educate and engage his or her team, volunteers, donors and/or community. This person (often a CEO, Board Chair or Volunteer, or Branch Executive) clearly articulates a vision that inspires and motivates others to positive action. Excellent communication requires real strategy. This award recognizes an individual's personal leadership, communications judgment, influence, storytelling, advocacy, and measurable contribution – not just the organization's overall campaign success. Your entry should demonstrate the strategic effort related to internal and/or external communication by a YMCA leader.

Entry Requirements: To be valid, your award submission must include 2 components:

1. Complete the Cause Communicator of the Year Entry Form

The submission form is a summary that clearly articulates why you believe the nominee should be selected.

[Cause Communicator of the Year Entry Form](#)

2. Upload Portfolio of Communications Pieces

A compilation of 3-5 communications pieces that best demonstrate your nominee's efforts to engage and inspire audience groups. These pieces may include internal and/or external communications materials such as emails, newsletters, social media, media interviews, videos, presentation materials, communications plans and/or message platform materials. You may include photos or videos of this person actively engaging others.

Reminders

- By entering your YMCA's materials, you are giving NAYDO permission to copy and keep the entry for the NAYDO library, website and/or conference distribution.
- It is your YMCA's responsibility to ensure all elements of any entry meet your country's YMCA brand standards.