

Keep America Beautiful 2022 National Award Application

- **Application Process**

The Keep America Beautiful National Awards recognize the best of the **best** among our community-based affiliates, partners, and volunteers.

The program identifies exceptional projects, organizations, and individuals in and connected to our network and awards those who are committed to cleaner, greener, and more beautiful communities. This is not only a way to appreciate their work, but to pinpoint excellency that can be shared among our affiliates, creating a strong benchmark that benefits the whole network.

As a leading organization, we continue to aim for high standards and recognition in these extraordinary times. With that in mind and during this global pandemic, we urge affiliates to consider applying for National Awards so Keep America Beautiful can honor outstanding individuals and organizations.

Please note award recognition will be given in four award categories:

- **Innovation** (by population category)
- **State Agency Recognition**
- **Sue Smith Professional Leadership Award**
- **The Lady Bird Johnson Award** (a gender-neutral recognition of an outstanding volunteer)

There is no limit on the number of submissions by affiliates, but programs or partnerships must be unique to the 2022 application period /program year.

Application Guidelines

- o This year, the application forms for all award categories are posted on this single link.
- o Carefully read all the instructions and questions for each category.
- o Select all the awards for which you are applying.
- o Follow the eligibility requirements and word limits.
- o Give complete answers.
- o Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- o Double-check spelling and spell out any acronyms; what you provide KAB will be used for physical awards.
- o Application must be completed in one sitting (a link to the PDF formatted survey is below).***
- o Fill out all the applications at once. It is NOT possible to save it and continue at another time.***
- o Alternately, you are encouraged to draft your responses on a Word document and copy and paste them to the online form all at once.***
- o All applications must be submitted by Monday, October 3, 2022, at 5 PM EST.

[o PDF Application Link to survey: 2022 KAB Awards Application](#)

Absolutely no extensions will be given for late entries.

Eligibility

- o Nominators and affiliate nominees must be in Good Standing to be considered.
- o Program Award submissions must be programs or initiatives that took place in 2022 (through the Awards deadline/program year/October 3, 2022).
- o Please take note of categories with specific eligibility requirements.
- o All nominators must be affiliated to Keep America Beautiful.

Judging Process

- o Winners will be selected by a judging panel composed of volunteer judges and KAB staff.
- o Judges will evaluate Content and Format:
 - o **Content:** Specific to each category. It should completely satisfy the requirements stated at the beginning of each category and the questions stated.
 - o **Format:** Consists of clarity, grammar, and respect for word limits.
- o Supplemental materials will not be reviewed by the judging panel.
- o One or more winners may be selected for each category.
- o Keep America Beautiful reserves the right to not award in one or all categories.
- o All decisions are final.

Winners Announcement

- o Winners will be notified in November of 2022.

Nominator Information (Page 1 of 1) The information below will be used for all the awards for which you apply.

- * Nominator Primary Contact Person First Name
- * Nominator Primary Contact Person Last Name
- * Nominator Primary Contact Person Email Address
- * Nominator Secondary Contact Person First Name
- * Nominator Secondary Contact Person Last Name
- * Nominator Secondary Contact Person Email Address
- * Nominator Affiliate
- * Nominator Affiliate Address
- * Nominator Affiliate City
- * Nominator Affiliate State
- * Nominator Affiliate Zip Code
- * Nominator Affiliate Phone Number

- a. Name: Gina Hawkins
- b. Organization: Keep Alachua County Beautiful
- c. Address: 211 SW 4th Ave, Suite 1
- d. Address 2:
- e. City: Gainesville
- f. State: FL
- g. ZIP/Postal Code: 32601
- h. Country: United States
- i. Email: gina.kacb@gmail.com
- j. Phone Number: (352) 371-9444

- * Which award(s) are you applying for? **Innovation Award (by population)** Lady Bird Johnson Award Sue Smith Professional Leadership Award State Agency Partnership Recognition Innovation Award (Page 1 of 2)
 - o This category recognizes innovation in partnerships and programs.
 - o Nominees should have created innovative partnerships or programs to further the Keep America Beautiful mission and one or more of its focus areas (end littering, improve recycling, and beautify communities).
 - o Successful applications will have creative or non-traditional ideas, methods, or approaches to solving challenges.
 - o We recognize innovation in concept or in the execution of partnerships and programs in the following population categories:
 - * 30,000 and under
 - * 30,001-100,000
 - * **100,001-250,000**
 - * 250,001 and over
 - o This category does not award overall organizational achievements, but new approaches to facilitate growth within an organization.

Scoring (100 possible points):

- 10 points -- Pitch
- 15 points --Background
- 15 points -- Execution
- 20 points -- Innovation

20 points -- Results

20 points -- Impact

o Judges will evaluate:

o The innovation of the partnership or program.

o Execution methods and techniques used.

o Relationships and partnerships that were involved.

o Whether the partnership or program can be replicable.

o Nominees must be a Keep America Beautiful affiliate.

* Is the nominee contact information the same as the nominator's? Yes **No** Innovation Award (Page 2 of 2)

* Nominee First Name

* Nominee Last Name

* Nominee Email Address

* Nominee Organization

* Nominee Organization Address

* Nominee Organization City

* Nominee Organization State

* Nominee Organization Zip Code

* Nominee Organization Phone Number

a. Contact Name: David Bane

b. Organization: GROW-HUB

c. Address: 2900 NE 8th Ave

d. Address 2:

e. City: Gainesville

f. State: Florida

g. ZIP/Postal Code: 32641

h. Country: United States

i. Email: info@grow-hub.com

j. Phone Number: (352) 262-8484

* How should the name appear on the award if selected? **GROW-HUB / KACB Partnership**

Please ensure proper spelling. This submission will be used on Awards collateral.

* Which sub-category are you applying for? Local Program **Local Partnership** State Program State Partnership

* Which population category are you applying for?

Please choose one (1).

30,000 and under 30,001 - 100,000

100,001 - 250,000

250,001 and over

* Elevator Pitch: (max. 60 words) **60** Summarize your innovative partnership or program and what Keep America Beautiful Affiliates and others can learn from them in order to make their communities cleaner, greener, and more beautiful places to live.

Our partnership helps bring underutilized members of the community into the fold of our mission. We believe that to best achieve our mission of a greener, more beautiful and more sustainable Alachua County, KACB must offer opportunities for everyone to participate meaningfully. A diversity of volunteers and staff are critical to succeeding in our mission and how we are perceived.

* Background: (max. 150 words) **150** Describe the partnership or program.

- o What was the motivation for the partnership or program?
- o Include key elements such as level of engagement by state affiliate staff, board, and volunteers.
- o Describe whether this was a one-time engagement or if it was an ongoing partnership or program.
- o Include any other relevant information about the partnership or program.

Finding a new home for the KACB award-winning landscape bank was the initial motivation for the partnership. GROW-HUB has acquired a large parcel of land from the School Board and is able to store the KACB landscape bank there. KACB can purchase pollinators and native plants grown on the GROW HUB property at a reduced cost. Plants from the landscape bank and plants and seeds purchased at GROW-HUB are used for KACB-sponsored beautification events. GROW-HUB employees and volunteers are able to effectively water, fertilize and otherwise tend the landscape bank plants. This is an ongoing partnership and KACB volunteers worked over 2,000 hours last year. The partnership allowed KACB to meet its goal of working with a greater diversity of volunteers, specifically with persons with disabilities, veterans, the homeless and more age groups beyond college students. KACB board, staff and volunteers are enthusiastic about employing young adults with disabilities.

* Execution: (max. 300 words) **172** Describe the partnership/program planning and execution.

- o Who was involved in making the partnership or program happen?
- o Was there any data driving the planning and execution of the program/project? How was this data gathered?
- o How did you plan, perform, complete, and evaluate the partnership or program?
- o What was the budget and how was it funded? Include any in-kind donations, goods, or services received.
- o Was this a new or modified program or initiative due to COVID-19?

GROW-HUB staff and trainees partnered with KACB. Melissa De Sa and David Bane of GROW-HUB and Gina Hawkins of KACB coordinated a schedule for volunteers to register with KACB and work on site on weekdays and Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. Results are reported on Volunteer Summary Sheets on the KACB website and compiled using Wix and Google Sheets. Gloves, first aid kits, and masks are afforded with grant funds from the City of Gainesville, Alachua County and FDOT. In kind donations of hand-sanitizer and gloves from Lowe's and supervision by GROW-HUB staff plus pots, trowels and soil from GROW-HUB complete the resources needed. Supplies and safety equipment: \$1,500; KACB staff coordinator: \$300; GROW-HUB staff supervision: \$1,200; In kind supplies: \$300. Total budget: \$3,300. COVID-19 increased demand for socially-distanced volunteer activities and this program already met the criteria. The program was

modified to follow all protocols for sanitizing supplies and required masks. Alachua County had a mandatory mask ordinance for all public places.

* Innovation: (max. 400 words)³⁹⁹ Describe why and how the partnership or program is innovative.

o What makes this project innovative?

o Has the partnership or program been done before in the Keep America Beautiful network?

The partnership is innovative in including people with disabilities, veterans, and the homeless. GROW HUB provides a good balance of work and school for sustainable living, and gives underutilized members of the community the opportunity to create meaningful and lasting experiences in the workforce and in sustainable living. GROW HUB offers employees for locally-run sustainable causes, and the chance to make long-lasting greening efforts. Providing a space that brings community partners together with local entrepreneurs, those with disabilities, veterans, and the homeless creates a community bond that will help Alachua County become more empathetic, sustainable, engaged and attractive.

Volunteers were recruited from the University of Florida student population and permanent residents of all ages. People of all ages can work together and find a meaningful volunteer engagement and learning experience at GROW-HUB. All genders, ages, ethnicities, cultures, creeds, and abilities are welcome. This exposes people to diversity and expands their minds and tolerance for differences in humanity.

Aside from the beautification projects, GROW HUB's 80-acre lot has provided many local entrepreneurs the space to cultivate their sustainable foods and produce other products to grow in an environment that will help them succeed. GROW-HUB provides their employees, who are underutilized veterans, the homeless, and developmentally-disabled high school graduates, to gain experience in the workforce, live sustainably, and learn about the environment in which they live. They also hold workshops, plant sales and teach visitors about their environment. They enrich their audience's lives with meaningful experiences and help them live greener and healthier.

The GROW-HUB program aimed to create new partnerships with complementary businesses seeking support, space and opportunities to employ an enthusiastic workforce. They reached out to philanthropic organizations and individuals looking to make a real difference, including KACB. GROW-HUB reached out to social service agencies with similar missions such as Vocational Rehabilitation and the Center for Independent Living and Veterans Affairs to help provide meaningful places of work and education.

Activities performed at GROW-HUB included plant sales, seed swaps and fundraisers to raise funds to support their employees. Working Food, a local non profit, has a similar mission and uses the GROW-HUB space to host workshops aimed at teaching citizens how to save, breed, trial, and share seed while understanding the work behind major crop research advances. These two day in-depth workshops featured local experts who were self-taught or university researchers to explore a wide range of planting options.

* Results: outputs (max. 250 words) 245

Describe the outputs. Outputs tell the story of your organization's activities and are often described in numbers. They are measurable and easily determined – for example, your ARD event at the local elementary school yielded 200 pounds of recyclables. Output measures do not address the value or impact of your services for your clients.

- o What were the main outputs?
- o Who were the audiences? How was the audience reached?

In 2022, GROW-HUB expanded donations, plant sales, outreach, and the number of workers employed. Donations increased from \$72,627 in 2021 to \$116,663 already in 2022, a 61% increase. Plant sales were on track in mid-2022 to increase by 30%. The number of workers with disabilities employed at GROW-HUB increased from 19 to 21, an 11% increase. GROW-HUB added a second weekend day to their schedule, an increase in volunteer opportunities of more than 50% since most volunteers are available on weekends.

Volunteer hours at GROW-HUB for 2022 exceeded 2,000, a value of \$50,000. Approximately, 170 plants were donated by local nurseries, a wholesale value of \$1,020.

KACB used social media to expand GROW-HUB sales and promote the establishment of pollinator-attracting plants and native plants in residential, commercial and public landscapes. Social media posts were 150 or more in 2022 and raised awareness of the plants and crafts available and their purposes both aesthetically and functionally. These posts increased sales for GROW-HUB.

KACB purchased and planted 60 red and yellow milkweed plants from GROW-HUB at wholesale prices to use in the “Love Our Byways” event sponsored by Toyota. Primarily retirees, UF students, and Toyota employees participated in the event. The milkweed plants were planted along the Old Heritage Highway Scenic Byway and given to 15 of the 56 volunteers to plant at home, work or school. KACB also purchased over 300 edible plant starts for installation in our community garden program.

* Impact: outcomes (max. 400 words)

Describe the long-term impact of your work and how you measure it. Outputs tell the story of your organization's activities. Output measures do not address the value or impact of your services for your clients. On the other hand, an outcome is the level of performance or achievement that occurred because of the activity or services your organization provided. It is the long-term impact of the project/program. An outcome is the change that occurred because of the work. Outcomes are the difference made by outputs. Keep in mind that outcomes might be in the future – for example, your ARD event at the local elementary school educated students about how to recycle correctly and, in turn, they have brought that knowledge home and are now teaching their parents to recycle correctly.

- o What community benefits were achieved through the partnership/program?

More diverse activities were available to KACB volunteers because of our partnership with GROW-HUB. Different individuals and volunteer groups are attracted by different kinds of events and the emphasis on sustainability at GROW-HUB has allowed KACB to draw in an even greater diversity of volunteers in terms of age, education, interest, ethnicity, and culture. Sustainability can be defined in terms of the environment, economy, safety, and health, among other parameters, and both GROW-HUB and KACB share the goal of sustainability for all members of society.

- o Which audience was most impacted?
- o How is this innovation more impactful compared to traditional approaches?
- o Describe the lasting impacts of your partnership/program. Consider economic or social impacts.

Our partnership has enabled KACB to gain access to an entirely new group of volunteers that was previously untapped. Different individuals and volunteer groups are attracted by different kinds of events and the emphasis on sustainability at GROW-HUB has allowed KACB to draw in an even greater diversity of volunteers in terms of age, education, interest, ethnicity, and culture.

The audience that has seen the most impact has been the underutilized, but able adults, willing and ready to work towards meaningful ends in our community. This includes veterans, homeless adults and disabled adults.

Compared to a traditional approach, this approach allows underutilized volunteers to be employed, which both increases our output towards our mission and provides sustainable employment for those individuals from GROW-HUB. This sustained employment allows for individuals from GROW-HUB, who typically suffer from unstable financial situations and/or directionlessness, to create stability and meaning in their lives on their own terms.

The outcomes long-term are an ever-increasing number of young adults with disabilities securing employment in the agricultural industry. A continued increase in the number of pollinator-attracted and native plants sold will result in a more robust ecosystem and more productivity from agricultural operations.

Supplemental Material: Please upload 2 images in high resolution that highlight volunteer experience, community engagement, or work impact. **Collages are not acceptable.**