

**American Bar Association  
Law Student Division**

**2011 Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Award Criteria**

**Deadline for Receipt: April 1, 2011**

This award recognizes outstanding rookie VITA programs and continuing VITA programs for undertaking the cause of assisting individuals in need with their income tax returns. In 1978, the Division adopted the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program which renders free income tax assistance to those taxpayers unable to prepare their own returns. VITA provides an opportunity for law students to gain experience in dealing with practical problems of complying with the Internal Revenue Code and provides an opportunity for the law school to render valuable public service.

**ELIGIBILITY**

All VITA programs at ABA-approved law schools.

**PART A – CONTACT INFORMATION**

You will be required to provide accurate contact information for the following individuals:

1. Nominee
2. Nominator
3. Law School SBA President
4. Law School ABA Representative
5. Law School Dean

**PART B – NOMINEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

You will be required to provide the following background information regarding the nominee:

1. VITA Award category: Rookie or Continuing
2. Total 2010-2011 law school enrollment
3. Total 2010-2011 VITA budget
4. School funding allocation
5. Number of tax returns filed by this VITA program
6. Dates of operation
7. Total number of volunteers
8. Number of law student volunteers
9. Number of non-law student volunteers
10. Program's primary clientele

**PART C – NARRATIVE QUESTIONS (2,000 WORD LIMIT)**

In the narrative portion of the Nomination Packet, you will be required to answer the following questions about your nominee using a maximum of 2,000 words:

1. **Description:** Describe the services offered at this VITA program and what, if anything made this program unique.
2. **For Rookie Programs:** Describe the issues/situations that prompted the need for a VITA program in your community, whether similar programs were available elsewhere in the community and indicate if the goals of the program were met.

3. **For Continuing Programs:** Describe if and how this program differed from previous years and what, if any, new and innovative ideas were implemented this year.
4. **Role:** What role(s) did your legal education or law school resources play in the success of this VITA program? Provide an assessment of how this VITA program enhanced the legal education experience for participating law students and expanded their appreciation for public service.
5. **Participation:** What was the overall participation, reaction and commitment of the student body, faculty, administration and community to this VITA program? Include the degree of campus support this VITA program received from such entities as your college business school, accounting clubs, etc.
6. **Benefits:** Describe the short and long-term benefits that this VITA program provided to the law student body, law school or community.
7. **Succession Planning:** Describe any obstacles or barriers the organizers overcame to provide the VITA program to the community and how those challenges will be addressed in the future. What other plans have been made to continue this program for future years?
8. **Promotion:** Did you promote/market this program as part of an ABA Law Student Division initiative? If so, please describe.

#### **PART D – NOMINATOR’S CERTIFICATION**

As the nominator, you will be required to certify that:

1. The information contained in the Nomination Packet is true and accurate to the best of your knowledge.
2. The narrative answering the questions in Part C contains no more than 2,000 words.

#### **PART E – DEAN’S CERTIFICATION**

In order for your nomination to be considered by the ABA Law Student Division Awards Selection Committee, the Law School Dean or Assistant Dean must affirm your nomination by completing Part E of the Nomination Packet to signify his/her approval of your nomination. Nominators are responsible for obtaining the dean's signature certifying his/her approval of the nomination.