

**First UU San Antonio Protocol for Selection and Presentation
of the Courageous Love Awards
At the MLK Weekend Sunday service each year**

(protocol contributed by Mary Grace Ketner, drafted in 2024)

UUA Description of the award:

The *Courageous Love Award* is for individuals or organizations in the local community that have exhibited courageous love and touched hearts. Presenting a *Courageous Love Award* is an opportunity to reach beyond our core social justice folks, and to engage our whole congregation or community in social justice work. It is also a chance to uplift others; strengthen and support partnerships we are already developing; and to join together with joy and with purpose those who have shared values.

When thinking about whom you might honor, ask yourself:

- How might you start new partnerships or strengthen existing ones?
- Is there someone you wouldn't normally honor, who is outside your group, who might be a good recipient?
- Is there an organization or individual who has faced oppression, discrimination, and prejudice with grace and inspired determination?
- How might you present a Courageous Love Award in a way that will help side with love with marginalized communities
- How can you drive resources and support to the work of the awardee in an ongoing way?
- What kind of ongoing commitment to organizing with this group are you willing to make?
- How might you make this intergenerational and involve families and your religious education program?

The **certificate** is located here:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5449513ee4b025f84fddfa72/t/5a5e28c8f9619a917e3a15ec/1516120264484/SIDE+WITH+LOVE.pdf>

(Since we have co-chairs and need two signatures, use a text box to fill in all the same information but with two signature lines.)

Local Practice:

- We have found that presenting the award to individuals is more likely to ensure that the leader will show up! When given to an organization, they may just send someone handy to pick up the award. Consider that it is a gift to our congregation to get to meet and hear from the primary leaders, hence more likely to build a relationship.
- We usually present three awards, though there have been two or four in various years.

- We say “recipients” or “awardees” instead of “winners.” It’s not a contest people can win; it is an honor bestowed.
- We select attractive, good quality frames so that the person will be proud to display it (and our church name) on their office wall.
- The award is not intended for work within the church, however it has been presented to members for justice work in the community but outside the church.

Calendar timeline:

October:

- Announce that we will make a decision about courageous love award recipients in November and December. (Possibly send a request to the SJC google group list-serve) Committee members should begin noticing who in our area might be appropriate choices.
- Set a date for the presentation with the Worship Committee and minister, usually MLK Weekend.
- Reserve the Fellowship Hall for a reception after the Worship Service/ceremony.

November and December:

- Discuss and select possible recipients.
- Appoint a caretaker to contact each recipient and ask them to attend the ceremony to receive the award on the date given.

December and early January:

- Confirm the ceremony with the minister and Worship Committee. They usually allow us about ten minutes. SJ determines the presenters, order of presentations, etc. within that time.
- Prepare an announcement of the event for the newsletter, FB page, etc.
- Caretaker or another should prepare the one-minute introductory speech for each recipient.
- Inform the recipient that they may prepare a one-minute response.
- Appoint someone to take photos of each recipient as they are presented their award. (For church media and subsequent use.)
- Plan a simple reception for after church—punch and cake with design and or names. Purchase cups, plates, napkins, utensils. (If it is a Fund Lunch day, recipients can be invited to lunch with a cake as part of dessert.) ?

Late January:

- Send photos to someone who can post them on the church media pages.
- Send recipients a photo or link to our pages.
- Send the new names to the church admin to update the Web page to add to our listing below.
- Write a follow-up article with photos for *Inspire* magazine.

History of Past Awards:

We keep a listing of previous recipients on our page of the UUSAT Web site here:

[Past Recipients of the Courageous Love Award](#)

[New link](#)

2024: Ada M. Babineaux, San Antonio Black International Film Festival (SABIFF); Andrea “Vocab” Sanderson, Poet and Activist; Rev. Rob Mueller, COPS/Metro leader; Ramon Vasquez y Sanchez and Ramon J. Vasquez, Artist and Founding director and son and current Director of American Indians of Texas at the Spanish Colonial Missions. (AITSCM)

2023: Deborah Bush, Marquise Jones Foundation; Jacquelyn Callanen, County Elections Official; and Laquita Garcia, TOPS

2022: Pharoah Clark and Josie Garcia, Reliable Revolutionaries; Doshie Piper, LLD, PhD

2021: Ananda Tomas, FixSAPD; Assistant City Manager Dr. Colleen Bridger for her key role in the City’s pandemic response and Commission on Domestic Violence

2020: Carolina Canizales for her work on behalf of immigrants with SA Stands; Douglas Melnick for his work on San Antonio’s Climate change and adaptation plan; and City of San Antonio Manager Erik Walsh for leading San Antonio’s compassionate response to the large number of asylum seekers making their way through the city.

2019: Mario Salas, longtime SA Activist; Aundar Ma'at and Born Logic Allah, Filmmakers of *A Walk on the River*.

2018: Mehmet Oguz, executive director of the Dialogue Institute SanAntonio; Sister Denise LaRock, Interfaith Welcome Coalition services to asylum-seekers; and Marissa Bono, Mayor Nirenberg’s Chief of Policy.

2017: Patti Radle, President of the SAISD School Board, and Pedro Martinez, Superintendent of SAISD.

2016: Jeffrey Hons, Executive Director of Planned Parenthood South Texas; Rev. Kelly Allen, Founder and Director of the Interfaith Welcome Coalition; Jonathan Ryan, Executive Director of RAICES

2015: Healthy Futures, Planned Parenthood, and Project QUEST

2014: Diego Bernal, Planned Parenthood, and CAUSA