



RURAL RENEWAL INITIATIVE

Seeking Nominations: Rural Renewal Citizenship Prize

The Oklahoma State University [Rural Renewal Initiative](#) inspires, empowers, and coordinates rural renewal research in Oklahoma and beyond. The Rural Renewal Initiative (RRI) will host its annual Rural Renewal Symposium at the Lodge at Sequoyah State Park in Hulbert, Oklahoma, October 27-28 2026, to expand and empower its network of collaborating faculty, students, and community leaders. At the symposium, RRI will award the **Rural Renewal Citizenship Prize**. RRI seeks nominations for this award to honor a leader who has made an important contribution to the renewal of one or more rural communities in Oklahoma. This Prize recognizes a person who shows true leadership qualities, is an exceptional role model, promotes community welfare, and advocates for community needs. This award highlights the outstanding rural renewal work conducted by Oklahoma community members.

Previous Rural Renewal Citizenship Prize Winners

2025	Jamey Mitchell Mayor, Texhoma, Oklahoma
2024	Suzanne Sullivan Vian Community Foundation, Vian, Oklahoma
2023	Bethia Owens Eastern Oklahoma Library System, Muldrow, Oklahoma
2022	Glen Winters Oklahoma Farm Bureau Agent, Altus, Oklahoma
2021	JaNae Barnard Executive Director, Major County Economic Development Corporation, Fairview, Oklahoma
2020	Karen Wages CEO Poteau Chamber of Commerce, Poteau, Oklahoma

Nomination materials include:

1. A one- or two-page **letter of nomination** including the nominee's name, an explanation of the nominee's contributions to rural renewal, and other information which might be helpful to the review committee. The name, address, email, and phone number of the person making the nomination should also be included.
2. A one- or two-page **resume** for the individual nominated, which showcases the nominee's work in rural communities. This can include, but is not limited to, educational background, places of employment, volunteer activities, organizational involvement, special projects undertaken, awards received, and other information which might assist the review committee.
3. Two one-page **letters of support** for the nominee that demonstrate his or her work and its impact on rural communities.

The nominating materials must be combined into **a single file** (.pdf or .docx) and sent to ruralrenewal@okstate.edu by **July 6, 2026**. The nominations will be reviewed by a team of OSU faculty. The winner will be notified by approximately August 17, 2026. The awardee must participate **in person** in the Rural Renewal Symposium, giving a brief acceptance speech. The prize will include a \$1,500 stipend.