Human Rights Awards Criteria

The United Nations Association of the National Capital Area’s (UNA-NCA) annual Human Rights Awards Reception commemorates the UN General Assembly’s adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by presenting the Louis B. Sohn Human Rights Award, the Perdita Huston Human Rights Award, the F. Allen “Tex” Harris Diplomacy Award, and the Community Human Rights Award to individuals and organizations that have made substantial contributions in the field of human rights. We invite you to submit your nominations for the 2016 UNA-NCA Human Rights Awards.

UNA-NCA Louis B. Sohn Human Rights Award
Louis B. Sohn (1914 – 2006) was a longtime scholar of international law, an advocate of international institutions, author, and activist. He participated in the United Nations’ founding at the 1945 San Francisco conference; campaigned for the acceptance of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a legally binding document, rather than a statement of principles; and championed the UN General Assembly’s 1968 adoption of the two UN Human Rights Covenants. In 1997, UNA-NCA established the Louis B. Sohn Award to honor individuals whose human rights work has exemplified that of Dr. Sohn.

The Louis B. Sohn Human Rights Award is presented to persons who have:

1) Advocated respect for international human rights as defined by the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other international human rights treaties and instruments;
2) Championed the effective role of the UN as well as regional organizations in the promotion and protection of human rights;
3) Advocated respect for human rights as a priority in US foreign and domestic policies; and
4) E elevated the role of non-governmental organizations in promoting and protecting human rights.

UNA-NCA Perdita Huston Human Rights Award
Perdita Huston (1936-2001) was an American journalist and longtime women’s rights activist. She was Director of Public Affairs for TIME Magazine in French-speaking countries; served as Peace Corps Director in Mali and Bulgaria; worked for the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF); and consulted with UNDP, UNIFEM, UNFPA and UNICEF. She also authored several books about women’s empowerment, covering topics such as motherhood and the status of women in developing countries. From 2001-2010, UNA-NCA issued grants in Huston’s name to support the work of women around the world who were commitment to advancing equality for women and girls. In 2011, UNA-NCA inaugurated the Perdita Huston
Award at its Human Rights Awards Reception to publically recognize persons who continue Perdita’s legacy in promoting gender equality.

The Perdita Huston Human Rights Award is presented to persons who have:
   1) Advocated to eliminate discrimination against women and girls around the world; and
   2) Made significant contributions for greater gender equality through increasing economic opportunity and development, promoting human rights, and supporting peace and security for women and girls.

UNA-NCA F. Allen “Tex” Harris Diplomacy Award
F. Allen (‘Tex’) Harris enjoyed a 35-year U.S. Foreign Service career in varied and often dangerous posts. His work during the height of the ‘dirty war’ in Argentina during the 1970s, where he exposed the fate of 15,000 citizens clandestinely killed by the military junta, earned him the U.S. Department of State’s “Distinguished Honor Award.” He also helped push the transition from apartheid in South Africa during the 1980s. When Harris joined the Foreign Service in 1965, events within foreign countries were generally perceived to be off-limits to American interests and representations. In large part due to his work, human rights advocacy is now a major policy consideration in American diplomacy. In 2013, UNA-NCA established the F. Allen “Tex” Harris Diplomacy Award to recognize an American diplomat for promoting human rights through diplomacy.

The Tex Harris Diplomacy Award is presented to current or former American diplomats who have:
   1) Advocated respect in American diplomacy for international human rights as defined by the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights treaties and instruments;
   2) Made significant achievements in human rights through the use of diplomacy; and
   3) Demonstrated leadership in the diplomatic community on human rights issues.

UNA-NCA Community Human Rights Award
The Community Human Rights Award is bestowed on individuals or organizations that have provided outstanding service in promoting and protecting human rights within the UNA-NCA chapter region. Recipients may be U.S. government officials, leaders of non-government organizations, public service organizations, academics, scholars or other practitioners and providers.

The UNA-NCA Community Human Rights Award is presented to persons or organizations who have:
1) Provided leadership to advance the cause of human rights through a local group or organization in the Washington, DC, Maryland and/or Northern Virginia area; and

2) Demonstrated personal and professional contributions to advance the cause of human rights in the public, private, and/or non-profit sector.