

Athena Awards

CELEBRATE & INSPIRE

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The 8 Principles of Enlightened Leadership™

The ATHENA Awards are grounded in the ATHENA Leadership Model, first articulated in *Becoming ATHENA: Eight Principles of Enlightened Leadership* by Martha Mayhood Mertz. These principles provide a framework for recognizing leaders who create positive change. The descriptions below are intended to help nominees and nominators explain how an individual or organization's leadership aligns with these principles.

1) LIVE AUTHENTICALLY

Leads with integrity and self-awareness. Acts in ways that align with personal values, demonstrates honesty and accountability, and earns trust through actions rather than titles.

2) LEARN CONSTANTLY

Commits to ongoing growth and improvement. Seeks feedback, learns from experience, adapts to change, and encourages learning and development in others.

3) BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Develops strong, respectful relationships built on trust and mutual understanding. Values diverse perspectives and invests time in people across roles, backgrounds and viewpoints.

4) FOSTER COLLABORATION

Brings people together to achieve shared goals. Encourages teamwork and shared responsibility, recognizing that better outcomes are achieved collectively.

5) ACT COURAGEOUSLY

Takes principled action even when it involves risk or discomfort. Is willing to make difficult decisions challenge the status quo and lead change when it matters.

6) ADVOCATE FIERCELY

Uses influence to support others, especially women. Champions fairness and speaks up for what is right.

7) GIVE BACK

Demonstrates a commitment to service beyond personal or professional gain. Contributes time, talent and/or resources to strengthen the community and improve the lives of others.

8) CELEBRATE

Recognizes and values the contributions of others. Creates a culture of appreciation, encouragement and shared success by celebrating achievements and milestones.