



GCAA Application Toolkit



Keep Texas Beautiful's Board of Directors and Awards Committee are pleased to provide you with the 2009-2010 GCAA Application Toolkit. This document contains information and resources to assist you in writing a Governor's Community Achievement Award application.

This toolkit should address many of the questions you may encounter as you complete your GCAA application. However, should you have any lingering questions about the awards and applications, do not hesitate to contact Keep Texas Beautiful at 1-800-CLEAN-TX. Remember– the GCAA application is due in the Keep Texas Beautiful office on **Tuesday, February 9, 2010 by 5:00 pm.**

Thank you for helping keep Texas beautiful!

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Awards Overview

Background Information

Keep Texas Beautiful (KTB) is a volunteer organization with the mission to educate and engage Texans to take responsibility for improving their community environment. The annual awards program is designed to recognize the efforts of communities, individuals, youth, governments, and businesses that are working to improve the Texas environment.

The Governor's Community Achievement Awards (GCAA) are presented by KTB in conjunction with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). KTB first presented the GCAA in 1969-70, and TxDOT joined in providing funds in 1985. Award applications are divided by population for determining the nine annual winners. One community may not have more than one GCAA entry, and, for purposes of the GCAA application, a community is defined as a region or regions with shared or adjoining boundaries whose beautification and litter abatement programs are administered by a common organization. The GCAA focuses on seven topic areas: Community Leadership and Coordination, Education, Public Awareness, Litter Prevention and Cleanup, Illegal Dumping and Enforcement, Beautification and Property Improvement, and Solid Waste Management.

Why You Should Enter

Everyone that enters is a winner– KTB provides certificates to every applicant. Entering an award competition also provides:

- a written record of program activities
- increased participation and involvement in your community
- a gauge of litter prevention and beautification progress in your community
- a way for your community to set appearance goals
- a method to help KTB track the entire state's efforts
- an opportunity to win a TxDOT funded landscape prize for a state right-of-way (1st place in GCAA)
- prestige as an award-winning community

TIPS FOR AWARD-WINNING ENTRIES

Before Writing an Application

- Read the application (view online at <http://www.ktb.org/programs/awards/governors-community-achievement-awards.aspx>)
- Talk to previous winners (call 1-800-CLEAN-TX for contacts).
- Set up an appointment with KTB staff to review past applications.
- Attend a KTB training session.
- Set up a record keeping system for volunteers, donations, and in-kind services (use the worksheets provided in this toolkit).
- Identify a photographer to take pictures (including before and after).
- Identify a historian to collect newspaper articles, newsletters, etc.

How to Motivate Your Community

- Give speeches to inform people about the award and get them to support entering.
- Make signs to put in business windows stating "Help us win the \$\$\$\$\$."
- Ask a newspaper to write a story about your efforts and interest in applying.
- Involve children – they are great volunteers and motivators.

Reviewing the Questions

In general, your organization and its volunteer efforts are the key. Your executive summary should address the questions asked. Some questions ask specifically about your program and others ask about your community. A consistent theme throughout the application is to show a connection between your program and other community events, organizations, plans, and activities. Just be sure to review the questions thoroughly before finalizing your answers.

Dates

The application tracks what a community has done in a twelve month period (*January 1 – December 31*). However, the application may reference past projects when they are connected to something that was accomplished this year. Example: In 2005, KTB received a grant to build an outdoor learning center, and in September 2007 the PTA added new plants.

Program vs. Community Questions

Some questions ask specifically what *your program* has done (such as in the GCAA Beautification and Property Improvement section, "How has your program..."). You should describe what your local group did to answer this question. However, another question asks "Describe beautification effort..." This could be from any source, not necessarily just what your group did. Some questions ask about *the community*. In the GCAA Illegal Dumping and Law Enforcement section, the question asks, "Describe community efforts to educate and work with law enforcement personnel." This question

refers to community results, not just those of your organization, and “community” may refer to the municipal or county government or other agencies.

Record Keeping

Good record keeping is the first step in entering any award competition. Records should be kept from the beginning of a project to the end. Everything within a twelve month period counts, so solicit help from volunteers to track what is happening in the community.

1. At the beginning of the year, set up files to organize your records. You may want to set up based on:
 - a. Award Category: Community Leadership, Litter Prevention, Education;
 - b. Events: Don't Mess with Texas Trash-off, Recycles Day, Arbor Day, Great American Cleanup; or
 - c. Time Period: Spring 2009, August-September, etc.
2. Place pertinent items in each file. Don't let it stack up.
3. Take a lot of photographs—you'll need them for award entries and displays. Take close-up pictures and before and after pictures. Organize digital camera photos so you may easily access them. Identify dates on printed photos.
4. Collect information about cleanup, recycling, and beautification efforts. Give surveys and data collection sheets to groups and ask them to keep track for the community application.
 - schools
 - teachers
 - school administrators
 - civic organizations
 - individuals
 - government officials
 - neighborhood associations
 - public housing authority
 - businesses
5. Clip newspaper articles written about your group and its projects or topics related to application questions. Measure column inches by measuring down the page. If the article or photo crosses more than one column multiply the inches down by the number of columns.
6. Track the number of minutes broadcasted on television and radio. Include public service announcements, remote broadcasts, news stories, and production time donated. Ask the companies to assist you in collecting the numbers.
7. Throughout the year, keep track of non-financial gifts including in-kind donations of goods and services, volunteer hours, equipment donated by businesses, and time supplied by interns and classes.

When Writing the Application

- Check to make sure you are using the current GCAA application.
- Set aside time to fill out the applications. Don't wait until February.
- Review your files– the information you'll need should be right in front of you.
- Read the rules thoroughly before starting, and refer to the application "Rules and Guidelines" while writing.
- Answer the question asked.
- Look for key words in the questions and answer accordingly.
- Be concise.
- Don't do it alone. Ask others to help gather information and proofread.
- Proofread carefully for mistakes.
- Count lines.
- Measure your margins. KTB will, so you should, too!
- Check font size.

Suggestions from the Judges

- Tie your supplemental notebook and executive summary together. The pictures should relate to the text and vice versa.
- Answer questions in the order in which they were asked.
- Address each of the seven sources of litter in the executive summary: pedestrians, uncovered trucks, construction sites, improperly handled residential waste, commercial waste containers, motor vehicles, and loading docks.
- Include statistics, when appropriate, and provide participant ratios in relation to the community size. Example: 200 of 400 students at the elementary school participated; or five of eight civic organizations were involved.
- Conduct a litter survey (KAB certified affiliates should provide the Litter Index number and KTB affiliates should consider the windshield litter survey in the Training Manual).
- The summation should focus on one program.

PROPOSED GCAA JUDGING SHEET

Section Please score all nine sections.	Points Possible	Points Given
<p>Community Leadership and Coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefly provide a profile of your community including location and special conditions, if applicable. Describe public, private, and civic partnerships (local government, public or private schools, businesses and corporations, civic organizations and clubs, etc.) that assist in your litter prevention, beautification, community improvement, and/or waste reduction programs and projects. Is your community affiliated with any state or national organization(s) related to litter prevention, beautification, community improvement, and/or waste reduction? How is your program funded? Describe staff support for your program. Is it run by volunteers, or by full-time or part-time paid staff? Describe any training that is provided to board/committee members. 	12	
<p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe your program's involvement with schools and youth groups (public/private groups, scouts, church groups, after school groups, etc.). What has your program done to promote proper litter prevention and waste handling practices to school children, teachers, and administrators? Describe school programs in the areas of campus cleanups, beautification efforts, and other special programs. Describe how school(s) use environmental curricula such as <i>Waste in Place</i> and/or other educational activities. 	12	
<p>Public Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how you made your community aware of your goals and programs through the use of media, speeches, workshops, bulletin boards, technology, and/or printed materials. List measurable results. How has your local program worked with area media to promote the Don't Mess with Texas campaign? Describe local awards and recognition programs. Specify awards given and awards received. 	12	
<p>Litter Prevention and Cleanup</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does your program conduct any type of study/survey to determine the litter problem in your community? 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how your program addresses the seven sources of litter: pedestrians, uncovered trucks, construction sites, improperly handled residential waste, commercial waste containers, motor vehicles and loading docks. Describe your community's litter prevention and cleanup campaign, including involvement with the Don't Mess with Texas Trash-Off, Great American Cleanup, Adopt-a-Highway and/or Lake and River Cleanup, What was the impact on the environment and/or the public's attitude toward litter prevention and cleanup? List the number of cleanups and measurable results, including the number of volunteers. 	12	
<p>Litter Law and Illegal Dumping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe community efforts to educate and work with law enforcement personnel (city, county, state) to review and enforce local and state litter laws including litter abatement and/or illegal dumping. Describe community efforts to reduce nuisance issues such as graffiti, grass and weed violations, dilapidated structures, junked cars, and other similar issues. 	12	
<p>Beautification and Property Improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe beautification efforts such as tree planting, native or adaptive landscaping, and landscape maintenance. How has your program worked to improve the appearance of your community, instill pride, and provide a positive impact on the economic development and prosperity of your community? 	12	
<p>Solid Waste Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe your program's involvement in solid waste management in your community, including work with local waste haulers, businesses, civic groups, and citizens. Describe how your program has supported source reduction, recycling, reuse, and composting. List measurable results, if applicable. 	12	
<p>Summation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What one project/program do you consider to be the most outstanding, unique and/or creative that best displays your community's grassroots efforts to be the best program in the state, and why? 	6	
<p>Supplemental Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supplemental material will be used to verify responses to the questions in each section. Separate information on summation was not required. 	10	
Total Score	100	

Written Comments: Provide statements for improvement only (i.e. why points were deducted or how to improve the application for next year).

My ranking for this application: 1 2 3 4 5

Sample GCRA Application Selections

Community Leadership and Coordination (ANGLETON)

The mission of Keep Angleton Beautiful (KAB) is to empower Angleton citizens through education to take responsibility for enhancing Angleton's environment. Making Angleton the most beautiful and environmentally responsible place in Texas, one person at a time is the constant vision in our community's mind. To further this vision, KAB has formed partnerships with several organizations, such as Angleton Chamber of Commerce (COC), Angleton Noon Lions Club, local Boy and Girl Scout groups, the *Angleton Times*, Angleton ISD (AISD), Brazoria County Adult Probation (BCCSCD), Angleton Parks Dept. (PARC), Code Enforcement (CE) Dept., Volunteer Fire Dept. (VFD) and Public Works (PW) Dept., IESI, Waste Management (WM), SeaBreeze Landfill, TX DOT, Wal-Mart, BASF, Baker & Lawson Engineering, Uticon, HEB, Sonic, Jack-In-The-Box, Walgreen's, Kroger's, Subway, Coca Cola, several area churches and youth sports associations, Commercial State Bank, Compass Bank, HGAC, Gamma Construction (GC) and Keep Brazoria County Beautiful (KBCB). KAB partners with the City of Angleton (COA) and the COC to promote all of their events as Litter Free. In the past, they have partnered with TX DOT on planting bluebonnets on Angleton roadways and medians, but presently share the responsibility of the project with the PARC. KAB partners with BCCSCD to help clean city streets and maintain litter control at numerous city events. IESI provides garbage boxes and trucks for litter free events during the year. GC works with KAB to recycle used and leftover concrete from the building site of the Angleton Recreation Center. Another partner is the *Angleton Times*, who ran articles about KAB events regularly and at no charge to the committee. KAB also participated in the City Wide Clean-Up (CWCU), not only in making this a litter free event, but also helping the CE Dept. with planning, registration and serving lunch to the participants. These partners allow KAB to educate the public on the importance of enhancing the city's environment, making it a more attractive and economically responsible place to live and work. KAB is not only a KTB Affiliate, but as of March 16, 2004, they are a Certified Keep America Beautiful (KAmB) Affiliate after a 6 month pre-certification process. KAB is funded through donations and grants. The COA also places a voluntary **\$0.50** donation on the water bill every month which provides **\$33,000** to help fund projects, staffing, training and events held by KAB. KAB also receives numerous in-kind donations. IESI donates garbage boxes, liners, staff time, roll-offs and rear-end loaders. WM donates

educational materials and staff time to promote education. Other local businesses donate many other items such as food supplies, water, gloves, garbage bags, etc. KAB is directly supported by 2 staff members, a volunteer Executive Director and a paid part-time intern. Many other staff members also support KAB throughout the year on certain events and projects. They also have eight volunteer board members, who were appointed by Angleton City Council (ACC) and represent different areas of the community, such as business, education and civic organizations. The CE Officer also spearheaded the organization of the CWCU and works with KAB on several other ventures. KAB conducts training at least once a year to refresh existing members and teach new members the committee's mission and goals. Each new and existing member receives an updated packet once a year containing information about the KAB mission, yearly goals, financial information, community events and other informative materials. KAB also has several committee members that attend volunteer to attend various KTB and KAmB trainings.

Education (SANGER)

With emphasis on youth, a written proposal involving 84 hours of preparation was presented to school administrators, teachers and youth sponsors. The proposal identified specific learning objectives relative to beautification and environmental efforts. This new approach had a positive effect involving approximately 2131 youth in KSB programs. To promote litter prevention & waste handling practices, KSB offered incentives and opportunities to be involved. Members of PALS, BPA, NJHS, Girl and Boy Scouts, Helping Hands (50 Kids & Dads) participated in the DMWT Trash-Off , GAC. The MYF, Boy Scouts and other students cleaned 6 miles of shoreline in the Lake and River Clean-up. Troop 199 cleaned 4 miles of the Greenbelt Waterway in canoes and all scouts received patches for their participation. The phone book recycling contest promoted waste handling as 189 Kindergarteners at the Tenderfoot Primary School collected 676 phone books. Teachers brought excitement to the classroom incorporating recycling skills with basic math graphing using the Waste in Place (WIP) curriculum. Three school and youth groups participated in the City-Wide Garage Sale, selling articles to raise funds for their Adopt-A-Spot. All six schools participated in Cleanup the Campus to improve the school grounds on a weekly basis. Beautification efforts included PALS mentoring to children at the middle & primary schools by planting and maintaining a flowerbed and continued the Liberty Garden project. Other school projects included

landscaping of the flagpole area at the middle school & the planting of crepe myrtles at each campus for Arbor Day recognition by the agriculture students. The older Boy Scouts mentored younger members in the proper planting of crepe myrtles at their new Adopt-A-Spot. All 175 fifth graders participated in the Arbor Day Poster Contest. The Environmental Expo held at the high school on Earth Day was an exciting and successful special program encompassing 646 high school students and interested community guests with 8 workshops and presentations on preserving our earth. Wal-Mart donated \$500 for prizes for recycling poster and art contests which were featured at the Expo. The Environmental Curriculum included the Junior Master Gardener, Helping Hands Project, WIP, & the KTB Environmental Education Kit. The Junior Master Gardener was a summer program involving 37 students who studied the lifecycle of seeds, proper care, and harvesting. Using WIP curricula, 30 students worked 310 hours with a trained volunteer in preparing a play, presented to 475 elementary students highlighting the need for awareness of sources of municipal waste & handling.

Education (LINDSAY)

Summation The project which best exemplifies our community's grassroots efforts was our Affiliate's Kickoff luncheon held on April 3. Because we are a close-knit and supportive community, everyone came together to put this event on through donations. Recognizing the value of our organization, the school donated use of the cafeteria. Businesses, church groups, civic organizations, and individuals donated food, labor and paper products for the meal and board members made desserts. We gave seeds and Glad bags to "green up and clean up" and Home Depot and Wal-Mart gave plants and garden tools as door prizes. Our colorful brochures were printed courtesy of First State Bank of Gainesville. Twenty three individuals donated their time from 9:30 am to 2 pm to set up, serve drinks, and clean up. Two hundred people received one hour of training about how they can participate and give input. People left the event with a renewed sense of community, excited at the prospect of all they can do to make Lindsay a better place. The overwhelming support of our Kick Off luncheon shows that our community and our organization are big enough to serve – small enough to care.

- Value of Kick-Off event in donations - \$2994.30
- Hours of Volunteer Time Donated- 115
- Hours of Education Received- 200
- Value to Community- Priceless

Supplemental Notebook

The notebook assists the judges in verifying the responses in the executive summary. Use your collected photographs, newspaper articles, brochures, flyers, and printed materials as a review of all your accomplishments before you start to write the executive summary. Then, once the executive summary is written, create your supplemental notebook using the sections from the executive summary as your table of contents. Try to place the materials in the same order as you have written about them in the executive summary. It is not necessary to repeat materials for the summation but make sure that the project for your summation has been documented in the notebook.

A sample from a supplemental notebook is provided on the following page.

Sample Supplemental Notebook

Montgomery County Beautification Association - Civic Organization - Program

MAY 13, 2008 - AWARDS NIGHT HAS FINALLY COME - THE TABLES are set THE STAGE is decorated and THE SEATING arrangements for 265 guests are reconfirmed. After months of anticipation, the students that have participated in the 2008 service project days and National Arbor Day Poster Contest will be recognized for their accomplishments.



Ben Pitzer, Woodforest National Bank Regional President, and wife, Shirley, come early to preview the posters that have been matted and placed on display. Each National Arbor Day Poster contest winner will receive a \$50 cash prize, a personalized certificate and their matted poster. The sponsor teacher will also receive a \$50 cash prize. These prizes are underwritten by Woodforest National Bank.



MCBA uses every event as an avenue to promote conservation practices by using displays from Texas Forest Service and Texas Agri-Life Extension Services Programs such as 4-H and Junior Master Gardeners.



All award winners meals are sponsored through donations made by MCBA awards program sponsors and an in-kind donation from the catering company. These sponsors were invited to a reception prior to the event to meet with our guest speaker, Todd Staples, Texas Agriculture Land Commissioner,



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GCAA Worksheets

Adapted from a document created by Keep Muenster Beautiful.

Community Leadership and Coordination

GCAA Question:	Project to implement:	Responsible Person:	Due Date:	Completion Date:
Briefly provide a profile of your community including location and special conditions, if applicable.				
Describe public, private, and civic partnerships (local government, public or private schools, businesses and corporations, civic organizations and clubs, etc) that assist in your litter prevention, beautification, community improvement, and/or waste reduction programs and projects.				
Is your community affiliated with any state or national organization(s) related to litter prevention, beautification, community improvement, and/or waste reduction?				
How is your program funded?				
Describe staff support for your program. Is it run by volunteers, or by full-time or part-time paid staff?				
Describe any training that is provided to board/committee members.				

Related projects:

List supplemental materials that may be used:

Photos/ List places that photos could be taken:

Education

GCAA Question:	Project to implement:	Responsible Person:	Due Date:	Completion Date:
Describe your program's involvement with schools and youth groups (public/private groups, scouts, church groups, after school, etc.)				
What has your program done to promote proper litter prevention and waste handling practices to school children, teachers, and administrators?				
Describe school programs in the areas of campus cleanups, beautification efforts, and other special programs.				
Describe how school(s) use environmental curricula such as Waste in Place and/or educational activities.				

Related projects:

List supplemental materials that may be used:

Photos/ List places that photos could be taken:

Public Awareness

GCAA Question:	Project to implement:	Responsible Person:	Due Date:	Completion Date:
Describe how you made your community aware of your goals and programs through the use of media, speeches, workshops, bulletin boards, technology, and/or printed materials. List measurable results.				
How has your local program worked with area media to promote the Don't Mess with Texas campaign?				
Describe local awards and recognition programs. Specify awards given and awards received.				

Related projects:

List supplemental materials that may be used:

Photos/ List places that photos could be taken:

Litter Prevention and Cleanup

GCAA Question:	Project to implement:	Responsible Person:	Due Date:	Completion Date:
Does your program conduct any type of study/survey to determine the litter problem in your community?				
Describe how your program addresses the seven sources of litter: pedestrians, uncovered trucks, construction sites, improperly handled residential waste, commercial waste containers, motor vehicles, and loading docks.				
Describe your community's litter prevention and cleanup campaign, including involvement with the Don't Mess with Texas Trash-Off, Great American Cleanup, Adopt-a-Highway, and/or Lake and River Cleanup?				
What was the impact on the environment and/or the public's attitude toward litter prevention and cleanup? List the number of cleanups and measurable results including the number of volunteers.				

Related projects:

List supplemental materials that may be used:

Photos/ List places that photos could be taken:

Litter Law and Illegal Dumping Enforcement

GCAA Question:	Project to implement:	Responsible Person:	Due Date:	Completion Date:
Describe your program's efforts to educate and work with law enforcement personnel (city, county, or state) to review and enforce local and state litter laws including litter abatement and/or illegal dumping.				
Describe community efforts to reduce nuisance issues such as graffiti, grass and weed violations, dilapidated structures, junked cars, and other similar issues.				

Related projects:

List supplemental materials that may be used:

Photos/ List places that photos could be taken:

Beautification and Property Improvement

GCAA Question:	Project to implement:	Responsible Person:	Due Date:	Completion Date:
Describe beautification efforts such as tree planting, native or adaptive landscaping, and landscape maintenance.				
How has your program worked to improve the appearance of your community, instill pride, and provide a positive impact on the economic development and prosperity of your community?				

Related projects:

List supplemental materials that may be used:

Photos/ List places that photos could be taken:

Solid Waste Management

GCAA Question:	Project to implement:	Responsible Person:	Due Date:	Completion Date:
Describe your program's involvement in solid waste management in your community including work with local waste haulers, businesses, civic groups, and citizens.				
Describe how your program has supported source reduction, recycling, reuse, and composting. List measurable results if applicable.				

Related projects:

List supplemental materials that may be used:

Photos/ List places that photos could be taken:

Summation

GCAA Question:	Project Identified:	Responsible Person:	Due Date:	Completion Date:
What one project/program do you consider to be the most outstanding, unique, and/or creative that best displays your community's grassroots efforts to be the best environmental program in the state?				

Related projects:

List supplemental materials that may be used:

Photos/ List places that photos could be taken:

Project Record

Project Name: _____

Date: _____

ITEM	VOLUNTEER \$ VALUE	DONATIONS	GOVT. COSTS

Sample Project Record

Project/Event: Don't Mess with Texas Trash-Off

ITEM	VOLUNTEER \$ VALUE	DONATIONS	GOVT. COSTS
Volunteer planning of event (5 members * 6 meetings * 1.5 hours) at \$17.19 per hour	\$ 773.55		
120 Hot Dogs, Buns and Condiments		\$200.00	
120 Drinks		\$60.00	
Trash Bags from KTB		\$50.00	
100 Volunteers at event donated 200 hours at \$5.15	\$1,030.00		
City Employee drives truck with supplies - 4 hours at \$9.00 per hour times 1.5 time for overtime			\$ 54.00
Newspaper ad to announce event and thank volunteers		\$100.00	
Printing of volunteer solicitation by City (250 copies at \$.04 per page)			\$ 10.00
Cost saving for volunteers cleaning lot on Smith Street (City contract for \$425)			
Prizes for participants (separate list)		\$275.00	
Totals	\$1,803.55	\$ 685.00	\$64.00

The simplest way to track your costs and benefits is to maintain records during each project and record all information as the project is completed.

Volunteer values:

<u>Type of Volunteer</u>	<u>\$ Value/Hour</u>
Cleanup	\$5.15
Board	\$17.19 by Independent Sector
Professional	\$ Current Market for the Service

Donated

Donations: use actual purchase cost of item(s)

Government costs: labor or equipment costs that the government would not have incurred except for your project.

Notes