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**Five Stars of**

**Excellence in**

**Christian Education**

**2018 - 2019**

Information Packet

Application Forms

**Application Deadline: April 30, 2019**

Sponsored by:

The Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church

Committee for Faith-Forming Relationships and Spiritual Formation

and

 Texas Conference Christian Educators Fellowship

**Five Stars of Excellence in Christian Education**

Sponsored by:

Committee for Faith-Forming Relationships and Spiritual Formation &

Texas Conference Christian Educators Fellowship

**Five Stars of Excellence in Christian Education** recognizes congregations in the Texas Annual Conference that are committed to effective ministries in faith formation. The program’s goals are:

* to assist local congregations to make and grow disciples of Christ;
* to encourage, promote, strengthen, and facilitate the growth of Christian Education and faith formation programs;
* to connect Christian Education to the overall ministry of the local church and the connectional church.

This program is designed to help churches develop and maintain the following:

* Mission statements and goals for the ministry area of Christian Education and faith formation that reflect a connection to the overall mission of the local congregation
* Involvement of clergy in Christian Education
* Calling, Equipping, and Affirming leaders
* Caring, Inviting, and Reaching Out
* Providing resources and support for all persons involved in faith formation.

The Five Stars of Excellence in Christian Education program has three levels of awards:

* The **Five Stars of Excellence Award** is given tochurches that fully complete the criteria in five different areas. Congregations should strive to achieve this award every year.
* The **Rising Star Award** is a one-time award developed to honor churches making a concentrated effort to improve, promote, and advocate for quality in Christian Education and faith formation but unable to meet the criteria in all five areas.
* The **Shooting Star Award** recognizes programs or events that are exemplary in nature. This award may be received every two years; congregations must have received the Five Stars of Excellence Award the previous year and qualify to receive it in the current year.

The Five Stars of Excellence program runs from April 15th to April 15th each year. All churches wishing to be considered for recognition should submit the completed application to the program Coordinator by **Tuesday, April 30, 2019**. Awards will be presented in May during Annual Conference at the Texas Conference Christian Educators Fellowship Luncheon (reservations required).

Please note that the criteria have been updated for 2019. Along with the completed forms, submit photos of ministries described in the application. **Each participating church** is encouraged to have at least one staff or lay leader become a member of Texas Conference Christian Educators Fellowship (www.tccef.org).

For more information or assistance, contact:

 Lauren Bedevian, Five Star Coordinator

 Memorial Drive UMC

12955 Memorial Drive Houston, TX 77079

 713-579-2902 or email to: laurenbedevian@mdumc.org

**Guidelines for Completing the Five Stars Application**

The Five Stars of Excellence in Christian Education is awarded annually, and churches are encouraged to complete as many of the Five Stars objectives as possible each year. Congregations that meet the criteria in all five areas will receive special recognition during Annual Conference at the Texas Conference Christian Educators Fellowship award luncheon. All criteria must be met between April 15, 2018 and April 15, 2019.

Please submit the following information to the program Coordinator, postmarked or emailed **on or before April 30, 2019**:

1. Church Information Form with church profile.
2. Five Stars Application Outline (with check marks for the criteria completed)
3. Purpose statement and mission goals for one of these areas:
* Christian Education or Faith Formation ministries
* Sunday School or small-group ministries
* Age-level ministries
1. A statement of how your church is incorporating the core values of the Texas Conference in its Christian Education/faith formation ministries (Category 1).
2. A brief explanation for each item checked on the Five Stars form in Categories 2 through 5. These explanations should be submitted in outline form; please refer to the examples below.
3. At least 1 photo for each award demonstrating the objectives (jpeg or pdf, please).

**Examples** of brief explanations in outline form for each of the items checked in categories 2 through 5:

**Category 2: Involve clergy as Christian Educators**

 A. Our associate pastor taught Methodism 101 classes and participated in confirmation classes.

1. Our senior pastor teaches Disciple I Bible Study.
2. Our associate pastor teaches monthly in an adult home group.
3. Our associate pastor has led two short-term studies. Our senior pastor led a Lenten Prayer study.

F. Our senior pastor attended the East Texas Leadership School; 2 pastors attended district training.

**Category 3: Call, Equip and Affirm Laity**

 A. We celebrated Christian Education Sunday and Promotion Sunday in worship on Sept. 6. We recognized Sunday School teachers and leaders during the worship service on June 4th. All teachers and leaders participated in a Covenant Service at that time.

 B. We held a “Keeping the Faith” Sunday School teacher appreciation dinner along with teacher training on November 13. The dinner was well attended with a delicious dinner, a fun and interesting program, and great fellowship.

 E. The majority of our Sunday School teachers (15 of 21) attended teacher training on November 13th.

 F. Wednesday Night Bible Study and Monday Morning Bible Study are both offered at our church for spiritual enrichment of our teachers and leaders. In July, two members participated in a Walk to Emmaus, and they are encouraging other members to attend as well.

Completed application packets should be mailed or emailed **by April 30** to:

 Lauren Bedevian, Five Star Coordinator

 Memorial Drive UMC

12955 Memorial Drive Houston, TX 77079

 713-579-2902 or email to: laurenbedevian@mdumc.org

For more information or assistance in completing the forms, please contact the program coordinator.

**FIVE STARS OF EXCELLENCE**

**CHURCH INFORMATION FORM**

This application is for the:



Rising Star Award Five Stars of Excellence Award Shooting Star Award

Church Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_City: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Church Profile:

 Total church membership \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Average attendance in worship \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Average Sunday School attendance: children \_\_\_\_\_\_ youth \_\_\_\_\_\_ adults \_\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person’s Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone and/or Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Senior Pastor’s Name, Phone/Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Associate Pastor(s) or Staff: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Members of TCCEF (staff or lay): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

District: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Annual Conference Year: 2019

Signature and date this document was reviewed by key laity working in the area of Christian Education or Age-Level Ministries:

Lay leader(s): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_


Completed packet will include: Church Information Form signed by lay leader(s)

 Application Outline (with check marks)

Documentation and brief descriptions for all categories

 Photos of ministries

Please mail or email packet to:

Lauren Bedevian, Five Star Coordinator

 Memorial Drive UMC

12955 Memorial Drive Houston, TX 77079

 713-579-2902 or email to: laurenbedevian@mdumc.org

**DEADLINE is April 30, 2019**

The Core Values of the Texas Conference are: Passionate Worship, Radical Hospitality,

Extravagant Generosity, Faith-forming Relationships, Risk-taking Mission and Service,

Connectional Ministry, Fervent Prayer and Diligent Study of Scripture, and

“We Love All God’s Children.”

**FIVE STARS OF EXCELLENCE**

**IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

**√ Please check the objectives completed by your congregation. Provide a brief explanation for**

 **each objective in outline form (see separate example sheet). Provide photos of ministries.**

1. **Mission and Goals (both are required)**
	1. Develop and submit a purpose statement and mission goals for one of these areas of ministry: Sunday school or small groups, Christian Education/Faith Formation, or an age-level ministry. Demonstrate how the mission goals of the ministry area help fulfill the overall mission statement of your local congregation.
	2. Write a statement about how the faith formation programs of your church -Sunday school, children’s ministry, youth ministry, small group ministry, etc. - are incorporating the core values of the Texas Annual Conference into your ministry (see core values above).
2. **Involve Clergy in Christian Education (complete 5 of these 8)**
	1. Teach or help lead a new-member class or confirmation class.
	2. Teach a long-term Bible Study (Disciple, Jesus in the Gospels, Covenant, etc.).
	3. Teach regularly in Sunday school or small group.
	4. Teach a special short-term class or study.
	5. Complete five hours of faith formation reading; please list resources.
	6. Attend a local, district, or national training event in the past year; give brief description.
	7. Clergy membership or participation in Texas Conference Christian Educators Fellowship.
	8. Share a story of how the clergy are involved in faith formation ministries in your local congregation.
3. **Call, Equip, and Affirm Laity (complete 6 of these 11)**
	1. Incorporate the celebration of Christian Education into worship (annual or seasonal). This could include celebrating Christian Education Sunday, a Covenant Service/Recognition of Teachers, Rally Day, Promotion Sunday, or highlighting small-group or faith formation ministries during worship services.
	2. Hold one or more appreciation events for teachers or leaders.
	3. Provide opportunities for discovering spiritual gifts within your congregation, and develop a plan and criteria for inviting individuals into faith formation ministries according to their gifts.
	4. Coordinate training for teachers, Christian Education leaders, or small-group leaders.
	5. Provide opportunities for spiritual enrichment, study and prayer for teachers and leaders.
	6. Provide job descriptions and/or covenant agreements for each teacher or leader.
	7. Laity participation in the connectional ministry of the church by attending local or national leadership training or a Christian Education conference.
	8. Laity membership in Texas Conference Christian Educators Fellowship or participation in TCCEF meetings, workshops, retreats, or a national CEF conference.
	9. Participate in formal training for small-group ministries (Disciple, Covenant, UMC Discipleship webinars, etc.)
	10. Share a story about how your church nurtures its faith formation ministry with prayer.
	11. Share a story of how leaders are called, equipped, and affirmed other than what is listed here.
4. **Care, Invite, and Reach Out (complete 7 of these 12)**
	1. Share how your congregation demonstrates compassionate caring within educational and faith formation ministries.
	2. Reach out and invite prospective participants of classes or small groups. Describe how Radical Hospitality is extended to visitors, prospects, and new members.
	3. Describe how you reach out to those who cannot attend church (home-bound, college, military, special needs, etc.)
	4. Begin or renew a long-term faith formation group, Sunday School class or small-group ministry.
	5. Begin or renew a short-term Bible study, seasonal study, or fellowship group for adults.
	6. Begin or renew an existing children’s or youth ministry (VBS, Youth Disciple, special needs program, Kids’ Club, etc.)
	7. Involve classes and small groups in Risk-taking Mission and Service or hands-on mission projects.
	8. Describe a discipleship process for the faith formation ministries of your church that guides persons of various stages in their faith journeys. Include the scope and sequence of the process for children, youth or adults.
	9. Implement a ministry in the community based on the vision of the “We Love All God’s Children” initiative, providing early childhood education, literacy, parent education, or health and wellness for children.
	10. Share how your congregation includes acts of worship within the education ministries of your congregation.
	11. Implement or evaluate and update a Safe Sanctuary policy for your local congregation.
	12. Share the story of how your congregation Cares, Invites, and Reaches Out to others in ways that have not been described previously.
5. **Provide Resources and Support of Christian Education (complete all 4 items)**
	1. Describe in a brief paragraph the priority of Christian Education and Faith Formation in your local congregation.
		1. Budget
		2. Material and supplies
		3. Classrooms, nursery, and facilities
		4. Library or resources for teachers and leaders
		5. Other (give examples of how your congregation has made Christian Education

 a priority)

* 1. Hold a teacher/leader meeting at least annually for the review of curriculum, calendaring, training, and fellowship.
	2. Have a structure in place that involves laity and staff in the process of Christian Education and faith formation. Please provide documentation such as flow charts, minutes of age-level ministries, or a short narrative paragraph.
	3. Choose curriculum that is best suited for your United Methodist educational setting. Provide a brief synopsis of what curriculum you are using in various age-levels. If you are not using United Methodist curriculum, briefly describe what materials you are using and explain why you chose an alternate curriculum.

The Rising Star Award

The **Rising Star Award** is a is a one-time award developed to honor those churches that are making a concentrated effort to improve, promote, and advocate for quality in Christian Education and faith formation but are unable to meet the criteria in all five areas. After receiving the Rising Star Award, churches are encouraged to participate fully in the Five Stars Award in subsequent years.

Criteria for the award are as follows:

A. Submit the Church Information Form.

1. Share information about your educational ministry. For example: what have you attempted to improve, change, or create as a result of participating in the Five Stars of Excellence process?
2. Complete Star #1, “Develop and submit a purpose statement and mission goals for one of these ministry areas: Sunday school or small groups, Christian education/faith formation, or age-level ministry. Demonstrate how the mission goals of the ministry area help fulfill the overall mission statement of your local congregation.”
3. Complete at least one criterion in each of the remaining four categories (2 through 5) in the

Five Stars of Excellenceapplication.

E. Submit at least one photo to illustrate your congregation’s educational ministry.

Churches that wish to be considered for the Rising Star Awardshould submit the application, postmarked or emailed **no later than April 30**. Award recipients will be recognized at the Texas Conference Christian Educators Fellowship luncheon held during Annual Conference.

Please contact the 5 Star Coordinator for more information or assistance:

Lauren Bedevian

laurenbedevian@mdumc.org

713-579-2920

The Shooting Star Award

Five Stars of Excellence in Christian Education honors congregations who seek to promote, support and advocate for quality in Christian Education. Each year, there are Five Star churches that have had exemplary success with one exceptional faith formation program. The **Shooting Star Award** recognizes these congregations. Churches are eligible to receive the Shooting Star Awardonce every two years.

The criteria for receiving this award are as follows:

1. The church must have received the Five Stars of Excellence Award in the previous year.
2. The church must apply and qualify to receive the Five Stars of Excellence Award in the current year, along with the Shooting Star Award.
3. Submit the Church Information Form with church profile.
4. Submit a statement about the exemplary educational program/event, including the following components:

Name of program

Goal and targeted audience

How the program was structured

Time line of organization, planning and the event itself

Cost and funding

How the goals for the program were met

What you would do differently or add to the program

Long-term benefits of this program for your church

1. Include at least one photo of the event or program (jpeg or pdf).

The **Shooting Star** and **Five Stars**applications must be emailed or postmarked by **April 30**. The ministries that qualify for the Shooting Star Award will be highlighted at the Texas Conference Christian Education Fellowship luncheon held during Annual Conference.

Please contact the program Coordinator if additional information or assistance is needed:

Lauren Bedevian

laurenbedevian@mdumc.org

713-579-2920