

POLICY GUIDELINES

JONATHAN MYRICK DANIELS '61 HUMANITARIAN AWARD

Purpose: The Jonathan Myrick Daniels '61 Humanitarian Award emphasizes the virtue of humanitarian public service and recognizes individuals who have made significant personal sacrifices to protect or improve the lives of others. The award affords cadets a continuing reminder that it is possible to embody and display heroic qualities of honor, loyalty, and devotion at any age and in any circumstance.

Background: Jonathan Daniels, valedictorian of the VMI Class of 1961, was a seminarian at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1965 when he answered the call of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. for clergy to assist with civil rights and voter registration efforts in Alabama. On August 20, he made the ultimate sacrifice, offering his life for that of another. He was murdered by a shotgun blast from the gun of Tom Coleman in front of a country store in Hayneville, Alabama. Daniels pushed Ruby Sales, a black teenager, to the ground and took the direct blast from the shotgun. Jonathan Daniels is recognized, along with Dr. Martin Luther King, as one of 15 modern-day martyrs by the Episcopal Church. In February 1997, the Special Programs and Public Relations Committee (changed to External Development Committee, Dec. 1998) of the VMI Board of Visitors began work to implement the Daniels Award. The committee, headed by Anita Blair and a separate task force, established criteria and guidelines for the award. These committees worked closely with VMI's Promaji Club, an organization of VMI cadets that promotes positive relations among all races and ethnic groups in the Corps of Cadets. The Promaji Club initiated a Jonathan Daniels Award in 1992, and its leadership graciously agreed to give the Institute exclusive use of the name for the new Jonathan Daniels Humanitarian Award. At its December 1997 meeting, the VMI Board of Visitors voted to establish the Jonathan M. Daniels '61 Humanitarian Award, only the second time in the history of the Institute the Board has taken such action, the first being the VMI New Market Medal.

Criteria: The scope of nominees will be on an international level with limitations only for current Board of Visitors members and Alumni Agency Board members. The Award will be presented at the discretion of the Board of Visitors, and as a condition of the Award, the nominee should indicate willingness to come to VMI to accept the Award.

Procedures: A selection committee, appointed by the Board of Visitors, will seek and consider nominations. The chairman of the selection committee is the current chair of the External Relations Committee of the Board, to which the selection committee reports. The full Board will consider and vote on nominees presented by the External Relations Committee. The Award will be presented at the discretion of the Board, and the Selection Committee will seek and consider nominations on a bi-annual basis through such methods as are deemed appropriate. The bi-annual call for nominations, in odd-numbered years, will be placed in the Fall Issue of the VMI Alumni Review and posted on the VMI Web-site. The award will be presented at a ceremony, with the Corps of Cadets in attendance, to be held as close to March 20th (Daniel's birthday) as possible.

Annual Ceremony: Though there is no mandate for an annual award, there will be an annual ceremony for the Corps held on a day as close to March 20 as possible. The purpose of the ceremony is to provide the Corps with an annual reminder of the award and the personal sacrifice of one of its brothers.

Selection Committee: The Jonathan Daniels Humanitarian Award Selection Committee shall consist of seven members as follows:

- One member of the Board of Visitors to serve as chairman ... this person shall be the Chair of the External Relations Committee (Mr. Hugh Fain '80)
- VMI Director of Marketing and Communications (**TBD**)
- Secretary to the Board of Visitors (**TBD**)
- President, VMI Alumni Association or his designee (Mr. Ed Johnson '79)
- President, VMI Promaji Club (Cadet Aleece Mickens '26)
- One at large member of the VMI faculty or staff (**TBD**)
- One Alumnus at large (**TBD**)
- Protocol Officer (non-voting member – Mrs. Teresa Thompson)

The Award: The Award includes a \$25,000 stipend to be given to a humanitarian effort or organization designated by the recipient.

Past Recipients:

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| March 29, 2001 | Jimmy Carter, Former President of the United States |
| March 23, 2006 | Andrew Young, Former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations |
| March 30, 2011 | Dr. Paul V. Hebert '68, International Humanitarian |
| March 11, 2015 | Congressman John Lewis, U.S. Representative (GA) |
| March 06, 2019 | Mrs. Carolyn S. Miles, President & CEO, Save the Children |