



# ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT COUNCILS

## THE REPORTER

~ VOLUME 62 ~ ISSUE 3 ~ February 2026 ~

### — Winter Report —

By Claire Hampton

Hello IASC! State Convention is quickly approaching, and so we are excited to provide you with some information!

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# Lincoln Award

Applications are now being accepted for the 2026 Lincoln's Award of Distinction. This award recognizes IASC districts for their work in recruiting and engaging with member schools, the performance of their executive boards, and their ability to plan programming and events for their membership. Points are earned based on meeting metrics related to Membership, District Officer Performance, Conventions and Workshops, Communications, and a bonus District Officer Challenge.

Multiple districts can earn this award, and you can earn the award in multiple years. For more information and to apply, complete this application and return to IASC President, Grady Simpson, by March 1, 2026.



# Advisor of the Year

The IASC is currently accepting nominations for the Advisor of the Year award, which will be presented at the 2026 IASC State Convention.

The Advisor of the Year program has been established to recognize and call attention to the outstanding efforts of student council advisors and their commitment to excellence and service to young people in their schools, districts, and across the state.

Each IASC district may nominate one advisor. The nominee's school must be a member of the IASC. The IASC Executive Board will select one award recipient. The IASC Advisor of the Year award recipient will be celebrated with a commemorative plaque at the annual State Banquet.

District boards should complete the nomination form and submit to Kyle Gordon, IASC Executive Director, no later than March 1, 2026.

The nomination criteria and nomination form is available online:

<https://illinoisstuco.org/Content/Convention/2026AdvisorOfTheYear.pdf>.





# STARS application

Does your council have what it takes to be named as one of our STARS Student Councils! Councils who complete 5 required projects and submit an application by March 1, 2026, will be recognized as an IASC STARS Student Council at the State Convention. These projects are required in each of the following areas:

**Service:** Projects or events that are performed to assist people in need or in crisis within your school, your community, nationally or globally.

**Teambuilding:** Events and/or activities in which the action or process causes a group of people to work together effectively as a team, especially by means of activities and events designed to increase motivation and promote cooperation. This can be with a small group of students/staff OR a large group!

**Appreciation:** Activities/Events that show appreciation for others.

**Rallies/School Spirit:** Projects/Events that promote school spirit by creating activities or events that involve all parts of the student body. An event/activity that when people feel a part of something larger than themselves and develop a strong sense of pride. It's about students feeling connected to the school and celebrating that connection and each other as students feel and experience it!

**State Convention:** Attend this year's state convention and ensure your school holds at least 2 Honor Delegate positions.



# Pillar Award

Each year during the banquet held Friday night at Convention, a special awards ceremony is dedicated to recognizing our student leaders. This year, we will continue recognizing selected students with the Pillar Award. Within Student Councils, we know collaboration is essential to success. Every student brings something unique to their Council. This award is meant to recognize those students who go above and beyond, specifically within one of these four pillars: Leadership, Community Service, School Pride, and Dedication.

We would like to invite you to nominate one student from your council for the Pillar Award. The student you nominate should demonstrate traits of one of the four pillars. Each school can only nominate one student to one pillar. Schools cannot nominate one student per pillar. Below you will find a link to the application, which contains the nomination form and an explanation of each of the pillars.

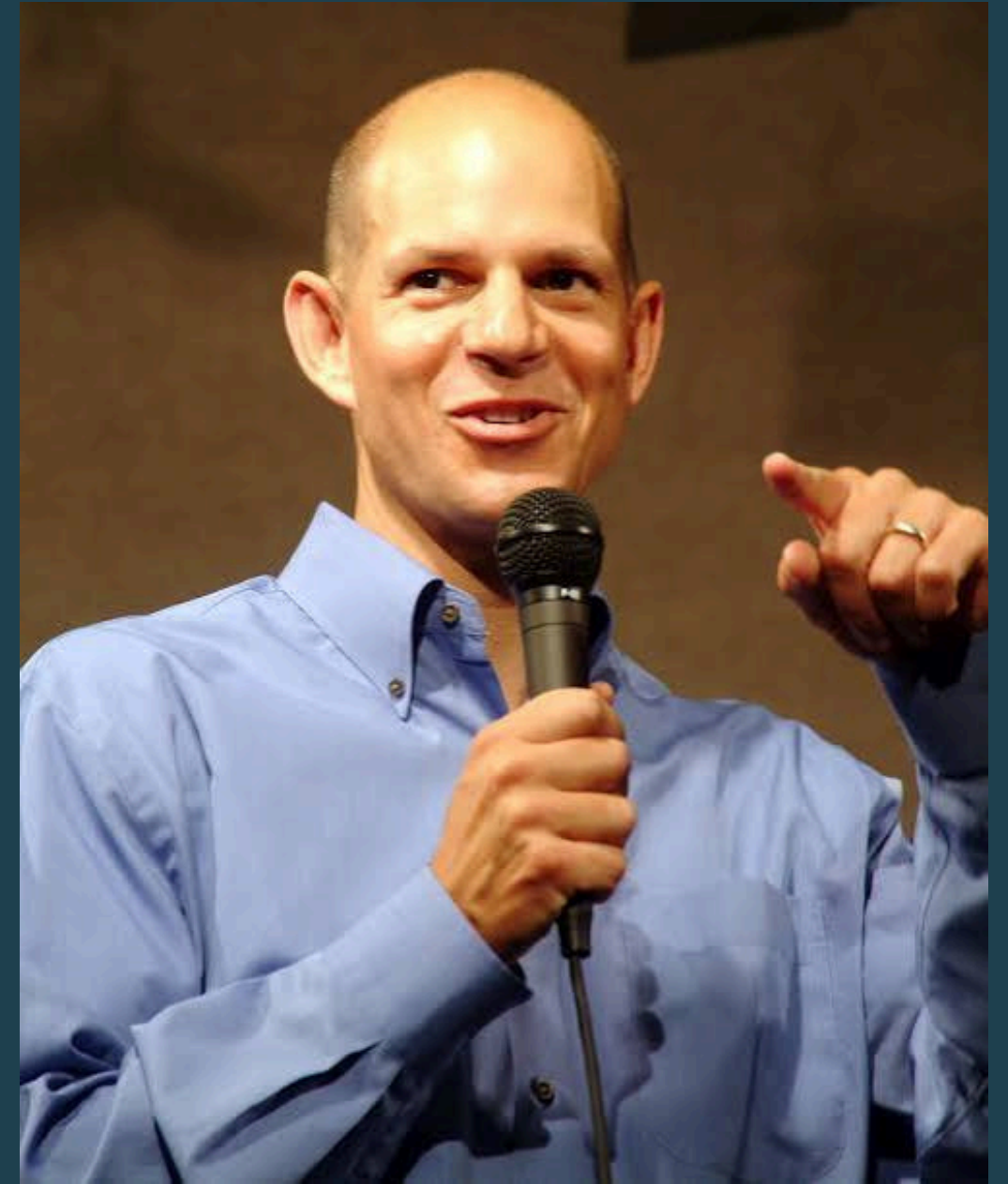
If you wish to nominate an outstanding student, please complete a nomination form. It includes a short statement (no more than three sentences) about your nominee, explaining why you have chosen to nominate him or her, and how he or she has contributed to your school council, your district, or the IASC within the pillar for which she or he is being. All nominations are due by March 1, 2026.





# Convention Keynote Speakers

## Ted Wiese



Known as one of America's best youth leadership development speakers, Ted Wiese works with thousands of students every year to teach and enhance their leadership skills. Ted is in the business of making students believe they can make a difference – and he teaches them how to do it! From starting his career with Junior Achievement to establishing Wiese Training and Development, Ted's dynamic and engaging programs have gained him a strong reputation for delivering results. For years, the students at Ted's presentations have laughed while they learned. His fun-filled keynotes contain contagious laughter coupled with a strong message, while his activity-oriented workshops develop student leadership skills in an energetic, highly interactive, humorous and effective manner. With wit, wisdom, real-life stories and a whole lot of fun, his programs leave students with information and skills to take back to school, ideas to put into action, and something good to talk about in the days and months ahead. Ted lives in Carmel, IN with his wife and two children.



# Convention Keynote Speakers Cont.

## Sue Schafer



Mrs. Sue Schafer has dedicated 29 years to agricultural education, including 27 at Taylorville High School, where she emphasizes work-based learning, career readiness, and leadership development through hands-on experiences and community engagement. Recognized with numerous honors, including the 2021 Nationwide Golden Owl State Winner, 2023 National Association of Agricultural Educators Outstanding Teacher of the Year, and 2025 ISBE Those Who Excel in Teaching, she considers her greatest achievements to be those of her students, who have earned top honors at state, national, and international FFA competitions. As a keynote speaker, she shares her own journey to show how confidence, resilience, and purpose can empower the next generation of leaders and inspires audiences to live boldly, embrace challenges, and pursue careers fueled by passion!





# Convention Keynote

## Speakers Cont.

### Sandy Ginger



Sandy Ginger is an integral leader within the state of Nevada; sharing her expertise and enthusiasm of leadership as the Southern Nevada Executive Director and retired Clark County School District Student Activities Coordinator. Mrs. Ginger has dedicated her life to the field of leadership. Leading by example, she puts students and the opportunity for students to participate in activities at the fore-front of her actions. She gathers materials from her daily life and enthusiastically shares those experiences with advisors and students. Leadership is a part of who she is and encompasses all that she does. Recognizing the value in her experiences, she creates lessons that are true to life. She uses these life lessons to inspire adults and students involved in high school and middle school student council, National Honor Society, National Junior Honor Society, speech and debate, ROTC, cheerleading, graduation, and academic clubs. Teachers and advisors lean on her for advice, instruction, encouragement and inspiration. To say that Mrs. Ginger is instrumental in leadership training is an understatement. She is leadership training! She enthusiastically participates in training and volunteers to share her leadership and teaching experiences on both the local and national levels. She is always available to teach a leadership lesson, present a key topic, share her ideas, give her time and support. Mrs. Ginger is an amazing person who gives of herself for the benefit of others. Advisors and students have come to rely on Mrs. Ginger for her strong, consistent character and work ethic.





# State Service Project

The attached link has the needed items for this years service project: Operation Support Our Troops. We are eager to begin collecting donations for this amazing cause, and we cant wait to see what our state can do for them!

## Service Project Participation

### Options

