



## THE AGLS AWARD FOR NATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN GENERAL AND LIBERAL EDUCATION

### About the Awards

This award recognizes exemplary individuals who have made significant contributions to the practice or theory of general education and liberal studies as a national leader. From 1992 until 2016, the AGLS offered a biennial award that honored the memory of Dr. Joseph (Joe) Katz, a philosophy professor who became a nationally recognized expert on student development and advocated for undergraduate education as a whole.

### About Joseph Katz

Joseph Katz was a German Jew who fled from the Nazi atrocities by train to Switzerland. He earned a Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1948 and taught philosophy at Amherst, Vassar, and Columbia Colleges. While a professor at Vassar he had the life-transforming experience of participating in a pioneering study by Nevitt Sanford about student development in college. For the first time, he saw students in their full human dimensions: searching for meaning, seeking identity, developing relationships, exploring new behaviors, struggling with fears and doubts, and devising a personal philosophy—as they worked their way through the formal curriculum. He saw that they pursued a quest for their own development both in their classes and beyond, with their peers and—when possible—their professors. The world of learning and teaching became a much more expansive, complex, and mysterious arena than he had realized.



Joe (everyone called him Joe) was extremely curious about the course of human development in college and he did extensive research on this topic. At Stanford University, he coordinated one of the first longitudinal studies of thousands of students there and at the University of California, Berkeley in the 1960s. The results were published in *No Time for Youth* (1968) a path-breaking work at the time.

Not content to focus only on students, he went on to conduct two research projects at 15 diverse colleges and universities that included interviews with faculty members as well as students, classroom observations by colleagues themselves, a survey of learning styles, and analyses of learning environments. Joe established and directed the New Jersey Master Faculty Program, in which groups of faculty members at most of the state's institutions interviewed their students to learn about the larger world of student life and to discuss implications for their own teaching. He taught faculty colleagues to access the new rich world of student and faculty life that he himself had discovered.

Inspired by Katz's legacy, the AGLS Council voted in 2017 to reframe the award and its criteria to include a greater range of leadership categories that characterize higher education in the 21st century.

Nominees may be:

- senior administrators on a college campus (two- or four-year) who are recognized as advocates for general and liberal studies;
- well-known figures associated with assessment or accreditation or higher education organizations;
- or scholars who have made influential contributions to the national conversation around general and liberal education.
- The above is a brief list and is merely illustrative. Other kinds of contributions are also possible.

The initial nomination is a letter (2-3 pages) containing the name of the individual, the home institution or organization, and a statement that summarizes the candidate's most significant contributions and makes the case for his or her stature as a national leader supporting general and liberal studies. Nominations can be submitted at any time.

Nominations received by the Past President and the nominating committee, who will contact the candidates to confirm their participation in the final process and gather any additional information needed (such as a c.v.).

All materials should be submitted electronically in a single packet (.pdf file) via email to [execdir@agls.org](mailto:execdir@agls.org).

The recipient receives a plaque, complimentary Constitute registration and is typically invited to offer formal remarks when the award is presented at the next annual meeting.

The deadline for nominations for the 2025 awards is May 22.

The award(s) will be presented at the annual Constitute in Louisville, October 3 to 5.

*The goal of the AGLS Awards program is to serve two national general education needs. Currently, little recognition is given to the creative program accomplishments produced by general education faculty and administrators committed to ongoing improvement. Also, a need exists for effective program improvement ideas and models, especially as institutions prepare for accreditation visits.*

*Recipients are selected by a panel of nationally recognized general education leaders and AGLS Council members. Awards will include a plaque recognizing recipients' efforts, a feature piece in the AGLS e-Newsletter, recognition on the AGLS website, and half-priced conference registration fee and annual membership fee for the upcoming year.*