**Virgil Masayesva Tribal Air Programs Excellence Award**

**Purpose:** Virgil Masayesva was the Director of the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals at Northern Arizona University from its inception until his passing in 2005. Virgil is commemorated for his leadership, dedication, innovation and commitment to the support of tribal air programs; their creation, development, advancement and ultimate success in promoting tribal sovereignty, tribal culture and tribal environmental protection. This award was developed to recognize and perpetuate continuing contributions to that legacy.

**What:** To recognize, memorialize and promote outstanding accomplishments, dedication and contributions to the advancement of human health and environmental protection in Indian country particularly as they relate to the improvement of air quality management. At this time, the award recognizes individuals and tribes that have shown exceptional dedication and accomplishment in advancing the interests of tribal air programs.

**Who is eligible:** Tribal environmental professionals, tribal programs, and environmental professionals in consortia, universities or other areas who have excelled in air quality protection efforts in Indian country. EPA, TAMS and ITEP staff are ineligible for this award.

Criteria for eligibility: The following criteria are suggested achievements which can be used to determine if nominees’ actions are likely to qualify for this award:

* Currently or previously engaged in air quality management related field for at least three years.
* Involved in National or Regional Committee work (e.g., National Tribal Air Association, National Congress of American Indians, United South and Eastern Tribes, Tribal Science Council, National Tribal Operations Committee/Regional Tribal Operations Committee, other inter-tribal consortia, academia, etc…)
* Has attained an outstanding level of success and/or recognition for air quality related achievements
* Has developed a unique approach to tribal air programs that is widely recognized for its success and/or innovation
* Has shown outstanding dedication in achieving a major milestone for tribal air programs

**Application / nomination Process:** Open and can self nominate. Nominations must be submitted at least seven days prior to the spring meeting of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee may alter deadlines should circumstances warrant. Nominations must describe the accomplishments and how they apply to one of the categories listed below. Judging and selection can only be based on information provided in the nomination, so all supporting information and documentation must be included.

**Deadline –** For **2024** please send nomination forms and supporting information to Darlene Santos at the TAMS Center by **December 15, 2023.** Award will typically be given out at the National Tribal Forum on Air Quality (NTFAQ).

**Selection Process**: Nominations for the Award are reviewed and selected by the voting members of the TAMS Center Steering Committee. Selection of nominees to be presented with the Award is the sole discretion of the Steering Committee. If the Steering Committee finds that nominees do not reach the standard of excellence required for the Award, they may choose to withhold the Award until the next nomination cycle. Should adequate nominations be available, one award will be presented in each of the available categories.

**Categories:** The following categories are available for nominations for this award. Nominations must address one of the categories of Technical Excellence; Tribal Program Development; or Policy Development. The descriptions are intended as guidelines, not requirements for eligibility. Nominees may compete in multiple categories, but may only win in one category per year.

Technical Excellence – Recognition of outstanding technical effort in monitoring, risk assessment, modeling, or other technical activities.

* Demonstrated outstanding leadership in use of technology
* Demonstrated outstanding leadership in developing policies and strategies in technical areas (monitoring strategies, risk assessment approaches, data management etc.)
* Demonstrated outstanding efforts in support other tribal air programs including communication, coordination and participation in regional and national initiatives

Tribal Program Development – Recognition of outstanding efforts in developing tribal program components, including training, tools, communications, capacity building, TAS, Tribal regulations or codes, strategic planning and other programmatic activities.

* Demonstrate outstanding leadership and dedication in developing tribal air programs
* Development of innovative codes, regulations, TIPs or voluntary programs to address air quality issues in Indian country.
* Demonstrate an outstanding ability to leverage resources to support tribal air programs
* Demonstrate outstanding innovation and creativity in developing resources and information to support tribal air programs
* Demonstrate an exceptional personal investment to providing support and capacity building for tribal air programs

Policy Development – Recognition of outstanding efforts to participate in and affect policies and actions that support or enhance air quality protection in Indian country.

* Demonstrate outstanding commitment and/or achievement in the development of policy initiatives, actions or processes to support air quality protection in Indian country
* Demonstrate outstanding commitment and/or achievement in the use of policy initiatives, actions or processes to defend and uphold inherent tribal sovereignty with regards to air quality in Indian country

**Nomination Form**

**Virgil Masayesva Tribal Air Programs Excellence Award**

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| **Nominated by:** | |  | |
| **Nominee (individual or program):** | | |  |
| **Date:** |  | | |

**Nomination Category:** Please check the appropriate category.

Technical Excellence – Recognition of outstanding technical effort in monitoring, risk assessment, modeling, or other technical activities.

Tribal Program Development – Recognition of outstanding efforts in developing tribal program components, including training, tools, communications, capacity building TAS, tribal regulations or codes, strategic planning and other programmatic activities.

Policy Development Excellence – Recognition of outstanding efforts and participation in and actions to develop, shape or affect policies that support or enhance tribal sovereignty and air quality protection in Indian country

**Nomination Summary:** Please provide a brief summary description of the work and accomplishments of the nominee for the award in the space below.

**Detailed Description:** Please describe in detail (no more than 2 typed pages) why this person or program is being nominated. You may attach a separate document if desired.