



Ruth Hubbard Cousins Chapter Award

Deadline » **February 1**

Prize » **\$3,500**

The winning chapter will receive \$3,500, travel expenses for one chapter officer to attend the APA/Psi Chi Convention to make a short presentation on how to become a successful Psi Chi chapter, and a plaque to display in the winning chapter's department.

CHAPTERS



PURPOSE

To award one chapter as a role model for others



ELIGIBILITY

All Psi Chi chapters are eligible to apply for the award except those that have won the award in the past three years. The criteria for selecting the winners are:

- effective chapter activities for the past three years, including offering quality programming, voting in Society elections, showing an increase in membership, submitting Annual/Financial reports, and submitting activity reports to *Eye on Psi Chi*;
- chapter involvement in Psi Chi activities and awards/grants program;
- adherence to Society policies;
- a clear plan on how the \$3,500 award money would be used; and
- an essay providing useful, creative information on how to be a successful Psi Chi chapter.



STYLE / STANDARDS

1. Papers must be an electronic document written in English conforming strictly to the instructions in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)*.
2. The text of the application should not exceed 15 pages in 12-point font (double-spaced). The paper should include references and any necessary tables, figures, or notes.
3. The application's clarity, grammar, syntax, and spelling will be considered.



SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

1. Current student officers should prepare the application and submit it online at www.psichi.org under the AWARDS/GRANTS section. The link for submissions is available at least one month prior to the submission deadline.
2. Submissions are accepted online until midnight local time on February 1. Late applications will not be accepted.

3. The application should include the information listed below:

- submission form (next page);
- cover letter prepared by chapter advisor and/or chair of department certifying information as correct;
- one-page summary of why the chapter deserves to be considered for the award;
- roster of current members and officers;
- description of the chapter's membership application and induction procedures;
- calendar of chapter events;
- narrative account of the chapter's activities for up to the past three years indicating:
 - a. effective programming (e.g., community service, fundraising, socials, lectures, seminars, panels, symposia, colloquia),
 - b. effective membership practices/participation (e.g., recruitment, registration during the past three years, member participation in activities, chapter participation in campus-wide programs),
 - c. participation in local chapter and Psi Chi Society (e.g., elections, reports to *Eye on Psi Chi*, attending conventions, submitting annual/financial reports),
 - d. contributions to the school, the community, the field of psychology, and other outstanding contributions (e.g., organizing student conventions, hosting a "Psychology Day," winning a poster contest, producing a newsletter or journal);
- a concise essay of no more than 750 words on how to become a successful Psi Chi chapter (see examples of previous winners' essays at www.psichi.org/awards/winners/cousins_win.aspx); and
- the proposed use of the \$3,500 to promote the chapter and Psi Chi. Possible examples are scholarships, book/journal purchases, travel to conventions, or other plans approved by faculty advisor and/or department chair.

APPLY NOW



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SUBMISSION FORM

Download and complete the submission form below, save your information to the file, and upload with your proposal.

Name of chapter (school)	
Name of officer preparing nomination	
Officer's phone	Officer's email
Name of faculty advisor	
Faculty advisor's phone	Faculty advisor's email

Previous Ruth Hubbard Cousins Chapter Award winners:

Charleston Southern University (SC)

The fundamental attributes of an effective and productive Psi Chi chapter are in short similar to the positive attributes of any organization focused on self-excellence and the advancement of a specific principle. In the case of Psi Chi, that specific principle is the advancement of the science of psychology through active members while maintaining integrity and service within the member population. One would expect with such a strong and motivated group of active participants the club would naturally flourish; however this is not always the case. Like any organization, movement, or chapter, there must be a strong and constant foundation which anchors the chapter. This allows the chapter to build, grow, and exceed the expectations set by overall guidelines. This anchor is the key to the success or failure of a Psi Chi chapter, which is none other than the consistent presence of a faculty advisor. This essential position is then followed by dedicated and involved officers, as well as devoted Psi Chi and Psychology Club members participating in service projects and on campus activities.

The reason why a strong faculty advisor's presence is so vital to a successful chapter is simple: they are the constant entity in an organization where the members are changing each year. A college club or organization that lacks a form of leadership that is not stationary has to constantly face the impending transfer of power. Officer election and transfer is an important component of an organization, Psi Chi not being an exception. However, the presence of a dedicated and involved faculty member is invaluable. This is because in the event that succeeding officers are difficult to find, the faculty advisor has the influence and experience to detect and encourage future leaders. A student run club lacks the vital component of a faculty advisor and runs the serious risk of decentralization and the disillusionment of its members, eventually falling victim to apathy. With the anchor of the club secured in a strong and dedicated faculty advisor, the club members have a foundation on which to build a successful chapter.

In the case of the Charleston Southern chapter, Psi Chi and Psychology Club officers collaborate where the Psi Chi officers preside over both club's meetings. The benefit of this is having a larger population of members available to participate in club activities and service projects. The officers of Psi Chi and Psychology Club and the organization's members of Psychology Club make up the identity and structure of our organization. The members of the executive board (president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer) must all be moving in the same direction and have excellent communication in order to maintain momentum. Although the president is the technical head of the club, the executive board really acts as a four-member president, suggesting ideas and pushing the club forward while still maintaining their own designated identities and fulfilling their own designated assignments. Charleston Southern University's Psi Chi and Psychology Club officers meet weekly after club meetings to discuss upcoming events, make suggestions, and discuss ways to improve the organization and increase member participation.

Read the rest of their essay on p. 30 in the Digital Eye at the following link: <http://www.ourdigitalmags.com/publication/?i=49534&page=1>.