



# National Wildfire Coordinating Group Leadership Committee



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### **2024 Paul Gleason “Lead By Example” Award Winners Announced**

*National Wildfire Coordinating Group Leadership Committee selects three annual winners and one life-time achievement winner*

**Boise, Idaho** – The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Leadership Committee has awarded the 2024 Paul Gleason “Lead By Example” award to three individuals for the annual categories of *Initiative and Innovation*, *Mentoring and Teamwork*, and *Motivation and Vision*, as well as one lifetime achievement award.

The award was created by the NWCG Leadership Committee to remember Paul Gleason’s contributions to the wildland fire service. During a career spanning five decades, Paul was a dedicated student of fire, a teacher of fire, and a leader of firefighters. The intent of this award is to recognize individuals or groups who exhibit this same spirit and who exemplify the wildland fire leadership values and principles.

The Paul Gleason “Lead By Example” award in the area of *Initiative and Innovation* was awarded to Justin Baxter, National Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) Operations Specialist with the U.S. Forest Service. Baxter is recognized for the dedication, professionalism, and expertise he has contributed in serving as a driving force in the integration and expansion of UAS operations within the wildland fire service. He’s dedicated time to develop protocols, formalize trainings, and provide mentorship to other UAS pilots.

The Paul Gleason “Lead By Example” award in the area of *Mentoring and Teamwork* was awarded to Kelly Woods, Wildland Firefighting Lessons Learned Center Director. Woods is recognized for her ability to build a positive command climate based on trust and authenticity. She has carried her team through change and uncertainty while maintaining a critical service highly valued throughout the global wildland firefighting community.

The Paul Gleason “Lead By Example” award in the area of *Motivation and Vision* was awarded to Doug Booster, ProHealth Net, Inc. instructor. For more than 30 years, Booster dedicated his time as an instructor and mentor to the wildland fire service community. He delivered every course to the highest standard of excellence and has thus shaped careers, developed leaders, and strengthened teams at all levels. Booster set out to do something that didn’t have a blueprint or a job description – there was simply Booster’s bold character, authentic relationships and quality delivery guiding him through a lifetime of influence. Booster leaves a lasting legacy within the wildland fire service community that will continue to be felt across the nation for decades to come.

The Paul Gleason “Lead By Example” lifetime achievement award has been awarded to Pam McDonald, writer-editor for the National Interagency Fire Center. McDonald’s unwavering dedication from the inception of the *Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program* to today has proven instrumental in building community, foundational programs and leaders across the nation. She developed several core components that inspire a workforce through large-scale programing and micro-learning moments. McDonald constantly innovated and challenged the status quo creating new opportunities for learning and strategies to meet people where they are in their leadership journey.

To learn more about the NWCG Leadership Committee visit [nwcg.gov/committee/leadership-committee](https://nwcg.gov/committee/leadership-committee). To submit a nominee for the Paul Gleason “Lead By Example” award visit: [nwcg.gov/wfldp/lbe](https://nwcg.gov/wfldp/lbe).