

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Berea Human Rights Commission Seeks Nominations for the John G. Fee Social Justice Award and the Dr. Janice Blythe Youth Award

Berea, Kentucky - September 8, 2026

The Berea Human Rights Commission (BHRC) is excited to announce that nominations are now open for the prestigious John G. Fee Social Justice Award and the Dr. Janice Blythe Youth Award. These awards recognize individuals and groups who have displayed exceptional dedication to promoting human rights within the city of Berea. The BHRC encourages all members of the community to participate in this important process by nominating deserving candidates who have made significant contributions to maintaining, improving, or expanding the human rights of their fellow Berea residents.

1. The Dr. Janice Blythe Youth Award, previously known as the Youth Award, was renamed in 2020 to honor the late Dr. Janice Blythe, a prominent social justice advocate and longtime commissioner of the BHRC. This award is presented to a remarkable youth aged 22 or younger who has actively promoted social justice and fought against discrimination in Berea.

2. The John G. Fee Social Justice Award, first bestowed in 2013, recognizes the outstanding efforts of a Berea resident or group who has championed human rights within the community. The inaugural award was granted to the "Concerned Citizens of Berea" organization, which played an instrumental role in resolving tensions following a tragic racial incident in 1968. The award was accepted by surviving members Robert Shaffer and Loyal Jones, with relatives of the founding African-American members present, adding to the significance of the occasion.

Nominations for both awards should include a clear statement of no more than 250 words describing the courageous or praiseworthy conduct in the realm of human rights that supports the nomination. The full name, address, and contact information of both the nominator and the nominee must be provided. Nominations can be submitted via postal mail to Berea Human Rights Commission, 212 Chestnut Street, Berea, Kentucky 40403, or through email to hrc@bereaky.gov. The deadline for nominations is October 20, 2026.

The award(s) will be presented during a City Council meeting in November. The names of the winners will also be engraved on plaques displayed in the Randy Stone Room at City Hall, alongside previous recipients.

The BHRC reserves the right to make the final decision on presenting the award(s) based on its evaluation of the nominations.

Please send any inquiries or requests for nomination forms to hrc@bereaky.gov.



Berea Human Rights Commission
212 Chestnut Street, Berea, KY 40403
(859) 228-1045

Dr. Janice Blythe Youth Award Application

Your name: _____

Your contact information: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Nominee Name: _____

Nominee contact information*: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Is the nominee aged 22 or younger? _____

Have they been notified they are being nominated?** _____

*Complete all contact information, or the application will not be accepted.

**Only applications where the nominee has been notified will be accepted.

Individuals who have passed away may be nominated, but please add the accepting party's contact information.

Please write up to a maximum of 250 words on why your nominee should be awarded the Dr. Janice Blythe Youth Award and attach it to this form.



Berea Human Rights Commission
212 Chestnut Street, Berea, KY 40403
(859) 228-1045

John G. Fee Social Justice Award Application

Your name: _____

Your contact information: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Nominee Name: _____

Nominee contact information*: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Have they been notified they are being nominated?** _____

*Complete contact information or application will be not accepted.

**Only applications where the nominee has been notified will be accepted.

Individuals who have deceased may be nominated, but please add accepting party contact information.

Please write up to a maximum of 250 words on why your nominee should be awarded the John G. Free Social Justice Award and attach it to this form.