



AGENDA ITEM: F1  
DATE OF MEETING: March 12, 2025  
ACTION:   
INFORMATION:

## **NOMINATION HISTORY FOR THE ANNUAL FIRST 5 RIVERSIDE COUNTY CHAMPION FOR CHILDREN AWARD**

### **SUMMARY OF ITEM**

Provide history of nominations received for the Champion for Children Award since its inception in 2019, with the first winner selected in 2020.

### **BACKGROUND**

First 5 Riverside County's (F5RC) Champion for Children Award was created in 2019 (Action Item 19-25) to honor and bring awareness to people and organizations whose leadership and advocacy embody the vision of F5RC, where all children in Riverside County are healthy and thrive in supportive, nurturing, and loving environments and enter school ready to learn and embrace lifelong learning. The selected candidate must have lived or worked in Riverside County for a minimum of two years.

The Advisory Committee is responsible for reviewing the nominations received each year and providing their recommendation for the award winner to the Commission. F5RC is responsible for promoting the nomination period when it opens, receiving nominations and communicating with those submitting them, and providing all nominations, supplemental information, and candidate summaries to the Advisory Committee.

In the six years that Champion for Children Award has been awarded or tentatively awarded, F5RC has received nominations for 37 candidates, including no fewer than three or greater than nine in a single year. Two of these candidates were deemed ineligible; one nomination was submitted for a member of the Advisory Committee; one nomination was submitted for a candidate who did not work or live in Riverside County.

The nomination period is open each year for six weeks. On two occasions, it has been decided with Advisory Committee approval to extend the nomination period an additional

six weeks in response to an insufficient number of initial nominations received. Nomination history by year is summarized in the table below:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Nominations Received</b>	<b>Extension/Nominations Received Before and After Extension Approved</b>
2020	9	No
2021	7	Yes/0 before, 7 after
2022	3	Yes/2 before, 1 after
2023	5	No
2024	5	No
2025	8	No

F5RC employs multiple strategies to promote the nomination period opening, which include or have included press releases, social media posts, eblasts to F5RC contact lists as well as eblasts to all Riverside County employees through RCIT, website displays, outreach to partnering organizations and other county departments.

Nominations received throughout the Award’s history have represented candidates working in each of the county’s five districts and supporting young children in F5RC’s three goal areas, though not all districts or goal areas may be represented in an individual year. Nominations received represent candidates whose work may or may not occupy and/or serve residents from specific regions within the county. The award reflects F5RC’s mission to serve families countywide.

Recognition of the Champion for Children has remained consistent in acknowledging award winners at a Commission meeting, through a press release, and the awarding of a \$1,000 sponsorship to support a community event through an organization of their choice. Starting in 2023, F5RC has adopted the practice of recognizing nominees not selected as the Champion for Children with a personalized letter highlighting specific examples of their work as provided in their nomination, an F5RC commemorative glass plaque or paperweight, and an invitation be honored alongside the approved Champion for Children at a Commission meeting.

In 2019, the Advisory Committee designed the criteria required to be nominated and can recommend improvements to broaden the pool of candidates, revise the application, or to streamline the process. After the 2025 Champion is named, the topic will be placed on the agenda for discussion or action at the direction of the Committee.

In January, an Advisory Member requested this item be place on the agenda to consider expanding the Champion award from one countywide Champion to selecting 5 Champions, 1 representing each supervisorial district. Based on the analysis presented in this information item and the maximum number (9) of nominations received in any given year, First 5 staff does not recommend this change at this time. Staff will be increasing outreach efforts to agencies and individuals who meet the nomination criteria, As the number of nominations increase, the district option will be reconsidered for recommendation to the Commission.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE**

Countywide Impact

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. 19-25 Action Item Approving First 5 Riverside Champion for Children Criteria
2. 2025 Champion for Children Nomination Process