



## GOVS WHO LEAD THROUGH SERVICE AWARD

# CANDLELIGHT BALL CO-CHAIRS AND COMMITTEES

2021 Candlelight Ball Committee Co-Chairs Kathryn Minniehan and Kayla Morgan

In both 2020 and 2021, the APSU Candlelight Ball co-chairs, Kathryn Minniehan and Kayla Morgan, have persevered through the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic to host a successful virtual event in place of the traditional, in-person ball. Minniehan and Morgan have worked tirelessly through more challenges than any co-chairs have faced in the 37-year history of the Candlelight Ball.

In 2019 and into 2020, Minniehan assisted then co-chair Andrea Herrera. Along with Morgan and the rest of the Candlelight Ball Committee, they organized the most successful Candlelight Ball to date. This group helped raise more funds and obtain the largest attending crowd - 650 guests - for any Candlelight Ball.

The following year, Minniehan and Morgan took over as co-chairs. They, along with the entire committee worked for eight months to organize the 2020 event, with an anticipated crowd of almost 700 guests! However, two days before the event was scheduled to take place, they were forced to cancel due to the pandemic.

When Minniehan and Morgan tried to host the Candlelight Ball in 2021, they had to change course yet again. The COVID-19 event protocols of the venue, the Omni Nashville Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee, did not permit the organization of their planned 700-person event. For this reason, they created a unique virtual event intended to keep alumni and friends connected while still contributing to student scholarships. After many months of planning, recording and editing the virtual celebration video, the event was launched on May 8, 2021. Guests who attended the ball in the past received emails instructing them on how to host a “Candlelight Ball at Home” party and to share their photos on social media. The public was also invited to watch the celebration video on the APSU Alumni social media accounts.

The co-chairs still managed to bring in a considerable number of underwriters and items for the online auction, which also launched on May 8 and remained open through May 15, 2021. Their efforts to make the virtual event a success truly reflect what it means to be APSU Governors.

The 2021 Goves Who Lead Through Service Award goes to Kathryn Minniehan and Kayla Morgan for their outstanding achievement as well as the individuals who have served on all of the Candlelight Ball Committees in the previous years of Austin Peay’s premier community event. Each year, they continue to raise funding for well-deserving APSU students through the Candlelight Ball Scholarship Endowment.