



Recognition for Student Employees

Student employees are just like regular staff in the way that their work satisfaction partly comes from being genuinely appreciated for what they do. It's known that employee appreciation and recognition improves commitment, retention, and productivity.

Recognition programs don't have to be expensive. A simple spoken phrase like, "Thank you for your hard work," can go a long way. An effective recognition program will be:

- **Fair** – everyone should be appreciated equally.
- **Consistent** - be timely with recognition.
- **Highly visible** – awareness fuels enthusiasm.

Low Cost

- Treat Day – organize a potluck! Have the full-time staff bring in treats/lunch for student workers.
- Take pictures - post employee pictures and list what wonderful things they do for your department. Place on your staff bulletin board if you have one.
- Coupon Booklets - this is always a hit with students! Insert coupons for a free can of soda, one dozen home baked goodies, etc. Be creative in designing your own coupons.
- Surprise student employees with beverages and cookies or other refreshments.
- Make a birthday calendar and celebrate each student's birthday by making/buying a card and/or baking a cake/cupcakes.
- Buy low cost, blank certificates and make up silly awards for students. Some suggestions for awards could be:
 - Best telephone voice
 - Best web-surfer
 - Best dressed
 - Funniest laugh
- Create certificates for awards from your word processing software. Some suggestions for awards could be:
 - One Academic Year of Service
 - Quality Customer Service Award
 - Innovation Award
 - Best Work Improvement Idea of the Quarter/Semester/Year
 - Teamwork Award
 - Project Support Award
 - Outstanding Initiative Award
 - Extraordinary helpfulness with other staff
- Friendship Plants - take cuttings from a plant in the office and give to each student as a live "connection" within the office.
- Bright Ideas - spray paint a light bulb gold, screw into a jar of play-dough and make a label around the jar naming who is receiving the "Bright Idea" award.
- Great Idea award – Where a student comes up with a new way to improve customer service or work processes.
- Good Egg Award - buy plastic Easter Eggs, fill with goodies and give out with "Good Egg" certificates. List what the student did to deserve this award.

- Have personalized note pads made for someone (created and duplicated in-house).
- \$1-\$10 ideas to pass out to your students as surprise appreciation awards:
 - Lotto ticket
 - Magnet
 - Insulated mug
 - Desk Calendar
 - Lunch gift certificate
 - Flower, balloon, candy or a note at a student's work area
 - Starbuck's coupon or another place student's go to enjoy free time
- Organize social outings for all of your student employees
 - Go to the REC center to go ice skating
 - Go to the UMC for bowling
 - Go somewhere for lunch (may do one-on-one with each student)
 - Bring lunch to share with student workers
 - Meet at least once a month or two for dinner one night Ice Cream Social – in office or out of office
- Care packages filled with things that are fun or usable for student. Some suggestions:
 - Candy
 - Mints
 - Inspirational quote
 - Fun toy
 - Phone card
 - Gel pens
 - Note pads

Free!

- Nominate your student for the CU Proud Award.
See <http://www.colorado.edu/orientation/cu-proud-application-form>
- Nominate your student for the Student Employee of the Year Award. Nominations are accepted once a year. See the Student Employment website/listserv around mid-December for nomination form
<http://www.colorado.edu/studentemployment/forms>
- Pat on the Back - Draw an outline of your hand on a piece of paper. Photocopy enough copies for all students in your office. On each hand write a note that tells the student why they deserve a "Pat on the Back".
- Use this week as an opportunity to start an award recognition program. Look around the office or at home for a white elephant item. Name the item for the award (Employee of the Month/Week, Great Idea Award, Gotcha Award - catch someone in the act of doing something good).
- Make a banner to hang for the whole week in your office. The banner should say something like, "Thank You Student Workers!" or "Our Student Workers Rock!"
- Decorate an office bulletin board or the office door for the week in recognition of your students.
- Post inspirational messages around the office. Have students help create messages and decorate the office.
- Provide a word of encouragement after a failed project.

Check out these cool web sites for freebies:

Awesome CyberCards: <http://www.marlo.com/card.htm>

Virtual Florist: <http://www.virtualflorist.com/>

The Cardmaster: <http://www.cardmaster.com/>

Hallmark Greetings: <https://www.hallmarkecards.com/#/>

CU Proud Award: <http://www.colorado.edu/orientation/cu-proud-application-form>