

# Recognition Toolkit

April 2014

Recognition of staff is key to building a high performing community that embraces its members' achievements in positive, visible ways. This toolkit was adapted in large part from work done by staff in University Relations for use in their own units, and is being shared across the Berkeley campus as a wonderful example of a best practice. The sharing of the document is in itself a demonstration of how we can recognize the valuable contributions of our staff.

We encourage departments and staff to share their experiences and best practices in how they utilize the various recognition programs.

How we recognize people will vary between units. What is most important is that, regardless of the method, recognition of work well done happens throughout Berkeley, and that staff feel recognized for their accomplishments.

## Contents

Current Campus Recognition Programs .....	2
STAR Awards .....	2
Non-cash Awards.....	3
92 Ways to Recognize Your Colleagues.....	4

Note: We would like to thank in particular the University Relations EID Engaging and Healthy Campus Climate Subcommittee members for their work on which this toolkit is based: : Loraine Binion, Glenda Rubin, Chris Vernon, Leslie Banez, Kim Smithers, Rebecca DeKalb, Mantra Robinson 2013/14

## Current Campus Recognition Programs

**Kudos** – This is an online site where UC Berkeley employees can recognize their peers who, through their work, are “living the Berkeley Operating Principles” (see pages 3 and 4). Many UREL employees have already been recognized in this way.

<http://vcaf.berkeley.edu/what-we-do/leading-best-practices/operating-principles/kudos>

**UC Berkeley Thank You Cards** - New UC Berkeley Thank You Cards are available at no charge so that campus employees can appreciate one another’s excellent work with a memorable message. Departments can order them at:

<http://vcaf.berkeley.edu/what-we-do/leading-best-practices/operating-principles/what-you-can-do/uc-berkeley-thank-you-cards>

**Chancellor’s Outstanding Staff Awards (COSA)** – The Chancellor's Outstanding Staff Awards (COSAs) are presented to individuals and teams who, in addition to performing all their normal job duties with excellence, also demonstrate exceptional initiative in contributing to the UC Berkeley campus community. These awards are among the highest honors bestowed upon staff by the Chancellor. The Chancellor's Staff Advisory Committee (CSAC) established and administers this award program.

<http://csac.berkeley.edu/cosa>

**Berkeley Staff Assembly Excellence in Management Awards** – The Berkeley Staff Assembly’s (BSA) Excellence in Management Committee seeks to improve the quality of life in the workplace by identifying and publicly recognizing outstanding managers and supervisors.

<http://bsa.berkeley.edu/committee/excellence-management>

## STAR Awards

UC Berkeley currently offers two recognition programs for non-represented employees: the **Staff Appreciation and Recognition (STAR) Plan**. STAR awards can only be awarded to non-represented staff. Compensation funding for represented staff is included in their respective collective bargaining agreements.

**STAR Awards** at UC Berkeley recognize and reward individuals and teams for exemplary performance and contributions while demonstrating **Berkeley's Operating Principles**:

- ***We include and excel, together.***

We cultivate trust, treat one another with respect, and assume good intentions. We actively include different perspectives and work cooperatively within and across departments. We thrive when we celebrate the diversity in our community and our common commitment to equity, inclusion, and equal access to all.

- ***We imagine and innovate.***

We develop sustainable solutions that help us meet campus goals. We are willing to take intelligent risks, make mistakes, and learn from our experience.

- ***We simplify.***

We reduce unnecessary steps and make it easier to get things done. Our solutions are common where they can be, custom where it counts.

- ***We are accountable to each other.***

We measure supervisor, individual, and team performance, make transparent decisions, and follow through on our commitments. We recognize excellence, and give and receive constructive feedback at all levels to help us improve.

- ***We focus on service.***

We provide timely, excellent service to students, staff, faculty, alumni, and other stakeholders. We emphasize service over bureaucracy whenever possible.

**The STAR Program** includes two types of awards:

**Achievement Awards (\$ 2,000)** recognize sustained, exceptional performance and/or significant contributions over an extended period of time within a major portion of the employee's area of responsibilities, including performance or project goals above and beyond normal performance expectations. May be awarded to an individual or team. *"Teams recognized via Achievement Awards will receive \$1,000 per team member."*

**Spot Awards (\$500)** acknowledge special contributions, as they occur, for a specific project or task accomplished over a relatively short time period. A Spot Award lets employees know that their noteworthy contribution has been noticed. It also recognizes and reinforces the behaviors and values that are important at UC Berkeley. May be awarded to an individual or team. *Teams recognized via Spot Awards will receive \$500 per team member.* For more information and nomination forms for the STAR awards program go to:

<http://hrweb.berkeley.edu/compensation/recognition>

### **Represented Staff**

Although represented staff are not eligible for STAR Awards they can receive a non-cash award up to a value of \$75 in accordance with the non-cash award program.

### **Non-Cash Awards**

**Recognition Awards (non-cash, up to \$75 in value)** recognize specific contributions to the departmental mission or strategic plan. Recognition Awards can be in the form of non-negotiable gift cards, certificates, plaques, or a range of preselected items of limited monetary value. Non-cash awards are limited to up to \$75 in value.

## 92 Ways to Recognize Your Colleagues

In budget-constrained times, ongoing, meaningful rewards and recognition can be provided to our staff to recognize their many contributions. Some are low-cost, others no-cost, just the time it takes to say “thank you.” Here are 92 ideas to help you embed employee recognition into your everyday work. Not all of them are appropriate for everyone, but the idea is to stimulate some new creative thinking on how to motivate and recognize colleagues.

1. Smile - it’s contagious!
2. Create a Hall of Fame with photos of outstanding employees.
3. Arrange for a team to present results of its efforts to upper management.
4. Plan a surprise lunch or get-together with refreshments.
5. Encourage and recognize staff who pursue continuing education.
6. Post a thank-you note on an employee’s door.
7. Create and post an Employee Honor Roll in a reception area.
8. Acknowledge individual achievements by using the employee’s name when preparing a status report.
9. Make a photo collage about a successful project that shows the people that worked on it, its stage of development, and its completion and presentation.
10. Find out the person’s hobby and buy an appropriate gift.
11. Make a thank-you card by hand.
12. Cover the person’s desk with balloons.
13. Make and deliver a fruit basket.
14. Inscribe a favorite book as a gift.
15. Establish a place to display memos, photos, posters, and so on, recognizing progress towards goals and thanking individual employees for their help.
16. Swap a task with an employee for a day – her/his choice.
17. Establish a Behind the Scenes award specifically for those whose actions are not usually in the limelight.
18. Give the person a copy of the latest best-selling management or business book or a subscription to a trade magazine.
19. Nominate the employee for a University formal award (UMatter or Workplace Award).
20. Keep in mind that managers should serve as coaches to indirectly influence rather than demand desired behavior.
21. Take time to explain to new employees the norms and culture of your department.
22. Give special assignments to people who show initiative.
23. Design a “stress support kit” that includes aspirin, a comedy cassette, wind-up toys, and a stress ball.
24. Present “state of the department” reports periodically to your employees acknowledging the work and contributions of individuals and teams.
25. At a monthly staff meeting, award an Employee of the Month and have everyone at the meeting stand up and acknowledge the winner.

26. If your team is under pressure, bring a bag of marbles to work and take a break to have a contest – a sure stress reliever.
27. Serve ice cream sundaes to your employees at the end of a project.
28. Once a year, have a Staff Appreciation Day where the managers supply, cook, and serve food.
29. Recognize employees who actively serve the community.
30. Serve a team a hero party sandwich at the end of an assignment, for a job well done.
31. Give employees an extra-long lunch break.
32. Have staff vote for top manager, supervisor, employee, and rookie of the year.
33. Name a continuing recognition award after an outstanding employee.
34. Include an employee in a “special” meeting.
35. Give a shiny new penny for a thought that has been shared.
36. Send flowers to an employee’s home as a thank you.
37. Allow employees to attend meetings in your place when you are not available.
38. Purchase a unique pin to serve as a memento for a task well done.
39. Create an Above and Beyond the Call of Duty Award.
40. Hold informal retreats to foster communication and set goals.
41. Ask your boss to attend a meeting with your employees during which you thank individuals and groups for their contributions.
42. Pop in at the first meeting of a special project and express thanks for their participation.
43. Provide a lunch for project teams once they have made interim findings.
44. Send a letter of appreciation to all team members at the conclusion of a project.
45. Start an employee recognition program. Give points for attendance, punctuality, teamwork, etc. Provide gift certificates to employees who reach certain goals.
46. Find ways to recognize and reward department-specific performance.
47. Give a personalized coffee cup.
48. Plan a surprise achievement celebration for staff.
49. Start a suggestion program.
50. Give Mr. Goodbar (candy bar) awards.
51. Give an employee a blue ribbon for achievement.
52. Write a letter of praise recognizing specific contributions and achievements. Copy senior management and the personnel file.
53. When you hear a positive remark about someone, repeat it to them as soon as possible.
54. Call an employee to your office to thank them. Don’t talk about anything else.
55. If you have a department newsletter, publish a Kudos column and ask for nominations throughout the department.
56. Publicly recognize the positive impact on operations of the solutions employees devise for problems.
57. Acknowledge individual achievements by using employee names in status reports.
58. Videotape a special event and share copies with participants.
59. Express an interest in employee’s career development goals.
60. Post a large “celebration calendar” in your work area. Tack on notes of recognition to specific dates.

61. Create and string a banner across the work area.
62. Give a deserving employee a mug filled with treats.
63. Give a framed poem (poster or card) as a thank you.
64. Greet employees by name.
65. Practice positive nonverbal behaviors that demonstrate appreciation.
66. Support flex-friendly schedules.
67. Encourage employees to identify specific areas of interest for job-related skills. Then arrange for them to spend a day with an in-house expert to learn more about the topic.
68. Share verbal accolades – forward positive voicemail messages.
69. Actively listen to co-workers, especially when discussing their accomplishments and contributions.
70. Use 3 x 5 cards to write “You’re special because....” statements. People can collect the cards and refer to them when things aren’t going perfectly.
71. Have a recognition event created by a peer group that decides what they will give and why they will give it.
72. Keep a supply of appropriately funny notes that can be given as immediate rewards. Keep the supply visible – in a basket or box in your office.
73. Widely publicize suggestions used and their positive impact on your department.
74. When someone has spent long hours at work, send a letter of thanks to her/his home.
75. Throw a pizza lunch party for your unit.
76. Acknowledge and celebrate birthdays.
77. Give a note reading, “Thank you. You are a \_\_\_\_!” Attach a roll of lifesavers.
78. Make a necklace of lifesavers and give it to someone for being the “Lifesaver of \_\_\_\_.”
79. Serve popcorn and lemonade on Fridays, especially after a hard week.
80. Allow an employee to have input on her/his next assignment.
81. At an employee meeting, randomly tape gift certificates to the bottom of chairs.
82. Recognize those committed to personal health and wellness.
83. Have weekly breakfasts with a group of employees.
84. Treat an employee to lunch.
85. Give out gold coins for a job well done.
86. Bake a gift (cookies, bread, etc.) for an outstanding employee or group.
87. Send birthday cards to employees’ homes, signed by the dean or director.
88. Have an outstanding employee spend the day with a dean or director.
89. Drop Box for appreciations – Provide a drop box for student staff members to leave written appreciations for a fellow worker. Students then read the submissions to the drop box at staff meetings.
90. “You’re Awesome” cards – create a pre-printed card from ‘Your Fans in ...’ and send cards, signed by the department staff to colleagues who they feel deserve special kudos.
91. Recognize Exceptional (level 5) Performance on Annual Reviews with a letter from the senior manager of the unit, copied to the personnel file!
92. Tenure Recognition Awards – The University acknowledges staff for years of service after 10, 15, and 20 years. Recognize employees who reach these milestones at a staff meeting.