

Management Improvement Council Report

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FOREWORD

It is often touted throughout North Carolina State Government that our most important and valuable resource is our employees. But say anything enough times and the meaning starts to fade. Without showing our state employees their importance to the state and its citizens, we will continue to lose good workers.

Despite satisfaction with their jobs, state employees continually express a low morale through the annual state employee survey. They feel unappreciated by management, legislators and the general public.

State employees do good work. They want to be recognized for their efforts. If they show innovation or creativity, commitment or dedication, they want to be noticed and thanked for the extra service. By promoting recognition, we improve morale and keep our strong work force committed to North Carolina. Nothing builds faith and confidence in a job more than swelling with pride at a your own personal accomplishment.

Recognition is more than a plaque or certificate and more than a pat on the back. It is letting others know that a special achievement has been accomplished. It tells employees “your contributions make a difference.” It sets the groundwork for others to follow suit and strive for the same level of performance.

The Management Improvement Council needs to work with agencies and universities to provide an appropriate vehicle for a statewide recognition program. We need to ensure that all agencies are recognizing employees – employees at **every** level of state government.

The Office of State Personnel has already made great strides in this area through the Governor’s Awards for Excellence program, the Governor’s Safety and Health awards, Service Awards and the Richard Caswell award for longevity, but there is still much room for expanding recognition. The Office of State Personnel is willing to spearhead and parent a larger statewide program. That will require the partnership of all state government agencies.

A statewide recognition program will show state employees how important they are to us and emphasize that employees truly are our most valuable resource.

Ronald G. Penny
State Personnel Director

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Philosophy Behind Employee Recognition

"Genuine recognition of performance is something people really appreciate. People really don't work for money. They go to work for it, but once the salary has been established, their concern is appreciation. Recognize their contribution publicly and noisily, but don't demean them by applying a price tag to everything."

- Phillip B. Crosby, *Quality is Free*

The Importance of Recognition to Our Organization

The citizens of North Carolina are demanding a government that is lean, effective and efficient. They want to know that their government is spending their money wisely. This expectation creates the need for State government to establish:

1. a system in which effectiveness and efficiency are known values;
2. practices that positively influence quality and productivity ; and
3. a program to recognize and reward employees who make positive contributions to an effective and efficient government.

A well-planned, meaningful and comprehensive recognition program is an important component of an effective and efficient workplace. It serves as a means to motivate employees who have made positive contributions that support the values of an agency and state government. It also creates awareness and understanding that positive contributions are appreciated and valued. An appreciated and valued employee experiences a greater sense of job satisfaction and is encouraged to work even more effectively on the job.

Accepting the challenge to create an effective and efficient State government, in June 1998, the Management Improvement Council, (MIC) which is made up of all state government division deputy secretaries, deputy commissioners, university and community college personnel, formed a cross-functional team to:

- Gather, study, and recommend best recognition practices from the public and private sector;
- Inventory existing state agency recognition programs in North Carolina;
- Identify existing funding sources or barriers to funding sources;
- Review policies or statutes which restrict our ability to recognize employees; and
- Coordinate existing programs and propose recommendations for implementing a statewide State Employees Recognition Program.

Representatives appointed to the cross-functional team include:

Ronald Penny, Director, Office of State Personnel--Sponsor

Elaine Perkinson, DMV, Assistant Commissioner--Team leader

Ann Cobb, HRD Division Director, Office of State Personnel--Facilitator

Team Members:

Jim Blaine, President, State Employees Credit Union

Sondra Gips, Department of Environment & Natural Resources

Val Nagle, Crime Control & Public Safety

Lou Russell, Durham Technical Community College

Dianne Sortini, NC State University

Gwynn Swinson, Department of Justice

Lavonda VanBenthuisen, Office of State Personnel

The charter for the MIC Recognition of State Employees Subteam was clear. The mission was to develop a multi-level, multi-award program to recognize all levels of "good" to "outstanding" performance for individuals and teams. The challenge was to create recognition methods that are effective, easy to use, and well understood by all employees, as well as to encourage leadership among managers and supervisors. Remember that it is the managers/supervisors who must take the first step to recognize their employees and understand the importance of recognition.

Members of the recognition sub-team conducted extensive research and investigation into established and successful, public and private sector recognition programs. This investigation led the team to some important conclusions:

1. *A progressive recognition program is essential to support employees so that they know they are valued and appreciated.*
2. *A recognition program must be consistent with a company's values and principles.*
3. *Two major strategies, **immediate** and **formal**, are essential components of an effective comprehensive recognition program.*
 - **Immediate Recognition** -- Immediate recognition can provide reinforcement of every day, positive behaviors in the work place. This recognition strategy should be streamlined and easy to administer, thus allowing on-the-spot recognition to become a part of "the way to do business".
 - **Formal Recognition** -- Formal Recognition can recognize top performers and innovators. The formal awards strategy should be carefully structured and administered at the departmental level. The entire program should be as simple as possible to administer.

4. *A successful, equitable recognition program must be well planned, appropriately implemented and properly managed.*

It is important to know and understand the difference between “award” and “recognition”. An award or reward brings to mind a direct tie to something monetary that in turn relates to performance. While recognition may be monetary, its real purpose is to benefit the employee by immediately recognizing work that is done well and deserves to be shared with that individual and his/her peers.

Presentation

The appropriate presentation approach will vary with the nature of the occasion. Some forms of recognition may be formal in nature, requiring a good deal of preparation. Some immediate recognition opportunities may be designed to be light-hearted and spontaneous, especially if the goal is a quick morale boost for the office. In such cases, a low-key ceremony with people from the immediate office may be more appropriate. No matter the approach used, recognition should be appropriately presented.

Basic Principles for Recognition

- ***Recognition is not compensation.*** Compensation (i.e., pay) is long term and fairly inflexible once established. Recognition, on the other hand, is immediate and flexible, and can occur anytime. Forms of recognition may vary to suit different situations, and to accommodate employee preferences.
- ***Recognition should be timely.*** Recognition should be timely and relate to specific accomplishments. Regardless of what form the recognition takes, the presentation should take place as soon as possible following the accomplishment.
- ***Recognition should be personal.*** Recognition is a direct contact between employees and supervisors, or peer to peer. It is a joint celebration. To ensure a personal touch, the recipient should have some choice in determining the form of recognition.
- ***Employees should believe recognition is not based on luck.*** If employees believe that recognition is controlled by events beyond their control, they will reduce their efforts. Why try if recognition occurs whether you try or not? Eventually, employees will become cynical about the recognition system. Instead, employees should believe that recognition is a direct response to positive behaviors and continuous improvement.
- ***Recognition should be given for effort, not just accomplishments.*** Accomplishments are readily measured, while efforts leading to accomplishments may be harder to measure. Good efforts are just as important as the result in many cases. For instance, we need to recognize those that try new techniques, suggest improvements, or try to be innovative -- even if those ideas are difficult to carry out immediately.

- *All employees should participate in recognition programs.* The supervisor isn't always the person most aware of the achievements of the average employee. If you know a co-worker that has done a great job, recognize him or her for it. Don't assume his or her supervisor will take notice and recognize them; it might not happen.
- *Diverse types of recognition should be available to all, as appropriate.* By using a criteria-based recognition system, there can -- and will frequently be -- more than one winner. The same individuals or teams should not be recognized continually to the detriment of others. If one team truly should be recognized multiple times, it should not be at the expense of another worthy team.

Benefits of a Comprehensive Recognition Program

Immediate and formal recognition strategies will benefit everyone in the organization.

- * Senior executives, Managers and Supervisors
- * State employees (individuals, groups, teams and committees)
- * Citizens of North Carolina

How?

1. A boost in morale for State employees (at all levels of the organization):

Genuine recognition of performance improves employee morale. Higher morale in the work place can lead to job effectiveness, greater productivity, winning teams and will build commitment to the organization.

2. A more positive State employee image (public perception):

The public will have a positive perception of employees who are effective, motivated and committed to their jobs. Visitors will visibly see signs of a strong recognition program and the positive affect it has on employees.

3. A more positive media coverage and media relations:

Agencies are encouraged to share their recognition programs and success stories with the public and other state agencies. Establishing communication partnerships with agencies that support state employees, such as the State Employees Credit Union and the State Employees Association of North Carolina, to share news on outstanding employees will create more positive media coverage and media relations.

Program Administration

To ensure that employee recognition programs are established and properly managed statewide, it is important that responsibility for statewide administration be assigned. The statewide administrator will:

- provide agencies the appropriate guidance, tools (e.g. policies, procedures, etc), consultation and technical support needed for the development of a successful employee recognition program;

- develop training and orientation materials on effective employee recognition practices and integrate those into existing management and supervisory training curricula;
- conduct research on recognition trends and share/inform agencies concerning trends, processes and procedures for continued program growth and success;
- serve as a unifying agent by which State agencies, public sector organizations and private sector organizations can communicate, share, understand and appreciate the positive contributions State employees, agencies and universities make to our society. This awareness and understanding of the positives will serve to increase employee morale as well as pride in their career choice as a State employee; and
- serve as a catalyst for State agencies, universities and community colleges to create programs that:
 1. recognize outstanding employees;
 2. show appreciation for all employees;
 3. generate positive media attention about good government;
 4. educate and involve the public in State government programs;
 5. create a more positive public perception of government employees; and
 6. recruit for State jobs.

If we want state employees to take pride in their career choices, we must raise the awareness and understanding of their contributions.

Other Available Recognition Programs

Formal award programs are available at the division, state and national levels to augment the department level programs. Further into this resource guide, you will find information about state and national level recognition programs. If you have questions about any of the recognition programs covered in this guide, you may contact the Human Resource Development Division, Office of State Personnel, 101 West Peace Street, Raleigh, North Carolina. 919-733-2474

Getting Started

To get started with a recognition program, ask yourself the following: *What kind of recognition program(s) do we have now? What kind of program(s) do we want? What are our options?* Once you have answers to these questions, use this guide to assist you in the development of the kind of recognition program that will meet the needs of your agency's environment. Remember to make your program comprehensive, flexible and meaningful to your employees.

Resource Guide

This recognition resource guide, *Strategies for Recognition*, is designed to assist you in the development of your agency's recognition program. It is meant only to be a guide, describing "best practices" selected by the Recognition of State Employees Sub- Team. It is not inclusive of all the many possibilities available to show your employees they are appreciated and valued members of your organization and of the State of North Carolina. These guidelines provide managers, supervisors, and employees a variety of choices for meaningful recognition. If utilized effectively, these recognition tools will enforce the kinds of behaviors we want to see in our organizations.

Program Proposals

Recommendations from this team:

- 1) Provisions through legislation that would allow the use of existing resources in any state agency budget to be used specifically for an Employee Recognition Program. This would be separate and apart from the existing line item budget code for service awards.
- 2) Provide clarification of the current language as it is stated in North Carolina General Statutes §143-23. (a2): "Funds appropriated for salaries and wages are also subject to the limitation that they may only be used for: (1) Salaries and wages or for premium pay, overtime pay, longevity, unemployment compensation, workers' compensation, temporary wages, moving expenses of employees, payment of accumulated annual leave, **certain awards to employees**, tort claims, and employer's social security, retirement, and hospitalization payments." Along with clarification pertaining to the above mentioned statute the same situation exists with the language found in the State Accounting System in Line Item 535840 which states: "Service and Other Awards: Payments for pins, plaques, trophies, certificates, and the like for services awards and **other special recognition awards.**"
- 3) Provisions to allow any state agency to use funds that are a result of savings from another area within their budget to be used for their Employee Recognition Program. The two examples listed below are from Kansas and the State of Washington.

Kansas: To encourage innovations and efficiencies in state operations, qualified agencies are allowed to retain half the savings that result from underspending in State General Fund and special revenue accounts. Eligibility to participate in the program has been expanded, starting in FY 1999, to include all agencies, not just those participating in the KQM Program. The law authorizes expenditures, at the discretion of the agency head, in any of the three expenditure categories listed below.

1. Salary bonus payments up to \$1,000 for any one permanent full-time or part-time employee per fiscal year. The 1998 Legislature clarified that the maximum payment is \$1,000 less withholding for fringe benefits.
2. Professional development training. This category has been modified to include official hospitality.
3. Purchase or acquisition of technology equipment, including reprographic and computer equipment.

State of Washington: The authorizing legislation limits Saving Incentive Account expenditures to one-time activities that improve the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of customer services in agencies. Since the amount of this funding resource is somewhat unpredictable, it may not be used to create new or expanded services, or to incur ongoing obligations. Reports from agencies indicate that the majority of Savings Incentive Account expenditures have gone to either technology improvements (55 percent), or to employee training (40 percent). This experience is consistent with initial expectations about what types of activities would most likely fit legislative criteria for the account.

While there is existing statutory authority (Chapter 143) that provides for service awards, historically the General Assembly and the Office of State Budget Management have been very strict with the interpretation of this law. Unfortunately this provides no means of funding for other items and/or programs for employee recognition; only for service awards that are directly tied to the employees' years of service to the state. For example, N.C.G.S. § 143.23 limits the way the funds are expended

and may only be spent as appropriated with no changes or amendments once the budget has been approved. As stated earlier in this document, the distinction between an award and recognition becomes even more important when viewed from the statutory standpoint. As indicated above, Line item 535840 from the State Accounting System specifically states Service and Other Awards: Payments for pins, plaques, trophies, certificates and the like for service awards and other special recognition awards. Consistently, “other special recognition awards” has not been given any approval unless service-related.

Executive management continues to hear the importance of employee recognition, but are not provided with any “legal” funding to provide such a program within their agency. By receiving legislative approval to use existing funds within the appropriated budget, the means for consistent, effective, real employee recognition would become a reality. State employees are very deserving and work hard on a daily basis, many times under the microscope of the general public. **Remember that our employees are our most valuable asset.**

Immediate Recognition

What is immediate recognition?

Simple. It's "acknowledgement without delay." Immediate recognition is most effective when it reinforces exceptional behavior wherever it occurs, is sincere and occurs as quickly as possible.

Why is immediate recognition necessary?

The recognition system should have maximum flexibility. *Immediate recognition awards* are available for on-the-spot presentation with no further approval required. These low to no-cost ideas for day-to-day recognition will give a wide range of options to meet the needs of practically any situation. Hopefully, these ideas will help you think of dozens more. The possibilities are endless.

Anyone - Anytime

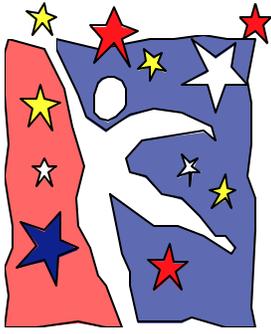
Anyone can recognize anyone at anytime! Recognition can occur between employees and supervisors or peer-to-peer. Don't feel limited to your own division. Recognition can cross division lines as well as departmental lines and can go beyond to outside state agencies and private industries. Everyone knows that supervisors and managers should recognize their top performers. Employees can also help office morale by giving their co-workers meaningful recognition as well. Remember that recognition is universal. You are not limited to recognizing individuals or teams within your division. *No approval process is required, . . . so why wait?*

Types of positive behaviors that should be recognized...

- Extra effort to make your customers satisfied (or even delighted)
- Consistently doing the job well
- Improving performance
- Participating on and/or leading an improvement team
- Identifying internal and/or external customer requirements
- Assisting a co-worker or someone in another office
- Identifying and preventing problems
- Obtaining additional skills, training, or responsibility
- Performing community service
- Volunteering for special work assignments
- Being innovative and creative
- Taking risks
- Projecting a "can-do" attitude
- Continually seeking improvements
- Making suggestions

Program Examples

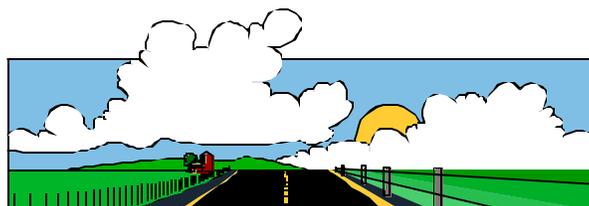
There are many ways to give immediate recognition to an employee, co-worker, supervisor and even others outside your division and/or department. You are only limited by the extent of your imagination. *Be creative!* Here is a list of ideas to get you started:



- ◆ **“Reach for the Stars” Awards.** This continuous process will allow employees to recognize each other for work above and beyond the call of duty. Any employee can present peel-off star-shaped stickers to a co-worker that he or she thinks is doing a great job. The stickers can be collected over an indefinite period. Once an employee accumulates 20 stars, he or she can select a prize. Employees should try to “catch other employees in the act” of performing work in an excellent manner, and should present a star sticker to another employee (or all members of a team) when they:
 - suggest or contribute an idea that enhances the efficiency of the organization;
 - perform an extraordinary act in pursuit of quality customer service.;
 - participate in or plan an activity that enhances the image of the Department or one of its divisions within the community;
 - volunteer or assist with a special project while continuing to achieve high performance levels in their regular job;
 - take initiative to assist a co-worker during a period when the workload is particularly heavy;
 - serve as a role model for other employees by continually exceeding standards; and/or
 - demonstrate outstanding “team building” qualities such as:
 - listening and responding with empathy
 - asking for help and participation from others
 - encouraging involvement
 - displaying a positive attitude
 - volunteering to assist others.

- ◆ **“Eureka!” Award.** This award is an easy way for any employee to recognize an employee on the spot for innovation and creativity. This award is a “traveling” trophy that the employee can keep as long as he or she sees fit and is passed on to another deserving, innovative employee.

- ◆ **“Extra Mile” Award.** This award provides recognition for employees that go out of their way to please a customer.



- ◆ **The “Above & Beyond” Award.** This award provides recognition to any non-Departmental individual, group or private company that has helped the Department in a significant way. Reward could be a certificate of appreciation, suitable for framing, signed by the appropriate person(s).

- ◆ **Candy Kudos.** A spontaneous, on-the-spot award that anyone can give to someone that has really been a big help. Pick the treat that seems to fit the situation best.



Examples:

Lifesavers: To someone that has been a real “lifesaver” to you regarding a particular situation.

Strawberry Jam: To someone that has helped you out of a jam.

100 Grand Bar: To someone that provided an invaluable service.

Nestle’s Crunch Bar: To someone who was there for you at “crunch”time.

Zero Bar: For completing a tough project with no errors.

Three Musketeers Bar: To the members of a great team.

Mr. Goodbar: To anyone with a positive attitude that enhances office morale.

Mint: To someone worth “a mint”.

Fireball: To someone who works like a fireball.

(Feel free to come up with your own list of sweet treats to fit any situation.)

- ◆ **Put it in Writing.** Anyone can take a few minutes to write a personal thank you note. For someone outside of your office, you might choose a quick “business card kudo”. Just write a brief thank you note on a business card (or a “post it” slip, or a 3"x5” index card) and sign it. Reinforce the message with a few words of thanks and a handshake. For someone within your organization, prepare a “letter of appreciation”. For very special circumstances, you can even go one step farther -- draft a congratulatory note for signature by a senior executive, such as the Division Director or the Department Secretary (a “letter of commendation”). In either case, make sure a copy of the letter is placed in the employee’s file, and present the original to him or her in front of the office staff.



- ◆ **Cyber Awards**. Send a buddy an electronic greeting card! Try this for a fun, animated way to send congratulations by E-mail. Make your own customized cards using formats you can access from the World Wide Web. Website addresses that may be used are www.bluemountainarts.com for Blue Mountain Arts' Animated Greeting Card Page and www.wral-tv.com/mall/cards for the WRAL On-Line Card Shop. There are many others, including Hallmark, just search the web for sites.
- ◆ **Wall of Pride**. Create a bulletin board showing your staff "in action". Provide a creative montage of photos, which can be updated every time a staff member is promoted, a noteworthy accomplishment is made, or any other happy moment occurs. Post letters of appreciation. Highlight special personal moments as well, such as the arrival of a new child, an engagement, and a fun retreat by the staff, etc.
- ◆ **"Free Parking"**. Give up that parking space! If you are lucky enough to have a reserved parking space, don't let it go unused whenever you are gone. Whenever you go on vacation, or plan to be away on assignment for a few days, give the parking pass away to someone that deserves a pat on the back.



- ◆ **"Mighty Mouse" Award**. Give a set of mouse ears to someone who has really come through in a tough situation, "to save the day."

- ◆ **"Dream Team"** Contact a representative from the N.C. Zoo, aquarium, or other state-run attractions for complementary passes. Give them to two or more people who worked together on a successful project.
- ◆ **"Spark Plug" Award**. Recognize employees who are friendly and helpful to their co-workers. Give them a spark plug, and say a few words of thanks to them in front of the office staff.

Best Practices – Employee Recognition

The following summary includes examples of employee recognition programs and activities from a variety of North Carolina State agencies and educational institutions, as well as private organizations both within and outside the state. While these examples are not inclusive, they do highlight a broad sample of formal and informal recognition programs. Contact phone numbers and web addresses are provided where available.

State of North Carolina

Crime Control and Public Safety Excellence in Action (www.nccrimecontrol.org)

Contact: Staff Development Office (919-733-6121)

A truly comprehensive recognition program, which encourages desired employee behavior (i.e., outstanding performance, advanced certification/training, and positive attitude). Formal awards are given for meritorious service or achievement, heroism, group excellence (see below) leadership, and to external organizations for service to the department. Immediate recognition awards are listed below. There are also a number of external award programs administered by the Office of State Personnel, the Governor's office, the NC Human Relations Commission, and several national awards and recognition programs. Unique programs include:

The **Group Excellence Award** honors outstanding and distinguished level of service by a group, team or committee. Award is a framed certificate signed by Department Secretary.

Immediate Recognition Program encourages employees to recognize co-workers through low-cost immediate awards: **A**Unsung Hero[®] (long-term, loyal employee who makes a positive contribution **B**thermal mug), **A**Reach for the Stars[®] (award star for work above and beyond the call of duty; 20 stars = prize, **A**Eureka[®] (award for innovation and creativity; traveling trophy); **A**Extra Mile[®] (for pleasing a customer; **A**Coin of Excellence[®]); **A**Above and Beyond Award[®] (non-departmental individual, group or private company that has helped the department in a significant way; certificate of appreciation); candy kudos, personal thank-yous, electronic greeting cards, parties.

Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) (www.dmv.dot.state.nc.us)

Contact: Employee Appreciation Committee, Division of Motor Vehicles (919-861-3015)

Employee of the Month. Anyone at DMV may nominate an individual by filling out a form; his/her supervisor then verifies evaluation. Nominations are evaluated monthly by 12-member Employee Appreciation Committee. Winners of the award receive a surprise visit from the Commissioner, a presentation (framed certificate) in front of co-workers, a small token gift and a special parking place next to Commissioner. In addition, winner's accomplishments are highlighted in DMV newsletter along with a picture of the honoree.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (www.ehnr.state.nc.us/EHNR)

Contact: Human Resources (919-715-4500)

The DENR Employee recognition program includes **“On-the-Spot”** as well as **Formal** recognition avenues. Their focus is on a non-monetary form of recognition in order to emphasize the importance of recognizing positive behaviors and innovations. This helps to emphasize the act rather than the reward. The **“On-the Spot”** awards vary from candy bars to thank you notes to parking places. The **Formal Awards** go through a nomination process and the recipients are then publicly recognized with certificates or plaques at division or Departmental staff meetings. The **Formal Award** categories are **Distinguished Service, Safety and Heroism, Pursuit of Excellence, Group Excellence, Division Award, Partnership, Leadership and Special Projects.**

Recipients also receive recognition on the DENR home page and in the monthly newsletter.

Appalachian State University (www.appstate.edu)

Contact: Human Resources (828 262-3186)

Offer a variety of informal events: **Lunch and Music on the Mall** - Low-cost lunch and musical entertainment provided once a month during the summer. **Employee Appreciation Breakfast** - free breakfast (served by the Chancellor and his/her administrative staff) for all employees during State Employee Appreciation Week. Lunch is provided (in November and December) for food service personnel, housekeepers, and other service personnel who worked at other recognition events and were unable to participate. **Faculty and Staff Family Night Football Game**. Each faculty and staff given two football tickets.

Durham Technical Community College (www.dtcc.cc.nc.us)

Contact: Office of the President (919-686-3374)

Committees of peers review submissions for **Effective Innovation in Instruction** and **Effective Innovation in Administration** programs. Honorees receive cash awards ranging from \$250-\$500 and are recognized publicly by the President at the spring/fall faculty/staff meetings.

North Carolina A&T (www.ncat.edu)

Contact: Employee Relations (252-334-7226)

Administer a number of programs including **Service Awards, Employee of the Year, Governor’s Award for Excellence,** and **Employee Appreciation Week.** Encourage additional recognition programs, which are tailored to the mission of the work unit or contribute to the community in a positive way. Provide guidelines on program documentation, presentation of awards, and options for awards.

NC State University (www.ncsu.edu)

Contact: Human Resources, Employee Relations (919-515-4300)

The University Awards for Excellence Program (www2.acs.ncsu.edu/hr/awards.htm) encompasses all units and colleges. Individuals are nominated and honored first at unit/college levels (where they receive a variety of awards at receptions, luncheons, pizza parties and ice cream parties). Unit winners move on to the university level (where the Chancellor, at a formal luncheon, awards plaques with a slide show featuring honorees in their work settings). From this group, five University Awards for Excellence winners are named. They receive \$250.00 and plaques. They then move to the next level to represent the university at the Governor's Award level. Over the last three years, more than 600 individuals have been recognized through this program. Pictures of all unit, university and Governor's Awards winners are featured on the Human Resources' web site.

Employee Appreciation Week (www.fis.ncsu.edu/eaw) is held in the fall (if possible during State Employee Appreciation Week) and includes *Employee Appreciation Day*, which is held at Reynolds Coliseum for all university employees. Every college and major administrative unit is represented. Exhibits highlighting recent research, programs, and information of general interest including appearances by athletic coaches and recently published authors are displayed. Entertainment features mascots, clowns, marching band, as well as singing and dance groups. Attendees enjoy free popcorn, ice cream and soft drinks and pizza for .50/slice. Food is served by the Chancellor and senior administrators. A variety of prizes are drawn including a grand prize, which generally involves a free trip for two. A *Service Recognition Luncheon* is also held during the same week that recognizes employees with 25, 30, 35, and 40 years of service. Honorees receive a plaque from the Chancellor.

University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill) (www.adp.unc.edu/hr/es/recognit.html)

Contact: Employee Services (919-962-1483)

Any permanent employee may recommend another employee for a **Chancellor's Award** (criteria similar to Governor's Award for Excellence). A selection committee of faculty and staff selects five individuals who are honored at a recognition luncheon with the Chancellor and receive a monetary award of \$500, 24 hours leave, and a framed certificate.

There are a large number of **individual departmental programs**. A complete listing is available at the above web site.

University of North Carolina (Wilmington) (www.uncwil.edu/)

Contact: Human Resources (910-962-3160)

Staff Award of Excellence winner becomes nominee for Governor's Award for Excellence. Honoree receives \$1,500 cash award, reserved parking spot for one year, 3 days of vacation leave, presentation clock, framed certificate, and name on perpetual plaque in chancellor's office.

Other Organizations

Alcatel Telecom (919-850-6000)

This organization operates in a team environment with continuous improvement teams. There are numerous recognition vehicles including *Wall of Excellence* (team members, photographs, graphs and information on each team), *Quality Cup Award* (awarded by corporate officers), high visibility use of banners and photographs, *Wall of Honor* (mural with fireworks background with gold stars engraved with team/individual names). *ATip o the Hat@* awards may be given by any person/team to any other person/team for excellent accomplishment of a task. Nomination form is signed by recipient's manager and the next level manager indicating acknowledgment of the award.

First Union Mortgage

With 2,200 employees in 19 states, the challenge is to communicate across division lines. The **AGo for the Gold@** program assigns a volunteer from each department who is responsible for gold coins and prize distribution. Each employee has a supply of Quality Grams and Marbles to recognize peers. When an employee has 10 marbles, he/she receives gold coin to purchase products from a catalog of rewards or may request time off.

Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DMV, Chief of Staff

850-921-8238 fax 850-488-9272

The Comprehensive reward and recognition program includes three levels of excellence. Level I: High Five and Outside/In Recognition (customer service), Super Vision (given by supervisors), Golden Attitude. Selection from winner catalog. Level II: AIM (All Ideas Matter Team Award), Have a Heart (community service award), Unsung Hero, Pursuit of Excellence. Certificates, cash award or gift certificate, gift from winner's catalog, plaque, preferred parking space. Level III: external award opportunities.

Public Employees Roundtable (202-297-5000) (www.theroundtable.org)

Suggestions for thanking employees: Excellence Awards/Breakfast of Champions; wall of public service; public employee night (sports or cultural facility); employee talent night; carnival for employees; invite employees of other government agencies to visit offices for an after-work mixer; challenge another agency to softball game or other event; organize own sports event (teams can compete from different agencies); and employees show appreciation for each other by sending balloon bouquets/carnations to each other.

City of Seattle

Comprehensive recognition programs reflect specific departmental functions Tools, Talent, Technology Award; First in Safety; Environmental Achievement; High Voltage Awards; Peak Performers Program; Pride at Work; Most Physically Fit (Fire Department); FAME (Finances Awesome Municipal Employees); HOODS (Honoring Outstanding Dedicated StaffBNeighborhoods Department); The Oscar (Outstanding Customer Service Award).

South Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles DMV Administrative Services

803- 737-1133 fax 803-737-1577

GEMS (Great Employees Mean Success) - Pat on the back recognition - personal message on GEMS card.

STATE AND NATIONAL RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

The success of State Government in providing services to meet the needs of North Carolina and its citizens is dependent on the efforts of State employees. A competent, committed, and dedicated State workforce assure that North Carolina citizens receive effective, cost efficient and beneficial governmental services.

State and National level programs provide additional avenues for recognition of employees for meritorious service or achievement.

Here are the programs currently in place:

State Programs

Service Awards Program

Recognition program based on years of service to the State. Non-monetary awards are presented for service in 5-year increments beginning with the fifth year of service. All employees are eligible.

Richard Caswell Award Program

Annual recognition program for State employees who have 45 or more years of State service. Certificates are presented. All employees are eligible.

Employee Incentive Bonus Program

Special program to encourage employee participation in improving efficiency and effectiveness of State Government. Monetary (up to \$100,000 based on anticipated expense reductions) and non-monetary recognition for individual employee and employee group cost savings ideas. All employees are eligible.

Governor's Award for Excellence

Highest honor that a State employee may receive for noteworthy service to State Government and the people of North Carolina.

State Employee Memorial (new program)

This program is an annual memorial ceremony held in honor of State employees who have lost their lives while performing their job duties. It provides State government with the opportunity to publicly acknowledge and recognize the value of these employees and the service they provided state government and the citizens of North Carolina.

Governor's Award for Safety and Health

This program is designed to promote awareness, encouragement, incentive and support for the development and implementation of safety and health programs. Effective safety and health programs can significantly reduce on-the-job injury, worker compensation cost and property liability losses. Three levels of awards are presented based on a points earned system:

Governor's Award of Honor
Governor's Award of Merit
Governor's Award of Citation

John R. Larkin Award

Presented annually to the State employee who best exemplifies the commitment of State government to social equality and positive human relations for all North Carolina citizens. Recipient must have the status of a permanent employee of the state with two years of service. Administered by the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs.

Recognition focuses on five performance areas: devotion to duty, innovations, public services, safety/heroism, and human relations. Awarded annually to a maximum of ten State employees. All agencies and universities participate.

State employees outside their jobs are active citizens of the State and are eligible for recognition under several programs administered by the Governor's Office and the N.C. Human Relations Commission.

Awards and certificates administered by the Governor's Office:

Governor's Award for Bravery and Heroism

The highest commendation for an act of heroism by a citizen. All North Carolina citizens are eligible.

Order of the Long Leaf Pine

Presented to individuals who have a proven record of service to the State of North Carolina. Guidelines call for special contributions to the community, extra effort in their career, and community activities.

Certificate of Appreciation

Recognition for those who have provided a service that benefits the entire State. All citizens are eligible.

Volunteer Certificate of Appreciation

Recognition to individuals, groups, and organizations that provide volunteer services to other individuals, groups, or organizations in North Carolina.

The North Carolina Human Relations Commission recognizes outstanding North Carolinians for their work in the area of human and civil rights in the following categories:

Citizen Award

Recognition for meritorious service in civil and community affairs.

Community Involvement Award

Recognition for efforts to promote community and human betterment.

National Programs

Numerous opportunities exist for national recognition of exceptional individual performance and department, university and agency programs. Most are administered through national professional organizations, trade associations, and inter-governmental groups.

Innovations Transfer Program

Since 1975, the Innovations Transfer Program of the Council of State Governments has identified and disseminated information on innovative programs or policies which have been successfully implemented by individual states, and have the potential to be adapted for use in other states. Two programs from each region are selected by a regional panel of state officials,

examined by staff and featured in the Council of State Government's *INNOVATIONS* publication series.

Public Service Excellence Award

The Public Service Excellence Award, established by the Public Employees Roundtable and co-sponsored with the National Governor's Association pays tribute to government organizations whose achievements exhibit the highest standard of dedication, excellence and accomplishment. The program provides a uniform, nationwide means of recognizing quality service at all levels of government. Members of the Public Employees Roundtable determine the Public Service Excellence Award.

PARADE/IACP Police Service Awards

The *PARADE/IACP* Police Service Awards, established by *PARADE* magazine editors, recognize exemplary performance in all aspects of police work. The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) solicits the nominations for these awards. A panel of judges from *PARADE* magazine and the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) review the nominations and make the final decision.

Conclusion

We have the opportunity to create an innovative, meaningful recognition process for North Carolina State Government. Some of the finest citizens of this state are employees that work in public service. Because of the important intrinsic value in acknowledging hard work, we should do all that we can to recognize their invaluable contributions.

We have been charged with the formidable task of recommending processes to recognize employee excellence in state government. Employee recognition is a critical part of making quality improvement a reality in North Carolina State government. The state will benefit because effective employee recognition processes improve morale, reduce turnover and create a more positive workplace; in turn, employees' commitment to their organizations will sky-rocket.

Developing a sound employee recognition program is the charge of each individual state agency, community college and university. Such a program needs strong support from the very highest levels all the way to the front-line employees. Support from the Governor, the Management Improvement Council, all agency, community college and university senior management, General Assembly members and public employees statewide are vital to the success of employee recognition. A successful recognition program will require continued financial support, program administration resources and legislation to establish and continue its operation.

State employees are making good things happen for North Carolina's citizens every day. We have the opportunity to create a system that recognizes these efforts and help bring about a new attitude toward government employees and North Carolina State government.

The Office of State Personnel is ready to move forward with the MIC and all agencies, community colleges and universities to make a comprehensive, state-wide employee recognition system a reality. It is never too late to begin your strategies for recognition.