

**Volunteer Recognition Round Table Discussion**  
**November 5, 2010**

The discussion of volunteer recognition focused on tangible ideas and ways that we can demonstrate appreciation to our volunteers. As managers of volunteers, it is vital that we create a culture of gratitude within our organization and with our volunteers. This starts with providing a meaningful, genuine “thank you” at the end of every session a volunteer attends.

The following is a list of ideas on how to recognize volunteers (Loosely Grouped in Categories):

**Relationship Building**

- Ask volunteers how they want to be recognized
- Get to know your volunteer and pin point specific interests (ex: Casino Night for volunteers who like to gamble)
- Photo Collage/Board
- Have residents/recipients assist with volunteer thank yous
- Board members call to thank volunteers
- Share positive feedback (personal and meaningful)
- Send pictures to volunteers in action and include a note
- Give specific verbal recognition
- Residents/Participants make cards
- Spend time with volunteers (personal connection)
- Share ownership (team)
- Build relationship
- Staff/program participants use “thumb” prints to make sign/card- “You’re really Thumb-Thing!”
- Involve President/CEO of organization in recognition of volunteers
- Birthday cards with a personal note
- Birthday Emails
- Holiday card with a personal note
- Bulletin board with pictures of volunteers centrally located
- Monthly Social
- Verbal thank you
- Condolence cards
- Play a game to connect volunteers
- Trivia Party

- Send photos of volunteer during an event
- Card home to family highlighting needs of volunteers

**Awards**

- Program Volunteer of the Year (adult, family, youth, and teen)
- 2 times a year banquet
- Volunteer of the Year awards
- Present each volunteer with a check of much each volunteer saved the organization
- 1 big conference every 6 years
- Presidential Service Awards
- Years of service awards
- Letter of recommendation
- Award 1 of 6 categories – Email nominations
- Awards based on service hours
- Awards on rotating basis (holiday themes)

**Food Thank You**

- Recognition Dinner/Banquet
- Holiday Potluck/Get Together
- Summer Picnic
- Hot Chocolate & Mug
- Candy Bar Thank you (You’re worth a Grand, Take 5 Bar Thank you)
- Cookie ingredients in a jar with a thank you note
- Candy with catchy phrases
- Breakfast
- Potluck with donated door prizes
- Lunches at different sites
- Ice Cream social
- Make volunteers coffee

- “Super volunteer”- mug with soup recipe
- Volunteer potluck (saved money goes for gifts/door prizes)
- Volunteer breakfast
- Instead of dinner, cake or appetizers
- Christmas Party

### **Gifts**

- Gift of a clock (Your time is precious; Thank you for sharing it.)
- Note pad/pen thank you gift
- Reusable grocery bag
- Birthday cards
- Flowers/Seeds
- Use donations to thank volunteers
- Volunteers Rock pins
- Birthday emails
- Give gift cards
- Provide t-shirts/cap
- gifts to take home from banquet
- Survival kit bag
- Recognition pins, name badges

### **Media/Community**

- Newsletter Recognition
- Baudville.com (recognition gifts)
- Note Card Thank you
- Instead of sending invitations to each volunteer, post it on website
- volunteers have their own website and post recognition/communications
- Post photos of volunteers in local newspaper
- Provide entertainment opportunities
- Newspaper article
- Volunteer profile
- E-Cards (123 greetings)

### **Other Ideas**

- Volunteers given access to perks of the job
- Continuing education programs
- Letter (This is how you have helped)
- Postcard coupons – Volunteer bring them in to office to receive a gift
- Picture of thanks
- City wide volunteer thank you