

**100 *W*ays to
*R*ecognize**

100 Ways to Recognize

The National Residence Hall Honorary of the National Association of College and University Residence Halls, Inc., an organization that is committed to the recognition of the outstanding accomplishments and achievements of students living in the residence halls. The charter of the NRHH allows each campus to induct up to one percent of its total on-campus population for membership. The members of NRHH are the top one percent of student leaders living in the halls and are selected for membership based on academic achievement, service to the residence halls, strong character, and leadership potential.

What is “100 Ways to Recognize?”

“100 Ways to Recognize” contains a creative list of ideas you can use to recognize people at your schools. These ideas can be used in your RHA meetings for goal setting and encouragement, to recognize the efforts of groups and individuals throughout the residence hall system, and to increase group morale. The list has been split into seven different categories. They are Goal Setting, Group Morale, Encouragement, Simple Individual Recognition, More Involved Individual Recognition, External Recognition, and Miscellaneous.

We hope that the recognition plans outlined in this booklet will be used to recognize, celebrate, and encourage students for all of the work they do. We hope that it will celebrate student leaders for the special gifts that they all bring to our residence hall communities, and encourage them to continue to find ways to be involved in residence hall life. Have fun recognizing!

How do I use the “100 Ways to Recognize”?

Read the ideas listed in the desired category. Read the descriptions of each idea on the list. Choose a few for your group to work on and try. Since there are so many ideas, you can try different ideas on the list at different times. Remember to have fun!

Some of the ideas are one-time recognition ideas, and others involve continuous involvement. Maybe try a few of each to keep the recognition going and keep group morale up.

Category Descriptions

Goal Setting: These ideas will help you set goals for your group that are fun and motivational.

Group Morale: These ideas will help you to lift morale and group productivity through recognition.

Encouragement: These ideas will help your group when things are tough. They can help motivate your members to continue to work hard.

Simple Individual Recognition: These ideas will help you to recognize outstanding individuals. These ideas are simple in nature, as they require small amounts of preparation.

More Involved Individual Recognition: These ideas will help you to recognize outstanding individuals. These recognition ideas are not difficult to complete, however they can take more preparation work than the ideas listed in the “Simple Individual Recognition” category.

External Recognition: These ideas will help you to recognize individuals outside of your organization. These ideas tend to be more externally oriented than those in the “Individual Recognition” categories.

Miscellaneous: These ideas do not fit in any of the above categories.

Goal setting

1. Wishing Well

Give every member of your group a penny, place a plastic wading pool in the middle of the room (or any wishing well facsimile) and request that members of the group throw their penny into the well while making a verbal wish. You may even adapt this by giving out more than one penny and having people make wishes in certain areas. This may be a good warm-up exercise for a goal setting program.

2. To Do Jar

Have people in your organization write the things that they like to do on a sheet of paper. After a particularly long day, meeting, or personal/organizational success, draw one of the cards and do what is written on the card. Your job as a leader is to assist in making sure that the activity takes place.

Group Morale

3. T-shirts

T-shirts are an excellent way to promote unity and community. They can also be used as awards and motivators. Create a unique design, or capture a phrase that represents the group you are working with, and award the shirts to deserving members. Shirts are inexpensive motivators (usually only \$10.00 to \$14.00 for small quantity orders). Having the group use fabric paints and create their own designs can save more money.

4. Friendship Plants

There are varieties of plants that can be propagated very easily by simply rooting a cutter in water. Have a big plant like this in your office or room, and give a cut out to people who have helped you or are deserving of recognition.

5. Magnificent Marbles

Every member of your group should receive a marble. You then explain that this is a magnificent marble and that it should be given to someone who is deserving because they have done something magnificent! Each member is encouraged to visit with another member of the group who is deserving of receiving this marble and share why they are making this "award." This is a positive, non-threatening way to share positive strokes.

6. Notes

There are so many times that a simple note can have a great impact. Many people enjoy receiving praise in person, but there is something about having a note to refer back to that makes it very special. You can put a note on almost anything - it's just the time you take to write it and send it that makes it special.

7. Limerick/Poem

Write a limerick or poem to celebrate an individual or the accomplishments of a group! Pass it out at meeting or include it in your minutes.

8. Success Jars

Have everyone in academics at a meeting share a recent success on a card. Throughout the meeting, take time to draw out and read the cards.

9. UN-Banquet

Many times we strive to do so much recognition through the use of banquets that they become less than special occasions. If you are involved in planning too many banquets, make an Un-Banquet --- plan a simple menu along with special activities that are generally uncharacteristic of a banquet. Let people wear blue jeans, make them eat different courses by different people, do whatever it takes to shake things up!

10. Blue Ribbon Exercise

Make an outline of a ribbon award for each member of your group or organization. Pass it around at the close of the meeting or workshop and encourage everyone to make positive comments on the ribbon.

11. Mid-term Banquet

Most banquets celebrate beginnings or endings. A very difficult time can be the middle of the semester. Plan a mid-semester banquet to chase away the blahs and remind students that they are appreciated!

12. Hugs and Back-Pats

Never underestimate the importance of being touched by someone. Talk is cheap, but by reaching out to another, you can indicate your approval, your understanding, your appreciation, and your support! Don't let anyone suffer from skin hunger!

13. Work of Art

Have each member of your group create a drawing of a very special time or event...save these drawings, and later in the year, display each for a certain period of time in a very special place. Create a museum or art gallery like atmosphere to highlight the individual's accomplishment or remembrance!

14. Appreciation Marbles

Give each member of your group a small jar. Each time they do something that you appreciate, give them a marble to place in the jar! This is made even more powerful if you attach a note, or share with them why you are rewarding them.

15. Membership Certificates

Give membership certificates to all those who are involved in your organization. You will be surprised at how pleased your members will be. Everyone has a need to feel included in a group or organization. These certificates are perfect for display on a bulletin board.

16. Door Decorations

Give each member a laminated door decoration that includes his or her name, position and organization logo.

17. Buttons

Buttons can advertise a number of things. They can indicate membership, or they can indicate special recognition within your group. Use buttons as an inexpensive way to recognize the efforts of others!

18. Superballs

Give everyone in your organization a superball as a reminder that they are super! You might even want to take a break in your meeting to play some games with the superballs-free the child that's hidden inside you and the members of your organization!

19. Tapes

Have every member or you organization, committee or staff bring a CD or tape of his or her favorite song. Record this into a master copy and then share a duplicate with all the members of the group. This can make a good closure gift!

20. Create-A-Song

Rewrite the words to a favorite song or TV theme song to recognize a special event or the accomplishments of an individual. Make a tape of this song to play at a meeting and award a copy to the deserving party.

21. Celebration

Spread streamers around your meeting room to celebrate an accomplishment. Take time to revel in your successes!

22. Coloring Book

Create a coloring book based upon the individuals and projects that are representative of your group. Try selling it as a fund-raiser or hand it out at meetings for those who like to doodle.

23. Slide Shows

Take a number of pictures throughout the year to create a slide show for presentation at the end of the year. Paired with music, a slide show can be a powerful way to focus attention on the accomplishments of the year.

24. New Cars

Give everyone in the group a new car! Make award contingent upon some accomplishment or a record of participation. Unless you are quite wealthy we suggest you purchase Matchbox cars vs. the real thing!

25. Plaques and Trophies (1967)

Plaques and trophies make outstanding mementos of involvement and achievement. If you cannot afford new trophies scavenge old ones that could be revamped by adding new inscription plates, by adding a more appropriate decoration at the top, etc. Work with a local dealer who is willing to assist you.

26. Murals (1970)

Recognize the creative talents of your group or organization by allowing them to create a mural that pictorially or graphically represents the goals of the organization. Allow all members involved to sign the mural.

27. Videos (1971)

Create a video that talks about group goals, group projects, or allows senior members to give advice to those who will be future members. This is an excellent way for people to feel involved and by giving copies of the video to each member, you share a lasting souvenir of the year.

28. Balloon Prizes (1972)

Solicit prizes from local merchants and at the end of the year give members an opportunity to break a balloon that corresponds to a prize.

29. Jar of Candy (1973)

Keep a jar of candy on your desk and only let individuals take a piece of candy from the jar if they can share an outstanding personal success or accomplishment with you.

30. Meeting Themes (1981)

Boost the morale of your organization or staff by sponsoring meeting themes (i.e.: Beachwear, movie stars, etc.)

31. Report Cards (1982)

Give everyone report cards at the end of a project or a term. This can be a very positive way to evaluate and recognize accomplishments! You may even choose to send these home to family members.

32. Twinkle, Twinkle (1994)

Constellations are wonderful, aren't they? So, to put things on a smaller, more individualized level, name a star after the best among your group.

33. E-Mail Baby! (1995)

Send a groovy message to those of a deserving nature. The Internet is a popular way of sending out some great vibes. Let the people who are worthy receive some great recognition. Everybody loves to get email!!!

34. "Liter" of the Week (1998)

At the beginning of the year the chapter decides who deserves the Leader/Liter of the Week award. The winner is awarded with a bottle of soda and is allowed to keep it. The next week the previous winner chooses someone they believe is deserving of the honor and it continues that way for the rest of the year. Not only do the leaders get recognized for their leadership but they also get a frosty beverage!

Encouragement

35. GOALdfish

Few people enjoy creating goals - but everyone likes goldfish. When you set goals at the beginning of a term or project, consider awarding a GOALdfish to all of those who achieve all of their goals. This is an inexpensive and creative way to encourage students to reach for their goals and for you to recognize them for their accomplishments!

36. Key Chain

Give key chains to all of the students involved in leadership positions on your campus. Virtually all students have a need to carry keys, and an inscription such as "I'm a student leader" on the key ring helps to emphasize an important (but sometimes overlooked) point.

37. F.R.O.G.s

F.R.O.G.s (an acronym "For Recognition of Growth") may be awarded to those who are maturing and developing in their leadership positions. You may choose to give plastic frogs or perhaps you will even decide to give tadpoles to these outstanding members.

38. Words of Wisdom

Have each member give you a quotation that is a personal favorite. Compile these into a small quotation booklet and use the quotes to decorate bulletin boards, etc.

39. Letter Bombs

If someone is having a tough time, encourage all members of the group to send him or her an encouraging note. Bombard them!

40. Hangers

Give a plastic hanger to members or a group or organization that need encouragement to "hang in there" after a difficult meeting or week.

41. Opportunities

Give packets of seeds to individuals at the beginning of a term project. Tell them that the seeds are like opportunities-if treated with care, and given the right amount of nurture, they will flourish into something beautiful. Organizational tasks and individuals are the same...at the end of the term or project, ask what the members did with their seeds.

42. Motivation Box

Have every member of your group write down something that motivates them on a card. Place this card in a box and share the motivation box ideas with any groups or individuals that could use ideas on enhancing motivation.

Simple Individual Recognition

43. Poster-O-Rama

Collect posters that are given to merchants and save them to attach to a note to give out as mini-awards throughout the year.

44. Hats off to...

Cut top hats out of paper and award them to those who deserve a tip of the hat. This is a very inexpensive and creative way to share recognition.

45. Hot Ticket Award

Create an award that looks like a ticket burn it around the edges, put it in a plastic sleeve and you have the Hot Ticket Award. A perfect way to recognize those individuals or ideas that have burned bright!

46. Stirring Things Up Award

For those who have stirred things up in a positive way you may choose to recognize them by awarding them with a large mixing spoon. Attach a note or certificate to explain how they have mixed things up!

47. Burning the Candle

Burn a candle at both ends and award it to someone who is pushing himself or herself to the limit! This might also work as a nice memento of a burnout of a program or workshop.

48. Posi-Squad

Implemented at one of NACURH's own annual meetings, this award is given to those people who make a positive statement or exhibit positive behaviors. Sometimes groups can become too negative, and this award tends to refocus the group on the positive! We found this to have a positive impact on the National Board of Directors, we think that this will work with your group, too!

49. Starfish Award

There's a story about a gentleman who questions why a person is going to extraordinary measures to throw starfish back into the sea. When asked the question, the rescuer responds "because it makes a difference to this one." Giving a dried starfish to those who are outstanding in reaching out to others makes for an appropriate and touching award.

50. Energizer Award

Give an award of a battery to the individual who is doing the most during the week to energize the group or organization. You may use one battery mounted on a plaque or you may present each honoree with an individual battery.

51. C.A.R.P. Award

This award also utilizes goldfish in recognition of the fact that they are nothing but fancy carp! C.A.R.P. is an acronym for Caring And Responsible Person, and a C.A.R.P. award should be made anytime one or your members has done something that is sensitive and supportive of others.

52. Bright Ideas

Give out light bulbs to those members of your organization who had a bright idea!

53. Good Egg Award

Blow out an egg, decorate it, and award it to a member of your organization who has been a "Good Egg."

54. Outlet Award

Give the award of a small outlet cover or plate to someone who has been an outlet for creative ideas or energy within your group or organization.

55. Adjourn in Honor of...

As a simple recognition, adjourn your meeting in honor of an individual or organization that has excelled. This should appear in the minutes.

56. Brushing Up Award (1966)

Give an award of a paintbrush to those members who are making efforts to improve their leadership skills and abilities by attending workshops, programs, and conferences. It's important to encourage this kind of activity.

57. Paper Clip Award (1974)

Give awards of a giant paper clip to those who are working to keep your organization organized or working together - sometimes we forget how much of an impact those simple tasks can be.

58. Banners (1975)

Create banners that share items of praise to be displayed at your meetings or in the hallways near your office. You may also choose to display a banner at the office or room of the person you are recognizing.

59. Balloon Surprise (1976)

Share a Mylar balloon as a surprise or for an even greater surprise, arrange to fill an office or room with balloons. This will take some coordination for entry and a lot of hot air, but it is sure to surprise the recipient.

60. Wanted Posters (1978)

Use photos to create "Wanted for Good Behavior" posters to be placed throughout the office or the hall!

61. Flowers (1983)

Everyone enjoys flowers for special occasions. Why not share a bloom with those who are deserving of your thanks? It's a small deed that is sure to brighten their day!

62. Chalk the Walls (1985)

If it does not violate campus policy, why not share positive exclamations of praise by chalking them on the sidewalk? This is sure to draw attention to your "honoree" and to your organization for its recognition efforts!

63. Dedications (1988)

Dedicate programs, activities, and events to the outstanding individuals on your campus. This really will cost nothing - just make a mention of it on the advertisement or mention it in the introduction.

64. Bookmarks (1989)

Create bookmarks that highlight the outstanding accomplishments of individuals and have these bookmarks placed at the main desk of your campus learning/resource center.

65. R.O.S.E. Award (1992)

Recognition of Superior Effort is given with a certificate and a rose. Choose a rose color that best matches the personality of your honoree.

66. Thank You! (1993)

Need I say more?

67. Go Back In Time (1999)

Ever wished you were a kid again? By simply giving the gift of a children's book with a significant message, you can assist somebody to regress into his/her childhood and relive the "good ol' days." Might I suggest calling the Doctor (Seuss, that is!)? Did I Ever Tell You How Lucky You Are? or Oh, The Places You'll Go! And what about, "The Little Engine That Could"? There is no better way to tell someone, "I think you can, I think you can, I think you can..."

More Involved Individual Recognition

68. Resident of the _____

Appoint a committee in your residence hall organization to select a resident of the (day, week, month, etc). Resident of the _____ can receive a letter of congratulation from the Director of Housing, the Chancellor, and the Hall Association President. You can also announce the selection in the newspaper, on the campus radio, etc. Post the winner's picture too!

69. Leadership Scholarships

Present outstanding student leaders on your campus with scholarships on each class level. Students can fill out applications, and the scholarships can be awarded at a banquet or special luncheon. This serves as a great way to recognize the student leaders. You may be able to participate in campus awards programs and publicize your organization.

70. Member of the Month

The Hall Association can select a member of the month. This can be a simple program based on nominations and a small selection committee. Refreshments can be served in honor of this person, and the

association may want to present the winners with a certificate. This motivates members and recognizes your student leaders.

71. Dinner with the Execs

New students can often be very shy about approaching Executive Board members of your RHA. This simple program gives them a fantastic opportunity to meet the board in a non-threatening and enjoyable way. Try to have dinner (or lunch, breakfast) with different residence hall representatives or staff members each week (or bi-weekly or monthly). The enhanced and improved communication that you can expect from taking time to communicate more closely will provide you with rich dividends that you can draw on throughout the year. To make this more special, you may decide to eat off campus.

72. Letter to Families

A powerful recognition tool is to take time to write a letter to students' parents, guardians and relatives. All enjoy hearing about the special talents of the students you work with! This is a powerful public relations tool as it enhances the status of your organization by promoting that you care, and it shows students that their involvement has had a great impact! Many of us recognize that families have difficult time understanding the various leadership roles and student activities that take place in many residence halls. This may help provide a bridge to greater understanding.

73. Publicity Releases

Utilize your University relations' experts on your campus to complete publicity releases about efforts of the individuals that you work with. Students like to see their names in local newspapers and usually it does not cost anything.

74. Service Pin (like the NRHH Outstanding Leadership Service Pin)

Consider giving service pins to those students who have been involved in your residence life program for 4,6,8, and 10 semesters. These pins need not to be given out on a competition basis - they should be distributed based on involvement. This is a wonderful way to recognize on-going service.

75. Medallions

Get in touch with one of your art students or the art department faculty members to make small medallions out of clay. Let each be glazed and fired in a different way to promote uniqueness. Present these as awards of thanks and praise when someone was helpful.

76. Campus TV/Radio

Use your campus TV or radio station to promote outstanding achievements of organizations or individuals! This is an excellent way for students to be aware of the excellent pursuits of their peers.

77. Personal Ads

Take out a personal ad in your campus newspaper to praise the accomplishments of individuals or groups that you work with. This is an inexpensive way to praise efforts and to share recognition in front of their peers.

78. University Signs

Many universities have announcement signs near the administration building or the heart of campus. See if you can encourage an administrator to recognize efforts of those you work with by placing a message on the signs.

79. Leader Trees

Plant small trees on your campus to honor student leaders. Work with administration to find an area in need of planting and create a living testimony to the outstanding efforts of your top student leaders.

80. Proclamations

Have your campus President, Dean of Students, or Director of Residence Life issue proclamations that recognize the achievements and involvement of outstanding students and groups.

81. Chancellor's Lunch (1964)

Arrange for the Chancellor to take an outstanding student leader to lunch once a month. This may also be implemented with the Dean or Director. This will be a good motivator for students and will provide top administrators with the exposure to your best students.

82. Incident Reports (1977)

Most campuses use some type of incident form or documentation for the student conduct system. Why not take these forms and document positive behaviors? Have students meet with hearing panels or administrators for focus on their positive contributions! Encourage good behavior to repeat itself!

83. Jail (1979)

Arrest these "do-gooders" and place them in jail - a main lobby area of the student union would be a good place! Treat them with a lot of TLC in preparation for #84. This may also be adopted as a fund-raiser, see if friends or colleagues will post bail money!

84. Trial (1980)

Have a trial to see if they are guilty of the good deeds they have been charged with. This can be played to the hilt as a melodrama. (You may want to consider videotaping for later showing.) The close of the Trial is a perfect opportunity for a going free party!

85. Cinema Announcements (1984)

Usually it is common for a member of your campus cinema organization to make some announcements before the screening of the movie. Why not encourage the organization to recognize those that you work with?

86. Day Off (1986)

Share recognition by trying to give an outstanding student leader a "day off." Try to find some volunteers that will assist them in making their day as effortless and enjoyable as can be (ideas might include doing laundry, cleaning dishes, typing memos, etc.)

87. Phone Calls (1987)

Have an administrator make a telephone call to family members of an outstanding student to share their appreciation for the efforts of the students!

88. Letter to the President (1990)

Why not send a letter praising the contributions of your group or an individual to your state's Senator, Representative, or Governor, or perhaps the President of the United States? Politicians usually get letters of complaint or dissatisfaction. Many politicians will return positive letters, but even if they don't you can send a copy of the letter to who you are praising and they'll always have a letter that was sent to the President about their efforts.

89. Show them their Efforts (1991)

If your school nominates inductees into NRHH, rather than an application process, you send the nominee a copy of what great thing someone else has to say about them. This goes for all of the "Of the Month" award nominations as well. It always feels good to be nominated to win an award, or be inducted into an honorary organization, but it feels even better when you know why others value your dedication!

90. Induction to the Association of Alumni and Friends of NACURH (AAFN) (1996)

The AAFN was formed to recognize outstanding individuals who have significantly contributed to improving the quality of life in the residence halls. The AAFN has been referred to as the "Hall of Fame" for NRHH Chapters and RHA's across the continent. Inductees are recognized at the NACURH Conference each May. A paragraph briefly detailing the individual's contribution is included in an annual booklet published and distributed among NACURH member schools. Inductees also receive an engraved paperweight. The deadline for inductees for each academic year is March 31st. Induction requires a \$100 contribution to the AAFN Fund and the submission of a brief (approximately 50-60 words) informational

paragraph describing their contributions and accomplishments. The funds are used to support student leadership development and scholarships within NACURH. To induct an individual on your campus contact the National Advisor.

91. NRHH pin and Apparel in honor of... (1997)

At your NRHH meeting, recognize someone who has exceeded the expectations of the group and wear your NRHH Apparel and Pins in honor of that person the next day.

External Recognition

92. Staff Attack

Encourage members of your organization or staff to attack another organization during their meeting-bring treats or prizes and be a positive and energizing force! It's best to check with the organization or advisor to make sure that your attack will not come at an inappropriate time.

93. RA Program of the Month

Your Hall Association can make an award for the outstanding RA Program of the Month. This will serve to recognize those RA's who are doing an excellent job with programming. The award can be a small cash stipend, a T-shirt, a certificate, or even a pizza! Your recognition process is sure to encourage successful programs!

94. Hall of the Year

Form a committee to nominate, deliberate, and select a residence hall on your campus that is deserving of the award for being the "Hall of the Year". Selection criteria should be established early and should be communicated with all the halls wishing to participate in the program. Halls can submit bids or the selection committee can solicit bids from deserving halls. Suggested categories for consideration could include creativity, programming, involvement, support of RHA, and growth or improvement that has occurred throughout the year. Involve administrators in presenting the award to make it even more special.

95. Day in the Honor of...

Name an individual to honor on a certain day. You may also want to honor a type of individual (RA, Hall Director, etc.) on a certain day. Honor them with banners, balloons, etc.

96. Carpeting Award (1965)

Give a small carpet sample to those students who are wearing out the carpet by visiting other students in an effort to encourage them.

97. Friend of the Halls (1968)

Make an award to administrators, faculty, and staff members who make an outstanding contribution to the residence halls. This may be in the form of a small award, a certificate, a newspaper ad, or simply recognition at a banquet. Don't forget that one of the efforts of NRHH should be to recognize all of those who assist the halls - not just the students.

98. Link Award (1969)

Provide those individuals, offices, and organizations that have assisted you in your efforts with a piece of chain. This is an inexpensive and catchy way to carry your message.

Miscellaneous

99. Holiday Figures

Buy plain stars and have members decorate them with names and personal holiday wishes or messages. Display these figures during the holidays and give them to the people before they leave the campus for the holiday celebration.

100. Build a Website (2001)

Build a website telling about the person/people and what a great job they have done or continue to do. This can be done at some place like geocities.com or on your own organization's web space.

