

CityStars! Employee of the Month Program

The CityStars! employee of the month program recognizes extraordinary accomplishments by city of **Alexandria, Virginia** (128,000), employees and employee teams. Employees may be nominated for the award by residents of the jurisdiction or by other employees, and the winners are recognized at city council meetings.

Leadership/staffing

The program was developed by a committee of approximately 20 employees, who were asked by the city manager to design an employee recognition program. Nominations are reviewed by a committee of approximately eight employees representing a range of city agencies and employment levels. The committee is appointed by the city manager and its chair is elected by the committee. A personnel department representative serves on the committee to verify that nominees are employees in good standing.

Timeline

The selection committee meets monthly; it chose its first employee of the month in November 2004. Nominations are accepted at any time, but nominations received by the 10th of each month are considered for the following month.

Budget/funding

The main cost of the program is the eight hours of annual leave that are given to winning employees. Otherwise, program costs are minimal.

Program description

All full-time and part-time employees in good standing who have completed their initial probationary period are eligible for CityStars! Anyone, including members of the public, may nominate an employee or a group of employees for the award. Employees and employee teams may be nominated several times, but self-nominations are not accepted.

Nomination forms are distributed through the city's intranet and are available to the public on the city's Web site. The form asks nominators to indicate the ways in which the nominee exemplifies the city's six values:

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Teamwork
- Communication
- Diversity
- Leadership.

All nominees are notified of their nominations through a letter from the city manager, who encourages them to keep up the good work. The winning CityStars are invited to attend a city council meeting, where their awards are presented. A proclamation is presented at the meeting, and winners receive eight hours of administrative leave (good for up to 12 months). In some cases, supervisors may also award a special parking place for a month. A photo of the winner is displayed on a special plaque in city hall as well as printed in the city's newsletter.

Results

In the first few months, the city received up to 20 nominations each month. That number has since decreased, but at least a handful of nominations come in every month. Two employees were recently recognized for a program they suggested to improve and upgrade the city's snowplows. Their suggestion saved the city \$6,000 in labor costs in the current fiscal year and will save even more in the coming years. The program has been very well received by employees.

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