Dear Community Member,

Thank you for your interest in the Of-the-Month (OTM) recognition program! OTMs serve to recognize members of the Boise State University community who are making outstanding contributions towards students’ lives. They can be written by and for students, faculty, and staff, are then evaluated on a campus level and sent on to the regional and national levels to complete against OTMs submitted by other schools across the country. They are a pretty big deal, so to have one written about you should be considered quite an honor! This type of recognition is what makes people feel appreciated and encourages them to keep up the great work!

In the following pages you will find information about writing OTMs, tools to help you write an award-winning OTM, and examples of winners to give you an idea of what wins. Don’t forget, OTMs for each month are due by 11:59pm on the 5th of the following month, so don’t wait until the last minute to get started! If you have any questions or need any assistance, contact the Boise State Chapter of the National Residence Hall Honorary at nrhh@boisestate.edu.

LET'S GET OUT THERE AND START RECOGNIZING!

NRHH Executive Board
Boise State University
11 TIPS FOR WRITING WINNING OTMS

1. Use specific concrete examples in your OTM – the more detail, the better!

2. Get to the point...avoid fluff.

3. Use spell check and grammar check features on Word AND proofread your submission.

4. For program submissions, include the outcome and effectiveness of the event.

5. Identify what is normal for the position/program and show how the nomination went above and beyond that.

6. Be descriptive, creative, and inventive when talking about people and events.

7. Write OTMs immediately following the program for which they are written. It will be easier to remember all of the details and events that occurred.

8. Don’t use abbreviations/define acronyms. These aren't always universal! State exactly what you are talking about.

9. Make sure you are nominating someone or something in the correct category.

10. Make sure a nomination is MONTH SPECIFIC! Use phrases like "in the month of ____ they did...". Maintain this consistency throughout the OTM.

11. Have fun! Realize you are doing this to honor someone else. Try and imagine their face when out of the blue they receive an award congratulating them for a job well done!
What *Not* to do

- Nominate someone or something in the wrong category
  - RAs and CAs nominated under “faculty”
  - Community service program nominated under “social program”
- Do not make a nomination month specific
- Leave parts of the form blank. If you’re missing information, try to get it before filling out the form.
- Submit your OTM after the deadline (Due 11:59pm on the 5th!)
- Start writing an OTM at 11:55 p.m. the night it’s due.
- Only write a few sentences about the nominee
- Be very generic and vague – be more specific!
  - “She is such a great person, everyone loves her.”
- Do not proofread the OTM for grammatical and spelling mistakes.
- Don’t submit an OTM at all.
Category Descriptions

Advisor
Any individual who directly advises a residence life organization and has made outstanding contributions to the organization(s). The individual may be the main advisor or the graduate advisor.

Community Service Program
A service or philanthropic program that benefits a group, charity, or other organization. This could include drives, fundraising, charity runs and/or book fairs, or other specific events. The program should focus on the importance of the residents giving back to their broader communities in which they live.

Diversity Program
A program that promotes and educates about diversity and understanding. This program illustrates the importance of promoting diversity in the residence halls as well as embracing diversity in the everyday lives of the residents.

Educational Program
A program meant to educate residents about a topic, issue or idea. Programs nominated in this category can range from academic success programming, learning a new skill or promoting global citizenship, etc.

Executive Board Member
This category recognizes the outstanding contributions of an Executive Board member of a member school’s residence life organization and the work of the board member within the Executive Board and across residence halls on their campus.

First Year Student
Any student first year student leader (freshman, transfer student, non-traditional, etc) who excels in adapting to a new environment within their residence hall and taking an active role in their communities and positively impacting those around them. Submissions in this category may emphasize academics, leadership, involvement, contributions to community, floor, hall, residence life organizations, etc. Individuals that would be eligible for nomination in any other category are ineligible for nomination in the First Year Student category.

Institution Faculty/Staff
Individuals who aid students in their academics, which includes professors, instructors, teaching assistants, counselors, and other academic affairs staff. This category is intended to recognize institutional faculty who have made a contribution to the residence life community both in and out of the classroom.

Organization
Any organization that has actively contributed to the student leadership, recognition, or other aspects of residence life during the month of nomination. This is for recognition of the organization as a whole and not just the accomplishments of a few members. Emphasis should be placed on the successes of the organization as well as how they have helped the campus in general and the residence life community.
Passive Program
Any program that does not require anyone to actively run it for people to participate in it. This category is intended to recognize residential programming that occurs through bulletin boards, newsletters, pamphlets, etc.

Residence Life Faculty/Staff
Individuals who aid residents within the housing campus community. This category is intended to recognize the Residence Life Faculty/Staff who are not eligible for the Resident Assistant category and who have made contributions to the residence life community.

Resident Assistant
Any individual within a residence hall student staff who has worked with/impacted residents on their floor or in their hall, gone above and beyond the duties of their job, supporting residents in the communities in which they work, supported their residence life organizations, and/or made outstanding contributions to the hall in which they work during the month of nomination. The OTM should focus on the nominee’s accomplishments within the RA role, but may also include other roles or responsibilities taken on during the month of nomination, such as supporting the above-mentioned organizations.

Residential Community
Any residential community, such as wings, halls, floor, complexes, etc. This award should emphasize what this community has done as well as how it has supported others (both within and outside their community). This community being recognized must not be an official campus organization. Should illustrate what brings a group of individuals together and how they worked together as a group to accomplish their goals during the month of nomination. Communities that would be eligible for nomination in any other category are ineligible for nomination in the Community category.

Social Program
Any social program that focuses on resident interaction and their ability to meet new people and socialize. Programs in this category can range from being a floor social program to a campus wide program.

Spotlight
Anything that does not fall under any of the other categories that you feel is worthy of an Of the Month recognition. Individuals or groups that would be eligible for nomination in any other category are ineligible for nomination in the Spotlight category.

Student
Any individual enrolled as a student at the institution who has made outstanding contributions to the residence halls during the month of nomination. Things to consider may be students who have made a contribution to their floor, hall, residence life organization, etc. through leadership, motivation, programming, volunteering and/or being a role model for other residents during the month of nomination. This OTM may address several areas of student life, such as academics, leadership, involvement and more. Also of importance is how the nominee has balanced their roles as a leader and a student and the display of good academic choices. Advisors, executive board members, first year students and anyone that can be classified as being in the resident assistant category are not eligible for an award in this category.
National Winner

NACURH, INC.

First Year Student of the Month

School: University of Arizona  Region: IACURH  Nominee: Caroline Shanholtz  Nominator: Jillian Andrews

On-Campus Population: 6000  Chapter Size: 45

Please explain the outstanding contributions of the nominee during the month of nomination

This year is ending, but after the month Caroline Shanholtz had, it’s clear that she is just getting started! Caroline is wrapping up her freshman year as one of NRHH’s most dedicated members, the leading force on her hall council, and a student poised to make an impact on the entire nation!

April was an incredibly important month for Caroline’s involvement with the Omega Eta Lambda chapter of NRHH. As a second semester freshman, Caroline was finally eligible for induction into the organization, and she wasted no time in applying! Caroline was inducted in the beginning of April, and she immediately started participating in NRHH’s recognition projects, and joined the NRHH Relay for Life team! As if she wasn’t already an outstanding member, Caroline jumped at the chance to run for the E-board! Just one week after being inducted, Caroline ran for Vice President of Recruitment and Retention. She beat out her competition, and was elected to the position! Her incredible dedication is already evident as she works hard to transition into the role, and the rest of the E-board is consistently impressed with her initiative to run for a position as a first year student!

Caroline is also an exemplary leader on the hall level, and Pima hall council looked to her to step up during April. In addition to ending her year as a liaison between RHA and Advocates Coming Together, Res Life’s social justice organization, Caroline was able to bring information from the campus level back to Pima. She was also Pima’s nominee for the U of A RHA First Year Experience Award, as they submitted a bid detailing all of her amazing achievements. Caroline also extended her impact to other halls by working closely with Pima’s hall buddy, Maricopa. As RHA implemented the hall buddy system and asked buddies to host collaborative programs, Caroline took the lead for Pima by communicating with Maricopa’s leaders. She was the head of the programming team as the two halls came together to host an open mic night for the whole campus!

Caroline didn’t just commit the last month of her first year to U of A; she used April to jump into national involvement! After being selected to U of A’s NACURH delegation, Caroline put all of her energy into preparing for the conference, and no first year student has ever been more excited to get involved with the nation! Caroline regularly attends delegation meetings as one of the most enthusiastic students there, and she always has valuable input to contribute as the group works on U of A’s banner, display, and spirit wear. Caroline also got involved with conference programming by submitting a program to help student leaders improve their communication skills. She worked hard to ensure top quality for her program submission and was recently thrilled to find out that her program was selected! Caroline couldn’t be more excited to share her knowledge with the rest of the nation, and she will definitely be one of U of A’s most spirited and involved delegates at NACURH!
Caroline Shanholtz’s first year at U of A is closing with a bang, and the entire university community has taken notice of her amazing devotion to all things Residence Life! She has made an indelible impact on NRHH, Pima hall council, and next she moves on to the nation. Caroline’s commitment to leadership is obvious, the only thing that isn’t clear is how a first year student could accomplish so much in one month!

Word Count: 580

National Winner

Month: October 2010
Faculty/Staff of the Month

NACURH, INC.

School: Northern Arizona University Region: IACURH Nominee: Gretchen McAllister
Nominator: Rachel Rebar

On-Campus Population: 6500 Chapter Size: 65

Please explain the outstanding contributions of the nominee during the month of nomination

October is a busy month on most college campuses with midterms, Homecoming, and Halloween. Instead of stepping aside until everything died down, our Faculty in Residence, Gretchen McAllister, ran alongside the students supporting them through this busy time.

Gretchen is new to her role this year and understands how important it’s to integrate herself into the community as early as possible. Outside of her office she created a bulletin board which serves to introduce her and her family to the community. Along with this effort, Gretchen brings her children to a lot of the events she hosts or supports in order to familiarize her family with the new environment.

Knowing how stressful of a time October can be for student studying for midterms, Gretchen has formed weekly study break events in Aspen Crossing Learning Community, the hall where she resides. Every week she rotates which floor hosts the study break and the types of snacks offered to the students; this event will run through the end of November to offer consistency and to give the residents something to look forward to. October is also a big month for professional development due to the career fairs. Gretchen hosted a resume-writing workshop for the residents and RAs of Aspen Crossing.

The RAs of Aspen Crossing had a “multicultural potluck” program in October. Not only did Gretchen show her support by attending the program with her family, but she took the engagement to the next level by prompting the residents to talk about their backgrounds and families. This’ yet another example of Gretchen’s dedication to her work and the enthusiasm she promotes in the community. Gretchen has also taken the multicultural aspect of her own life and shared this with the Aspen Crossing community by helping coordinate African Drumming lessons taught by her husband.

Gretchen also demonstrates this same devotion with the RAs of the Aspen Crossing community by attending every weekly staff meeting to stay in touch with what’s going on in the community. Her care for these students extends into developing stress relief for the staff called “Play With Purpose”. Her presence is a warm reminder that she supports the RAs in their efforts to reach the community.

Gretchen’s dedication to this important role doesn’t end Friday at 5pm. She has a standing invitation to enjoy pancakes with her family on the weekends. Gretchen has also used the month of October to host several open house events for different majors and colleges. These serve as mixers for the students to have a place to hang out and meet with the faculty of their respective majors. Gretchen goes above and beyond to create that comfortable environment for students and faculty to connect with each other. Her apartment patio has also been utilized to host a pumpkin carving program for the Aspen Crossing residents and the Chinese Scholars attending NAU. Just another example of the great opportunities Gretchen is creating for students to interact with a variety of influential people.
Another way Gretchen reaches out to the international population is through Friday tea time with the visiting faculty members from China. This is an opportunity Gretchen created to have that time to talk to these folks about their experiences at NAU. They meet in the public side kitchens in Aspen Crossing, which inevitably attracts students inquiring about their meeting.

These are examples of an environment Gretchen has created in October to promote learning and growth for the students, as well as faculty members. Gretchen deserves this recognition for her tireless efforts to enhance the experience of those within her reach.

Word Count: 598
Sometimes, I like to think that Max is like Miracle Max from The Princess Bride. In the movie, when all the other characters believe that Wesley is dead, Miracle Max instead describes Wesley as “mostly dead” and then proceeds to bring him back to life with his miracles. Maxwell Bohning is just the same, except Max works his miracles for coworkers and residents. Something that would be “impossible” to most other people is merely “mostly impossible” for Max. Let me start with his daily agenda. Besides all the duties of being an RA, he is currently taking 16 upper-division credit hours for his Applied Mathematics major. He is also in charge of large sections of the roommate agreement website, which serves all 5000+ of our campus residents. He is the Vice President of Recognition in the NRHH, and has been writing regional winning OTMS regularly. The only way I could see Max being more busy and involved is if he coordinated the Conference on World Affairs at CU, a massive program with a wide variety of experts in just about everything from all over the world. But wait, he actually is a major coordinator behind this event too… Max does just about everything.

Have you ever seen a floor dinner? They usually attract somewhere in the neighborhood of 5-15 people, but when Max has a floor dinner it really is a “floor” dinner. I have never seen him go to a floor dinner with less then 30 people, which is pretty spectacular considering that he only has 36 residents. He is also there for everyone. Every time I have been downstairs, I have seen him helping people with their homework, their relationship issues, their roommates problems, and more. And he doesn’t just help the people on his floor, he goes way out of his way to help everyone. He’s even been helping me adjust to being the new Hall Council President on a daily basis.

Max also does a lot outside of his daily routine. Over the summer, he co-created and hosted the CU Stampede program, a freshman introductory program about leadership. Unfortunately, CU Stampede was during RA training, and Max still had to finish his responsibilities on his floor as well as coordinating one of CU’s largest leadership camps. Even though it would be impossible for most to complete two such momentous tasks, Max proceeded to make the ultimate experience become a reality for CU Stampede. CU Stampede was full of creative and fun innovations. He was even able to get Jim Voss, an astronaut, to speak at CU Stampede. Most importantly however, is that he created a wonderful learning and fun experience for all the participants. I was a mentor at this program, and his efforts truly made an impact on my Stampers. To add to the chaos, there was a massive water leak the day before Stampede that proceeded to flood the bottom floor of Aden, Max’s floor. But guess who was there first, who saved the day by blocking the water from getting through using blankets, and who let the Hall Directors know what was going on, and even helped clean up after the flood? Max of course.

All in all, Max does so incredibly much and changes so many lives on a daily basis, that it makes me start to question whether he actually sleeps. He does so much, it sometimes seems he may have learned Wesley’s trick of dual identities. But, above all, he is still Miracle Max and continues to make the impossible, mostly possible.