

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS DAY 2006

The Department of Human Resources will sponsor a recognition program for ODU administrative professionals on Thursday, April 27, 2006. Employees who provide reception, secretarial and administrative assistance services and are in the Administrative and Office Specialist career group will receive an invitation to the program. The event will include a continental breakfast reception and mystery theme program. **Attendance is by invitation; RSVP and supervisor's approval to attend are required.** Invitations will be sent to eligible employees during the first week in April.

Although the Department of Human Resources is sponsoring a program, this should not preclude departments planning an activity or event to express appreciation to those valuable employees who provide administrative support to their areas. Larger departments may want to plan one activity for all of the support staff; smaller units may be able to do something on an individual basis. Some ideas:

- ❖ Host a potluck luncheon – food provided by supervisors/faculty in the department.
- ❖ Prepare a personalized greeting card for each administrative employee.
- ❖ Bring in some sweet treats or basket containing assorted edibles for your administrative professionals.
- ❖ Take your administrative professional(s) out to lunch.
- ❖ Spend a few minutes expressing gratitude for the contributions they have made making sure to cite specific examples.

If you have any questions or need additional suggestions, please call Kathy Williamson (683-4564) or September Sanderlin (683-4234).

Return-to-Work Program

Per Governor's Executive Orders issued in 1999 and 2005, ODU established a Return-to-Work policy that provides for temporary light, modified, or alternative duty (transitional duty) for salaried full and part time employees unable to perform normal duties due to injury or illness. (The policy also applies to wage/hourly and adjunct employees covered under Workers' Comp.) The emphasis of the policy is to reduce lost time and provide work as an important part of the recovery and healing process.

The program benefits the University and the employee and applies to work and non-work related conditions when the employee's doctor specifies in writing that the employee is able to perform some duties on a transitional basis until able to return to full duty. The transitional duties may consist of the employee's regular assignment with modification such as reduced physical activity or length of workday. Other situations may require an alternative assignment within the department, for example, deskwork in lieu of the physically demanding assignments of a position.

The most recent executive order requires classified employees who are supervisors to be evaluated on their efforts to manage lost time and to actively participate in the return-to-work process. When appropriate, supervisors should also be evaluated on maintaining a safe work environment. Sample performance expectations for safety and managing lost time will be sent to budget unit directors soon.

Please contact Dave Hollembeak (683-3051) in the Benefits section of HR if you have questions.

Policy 6051, Return to Work may be accessed on the ODU web site under Policies and Procedures. <http://www.odu.edu/ao/polnproc/>

VIRGINIA PUBLIC SERVICE WEEK 2006

Governor Kaine has designated the week of May 1 – May 7 to observe Virginia Public Service Week in the Commonwealth. This year's theme will be "Proudly Serving Virginians" to emphasize the service aspect of public employment. This observance provides an excellent opportunity for recognizing and rewarding deserving employees in each state agency.

As part of the celebration, the Governor will announce winners of seven awards from among nominations submitted by agency heads. Nominations from ODU will include recent winners of the Customer Relations Employee of the Year, HACE Employee of the Year, AUA Faculty Administrator of the Year, Gazelle Award and others. The Governor's awards are listed below. Recipients of the Governor's Awards will be honored at a reception in Richmond during Public Service Week.

- The Governor's Award for Agency "Star"
- The Governor's Award for Career Achievement
- The Governor's Award for Community Service and Volunteerism
- The Governor's Award for Customer Service
- The Governor's Award for Innovation
- The Governor's Award for Teamwork
- The Governor's Award for Workplace Safety



Departments are encouraged to use Virginia Public Service Week as a way to salute the contributions of ODU employees in their efforts to serve the citizens of Virginia. A list of ideas is provided for your consideration in planning recognition for your employees.

- ❖ Hosting a breakfast, lunch, ice cream social or picnic in your department
- ❖ Printing and distributing departmental t-shirts
- ❖ Have a drawing for a prize(s) (perhaps tickets to an ODU sporting event)
- ❖ Printing certificates of appreciation
- ❖ Developing a list of departmental accomplishments
- ❖ Providing individual letters of appreciation to employees
- ❖ Purchase movie tickets or gift certificates (use internal recognition program budget)

School Assistance and Volunteer Service Leave Policy

The Department of Human Resource Management has revised this policy (formerly Leave to Provide Community Service). The new policy clarifies eligible agencies: "A public or private nonprofit organization that is representative of a community or a significant segment of a community, and is engaged in meeting human, educational, environmental, or public safety community needs. Excluded is service provided through a place of worship where the only recipients of the service are the constituents of the place of worship (e.g. painting and maintenance of buildings, yard work, serving on a Board, etc.)" The policy also defines "volunteer" as: "A person who performs or gives services of his/her own free will. A person who renders aid, performs service, or assumes an obligation voluntarily without monetary compensation." Finally, the revised policy provides a list of examples for which an employee may be granted volunteer leave. Unchanged are the requirements for supervisory approval prior to using volunteer leave and the allowance of up to 16 hours of paid leave per leave calendar year. This policy may be reviewed in detail at: http://www.dhrm.state.va.us/hrpolicy/policy/pol4_40.pdf

Reference Requests for Classified and Hourly Employees

ODU Policy 6200 directs supervisors to refer requests for references on current and prior classified and hourly employees to Human Resources for response. HR will coordinate a response with the supervisor. Policy guidelines include providing only job-related information that is accurate and factual. Any characterization of the employee's performance not based on fact should be avoided. When possible, responses should be made by phone and general notes kept and dated regarding the conversation. Certain personal information may not be disclosed without the written consent of the employee. This information includes performance evaluations, disciplinary actions, attendance, personal information such as age, home address, marital status, and insurance coverage. When the employee has provided a specific signed authorization for the release of employment information (sometimes part of an application form), management may release the specific information that has been requested. Please contact Human Resources with questions about providing reference information.



Benefits Connection

Tuition Assistance Summer Semester Deadline: May 1, 2006

Classified, faculty and faculty administrators may apply for summer tuition for three credit hours. There is no dependent/spouse tuition assistance for the summer.

Tuition Assistance for Fall Semester Deadline: August 1, 2006

For more information call Kathryn Whitson at extension 3-4237 or visit <http://www.odu.edu/af/humanresources/benefits>

Open Enrollment

for health benefits and for flexible reimbursement accounts will be from
April 14 - May 15.



Detailed information coming soon!