SPECIAL OLYMPICS VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT SERIES

RECOGNITION
Volunteer Recognition
Learning Objectives:

- Understand the impact of recognition in your own life
- Identify organizational barriers to giving recognition and propose solutions
- Explore ways of offering formal and informal recognition in your Special Olympics Program
  - Discuss creative, low-cost recognition ideas
- Review essential guidelines of effective recognition
Think about volunteer recognition in your own life:

- What kind of recognition have you received?
- Was it meaningful?
- Why?
Key Concepts of Recognition:

1. Recognition is an ongoing, integral part of the management process.

2. Recognition can be formal or informal and can be given on many occasions during a volunteer’s involvement with Special Olympics.

3. Recognition should be meaningful to the recipient and should be given in a timely manner.

4. Recognition can be creative and fun to give and receive and is best when associated with the Program’s culture and the volunteer’s type of service.
Key Concept #1

Recognition is an ongoing, integral part of the volunteer management process
Can you identify any organizational barriers to giving positive feedback and recognition to your volunteers?

- If so, what are the barriers?
- How can you overcome them?
Key Concept #2

Recognition can be formal or informal and can be given on many occasions during a volunteer’s involvement with Special Olympics.
Formal Recognition

Major benefits of formal recognition:

1. Building community spirit among volunteers
2. Publicly recognizing volunteers – attracts others to join
3. Boosts volunteer motivation
4. Volunteers see that their service is valued
Cautions in Formal Recognition

1. Presuming they replace daily “thank yous”

2. Lack of personal presentations

3. More costly – some people believe that money should be spent solely on the athletes and the Program

4. Poor attendance at formal recognition ceremonies; lack of promotion; time constraints

5. Others
My Program Recognizes Volunteers...

- How and when does your Program currently recognize volunteers?
- How could you improve on this?
Times for Recognition

- Daily/weekly basis
- Monthly/yearly basis
- Special Occasions (birthday, anniversary date with Special Olympics, holidays, etc.)
- At the end of a large project
- When a volunteer leaves Special Olympics
- Before or after a Special Olympics competition
Key Concept #3

Recognition should be meaningful to the recipient and should be given in a timely manner.
The Appropriate Recognition for the Individual

- What kind of recognition do people motivated by accomplishment like?
- What kind of recognition do people motivated by social interaction enjoy?
- What kind of recognition do people motivated by power like?
Key Concept #4

Recognition can be creative and fun to give and receive. It is best when associated with the Program’s culture and the volunteer’s type of service.
Innovative Ways to Recognize Volunteers

Describe several ways a Program could recognize the following volunteers:

- Day-of event volunteers
- Office volunteers
- Year-round volunteers
- Committee members
- Games and Area Management Team Members
Essential Guidelines of Effective Volunteer Recognition

• The key to volunteer recognition is placement in the job most suitable to his/her motivations and talents.

• Recognition must be meaningful to recipients, not to the person giving the recognition.

• Many acts of recognition can be spontaneous and personal and are often not costly

• Short term volunteers are best recognized at the work-unit level in the group with which they interact

• Long term volunteers generally like recognition within the larger group setting