

Dear Evaluation Committee,

It is with great pleasure that I nominate Ms. Mary Nominee for consideration for the 2016 Staff Award for Excellence. In addition to performing her job at an exemplary level, Mary demonstrates an extraordinary commitment to her university community as well as to the general public.

Mary takes it upon herself to provide exceptional support and service to new faculty and staff. She discerns quickly their individual needs and moves efficiently to provide key information, recommendations, or direction. Beyond this and during times of transition, she has kept pets, found babysitters, health care providers, schools, and she is known for delivering meal after meal to sick individuals. "Mary is a wonderful ambassador for our university...in assisting faculty, students and staff as they navigate the university bureaucracy and in greeting visitors and guests. If she did not exist, we would try to invent her," said one of Mary's former supervisors.

As another example, a recent graduate of our university frequently visited Mary's office prior to graduating. Mary and the student often exchanged news and information; Mary even offered enough positive input that the student landed an impressive position with a local company. "Mary is the kind of person who gives to give...she took time out of her busy schedule to meet with me and discuss my career goals and my resume." Beyond the unsolicited and appreciated mentoring, this student shared a quintessential conversation that perfectly depicts the characteristic of genuine public service: "As I grew as a leader, she showed me how to juggle ups and downs and inspired me to never stop giving. Mary epitomizes servant leadership and inspires others to give back and pay it forward. When I asked how I could show her my gratitude, she smiled and said, 'All I want is for you to pay it forward when you can.'"

Fondly known as the 'go-to' for most things at our university, Mary receives calls daily from offices throughout the university, students, and parents who call upon her experience and know-how for information and advice. "Mary is helpful, caring, resourceful, and happy to offer service no matter the task. She often performs above and beyond and recently offered her expertise and planning skills to navigate a job search to the point of providing detailed itineraries for several external candidates. Even

though this was not required of her, she did so willingly and cheerfully,” shared a senior leadership member. To confirm her commitment to serving the university and state, another senior leader shared, “Over the last 15 years, I have known Mary to be a fantastic teammate...always cheerful and exceptional in everything she does. Her quick wit, attention to detail, and loyalty to the university have endeared her to her colleagues. She is a true champion for higher education with a tireless commitment to serving our university.”

Outside the university, Mary’s community service efforts are unique and far-reaching. Currently, Mary serves as a volunteer neighborhood coordinator working with a number of state and non-profit agencies. In this role she has facilitated the development of rain gardens in neighborhoods that have flooding problems. She has hosted the city’s training of thirty students to design, build, and install the rain gardens as the first test case for the state.

Mary is always willing to pitch in for the good of the community regardless of the mission. At a local community college, she worked to establish programs for work study students so they could perform approved community service through after school tutoring at the public library. In our local community, she spent several years serving as an assistant Boy Scout leader among other outreach.

Through many changes in leadership, Mary has made a difference at our university, exemplified the mission of the university, and has positively impacted the people of our state. Her skills, knowledge, willingness to help others, and dedication to our university and the community make her our Staff Award for Excellence nominee.

Sincerely,

Nelson B. Recommender

This sample is based on an actual successful nomination letter from the University of North Carolina Wilmington and serves as an excellent example