

DOVIA Mississippi Presents

EXPANDED 101 Ways to Thank Volunteers for Under \$10

Recognizing and rewarding volunteers is a simple but vastly complicated subject! Below are some great ideas borrowed from volunteers and managers of volunteer programs of all types. These are just a few of the thousands of ideas for letting youth, adult, or senior volunteers know how valuable they are to your program! (Taken from a DOVIA program, "101 Ways to Salute Your Volunteers Under \$10")

- Birthday cards (e-cards?) and telephone calls on volunteers' birthdays
- Make a Get Well card on the computer, have everyone sign it, and send it to someone who is out sick.
- Your attitude is so important. Remember volunteers don't have to be there!
- Free lunch
- Flyers in the elevators or around the office anywhere thanking and calling attention to value of volunteers
- A picture board in the office showing volunteers doing their jobs
- Candy in the office each day
- Goodies in the volunteer office every day during Volunteer Appreciation Week (usually the teen week of April) and other special occasions
- Eat lunch with your volunteers each day.
- Put someone "in charge" when you are away from the office
- Hang any awards on the walls
- Post pictures of volunteers on bulletin boards and around the office
- Make and display an album of awards and newspaper articles
- Make and display a photograph album in the volunteer office showing activities of volunteers
- Post quotations about how great volunteers are
- Compliment them constantly and thank them constantly – be sincere!
- Bring back favors collected from seminars and meetings and make available to anyone who wants them.
- Have complimentary pens available at all times
- Have longevity pins for them to wear on their name tags
- Be sure that staff recognizes the worth of volunteers and shows appreciation every day verbally and through their actions
- Let them know they are missed when they are away
- During volunteer appreciation week have staff members write thank you notes to volunteers
- Have door prizes from the gift shop at your appreciation luncheon
- Calculate the money saved your organization by volunteers (hours x minimum wage) and tell this at appreciation luncheon
- Nominate someone for every award that comes along

Please don't reinvent the wheel – feel free to reproduce, edit, modify, and use any materials from this document and/or this website. Please give credit to DOVIA Mississippi and refer interested friends to our website (www.doviaMS.org) for more info. Thanks! (Revised January 2011)

- Take time to listen to them – constantly
- Be interested enough in them to ask pertinent questions about family and activities
- Celebrate arrival of new grandchildren, etc., with cards
- Greet each one personally, know each one by name
- Post a list of birthdays for the month in the office
- Thank individuals specifically for specific job well done.
- In front of the volunteer, tell others how much you appreciate what the volunteer does – be specific!
- Subscribe to this motto: "If it is great, you did it. If it is OK, we did it. If it is bad, I did it."
- Nominate her for a Governor's Initiative for Volunteer Excellence (GIVE) Award
- Submit the 9th - 12th grade volunteer to be in the YES! Program (Youth Engaged in Service) through MCVS ([Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service](#))
- Send a "Thanks for Serving" e-card
- Movie tickets (>\$7)
- Gift certificates for Baskin Robbins, McDonald's, etc. (\$5)
- Print a certificate on your color printer (7" x 8.75"), cut it out, and tape it around a giant Hershey bar (\$1.29)
- Nominate for a Daily Points of Light Award – www.pointsoflight.org/recognition/dpol
- Or an Ageless Heroes Award – www.agelessheroes.com
- Write a letter of commendation to the volunteer's supervisor. Be sure to send a carbon copy to the volunteer!
- Thank the volunteer by name in a public speech.
- At a volunteer thank-you event, distribute "Thanks, Volunteers!" T-shirts and Sharpies; allow time for volunteers to sign each others' shirts. (>\$10)
- Send birthday cards and anniversary-of-service cards.
- Send Valentine's Day cards.
- Using certificate paper and gold foil seals from the office supply store (about \$15 for 50 certs & seals), custom make Thank Yous, Certificates of Commendation, Awards of Merit, and more.
- Make them official with company badges, name tags, or ID cards.
- Thank you coffee mug filled with candy (\$9)
- "Our Volunteers Are Stars" tote bag (>\$8) – www.volunteergifts.com
- "Our Volunteers Are Treasures" key chain (>\$3) – www.volunteergifts.com
- Praise the volunteer to his or her spouse and children.
- Smile and say "Good Morning!"
- Have a job description for each volunteer job; place a copy in the volunteer's official file.
- Nominate the young volunteer for a President's Student Service Award. www.presidentialserviceawards.gov
- Nominate the young volunteer for a Presidential Freedom Scholarship. www.nationalservice.org/scholarships
- "Peace" and "Happiness" magnetic buttons (>\$4) – www.anopenheart.org
- On a 3x5 card: "Without you, we'd be in a real CRUNCH!" (attach a mini Crunch bar)

Please don't reinvent the wheel – feel free to reproduce, edit, modify, and use any materials from this document and/or this website. Please give credit to DOVIA Mississippi and refer interested friends to our website (www.doviaMS.org) for more info. Thanks! (Revised January 2011)

- Smile and say "Good afternoon!"
- Have a time card for the volunteer to sign in/sign out.
- Keep good volunteer records.
- Have a "We Have Great Volunteers" pizza party.
- Invest in tiny charms that attach to a volunteer's badge that say "1 year", "2 years", etc. or "250 hours", "500 hours". Or designate a star to mean 250 hours, a shoe to mean 500 hours, etc.
- Have a bulletin board up in a public place and post photos of your smiling volunteers at work. Attach a folder containing a volunteer application form.
- Give incentives to volunteers who recruit other volunteers, such as \$10 gift certificates to area restaurants and attractions.
- Give volunteers more respect and attention than they expect!
- Give a copy of Chicken Soup for the Volunteer's Soul (\$15; I know this is over \$10 but it's such a GREAT book!)
- Special design certificates
- Personal notepads or paper
- Pins and buttons
- Creative pens
- Potted Flower with name of volunteer
- Volunteer Appreciation Kit
- Photos of special events with the volunteer
- Newspaper/Newsletter articles
- Recognition for students to parents/grandparents/school officials
- Chocolate Salute
- Angel Award
- Special parking privileges ("volunteer of the month" space?)
- Name badges
- T-shirts
- Caps
- Volunteer Handbook
- Complimentary Meals
- Donated artwork, pottery, etc.
- Coupons for food/services
- Address book
- Calendar
- Books
- Put on Committees/Boards of other organizations
- Nominations for special local, state, national awards
- Sun visors
- Bean bags with logo
- Stuffed animals
- Candles ("You Light Up My Life")
- Clocks

Please don't reinvent the wheel – feel free to reproduce, edit, modify, and use any materials from this document and/or this website. Please give credit to DOVIA Mississippi and refer interested friends to our website (www.doviaMS.org) for more info. Thanks! (Revised January 2011)

- Calculators
 - Picture Frames
 - Bookmarks
 - E-mail messages
 - "Bottle of Bubbles"
 - Candy Kisses at the desk of volunteers
 - Name the coffee pot after a volunteer each month for "serving" well
 - Your list begins here...!
-
- Take certificates of achievement to the principal and allow him/her to give to the student
 - Good morning smile/greeting
 - Donuts!
 - "Boss for the Day"
 - Escort the director to a meeting or attend a meeting with the director
 - Let the volunteer he is missed when he is away
 - Let the volunteer know how great he is
 - Day off at work
 - Make sure every staff member knows every volunteer
 - "Volunteer of the Month"
 - Eat lunch with your volunteers every day
 - Free memberships or visits to a fitness center
 - Get the volunteer's family member to present the award to the volunteer at your ceremony
 - "shared leadership" – allow volunteer to conduct a meeting
 - Gift cards for gas
 - Movie in the break room (project on the wall)
 - Recognition program
 - Candy basket
 - Dollar store basket
 - "PIMP" of the Week (Person Impressing the Most People) – gets to hold the "cool king stick" (scepter)
 - Buttons/badges
 - "Dress Down Day" for school volunteers who have to wear uniforms
 - Highlight volunteers in newsletter and on bulletin board
 - T-shirt
 - Gym pass
 - Wall of Fame
 - Slip 'N' Slide Family Fun Day with potluck supper
 - Say "Thank You" – it's free!
 - Certificates
 - Any free gifts that you have, give them out to volunteers

Please don't reinvent the wheel – feel free to reproduce, edit, modify, and use any materials from this document and/or this website. Please give credit to DOVIA Mississippi and refer interested friends to our website (www.doviaMS.org) for more info. Thanks! (Revised January 2011)

- Discount coupons (free sandwiches, free drinks, gym pass...)
- Flowers or veggies from your garden
- Coupons in a water bottle
- Movie passes
- Certificates (“Volunteer of the Month”, “Volunteer of the Year”...)
- Paper or silk flowers
- Donated items (cups, pens, buttons)
- Complimentary gift cards for food, goodies, etc.
- Balloons
- E-cards
- Dollar store gift snack bags (chips, candy, soda)
- Thank you buttons
- Coupons (McDonald’s, free items, ice cream...)
- SHOUT OUTS! at meetings and in other public venues
- Newsletter recognition with a picture
- Special parking spot

Please don't reinvent the wheel – feel free to reproduce, edit, modify, and use any materials from this document and/or this website. Please give credit to DOVIA Mississippi and refer interested friends to our website (www.doviaMS.org) for more info. Thanks! (Revised January 2011)