

Of The Month (OTM) Guide

The “Of the Month” (OTM) award is a service of the National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH) intended to recognize the outstanding contributions of individuals, groups, and programs to the on-campus living communities of colleges and universities nationwide. At Kansas State University, OTM submissions are accepted monthly in the following categories: Advisor, Community, Desk Attendant, Executive Board Member, Faculty/Staff, First Year Student, Organization, Resident Assistant, Spotlight, Student, Community Service Program, Diversity Program, Educational Program, and Social Program. Any person affiliated with the on-campus living community may submit or be nominated for an OTM. Every OTM should be month-specific and illustrate how the nominee went above and beyond expectations during the month of nomination. Campus winners are selected each month by a committee of undergraduate members of the Little Apple Chapter of NRHH and are submitted to the regional level, where they may be considered for regional and national recognition. All OTM submissions should be made through the OTM database, available online at otms.nrhh.org, and should address/adhere to the following criteria:

ADVISOR

- ✓ How did the individual impact, support, and/or recognize the students he/she advises during the month of nomination?
- ✓ Does the OTM focus on the individual’s advisory, rather than supervisory role?
- ✓ Specific examples of unusual or extraordinary tasks addressed by the nominee?
- ✓ All fields completed, spelling/grammar/word counts accurate?

The Advisor OTM is designed to recognize those individuals who advise a staff, governing board, campus organization, or other related group in a formal role. The OTM should focus on the individual’s role as an advisor, not as a supervisor of a staff or community.

Acceptable Nominees: Senior staff advisors to a governing board, diversity team, ARH/NRHH, etc.

Ineligible Nominees: Any undergraduate student; submissions emphasizing supervision; multiple people.

COMMUNITY

- ✓ What unites these individuals as a community?
- ✓ What specific positive contributions did this community make during the month of nomination to enhance the lives of the group members or those around it?
- ✓ Specific examples of unusual or extraordinary tasks addressed by the nominees?
- ✓ All fields completed, spelling/grammar/word counts accurate?

The Community OTM is designated for groups of individuals not recognized as official campus organizations. Possibly the broadest OTM category, a Community OTM should illustrate what brings a collection of individuals together and how they worked together as a group to accomplish their tasks during the month of nomination. A strong community does not have to be location-specific.

Acceptable Nominees: Residential floors, wings, halls, complexes, committees, etc.; any staff; two or more individuals united by a common task/assignment/purpose.

Ineligible Nominees: Individual people; groups recognized as official organizations.

DESK ATTENDANT

- ✓ How has the nominee exceeded his or her job expectations?
- ✓ Does the OTM focus primarily on the nominee’s role as a desk attendant (CA/DA/ARA)?
- ✓ Specific examples of unusual or extraordinary tasks addressed by the nominee?
- ✓ All fields completed, spelling/grammar/word counts accurate?

The Desk Attendant OTM seeks to recognize student employees in desk positions for exceeding their normal expectations while at work. The OTM should focus primarily on the nominee’s accomplishments related to that position, and should involve more than simply satisfying the position’s requirements.

Acceptable Nominees: Community Assistants, Door Assistants, and Academic Resource Assistants.

Ineligible Nominees: RA/MA staff members; submissions not focusing on the desk attendant role.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER

- ✓ Is the nominee a member of a Residence Life Organization Executive Board?
- ✓ What additional responsibilities did the nominee take on during the month of nomination?
- ✓ Specific examples of unusual or extraordinary tasks addressed by the nominee?
- ✓ All fields completed, spelling/grammar/word counts accurate?

To be eligible for this category, an individual must serve on the Executive Board of an official Residence Life Organization, such as ARH, NRHH, or a Hall Governing Board. The OTM should focus on the individual's work within and related to that role, and should illustrate how he/she has gone beyond the basic requirements of that position. NRHH Committee Chairs are also eligible for this category.

Acceptable Nominees: ARH/NRHH Exec Board Officers; HGB Exec Board Officers.

Ineligible Nominees: Floor presidents/officers; submissions not focused on Exec roles; multiple people.

FACULTY/STAFF

- ✓ Is the nominee a member of the university faculty?
- ✓ How has the nominee contributed to the on-campus living community?
- ✓ Specific examples of unusual or extraordinary tasks addressed by the nominee?
- ✓ All fields completed, spelling/grammar/word counts accurate?

The Faculty/Staff category was created to recognize university faculty who have made a contribution to the on-campus living community both in AND outside the classroom. Residence Life employees such as hall coordinators are not eligible for this award, even those designated as Faculty, as this category was established to recognize other university professors, instructors, etc.

Acceptable Nominees: University faculty who assist with Residence Life organizations, programs, etc.

Ineligible Nominees: Undergraduate students; Residence Life staff; multiple people.

FIRST YEAR STUDENT

- ✓ Is the nominee in his or her first year at the university?
- ✓ Has the nominee taken on leadership roles or responsibilities within their community?
- ✓ Specific examples of unusual or extraordinary tasks addressed by the nominee?
- ✓ All fields completed, spelling/grammar/word counts accurate?

The First Year Student category recognizes students (including transfer students) in their first year at the university. In addition to the normal challenges of adapting to a new environment, these nominees have taken an active role in their communities and positively impacted those around them. Submissions in this category may emphasize academics, leadership, involvement, and much more.

Acceptable Nominees: Students (including transfers) in their first year at the university.

Ineligible Nominees: RA/MA staff members; campus-wide Executive Board Members; multiple people.

ORGANIZATION

- ✓ Is the nominee recognized as an official organization by university standards?
- ✓ How has the organization impacted both its members and the greater community?
- ✓ Specific examples of unusual or extraordinary tasks addressed by the nominees?
- ✓ All fields completed, spelling/grammar/word counts accurate?

The Organization OTM category recognizes the work done by official residence life organizations as a whole, not just the accomplishments of a few members. Eligible nominees must be recognized as organizations by the university and/or fit the criteria for classification as an official organization. Organizations typically have written policies and/or a constitution. Less formal groups of people should be nominated under the Community OTM category.

Acceptable Nominees: ARH; NRHH; governing boards; councils; associations; formal organizations.

Ineligible Nominees: Staffs; committees; living communities; informal groups; individual people.

RESIDENT ASSISTANT

- ✓ Is the nominee currently employed as an RA/MA staff member?
- ✓ How has the nominee impacted residents in their community during the month of nomination?
- ✓ What additional responsibilities outside of his/her job requirements has the nominee taken on?
- ✓ Specific examples of unusual or extraordinary tasks addressed by the nominee?
- ✓ All fields completed, spelling/grammar/word counts accurate?

Resident Assistants and Multicultural Assistants are eligible for this category. The OTM should focus on the nominee's accomplishments within the RA/MA role, but may also include other roles or responsibilities taken on during the month of nomination, such as involvement in other organizations.

Acceptable Nominees: Resident Assistants and Multicultural Assistants.

Ineligible Nominees: Everyone else; Senior Staff; multiple people.

SPOTLIGHT

- ✓ Is the nominee ineligible for nomination in every other category?
- ✓ How has the nominee positively impacted the on-campus living community?
- ✓ What is this nominee's role in the lives of students? (Who are they?)
- ✓ Specific examples of unusual or extraordinary tasks addressed by the nominee(s)?
- ✓ All fields completed, spelling/grammar/word counts accurate?

The Spotlight OTM category exists to recognize those individuals or groups that do not fall into any other OTM category. These nominees are not students, but still impact the on-campus living community and often go unrecognized. Spotlight OTM nominees can't be eligible for nomination in any other category.

Acceptable Nominees: Housekeepers, Maintenance, Dining Services, Campus Police, etc.

Ineligible Nominees: Undergraduate students, organizations, advisors, etc.

STUDENT

- ✓ What has the nominee done during the month of nomination to distinguish it from other months?
- ✓ Has the nominee taken on leadership roles or responsibilities within their community?
- ✓ Has the nominee maintained a healthy balance between academics and other activities?
- ✓ Specific examples of unusual or extraordinary tasks addressed by the nominee?
- ✓ All fields completed, spelling/grammar/word counts accurate?

The Student OTM category recognizes the exceptional performance of a student living on campus during the month of nomination. This OTM may address several areas of the student's life, including academics, leadership, involvement, and more. It is important to emphasize what the nominee has done during the month of nomination to distinguish it from other months and how that has impacted others, if applicable.

Acceptable Nominees: Students living on campus.

Ineligible Nominees: RA/MA staff members; campus-wide Executive Board Members; multiple people.

PROGRAMS

Educational:

- ✓ How did the program educate students?
- ✓ How were the educational needs of the community addressed?
- ✓ What were the goals of the program and how were they accomplished?
- ✓ What makes the program unique?

Social:

- ✓ What was the purpose of the program?
- ✓ How did it encourage residents to interact with one another?
- ✓ What makes the program unique?
- ✓ How can the program be adapted to other campuses?

Community Service:

- ✓ What was the service project?
- ✓ Who did it benefit?
- ✓ How did the project impact the residential community?
- ✓ What makes this program unique?
- ✓ How did students take an active part in the program?

Diversity:

- ✓ What were the goals of the program and how were they accomplished?
- ✓ How did the program serve to promote diversity and understanding?
- ✓ What makes this program unique?
- ✓ Did the program have a lasting effect on residents?

As with all OTM submissions, it is important to complete all fields. While it is more time-consuming to fill out a program OTM, each section is important and helps illustrate the success and impact of the program. Be conscious of the category name and make sure to emphasize how the program fits into that category. Don't make up numbers, and don't be afraid to ask for information from the program coordinator.

Tips For Writing Quality OTMs

- Don't leave any fields on the OTM blank. Address, phone, and e-mail information are typically available through the K-State People Search online. This information is helpful for when an OTM wins an award, as the winner usually receives a certificate congratulating them.
- Always proofread your OTM before submitting it. Make sure the category is correct.
- Define any acronyms when you use them for the first time to avoid confusion. The **only** exceptions to this are: OTM, NRHH, NACURH, and a region name such as MACURH.
- Be specific and give examples whenever possible. Quotes can be helpful, as well.
- Make sure the OTM is month-specific and illustrates how the nominee went above and beyond.
- Complete the "blurb" section, which should effectively **summarize** the OTM in 3 to 4 sentences.
- Don't write an OTM to win an award, but rather to recognize someone for a job well done.
- Submit your OTM before the deadline, typically 11:59 PM on the 5th of every month.
- Have fun, and never hesitate to recognize someone for his or her accomplishments.

OTM Guidelines compiled by Tony Kern, LAC-NRHH OTM Committee Chair 2007-2008. This document was created using information from the Regional and National OTM Guides. It also includes some additional criteria established by the Little Apple Chapter of the National Residence Hall Honorary to better serve the students of Kansas State University.