



Recognition Ideas

Involve youth and/or parents of youth volunteers in as many of your Recognition Activities as possible – in selecting, planning, organizing, and implementing them.

Personal Recognition

Kind words of praise after seeing them in action, on daily/weekly basis

Personal note or fun postcard of thanks

Phone call or email message

Hugs or pats on the back

Phone call or note of commendation to their parent(s)

Have members write notes to themselves—(hold and mail to them in 2–6 months!)

Public Recognition

List members and accomplishments in your newsletter or on your Web site

For Youth Volunteers, include recognition in school announcements and notices in school papers

Send out press releases to invite media to service projects

Nominate youth for community service awards

Contact local newspapers for recognition column or feature article

Radio public service announcements or public affairs shows

Ask agencies for help in recognizing the members

Display pictures from your projects in public presentations/at schools

Get a proclamation from the mayor's office for a member recognition day

Have public recognition on school TV stations or local cable programs

Offer special parking/office space for member of the month

Feature a member of the month in your newsletter or on your Web page

Have bulletin boards in your office and/or at local schools (or other host sites) with pictures of your members

Public recognition from school and other public authorities

Create a Wall of Fame in your community

Prepare a public display of members in action for local mall, city hall, libraries, etc.

Design a float or other display for a community parade or fair

Awards/Gifts – Related to Service

Give T-shirts, pins, and certificates, etc.

Get donated jackets, T-shirts, caps or that apparel, and put your logo on them

Give each member a team photo of their team in action

Give members a book or manual related to volunteering and/or community change

For youth volunteers, share member pictures with schools for their yearbooks

Provide trophies or plaques recognizing members

Create your own buttons or bumper stickers to share

Help members create a volunteering/service resume

Put their resumes on video or on a Web page

Give members a video of their project or of the whole program

Have members make jewelry for one another (provide the materials)

Have members make other gifts for one another (with extra prizes for creativity)

Provide business cards for members—or the template to allow them to create their own

Other Awards/Gifts Ideas

Bring food to the project site or have it in the office

Get donated coupons for food, movies (rentals or at the theater) or other entertainment

Arrange for tickets to sporting event (pro or college)

Arrange for tickets to the theater or other cultural events, concerts, etc.

Arrange for guest passes to other local, popular facilities or events

Provide a dollar store goodie bag

Arrange for local business discounts with your program membership card

Enrichment/Personal Growth Opportunities

Offer leadership opportunities within your organization (e.g., on the advisory council or as assistant team leaders)

Set up opportunity for members to do presentations on the program (in schools, Rotary clubs, chamber of commerce, city hall, businesses, or at conferences or other events)

Invite members to assist in leading trainings on youth service, youth involvement, and other aspects of your program. Offer training and enrichment (e.g., to serve on boards of directors, special commissions)

Assist members in producing TV shows on the local cable access station

Offer the opportunity to attend local, state, regional, or national conferences

Arrange for speakers on enrichment topics of the member's own choosing

Arrange for members to attend job fairs, tour colleges, or local industry

Arrange for free lessons in anything or discounts to other youth activities for those who have participated in the program (through your partnerships)

Organize a weekend or overnight

Hold a retreat for your members—connect it to a project and provide reflection and leadership growth (have members plan the entire event)

Invite local celebrities to your projects or special events—ask them to share words about the value of volunteering

Scholarship/Long Term

Write letters of recommendation

Be a willing reference for members on their applications

Help members create a service resume or write up their experiences in service

Nominate members for local, regional, and national scholarships

Nominate members for other awards and honors

Assist members with job applications and college applications, including being a reference

Special Events

Have a picnic with games, activities, awards, and great food

Organize roller or ice skating parties

Organize a swimming, bowling, bocce ball, or other sport outing

Sponsor a dance (combine it with a fundraiser)

Take a trip to the zoo, amusement park, or other special place nearby

Organize a camping trip (combine this with an outdoors service project)

Organize a team to visit and serve with another program

Take a boat ride, historical tour, or city tour

Participate in local parades

Host an annual banquet or recognition event

Organize monthly fun potluck parties

Seasonal Events

Hay ride

Pumpkin carving party

Winter holidays party

Sledding/toboggan parties

MLK Day of Service special events

National Youth Service Day special event

Sponsor and take part in an Easter egg hunt

Host a post-prom party (for youth volunteers)

Surfing parties

Organize a hike with a picnic or stop for ice cream