



**RUTGERS**

**Presidential  
Employee Excellence  
Recognition Program**

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2024 Committee Proposal



March 12, 2024

President Jonathan Holloway  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
7 Winants Hall  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

RE: Presidential Employee Excellence Recognition Program

Dear President Holloway,

On behalf of the Presidential Employee Excellence Recognition Program Committee, we thank you again for the opportunity to serve on the committee dedicated to the implementation of your esteemed recognition program. We are writing to present a brief report that outlines the committee's timeline for this academic year and recommends the addition of the Rutgers Lifetime Contribution Award.

As we reflect upon last year's inaugural efforts, we remain inspired by this remarkable program and the many accomplishments and exceptional contributions of our dedicated Rutgers colleagues. Our careful review of the program's first year also has allowed our committee to identify those elements of the program that we believe should be maintained as well as areas of improvement.

We ask that you review and approve our proposed timeline and our recommendation for a new award category at your earliest convenience. In order to launch the application and communication campaign by early April, we kindly request your feedback by March 22. We are enthusiastic about the prospect of celebrating the achievements of our colleagues once again this year. Thank you for entrusting us with this vital task.

Sincerely,

Jon Oliver  
Office of the Chancellor-New Brunswick  
Former President of the University Senate

Elizabeth Matto  
Director, Eagleton Institute of Politics

Committee Representatives:

Ghislaine Darden, Institutional Planning & Operations  
Ralph Gigliotti, Center for Organizational Leadership  
Roxanne Huertas, University Human Resources-Camden  
Adam Kustka, School of Arts and Sciences-Newark  
Kim Manning, University Communications & Marketing  
Sam Rabinowitz, School of Business-Camden  
Mark Robson, School of Environmental & Biological Sciences  
Karen Shapiro, School of Health Professions  
Nayland Smith, Office of the Chancellor-New Brunswick  
Kyle D. Warren, School of Nursing  
Carolyne J. White, SAS-N Urban Education  
Melissa Marrero, University Human Resources  
Julie Jain, University Human Resources

## Executive Summary

On June 23, 2022, Rutgers University President Jonathan Holloway endorsed the recommendations of the [Future of Work Task Force](#), which called for the establishment of a university-wide Presidential Employee Excellence Recognition Program. The goal of the recognition program is to strengthen institutional pride and build on the ideal of a beloved community where employees are engaged, productive, valued, and rewarded for their contributions.

To achieve the goals articulated by President Holloway in a collaborative and inclusive manner, the Presidential Employee Excellence Committee was tasked in 2023 with identifying recognition categories and eligibility criteria, establishing tools for online submissions, determining the submission review process and non-monetary incentives for recognition, developing a timeline and communications strategy, and hosting the first annual event.

The program introduced five award categories, aligning with the university's core values of academic excellence, building a beloved community, and serving the common good, welcoming both individual and team nominations. These categories can be found in the Appendix of this report. The inaugural cohort of awardees was selected during the 2023 fall semester and celebrated at [an award ceremony](#) in December.

After a thorough review of the inaugural year, the Presidential Employee Excellence Recognition Program Committee proposes the following timeline for 2024. We believe that this timeline will allow for more time to recruit candidates University-wide, review applications, communicate with awardees and those nominated, and allow for broader participation at the award ceremony.

Our committee's review also suggested the need for an additional category that celebrates the long-term and sustained contributions of our faculty and staff. Accordingly, we propose the addition of the Rutgers Lifetime Contribution Award detailed below.

### Proposed Timeline, 2024

Date	Project Milestone
February 15, 2024	Committee kickoff meeting
March 12, 2024	Submit committee proposal to President Holloway
April 5, 2024	Finalize website and online submission form and begin executing communications plan announcing program systemwide
April 15, 2024	President's Universitywide announcement of program

July 15, 2024	Nomination application deadline
September 20, 2024	Committee reviews and proposes award recipients to President Holloway
October 11, 2024	President invites endorsed recipients to reception ceremony
December 12, 2024	Host reception ceremony

**Proposed New Award Category**

<b>LIFETIME CONTRIBUTION</b>	
<b>Award Name:</b> Rutgers Lifetime Contribution Award- Faculty Rutgers Lifetime Contribution Award- Staff	
<p><b>Description:</b> This award celebrates the extraordinary achievements of faculty and staff who have devoted over two decades of their professional journey to enriching the academic landscape and leaving an indelible mark on the University. This prestigious accolade acknowledges individuals whose tireless commitment has shaped the very essence of our institution and beyond. Their impact transcends generations, shaping the intellectual landscape and nurturing the next wave of visionary leaders.</p> <p>In addition to demonstrating expertise and leadership within their respective disciplines and/or professional domains, recipients of this esteemed award have also served as catalysts for transformative change both within and beyond the institution.</p> <p>In honoring their decades-long dedication and profound influence, the Presidential Lifetime Contribution Award pays homage to a legacy built upon unwavering dedication, boundless passion, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. As stewards of knowledge and champions of progress, these exemplary individuals embody the true spirit of enduring excellence, leaving an indelible imprint on the fabric of our institution and society as a whole.</p>	
<p><b>Eligibility Criteria:</b> Full time Faculty and Staff may be nominated for this award. Rutgers full-time faculty and staff who have retired within the last 12 months are eligible.</p> <p>Nominees must be a university faculty or staff member for a minimum of 20 years. Nominees must have made significant and sustained contributions to the university community throughout their tenure. These contributions may include, but are not limited to:</p>	

- Teaching excellence, research achievements, administrative leadership, mentorship, and service to the university and wider community.
- Demonstrable impact on the academic, professional, and personal lives of students, colleagues, and the broader university community

Nominees must have demonstrated exceptional dedication, commitment, and service to the University throughout their tenure. This may include:

- Exemplary performance in their assigned duties, innovative contributions, leadership in their department or unit, and going above and beyond expectations to support the University's mission and goals.
- A significant and positive impact on the university community, whether through their interactions with students, colleagues, or other members of the Rutgers community, or through their contributions to the efficient functioning and success of the university as a whole.

Consistently demonstrated professionalism, respect, and collaboration in their interactions with others, fostering a positive and supportive work environment.

**Required Documentation:** Nominees must be endorsed by colleagues, supervisor and/or other members of the university who can attest to the nominee's longtime outstanding contributions and impact on the university community. These endorsements may include:

- A thoughtful and substantive summary outlining the extraordinary effort and accomplishment serving as evidence of the nominee's exceptional service and impact.
- Letter(s) of support documenting the individual's achievements (up to 3).
- Artifacts showing qualitative and/or quantitative impacts, such as commendations, letters of appreciation, or other forms of acknowledgment.

Based on the experiences of last year, the Program Committee has discussed and outlined an updated nomination and review process, has made a few modifications to the Awards Ceremony, and has crafted a set of next steps.

## Nomination Process

- Once again, an online submission form will be developed in Qualtrics.
- In creating the nomination process, attention will be given to making the process mobile friendly to facilitate access.
- The submission form will allow those nominating an individual or team to submit for more than one recognition category at a time.
- Completed forms will be accepted through July 15, 2024. Submissions received after the deadline will not be processed.
- Nominations may be written by a current co-worker, supervisor, or other member of the Rutgers community.

- Nomination materials must identify the name of the award(s) for which the person or team is being nominated and clearly address the award criteria.
- All nominations must include the required documents, with clear instructions and examples of supporting evidence. The committee recommends that the size of nominated teams is limited.

## Reviewing and Selecting Awardees

The review committee, comprised of full-time staff and faculty peers, will evaluate each nomination for suitability and eligibility. The committee will make recommendations to President Holloway for final selection. The reviewers will consider the balance of the articulated outcomes and work effort made by the individual or team. The committee has made adjustments to the timeline to provide sufficient review time for nominations. It is also recommended that the committee notifies runners-up and ensures that nominators are also notified.

## Recognition Ceremony

The Rutgers Club is confirmed on December 12, 2024 from 11:00 am to 2:00pm. Awardees, nominators and cabinet members will be among those invited to the reception. The committee recommends the following:

- More advanced notice is given to cabinet members to allow them to attend the ceremony. We also recommend that additional time is provided prior to the ceremony so President Holloway is able to mingle and interact with the attendees.
- For the ceremony itself, the committee suggests delivering the announcement of awardees first, then explaining the award category, indicating for what the individual or team was nominated, and then announcing name(s).
- For team recipients, we recommend asking the audience to hold applause until all names are announced.
- To ensure University-wide participation, the committee recommends that a shuttle is coordinated for Newark and Camden attendees.
- It is recommended that honorees' nametags include department/unit and award category.

## Next Steps

The committee will launch a communications plan for the Presidential Employee Excellence Recognition Program awards on April 5<sup>th</sup> with the following elements and recommendations:

- The website dedicated to the recognition program on the Office of the President will continue to be utilized.
- An initial University-wide email will come from the President's Office. To underscore its importance and to personalize the launch, the committee requests that President Holloway record another short video announcing the award. The committee will communicate with Mike Meagher and Lara Beise from the President's Office to arrange to film this video.

- Following the President's announcement, follow-up communication by the Chancellor's Offices on all campuses is recommended.
- Targeted communication and follow-up by Jon Oliver and Elizabeth Matto will be directed towards Deans, the President's Administrative Council, Department Chairs, and Center and Institute Directors. These communications will include draft language to facilitate their dissemination.
- Award recipients will be featured, with pictures and a narrative, on the recognition program website.



## APPENDIX

### 2023 Award Categories

#### COMMITTED TO ACCESS AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

**Award Name:** Rutgers Gateway Award (Service to Students)

**Description:** Recognizes staff, faculty, or a team of employees who go to exceptional lengths to remove barriers and provide access to those pursuing a Rutgers education. The recipient(s) recognize(s) the value of a diverse student body and the challenges students often face and seek(s) to make education more accessible and attainable.

This award is presented to those who initiated innovative solutions and/or provided extraordinary value or service that led to exceptional outcomes for our students and the Rutgers community.

**Eligibility Criteria:** Individuals and/or unit, departmental, interdepartmental or campus teams can be nominated for this award. Only current full-time faculty and staff are eligible. Nominations for faculty and/or staff teams that include student participants or part-time faculty or staff participants will also be accepted.

Nominated effort must be within the last 12-months and show lasting positive results in at least one of these areas:

- Student and/or parent satisfaction
- Enhancing the student experience
- Providing access
- Creating a supportive and inclusive environment
- Improving processes for students
- Augmenting safety
- Stewardship of University resources

Individuals or teams selected for this award may be determined ineligible for other Presidential Employee Excellence Recognition Program awards in the same calendar year. Nominations are encouraged in more than one category, if applicable.

**Required Documentation:**

- Artifacts showing qualitative and/or quantitative impact on a population of students.
- Letter(s) of support documenting the individual's or team's achievements.
- Nomination letter(s) from a student or group of students highlighting an exceptional impact is strongly encouraged as supporting documentation for this nomination.
- A thoughtful and substantive summary outlining the regular duties of the individual or team and the extraordinary effort and accomplishment serving as the basis for nomination.

**COMMITTED TO ACCESS AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

**Award Name:** Rutgers Gateway Award (Service to Employees)

**Description:** Recognizes staff, faculty, or a team of employees who go to exceptional lengths to remove barriers to build a more positive work environment, improve employee engagement and morale, and create operational efficiencies through forward-thinking process improvements. The recipient(s) recognize(s) the value of a diverse workforce and encourage(s) cross-departmental teamwork to address shared challenges and improve workplace culture. This recognition spotlights complex initiatives or practices that highlight how to enact change, innovate, and navigate institutional barriers to improve everyday work for employees and the Rutgers community. These may include collaborations, cross-unit improvements to systems or processes, clarifying roles and structures, or bringing about broad cultural change to showcase what Rutgers can accomplish when we collaborate to function at our best.

This award is presented to those who initiated innovative solutions and/or provided extraordinary value or service that led to exceptional outcomes for our employees and the Rutgers community.

**Eligibility Criteria:** Individuals and/or unit, departmental, interdepartmental or campus teams can be nominated for this award. Only current full-time faculty and staff are eligible. Nominations for faculty and/or staff teams that include student participants or part-time faculty or staff participants will also be accepted.

Individuals or teams selected for this award may be determined ineligible for other Presidential Employee Excellence Recognition Program awards in the same calendar year. Nominations are encouraged in more than one category, if applicable.

Nominated effort must be within the last 12-months and show lasting positive results in at least one of these areas:

- Prospective and/or current employee satisfaction
- Enhancing workplace culture or the patient experience
- Promoting healthy working relationships and a supportive work environment
- Improving processes that result in significantly more effective and efficient department or university operations
- Augmenting safety
- Stewardship of University resources

**Required Documentation:**

- Artifacts showing qualitative and/or quantitative impact on Rutgers employees and workplace culture.
- Letter(s) of support documenting the individual’s or team’s achievements.
- Nomination letter(s) from an employee or group of employees highlighting an exceptional impact is strongly encouraged as supporting documentation for this nomination.
- A thoughtful and substantive summary outlining the regular duties of the individual or team and the extraordinary effort and accomplishment serving as the basis for nomination.

**BUILDING A BELOVED COMMUNITY**

**Award Name:** Rutgers University Spirit Award

**Description:** This award celebrates differences and recognizes significant contributions to cultivating a beloved community—one in which all members work together and are heard—at Rutgers University. This individual or team exemplifies this commitment by promoting and advancing dialogue, mutual respect, and a spirit of belonging to create a healthy Rutgers ecosystem.

The recipient(s) of this award embody the principles of a beloved community and model an exceptional commitment to the values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

**Eligibility Criteria:** Individuals and/or unit, departmental, interdepartmental or campus teams can be nominated for this award. Only current full-time faculty and staff are eligible. Nominations for faculty and/or staff teams that include student participants or part-time faculty or staff participants will also be accepted.

Individuals selected for this award may be determined ineligible for other Presidential Employee Excellence Recognition Program awards in the same calendar year. Nominations are encouraged in more than one category, if applicable.

Nominated effort must be within the last 12-months and show lasting positive results in at least one of these areas:

- Community building and collaboration
- Enhancing workplace culture in line with the spirit of this award
- Advancing Rutgers University's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion

**Required Documentation:**

- Artifacts showing qualitative and/or quantitative impact.
- Letter(s) of support documenting the individual's or team's achievements.
- A thoughtful and substantive summary outlining the regular duties of the individual or team and the extraordinary effort and accomplishment serving as the basis for nomination.

## SERVING THE COMMON GOOD

**Award Name:** Rutgers Outstanding Service Award

**Description:** Rutgers is committed to serving the common good and to making a difference in the worlds of ideas, politics, social justice, innovation, invention, business, health, local need, national discourse, and of global priorities.

This award recognizes faculty, staff, and/or a team that demonstrate a relentless determination to make a lasting difference beyond the university's borders. The recipient(s) display(s) a demonstrated commitment to moving society towards a greater common good and encourage(s) constructive collaboration in service to our local and global communities.

**Eligibility Criteria:** Individuals and/or unit, departmental, interdepartmental or campus teams can be nominated for this award. Only current full-time faculty and staff are eligible. Nominations for faculty and/or staff teams that include student participants or part-time faculty or staff participants will also be accepted.

Individuals selected for this award may be determined ineligible for other Presidential Employee Excellence Recognition Program awards in the same calendar year. Nominations are encouraged in more than one category, if applicable.

Nominated effort must be within the last 12-months and show lasting positive results in at least one of these areas:

- Work outcome results in meaningful positive impact in communities in New Jersey and/or beyond
- Demonstrate constructive collaboration with internal and/or external communities
- Achievement of environmental, health, and/or well-being goals

**Required Documentation:**

- Artifacts showing qualitative and/or quantitative impacts.
- Letter(s) of support documenting the individual's or team's achievements.
- A thoughtful and substantive summary outlining the regular duties of the individual or team and the extraordinary effort and accomplishment serving as the basis for nomination.

## ALL VALUE PROPOSITIONS

**Award Name:** Pride of Rutgers Award

**Description:** The Pride of Rutgers Award is given to those who exemplify the University's value propositions through their day-to-day actions.

This award recognizes university staff members who:

- exceed the expectations of their day-to-day tasks;
- provide exceptional customer service taking the time to understand the needs of our students, staff, patients, and/or visitors to meet their needs consistently and effectively;
- serve as problem solvers and find innovative ways to save time, money, or other resources; and
- demonstrate a consistency in getting the job done right and on time.

**Eligibility Criteria:** Individuals and/or unit, departmental, interdepartmental or campus teams can be nominated for this award. Full-time staff are eligible. Nominations for staff teams that include student or part-time staff participants will also be accepted.

Individuals selected for this award may be determined ineligible for other Presidential Employee Excellence Recognition Program awards in the same calendar year. Nominations are encouraged in more than one category, if applicable.

Nominated effort must be within the last 12-months and show a true alignment to one of the following categories:

- Exceed Expectations
- Customer Service
- Initiative
- Reliability

**Required Documentation:**

- Letter(s) of support documenting the individual's or team's achievements.
- A thoughtful summary outlining the regular duties of the individual or team and the extraordinary effort and accomplishment serving as the basis for nomination.