

50 Ideas to Recognize your ASPIRE Mentors

1. Don't make them wait! Get them started as soon as their background check is complete.
2. Have clear goals and expectations of what your mentors will do.
3. Be flexible with scheduling, which will help balance school, work, family, and service!
4. Make sure they understand the importance of the task they are doing and how it fits into the overall project.
5. Never allow people to feel that you wasted their time or that they weren't really needed.
6. Introduce new mentors to administrators, office staff, and key teaching staff.
7. Have a workspace for mentors with a secure area for purses and other personal items.
8. Give each mentor a copy of your school year calendar, so they know when holidays and in-service trainings will be occurring.
9. Provide coffee, tea, cocoa, or access to the staff room.
10. Keep a tickler file and celebrate birthdays of committed mentors.
11. Provide promotional opportunities for those who want to take on roles of greater responsibility.
12. Give honest and sincere praise.
13. Recognize mentors in speeches, media, meetings, etc.
14. Give out ASPIRE logo items; pencils, nametags, lanyards, mugs, t-shirts. (Check with the ASPIRE central office for available items.)
15. Have parties, retreats, picnics, and other "off-duty" events.
16. Small gifts such as lifesavers and a note "You are a lifesaver! Thanks for helping with..." or a teabag in a note "Sit back and relax, you deserve a quiet moment".
17. Thank You cards. (Thanksgiving is a fun holiday because you can use a phrase such as "Happy Thanksgiving – Thank You for Giving!")
18. Articles on individual mentors in your school newsletter.
19. Mentor of the Month award.
20. Free coffee and treats for on-site mentors for meetings or celebrations.
21. Articles about your mentor(s) in the local newspaper.
22. Gift certificates or coupons to local restaurants.
23. Know their names, the names of their partners, kids and/or pets.
24. Birthday, anniversary, and special occasion cards (ecards are free and great for your computer savvy mentors).

25. Print names of all mentors in the school newsletter.
26. Recognize mentors at events honoring service awards.
27. Invite mentors to participate in workshops and involve them as speakers.
28. Send a letter to the mentor's family- letting the family know how much the person's work has contributed, and thanking the family for supporting the mentor in their efforts.
29. Send a letter to the mentor's employer especially if they are receiving work-release time to mentor or if you have college student interns write to their intern advisors.
30. Have the students send a card or note to the mentor mentioning what they especially appreciated help with during the year.
31. Offer continuing education or credential credits for attending ASPIRE training.
32. Pay registration fees (or part of) for continuing education classes or conference.
33. Articles on individual mentors on the school web site or even a web page salute to mentors, listing them all and thanking them for their help.
34. An ASPIRE parking spot for a month in the school parking lot.
35. Tickets to cultural and/or sporting events.
36. Arrange discounts for your mentors at a local shop.
37. Help them get connected to the Internet by arranging free net access and/or have an Internet training.
38. Share outcome evaluation results with mentors showing the impact of their efforts.
39. Have staff and clients give comments and quotes about the difference mentors make to be printed in a booklet and shared at a recognition event or mailed.
40. Their own coffee mug in the break room.
41. Bookmark.
42. Photos of mentors at work posted in prominent spot in the school or a newsletter.
43. ASPIRE note cards.
44. Post it notes with the ASPIRE logo.
45. Formal events such as teas, dessert buffets or luncheons (National Mentor Recognition Week is always in April).
46. Invite community leaders to ASPIRE meetings and have mentors "report" their success.
47. Allow each mentor to choose a book for the school library. Insert a name plate which reads, "In recognition of the mentor help given to _____ High school by: (person's name) during (years). Place it on hold for the mentor so they can be the first one to see it when it arrives.
48. Watch for opportunities to nominate your mentor for community recognition awards.
49. Hand out certificates of accomplishment that are either formal and signed by your administrators or humorous and specific to the individual.
50. Always say thank you when a mentor leaves for the day. It makes people glad they came and participated. Every day is not too much!