



PUBLIC SERVICE
RECOGNITION WEEK 2009

MAY 4-10

**GOVERNMENT
GOES GREEN**



PARTNERSHIP
FOR PUBLIC SERVICE



CELEBRATE PUBLIC SERVICE 2009



AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
ASSOCIATION OF TECHNICAL AND SUPERVISORY PROFESSIONALS
COUNCIL OF FORMER FEDERAL EXECUTIVES
EXECUTIVE WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT
FEDERAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION, INC.
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FEDERAL AND ARMED FORCES LIBRARIES ROUNDTABLE
FEDERAL MANAGERS ASSOCIATION
FEDERALLY EMPLOYED WOMEN
NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES
ORGANIZATION OF PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES OF THE USDA
PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE
PROFESSIONAL MANAGERS ASSOCIATION
SENIOR EXECUTIVES ASSOCIATION
THE PUBLIC MANAGER
WORLDWIDE ASSURANCE FOR EMPLOYEES OF PUBLIC AGENCIES, INC.

GET INVOLVED!

Email psrw@ourpublicservice.org or call us at (202) 775-9111 for more information about how your organization can participate in *Public Service Recognition Week*.

Complete program details are also available at ourpublicservice.org/psrw.



PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

JOIN US IN CELEBRATING PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK

MAY 4-10



PSRW 2009 THEME GOVERNMENT GOES GREEN

WHAT IS PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK?

Celebrated the first full week in May for the past 25 years, *Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW)* is a time to honor the men and women who serve our nation as federal, state, county and local government employees. Throughout the nation and the world, public servants use this occasion to educate others about the work they do and why they have chosen public service careers, as well as the many ways government services make life better for all of us.

Festivals, open houses, parades, community clean-up days and fund-raising events to benefit charity are just some of the ways that public employees commemorate the week.

These activities serve to improve citizen support for government, a key element of healthy public institutions, inspire people to consider serving themselves, and invigorate government workers by offering the praise they richly deserve but seldom receive.

This year, *PSRW* also seeks to draw attention to all the things government does to promote sustainable communities and a healthy environment, as reflected by this year's theme: "Government Goes Green."

This guidebook is designed to help you celebrate *Public Service Recognition Week* in your communities. In particular, it offers strategies to reach out to your community, the media and local educators; it provides models for employee recognition activities; and it lays out suggestions for building partnerships with the private sector.

Many of the ideas are simple, fun and inexpensive. Others require more coordination, planning and preparation. Whatever you do, the Partnership for Public Service (Partnership) and the Public Employees Roundtable (PER) exist as a resource to help you.

HOW WE CAN HELP YOU

FREE MATERIALS

The Partnership and PER have a variety of free materials available to facilitate your participation in *PSRW*, such as posters and curriculum materials. All materials can be downloaded from the Partnership's Web site. Please remember to check back often for updates.

POSTERS

Free posters are available electronically in three sizes: 8.5" x 11", 18" x 24" and 24" x 36". The smaller posters may be particularly useful if your agency plans to distribute copies to other sites. You can display posters:

- In building lobbies
- In the cafeteria
- On bulletin boards in your building
- On buses and commuter trains with permission from your transit authority.
- In post offices
- In libraries
- In senior and recreation centers run by the city
- In schools—teachers are public employees too!

The posters are a great tool to advertise the dates of *PSRW* and engage those who normally would not know about the celebration.

TEACHER'S GUIDE

The Teacher's Guide is a booklet designed for middle-school and high-school teachers of civics, social studies and American government. The booklet contains projects, games and discussion ideas to get students thinking and talking about the role and process of government and the responsibilities inherent in citizenship.

RESOURCE INFORMATION

The Partnership and PER understand that many celebrants around the country often have very limited budgets, time and space to carry out a *PSRW* celebration. That is why we provide many of the free materials mentioned above. But we can also offer much more in the way of information to help you organize and execute a celebration. For example, if you are a *PSRW* coordinator in Florida who would like to expand your celebration to a region of the state, we might be able to help by supplying contacts, organizing partnerships, or generating media and corporation support.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

There are some basic things that you need to do in order to have a successful celebration:

- Begin planning now. The earlier the better.
- Read through the ideas in this book.
- Create a timeline of steps to take. Many ideas are simple but need to be scheduled far in advance of *PSRW*.
- Designate a point of contact for your agency.
- Appoint a media outreach person or committee, and let them get started on publicity.
- Contact local businesses and see how they can participate in your plans.
- Download the free materials available at the Partnership's Web site at ourpublicservice.org/psrw.

HOW YOU CAN HELP US

We are continually striving to serve you better. You can help us maximize our resources in several important ways:

- Provide us with your contact information. In particular, let us know your e-mail and fax number. These two points of contact are the quickest, easiest way for us to keep in touch.
- Let others know about the week. This means sharing information, materials and booklets.
- Provide us with ANY information that you think would help us or other participants in the week.

GET EVERYONE INVOLVED!

Use *PSRW* to build new partnerships with other public employees, associations, community organizations and private corporations. The image of public employees is strengthened when citizens see us working in cooperation with each other and with the community. Consider collaborating with any or all of the following groups when formulating your *PSRW* plans:

- Public employee unions;
- Local chapters of Public Employees Roundtable member associations, e.g., ASPA, NARFE;
- Citizen support groups like the PTA, League of Women Voters and Better Government Association;
- College and university students;
- Public elementary and secondary schools;
- Federal Executive Boards;
- Federal Executive Associations;

- Local businesses which can display posters or sponsor your events;
- Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Explorers, Young Astronauts and other youth groups who care about good citizenship; and
- Civic groups like Kiwanis, Rotary International, Masonic lodges and others may welcome speakers on good government during *PSRW*.

The only way for these celebrations to succeed is through partnerships and inclusion. Think “out of the box” when planning a celebration and let us know what you are doing!

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The only way the image of government can change to reflect a more accurate picture of its effectiveness is through your proactive and direct participation in community outreach. Through this effort, we also empower citizens to contribute more effectively to the success of government. Working together, we can make the most of our resources and more quickly see results.

Public employees must make a special effort to inform our customers, the American people, about what we do, why we do it, and how well we do it. Americans are demanding a government that is lean, effective and efficient. They want to know that their government is spending their money as wisely as they would spend it themselves.

It is not enough that we in public service know we are doing more with less. Unless the American public is convinced, their support for essential programs will vanish, and those programs may be cut or eliminated. If that happens, and the impact is unacceptable, citizens will ask why we didn't tell them.

Exhibit Events

Exhibits or information fairs are opportunities for multiple government agencies to inform and demonstrate to the public what services they provide. The benefits are threefold:

- To foster pride among your employees;
- To demonstrate government services, products, research and spin off efforts to taxpayers; and

- To introduce citizens to the wide range of employment opportunities in government.

Planning an exhibit event encourages cooperation between and among federal agencies and county, state, and municipal governments. These events also help agencies focus attention on their “reinventing government” efforts by establishing an informed dialogue with their customers, the American public.

Setting up an event during *Public Service Recognition Week* can be an easy task if enough time is invested in planning. *PSRW* is always celebrated the first Monday through Sunday in May. With this in mind, planning should begin as early as possible.

- **Participation:** Exhibitors can include federal, state, county and local government agencies, public employee associations and unions.
- **Displays:** Exhibits should be interactive, not static. They can include fire trucks, police cars, the canine corps or mounted police and military vehicles. Agencies can provide booths offering their services on-site.
- **Educational Outreach:** Contact guidance counselors or school coordinators and give them a presentation on your planned activities and the educational opportunity they provide. Give students information on careers in public service, educational requirements for those careers and on the work government agencies do. Promote field trips to your event.
- **Planning:** Set up a planning meeting. Coordinate efforts with Federal Executive Boards (FEBs), Federal Executive Associations (FEAs), Councils of Governments, employee professional associations and other federal, state, county, or local government entities. Ask for a representative from each organization to coordinate your joint efforts.
- **Location:** Choose a location with high public traffic, like a shopping mall, park or public plaza. Find out what permits you will need, who will need to give permission and any cost or other rules the site entails. Make sure to consider access for the disabled, parking enforcement, first-aid and security for your exhibits, especially for events running several days.
- **Procurement:** If you will need to contract for booths, tents, tables, chairs, electrical hookups, etc., consider a joint procurement effort and do it early.
- **Budget:** The cost of the event will depend on: 1) cost of the tents, flooring and covering (if needed); 2) cost of tables and chairs; 3) tablecloths, draping and skirts; and 4) any other items deemed necessary by your

agency. We recommend that you use exhibits, booklets and information back drops already available in house; high-tech exhibits are especially popular.

- **Publicity:** Publicity is critical to the success of your event. Distribute fliers to local hotels or arrange for posters to be displayed in buses or subways. Also consider an advertising or editorial supplement in your local newspaper. See the Media Outreach section of this booklet for ways to draw the public to your event.
- **Opening Ceremony:** Plan an opening ceremony or kickoff to your exhibit event on the first day. Guests of honor could be local council people, the Mayor, the Governor, members of Congress and heads of agencies. Ask a local media celebrity to serve as emcee.
- **Continuous Entertainment:** Agency choirs and bands can be a crowd-pleaser and attract visitors to the event. Local talent is usually available and willing to perform at these events and there is often a wealth of talent right in your agency. Agency mascots are extremely popular.

Other Community Outreach Ideas

- Offer tours of public facilities not frequently open or offer “behind the scenes” tours of more familiar sites such as City Hall, military facilities, post offices, etc.
 - Hold workshops for citizens in your community. In the past, this has ranged from career training workshops to youth service workshops.
 - Play host to your customers. Customer service agencies that deal with the public daily can often get local grocery stores or markets to donate refreshments for those using the service.
 - Have a parade. Most of the units in parades we see are public employees - military units, police, fire fighters, street sweepers and local elected officials.
 - Unveil a special program, dedicate a new building or draw attention to the special work of your agency.
 - Put together a speakers bureau and publicize it to schools, civic groups, libraries, etc. This should be a year-round activity, but *PSRW* is a great opportunity to send speakers to schools, college and civic group meetings.
 - Hold a “Mentoring Day” to provide hands-on experience to students seeking careers in public service.
 - Print bookmarks with the dates of *PSRW* on one side and your events or the contributions of your agency on the other.
- Ask the public utility companies to include a *PSRW* message on their April or May water, gas and electric bills to all community residents.
 - Ask the library to have a special story time for children during *PSRW* and read stories about firefighters, police officers and other public employees.
 - Hold a banquet to honor distinguished public employees in your area. Invite a speaker who will be a draw for the event.

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

The support and understanding of the community are critical to the successful operation of any public agency. *Public Service Recognition Week* offers an opportunity to increase awareness of the scope, range and importance of public service and has become a valuable means of educating young people about government. During this week-long celebration, many cities will have exhibits at malls and open houses that can be utilized for an interactive learning experience. The strategy is to aim at highlighting and maximizing its educational potential. Educational outreach provides students the opportunity to:

- Learn about math, science, computer and robotics technology from hands-on demonstrations by public employee experts in those fields.
- Find out about drug and crime prevention from law enforcement agencies including local and state police, customs agents and/or the FBI.
- Learn about health and nutrition from community hospital nurses, state agricultural personnel or employees of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Learn about internships, co-ops, scholarships and fellowships available from government agencies.
- Learn about job opportunities in public service.

ENGAGE TEACHERS

Many people tend to forget that teachers are public servants and should be recognized as such during *PSRW*. Teachers also need to be incorporated into the educational segment of the celebration. Almost every school in America will have a civics or government course that is required for their students. As a *PSRW* organizer, you should work through these teachers in order to help them educate their students about American government. Be-

low are some classroom activities to help teachers create a unique and interactive learning environment.

LINK AN ISSUE AREA TO A DEPARTMENT OR AGENCY

Choose a particular issue area (space exploration) and then discuss how the relevant agency (NASA) develops related policies. Issues can be local, state-wide or national in scope.

WRITE A CONSTITUTION

If you were drafting a new constitution what would you include? Assume the class is responsible for developing a constitution for one of the newly democratized states of eastern Europe. Is the U.S. Constitution a useful model? What else should be included? Class exercise: Stage a constitutional convention with two-thirds of class support required to adopt an amendment; debate issues.

BALANCE-OF-POWERS/ELECTIONS/POLITICAL ISSUES

The Balance-of-Powers principle has endured for more than 200 years. Discuss. What does the Constitution say about elections? Examine the Hatch Act limiting political activities of civil servants. What is the difference between elected and appointed officials? What are their roles in government?

THE HIDDEN ASPECTS OF GOVERNMENT

Have the class list as many government functions as they can and then reduce the list by 10 percent, 20 percent, 50 percent — What are the effects at each level? What could you afford to live without? What are some of the hidden effects? This lesson is designed to emphasize the range of services and functions of government while highlighting invisible aspects of “smooth operation” — How visible are government functions: obvious/less obvious/obscure/hidden? What is their nature: critical/valuable/quality of life/ceremonial?

RUN THE CITY...STATE...NATION FOR A DAY

Divide the class into executive and legislative sections, assigning specific tasks, challenges and issues — Encourage honest, realistic role-playing and debate asking students to weigh political considerations — Deduct points for action out of character. Break down a federal department and detail how things get done. Chart the passage of a bill through Congress

ENGAGE STUDENTS

- Plan a Students’ Day for your *PSRW* event. In Washington D.C., we arrange for young people to visit the

National Mall on Friday with exhibits focused on students.

- Create a scavenger hunt of a public site like a library, museum or City Hall. Create a list of questions which students can learn the answers to while they are on a field trip to that site.
- Call your neighborhood school and offer to speak to a class about the importance of public service.
- Offer interactive displays (computers, experiments - anything they can touch, feel or try).
- Offer to provide interesting and informative government speakers on issues such as environment, drug enforcement, health research, the space program or consumer product safety. If the speakers come to the school before your events, the students will be better prepared to participate in them.
- Conduct a public service job search workshop or career fair at your local high school.
- Provide teachers with a film on what your agency does. The Social Security office in Little Rock, AR, produced “Our Office,” a film that featured every employee on the job.
- Provide the school district with a promotional packet specifically identifying the educational component of your event. Include exhibits appropriate for the targeted age groups, e.g., career guidance. We have free Teacher’s Guides on *PSRW* available for use before a field trip.
- Sponsor a poster coloring contest or a photography contest for pictures of public employees. Display the drawings at city hall, the library or in another visible place.
- Provide teachers with the free *PSRW* posters.
- Ask teachers to plan a field trip to one or more government agencies. Give students a tour, introduce them to what you do and how you do it.
- Obtain some of the free or low-cost educational materials that are available from the education divisions of federal agencies for students of all ages. The U.S. Department of Energy and NASA, for instance, have many materials aimed at teaching math and science to young people. Most also have special Web sites for students.
- Work through groups like the 4-H Club, YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs and Scouts.
- Provide resource materials to teachers on the role of public service, such as films and posters which kids will enjoy.

- Does your agency have a mascot like “McGruff the Crime Dog” or “Woodsy the Owl”? Arrange for them to visit schools during *PSRW* or to be at your exhibit event. Consider a chance to meet a firefighter or an astronaut.
- Remember, teachers are public employees too!

Examples of Student Outreach

- Office of Personnel Management in Birmingham, Alabama, sponsored an essay contest for city and county schools.
- Federal Managers Association members at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, visited local schools to talk about careers in public service and sponsored an essay contest on “What a Public Service Career Means to Me.”
- The Maine Department of Labor scheduled more than 1,000 students for office tours and honored their teachers as well.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION ACTIVITIES

Tell your agency’s employees that their dedication and sacrifices are noticed and appreciated.

Awards

Public Service Recognition Week is an ideal time to recognize outstanding individual employees, teams of employees or programs. Peer awards are particularly effective, and awards to programs, rather than individuals, demonstrate that government can be effective and excellence is the rule rather than the exception.

You can show appreciation to:

- Government employees who donate their personal time to activities that benefit the community.
- Volunteers from the community who donate their time to assist your agency.
- Employees who have received other agency awards during the year.

Proclamations

Requesting a proclamation from your mayor, city council, governor or other official is easy. It’s a simple way to help bring attention to *PSRW* and to ensure that elected officials are aware of its existence.

- Draft a sample proclamation.
- Send a letter with the draft proclamation to the official(s) you are requesting it from. Include the sample and a list of any plans you have to commemorate the week.
- Arrange for the proclamation to be signed or presented at a public event—a city council meeting, or *PSRW* ceremony.

In-house Publicity

- Use employee and agency newsletters to publicize *PSRW*. Devote a whole issue to excellence among your employees.
- Arrange for a photographer at your events. Give copies of the photos to your public affairs office and local newspapers.
- Publicize plans to your own employees through computer bulletin boards, posters, flyers and tentcards.

Other Employee Recognition Ideas

- Give on-the-spot awards to employees.
- Present each employee with a certificate of thanks.
- Download the free posters. Put them up in your office, lobby and cafeteria.
- Use the bulletin boards in your building, or create your own to celebrate your employees. You can include photos of agency award winners or a “who’s who” of your employees.
- Decorate with balloons, banners or colored streamers.
- Create a display of implemented employee suggestions to demonstrate your agency’s continuous effort to improve.
- Hold training sessions during *PSRW* or schedule a conference to coincide with the week.
- Have employees dress in red, white and blue one day.
- Use butcher paper to create a “Wall of Public Service” in your lobby and invite employees and customers to write what public service means to them on the wall.
- Arrange for Public Employee Night at a sports or cultural facility—a baseball game, bowling alley, movie theater, opera or the zoo. The evening could include free or discounted admission for public employees and/or a special tribute at intermission or half-time. Have a public employee throw out the first ball in the game.
- Have an appreciation breakfast or organize a lunch. Make it a potluck or have supervisors cook up some-

thing for employees. Serve barbecue or pizza. It can even be a picnic or barbecue if the weather permits.

- Organize an employee appreciation event or rally. Remarks can come from agency heads, elected officials and local celebrities.
- Highlight the diversity of your work force, focusing on a different ethnic group each day.
- Hold a contest to create a slogan for your agency or office and award the prize during *PSRW*.
- Challenge another division or agency to a softball game or other sporting event and invite your colleagues and families to come watch.
- Display letters your agency has received from citizens who appreciated your service. Make sure they're displayed in an area the public can see as well.
- Arrange for payroll stubs, envelopes or mailing enclosures to carry a message thanking employees.
- Ask the public transit authority to let public employees ride free during *PSRW* by showing a government ID. Public facilities like museums and zoos can offer free admission for a week to public employees and their families.
- Give employees special buttons or ribbons to wear.
- Give your employees a quiz on public service based on the "Do You Knows" in this booklet or trivia on your own agency.
- Finally, be sure to acknowledge the hard work of the people who put together your activities.

Your office and building should reflect to both employees and the public that this is *PSRW*! It's free (or nearly free), fun and festive. It's important to show the public you are proud to serve as a government employee and it helps to boost morale among your colleagues.

Following Up

The Partnership and PER serve as a central resource for celebrations throughout the nation. In order to keep track of the growing success of *Public Service Recognition Week* and to respond to the changing needs of those who participate, it is very important for us to get feedback each year from everyone who takes part in the week.

If you are the coordinator for a regional office, make it part of your wrap up to find out what each of your field offices did during *PSRW*. If you are a national office, ask for a report from each of your field offices. Gather feedback from any office which is under your jurisdiction and make us aware of what is going on.

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management and the Comptroller General have ruled that jackets with agency logos (and other like apparel) can be purchased for federal employees with appropriated funds under the 1988 Government Employees Incentive Act, if they are given as recognition to award winners. (CG No. B-243025, May 2, 1991)

PRIVATE-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

We know that budgets are tight and funding large *PSRW* celebrations can be expensive, but the week is an investment that pays off. It is nearly impossible to give specific advice on how to raise funds for *PSRW* due to the many different rules and regulations that each government entity has regarding fundraising. Partnering with the private sector is a great way to alleviate much of the financial and logistical burden of a *PSRW* celebration. It is also a way to create meaningful relationships with the business community that will continue beyond the celebrations. Along with PER, local businesses in your community may also be willing to help by donating raffle gifts, prizes for contest winners or by publicizing events for the community.

Companies that market to the government sector have a specific interest in maintaining a positive image of themselves among public employees. There are many ways to get businesses to be part of your *PSRW* efforts. These are just a few suggestions:

- Ask area merchants to display the *PSRW* posters in their stores.
- Ask merchants to offer discounts, coupons, prize giveaways or other specials for customers with a government ID during the week.
- Ask a government credit union to sponsor one of your events or help you pay for advertising your events. They have a vested interest in supporting government employees.
- Ask area businesses to provide their products free of charge to winners of awards or recognition programs.
- Work with area government employee associations and unions to determine what businesses or merchants would be willing to partner.

MEDIA OUTREACH

Exciting opportunities exist to get positive media coverage during *PSRW*, both for your events and for public employees in general. Government employees are called on every day to tackle difficult issues and complex tasks. The American public is often unaware of much of what we do to serve them. You are the expert in your area of government service. You are also a local citizen who has more voice and clout in your community than an “expert” from another place.

Who Are We Dealing With?

Newspapers, magazines, TV and radio stations, with few exceptions, are businesses. They produce products designed to appeal to certain audiences. The sale of advertising space or time is the media’s primary source of income. The size and affluence of the audience reached determines how much can be charged for advertising.

What Is News?

The audience of each news organization affects how news is defined. To the editor of a small community newspaper, an award given to one of your employees can be big news. To a metropolitan newspaper, such an event is too routine to merit any mention. Reporters gather information from many sources, selecting only the information that they believe is of interest to their audience.

Reaching out to the media is far easier than most people think. It does require planning and time. It also is very worthwhile. Public employees do a broad range of jobs and do them very well. They also contribute to their communities in many ways. In either case, they have interesting stories to tell. Who better to tell their stories than other public employees? *PSRW* gives you a forum. Here are a few suggestions for getting started.

Gather statistical information on the total number of public employees and retirees at all levels of government in your area. Don’t forget teachers, fire and police personnel. You want the total number. Also try and find out what they contribute to the community in taxes and disposable income. This information can be very important when trying to convince a local media mogul to carry your story. You should be able to get most of this information from the U.S. Census reports online and at your local library.

What do you want your community to know about your activities? Does your *PSRW* celebration have a particular theme? Is your focus on honoring outstanding public employees or on the services available through various government offices? Make sure that people hear your message. A consistent message can give your plan much more power.

Start identifying key spokespersons. You may know of several who will be happy to speak out for public employees. Who is selected may depend on your message and where you plan to place it. Spokespersons may even be individuals from the private sector.

After talking with key people at the various outlets, choose the ones you plan to use and develop a time line for submission of stories, calendars, etc.

- Develop a list of all the possible media outlets. Local newspapers, radio or TV talk shows or billboards all have good potential. You may want to talk to the editor of the local paper, the manager of the radio station, or the producer of a cable TV talk show before you decide which outlets will be the most effective for your message. Some tips for using the various media outlets follow this section.
- Keep a file of good quotes and action photos. You never know when you might need them in a hurry. We live in the age of the sound bite and visual image. To be effective, you need to capture the attention of your readers or listeners in the first few seconds.

Once you make media contacts, you need to keep them alive. Stay in touch throughout the year with items of interest. Let them know that stories about public employees are newsworthy. An occasional thank you note to a reporter or a letter to the editor won’t hurt either. Everyone likes to know their work is read and appreciated!

NEWSPAPER COVERAGE

- There are many ways to get your story into the newspaper. The key is to be creative and persistent.
- Keep your story suggestions short and to the point. Use facts and figures but don’t forget the human interest angle either.
- Use plain English. Avoid government jargon, technical terms and acronyms.
- Be prepared when you suggest a story. Have the information at hand. If you don’t know the answer to a question, find out, but don’t guess.

Story Ideas

- Prepare stories about outstanding employees or groups in your agency and send them to the press, allowing for lead time of one month. Use them in your own agency publications as well.
- Develop a list of “Facts and Figures” on the surprising and unique contributions of your agency to send to local newspapers and use in agency newsletters. Our “Do You Knows” are listed later in this booklet.
- Write a letter to the editor of your local newspapers about the importance of *Public Service Recognition Week*.
- Ask for space for a guest editorial during *PSRW* in your area paper. Small and medium-size papers are often eager to publish guest opinions.
- Invite the press to each of your activities. Provide background on the celebration and encourage them to focus on public employees during *PSRW*.
- Encourage advertising “saluting” public employees. It’s good business for them and good morale-building for us.
- Have your events listed in the events calendars of magazines, newspapers and on radio. Include the free “advertiser” newspapers and specialized publications.

Feature Articles

Even major metropolitan areas have a community newspaper that often is a more effective communication tool than a paper with a national focus. Read through several days’ papers to see where your message can be expressed most effectively. Business, metro or city sections are all good possibilities.

Look for the names of key reporters for each section. These are the people you want to contact. This is where it pays to do your homework. You can make a persuasive argument about why your story or event should be covered if you are armed with the facts about the number of public employees and their economic contributions.

Whether you meet with reporters in person or over the phone, you’ll need to convince them that the story you have to tell will warrant their time and their editorial space. Find out the best way to contact them with story information and their deadlines. The best story in the world won’t do a reporter any good if his or her deadline is passed.

Op-Eds and Letters to the Editor

Op-eds and letters to the editor are good ways to focus attention on *PSRW* and the contributions of public employees. Contact your paper’s opinion editor and find out how guest writers are selected. Remember your list of possible spokespersons? Is there someone on the list who is especially well regarded in the community?

They may be willing to let you use their name. You may have to write a draft of the editorial or provide someone on their staff with the facts that you want highlighted. Be sure to allow sufficient time so you can meet the paper’s deadlines. TV and radio stations run public opinion segments as well.

Community Calendars

These are key places to list your event if you want the community to attend. The reason most often given for unsuccessful outreach efforts is lack of publicity. Find out what the deadlines are and if you can submit photos with your listing. Be sure the date, time and location are clearly stated.

Advertising Supplements

Every newspaper makes its money from selling advertising. Supplements are special inserts which focus on a particular subject area (the job market, real estate, care for the elderly) and give the newspaper an opportunity to sell advertising space to businesses who can target readers with an interest in that area.

Advertising is a successful way to draw attention to public employees, government programs and publicity for *PSRW* events. Newspapers sell advertising saluting public employees and in exchange provide you with editorial space to promote *PSRW*.

Advertising Supplements can:

- Provide publicity for all your activities, especially those open to the public.
- Tell the stories of people in government and the critical work they do on behalf of the public.
- Give the private sector a chance to enhance their image with public employees by saying “thank you” through their ads.
- Contact your local Chamber of Commerce. They may be willing to serve as the catalyst to get the word out to area businesses.
- Reinforce pride and respect among public employees.

- Reach out to the potential employment pool, especially young people. Involve your local community college and its career center.

Advertising supplements are mutually beneficial to all involved. When you meet with the advertising director, bring a portfolio of photos and a description of events which occurred in your area during *PSRW* in past years. Bring a list of story ideas to show that the editorial content will have substance for all readers, not just public employees.

As a rule, the newspaper secures the ads and does layout and design, leaving you free to write the articles and editorials. It will be easier for the paper to sell advertising if you have outlined stories that are high quality and aimed at a general audience. Don't use jargon, and make it interesting!

Be creative and adapt story lines to your local area. Get government agency public information people involved in the process. We can provide copies of past advertising supplements and the names of public employees in other cities who helped create supplements.

Newsletters

Newsletters or monthly magazines by and for public employees are often overlooked outreach opportunities. You can include an article that emphasizes the important contributions of public employees, salutes the outstanding employees in your agency or highlights your *PSRW* activities. Contact the editor about deadlines and potential story ideas. They may have ideas of their own and suggest important contacts in the news community.

RADIO AND TELEVISION COVERAGE

Local radio and TV stations are also good outlets for information about public employees. Again, it is important to do your homework. Does the station offer a community news segment or talk show that might offer an outlet for your message?

Call the stations in your area and learn the names of the news director, the assignment editor and the contact person for public service announcements (PSAs). Is there a "drive-time" segment on a radio station that is willing to interview public employees during *PSRW*? Call and find out who should be contacted about scheduling. You may find that there is a station interested in doing a remote broadcast from your site. Not only can they interview

people "at the scene", the broadcast may interest other people in stopping by.

Just as you do with the print media, you should start early developing your broadcast media contacts. Don't wait until the week before *PSRW* to try and line up outreach opportunities.

OTHER IDEAS

- Ask radio stations to broadcast live from your event. Arrange for public employees to appear on talk shows to discuss *Public Service Recognition Week* and the important work of government employees. For example, Social Security, IRS and Post Office employees in Monroe, LA, appeared on the GOOD MORNING SHOW at KNOE TV to promote *PSRW* events.
- Target non-English publications and stations as well. Translate PSAs into appropriate languages.
- FAX "reminders" of your events to radio stations early in the morning (5 a.m.) to capitalize on the morning commute time.

Cable Television

Most cable TV companies must offer a public access station. Possibilities may exist for producing your own program by and about public employees. Many public access programs are also interested in promoting community activities.

Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

PSAs are short, informational items that usually announce events or provide educational information of interest to the public. They are usually offered to radio or TV stations, but can also be offered to the print media. If a station agrees to use a PSA, it is at no cost to you. They will usually schedule the PSA to run periodically for a week or other given period. Every station has different format requirements for the PSAs they will accept. Some stations take written PSAs and have their own announcers read them on the air. Others require broadcast quality tape. Find out from the station which format they prefer. You can also create your own PSAs to fit your message. Again, if you are advertising a special event, be sure the date, time and location are correct. Read the PSA over several times, then record it yourself. This will allow you to time it and make sure your message comes across as you intend. Your community access station may allow you to use their recording studio to record your PSAs.

Preparing for Media Interviews

Media coverage during *PSRW* is an opportunity to change the perception that many people seem to have of government and public employees. Few of us are accustomed to meeting with the media, but some simple tips can make most anyone feel more at ease.

This advice will work well for print or broadcast media. For radio or TV interviews, you may want to use someone with extensive public speaking experience. Also, consider asking the presidents of nonprofit public employee associations. Whoever is selected should appear confident and at ease, especially before a camera.

Gaining familiarity with the reporter or interviewer's style is also important. Review several articles or programs before the actual interview. You can help the interviewer know your representatives by sending copies of their bios a few days before the scheduled interview. If you plan to use props, make sure they are brief and easy to read on the air. Use as few as possible and practice using them before the interview.

Don't try and fool the audience. If you don't know the answer to a question, say so and move on. With a newspaper reporter, ask if you can't get the answer to the question before the deadline. Then be sure you do so! Nothing can turn a positive experience into a negative one faster than failing to provide promised information.

Respond to questions with short, clear answers. You can probably respond to any question in one or two short sentences. If the interviewer wants more information, they will ask you for it.

Other Media Outreach Ideas

- Ask your transit system to donate advertising space for *PSRW*. Messages can be posted on trains and buses, in stations, and on the back of transit cards or brochures.
- Arrange to display a message about your activities on the TV convention channel at city hotels. Many cable access channels have video bulletin boards. Ask if they will run messages about *PSRW*.

CONCLUSION

We've given you a lot of information about media relations. Remember, you don't have to do everything at once. If you haven't been involved with the media in the past, decide what you're comfortable doing the first year. Build on your success in the following years.

CELEBRATION EXAMPLES

Oklahoma State *PSRW* Celebration

The Oklahoma Federal Executive Board office served as the primary coordinator of *PSRW* events for the State of Oklahoma. A diverse set of individuals served on the committee to assist in the planning. Congressional staff members participated by serving as a selection committee for the annual awards program.

The committee used *PSRW* to reach out and educate the community with the annual “Public Servants at your Service” event, which is basically government on display at a local shopping mall. State, county and municipal governments were invited to participate in the event and were very well represented. The agencies that exhibited provided services to the public from the mall location or presented information on the services they provide. Schools around the state were also invited to bring their students to the event in order to help the students learn about the functions of government. This event was a great asset to the committee in publicizing the week to the media and the public. In addition, the representatives from the various agencies who participated in the Mall event enjoyed the day of interaction with the public.

Oklahoma also held the Employee of the Year award program during *PSRW* to recognize outstanding federal employees. The nomination process limited agencies to nominating one employee per category with the nominees coming from federal agencies throughout the State of Oklahoma, which created a healthy state-wide competition. Employees were ranked by Congressional staff members to provide neutrality to the process. The event was very popular among the employees; whether they were the category “winner” or not, each nominee was recognized before an audience comprised of inter-agency representation.

The Oklahoma State Celebration is a good example of a highly organized celebration. Even though the Oklahoma Federal Executive Board was the primary organizer, all levels of government were included in the celebration. If you want a week that focuses primarily on employee recognition, this is a great example to follow.

Baltimore *PSRW* Celebration

The Baltimore Federal Executive Board celebrated *PSRW* with the Annual Excellence In Federal Career (EIFC) Awards Ceremony and Luncheon. In the past, the U.S. Naval Academy Ceremonial Band played the ceremony along with an “All-Service” Color Guard from Fort Detrick, MD. The event was very popular and grew each year in stature and historically has had about 1,000 individuals attend. The Awards Ceremony and Luncheon was a culmination of the EIFC Awards that are chosen each year in 16 different categories. The EIFC Awards

Nomination Package was sent out to all FEB member agencies in the Fall, and nominations were due at the beginning of the year. There was a Screening Committee which met to review all the nominations and determine the finalists in each of the 16 categories. A Blue Ribbon Panel of executives and business leaders reviewed the finalists to determine the one Gold Winner among the finalists in each category. (Gold winners were kept secret and were announced at the ceremony and luncheon).

This example is great for those who are organizing one event, especially if it is an Awards program. The organization of the nomination and selection process and of the Awards program itself is one that can be translated to any level of government. It not only recognizes dedicated employees but it also creates interest and partnership among government, community and business leaders.

DID YOU KNOW?

The following list of little-known facts about contributions of public employees serves to highlight the importance of our contributions as public employees. Use them in your press releases or for fun with your employees during *PSRW*.

Health

- The National Institutes of Health began in a single attic room with one doctor searching for a way to prevent the spread of cholera.
- The CT Scan and cardiac angiography have been improved by NASA’s digital image processing.
- Premature infants are placed in heat cradles developed from the materials used to make astronaut helmet face plates and heated cockpit canopies.
- Ninety-five percent of America’s children are protected against major disease through use of vaccines administered by public employees. Thanks to the government, polio and measles have been all but wiped out. The vaccine for meningitis and drugs for malaria were developed by federal government employees.
- Half of all U.S. medical doctors in practice today received training by government employees working for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
- NASA developed the Rotating Wall Bioreactor which stimulates cancer cell growth in micro gravity. This will help researchers better understand tumor growth in cancer victims.
- It was an employee of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Dr. Frances Kelsey, who prevented a generation of birth defects by successfully instituting a ban on the child-deforming drug, Thalidomide.

- People born without sweat glands can wear a cool suit developed out of the same technology that created the space suit. The same kind of cool suit is also worn by race car drivers who are subjected to temperatures of up to 130 degrees Fahrenheit.

Inventions

- A government employee at the U.S. Department of Agriculture pioneered the bar code scanner that automatically computes the cost of your purchases at the store.
- Employees at the U.S. Department of Energy created a plastic bag like those used by grocery stores that is made entirely out of potato peels and is completely biodegradable.
- Defense Department researchers developed the networking system that led to the creation of the Internet.
- A career government scientist created the instrument landing systems used by all commercial and military aircraft.
- A scientist with the Agricultural Research Service invented a frozen milk concentrate with a shelf life of six months.
- Scientists at Argonne National Laboratories can make a construction material twice as strong as concrete from ashes left from incinerated garbage.
- Freeze dried food was first used during John Glenn's 1962 Mercury flight.
- Two employees of the National Institute of Standards and Technology invented the neon light.
- A U.S. Department of Energy lab is working with the University of Michigan to create a new type of x-ray camera which will make it possible for oncologists to see in real-time where a radiation beam is focused in a patient's body and verify how much radiation dose the patient receives.
- NASA research developed low-cost wastewater treatment systems for use in rural communities.
- The smoke detectors in your home were modeled after the smoke and fire detection system used on the Skylab manned spacecraft.
- A career federal employee with more than 50 patents for his inventions developed radar. Another government employee discovered sonar.
- Scientists at the Naval Research Lab discovered applications for the substance Teflon, which now covers most modern cookware. These scientists also developed the thin plastic wrap which keeps food fresh in the supermarket.
- Government scientists at the Agricultural Research Service, tired of ironing clothes, developed technology to make cotton fabrics as wrinkle resistant as permanent press fabrics.
- A U.S. Department of Agriculture research chemist, Dr. Alene Jeanes, developed Destran, a carbohydrate made from sugar for use as a blood extender that was used extensively during the Korean War.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture researchers put starch from surplus grain to good use—it is the key ingredient for biodegradable plastic trash bags.
- A government employee invented the plastic cornea, a discovery which has given back eyesight to thousands.
- The CAT scan, which helps physicians diagnose cancer, brain disorders and other diseases, was invented by a government employee.
- Agricultural Research Service researchers in New Orleans created flame-retardant clothing for fire fighters and the material used in space suits.

People

- Alexander Graham Bell, father of the telephone, worked as an agent of the U.S. Census Bureau.
- Clara Barton, an employee of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, founded the American Red Cross.
- A freed slave, Mary Elizabeth Bowser, became a Union Army spy by working as a maid for Confederate President Jefferson Davis, memorizing military plans and communiques.
- The first person to set foot on the moon, Neil Armstrong, was a public employee.
- Frederick Douglas, American abolitionist, author and-statesman, held various government positions including Minister to Haiti and Recorder of Deeds in Washington, D.C.
- Rachel Carson, author of Silent Spring, which helped spark nationwide concern for ecology, was an Aquatic Biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Technology

- Army doctors in Somalia used satellite technology to transmit photos and text via computer to aid in diagnosing and treating patients from around the world.
- NASA space technology launched tens of thousands of products, including cordless construction tools, heat cradles for premature infants, smoke detectors, low-cost wastewater treatment, radiology, and an underwater device used to locate the "black box" from airplane crashes.
- The Space Shuttle's Imaging Radar detected rivers buried more than 16 feet below the sands of the Western Desert in Egypt. The discovered water will support agriculture in that area for the next 200 years.
- Popular athletic shoes use material that cushioned and insulated the boots of Apollo astronauts.
- Employees at the U.S. Department of Energy have developed the world's first device to reveal the exact three-dimensional arrangement of atoms in small molecules which could help determine the impact of acid rain and the chemical evolution of life on earth.

- In their search to unlock the mysteries of the universe, NASA scientists discovered the first Black Hole.
- Instrument landing systems used by all commercial and military aircraft, as well as the basic design of most aircraft, were developed by government employees.
- It was a scientist with the Environmental Protection Agency who did the research that spurred federal regulators to reduce allowable levels of lead in gasoline by more than 90 percent in the mid 1980's. For his work he was granted a coveted McArthur Foundation grant.
- NASA's Cosmic Background Explorer provided evidence to support the Big Bang Theory.
- Government scientists are now exploring the use of the Shuttle's ceramic insulation as a substitute for bone material.

Other Trivia

- The Pentagon is one of the world's largest office buildings, covering more than 29 acres and housing 17.5 miles of corridors.
- Most children in America are educated by public school teachers.
- Employees of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have constructed many of our nation's architectural masterpieces.
- In 1865 approximately one-third of the U.S. currency in circulation was forged, prompting the creation of the United States Secret Service.
- NASA mapped the entire planet Venus from space using the Magellan space probe.
- The IRS employs fine art experts who make appraisals when donated art is claimed as a tax deduction.
- More than two million public employees protect our nation through service in our armed forces.
- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has for more than a century operated the Cooperative Weather Station Program through which 10,000 volunteer weather observers donate more than a million hours a year making daily records of the weather across the country.
- Since 1960, more than 195,000 people have served as Peace Corps volunteers in 139 countries.
- In 1989, the 77,000 volunteers at the U.S. Department of the Interior surpassed the number of paid employees—72,000—effectively doubling the Department's ability to provide services at a fraction of the cost.
- The U.S. Forest Service relies on nearly 95,000 volunteers who work on trail construction and maintenance, fish and wildlife management, research projects and visitor programs in the national forests. The appraised value of their services amounts to \$33.8 million in savings to taxpayers each year.

Create Your Own

- How many residents are employed as federal, state, county or local employees?
- What is the combined purchasing power of the public employees in your area (the combined salaries of all the public employees in your area)?
- How many people rely on public transit each day in your area?
- How much blood do your employees donate to the Red Cross?
- How much money is given by public employees in your area to the Combined Federal Campaign or the United Way?
- How many volunteer hours do your employees donate to worthy causes?
- How many school children are educated by teachers in your area each year?
- How many calls do firefighters, paramedics and police officers respond to annually in your area?
- How many books are checked out for free from your city or county libraries each year?
- How many citizens in your area receive Social Security checks each year?

QUOTABLE QUOTES

Government is a trust, and the officers of the government are trustees; and both the trust and the trustees are created for the benefit of the people.

—HENRY CLAY

Public confidence in the integrity of the Government is indispensable to faith in democracy; and when we lose faith in the system, we have lost faith in everything we fight and spend for.

—ADLAI E. STEVENSON

It is a distinct pleasure to extend special greetings to the over 20 million members of the Public Service preparing to celebrate *Public Service Recognition Week*...Your contributions to governance at the local, state and national levels improve the quality of American life and safeguard the principles of freedom and democracy held so dear by the people of this Nation...and help all of us keep the American dream alive.

— GENERAL COLIN L. POWELL

The government is us; we are the government, you and I.

—PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Any free government certainly needs a vast corps of well-trained, dedicated, intelligent, long service people who can take care of all the intricate jobs of operating the many and manifold activities that governments these days are compelled to carry on.

— PRESIDENT DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

Let the public service be a proud and lively career. And let every man and woman who works in any area of our national government, in any branch, at any level, be able to say with pride and with honor in future years: 'I served the United States government in that hour of our nation's need.'

—PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

When I talk with students, I tell them what you do in government at any given level matters more than what business people at a comparable level do. What they do is good for the management and the stockholders, and sometimes, for all the customers as well. What you do affects the well-being, survival even, of millions.

— ELLIOT L. RICHARDSON

The ability of this or any Administration to succeed depends in no small degree upon the energy, dedication, and spirit of the great majority of federal employees.

— PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

Employees who use imagination, initiative and bold vision will be able to benefit in ways that they could never do before. Those who believe in government the most and who dedicate their careers to lives of public service have the greatest stake in making it work.

— PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER

Throughout my years in government, I have been privileged to know and work with extraordinary men and women...Day in and day out, in a variety of settings and at every level of government, these quiet heroes work to give their fellow citizens the tools and opportunities to make the most of their lives.

—PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON

The overwhelming majority of public employees are dedicated and hardworking, helping to make government at all levels work more efficiently for the American taxpayer.

— CONGRESSMAN STENY HOYER (D-MD)

So very much of what we are as a nation - and what we are to achieve as a people - depends upon the calibre and character of the federal career people. In no other endeavor can you more directly serve our country's cause - or the values on which we stand - than in the public service.

—PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON

At various times in our nation's history, the call of public service has captured the vision of an entire generation of Americans, igniting a spirit of enthusiasm for serving our nation. As public employees, we will face many tests in the upcoming years. I know you share with me the feeling of excitement towards making a difference in the quality of American life. Your commitment and experience, and professionalism have made this country strong and are a national resource. A new decade and century are before us. With them come new promises as well as new challenges. To meet those challenges, we will need the best schools, the best technology, the best government and the finest work force this nation can offer.

— FORMER SENATOR DAVID PRYOR (D-AR)

All Americans owe a debt of gratitude to those individuals who have dedicated their lives to public service and, through that service, have made invaluable contributions to our Nation's growth and prosperity.

—FORMER SENATOR PAUL SARBANES (D-MD)

50 WAYS GOVERNMENT WORKS FOR US

1. Social Security spends less than one percent on overhead.
2. Social Security Survivor's insurance provides income for your family if you die before retirement.
3. Social Security disability provides benefits if you become too disabled to work.
4. Medicare provides government health care for seniors.
5. Medicare provides free flu shots for America's senior citizens.
6. Child labor law enforcement keeps children 14-years-old and younger in schools, not factories.
7. College loan programs help millions who might otherwise not be able to afford higher education.
8. U.S. Postal Service inspection programs help prevent mail fraud.
9. OSHA regulations and inspections limit exposure to toxic chemicals in the workplace.
10. The federal minimum wage law makes sure every covered worker gets paid a basic wage.
11. Labor laws guarantee you cannot be prematurely replaced if you strike over unfair labor practices.
12. The Family and Medical Leave Act provides the right to take time off from work to care for a sick child or parent without losing your job.
13. Institutions like the National Archives and Smithsonian Institution preserve our nation's history.
14. The National Cancer Institute has made many discoveries in the treatment of the disease.
15. Government-backed bonds are the safest income security for investors.
16. The Interior Department protects our national parks for the enjoyment of all Americans.
17. Bank regulations limit your loss to \$50 if someone steals money from your account with your ATM card.
18. Copyright and patent laws protect an invention or creative work from being stolen.
19. Child-resistant packaging rules reduce poisonings from medicine and household cleaners.
20. Inspection of meat, dairy and food protects against contamination and disease.
21. Rules ban clothing makers from using flammable materials for kids pajamas.
22. Economic statistics-keeping helps track inflation.
23. Public education is available to every child.
24. The U.S. Mint prints currency and manufactures coin.
25. Truth in lending laws discourage ripoffs by credit card companies.
26. School lunch regulations mandate nutritious meals.
27. Technical help for industry set standards for carbon monoxide detectors, bunk beds, home swimming pools, riding lawnmowers and other consumer items.
28. Enforcement of the federal Clean Air Act guarantees safer air to breathe.
29. Monitoring of earthquakes and volcanoes worldwide provides life-saving warnings.
30. USDA assists family farmers during periods of drought and crop failure.
31. Federal dams provide electrical power, flood control, and irrigation.
32. Federal deposit insurance protects bank accounts.
33. Law enforcement agencies apprehend criminals and search for missing children.
34. Construction and maintenance of interstate highways link the country.
35. Funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting provides noncommercial radio and television alternatives.
36. Military doctors eliminated diseases like typhoid and yellow fever.
37. Government provides assistance to artists and musicians to help develop and preserve American culture.
38. Regulations prevent the sale of alcohol and tobacco to minors.
39. The federal Women, Infants and Children nutrition program improves the health of babies.
40. The U.S. Weather Service provides storm and hurricane warnings.
41. Federal law prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of age, race, gender, color, national origin, religion, pregnancy, childbirth or disability.
42. The Federal Housing Authority helps Americans become homeowners.
43. Food stamps protect families facing hardship.
44. Digital-imaging developed by NASA resulted in the CAT scan, MRI and computer-aided design and manufacturing.
45. Government keeps our nation safe from invasion by outside military forces.
46. The Coast Guard protects America's fishing fleet by halting illegal fishing by foreign boats.
47. Consulates and embassies help U.S. citizens traveling abroad.
48. FEMA provides natural disaster relief for victims of hurricanes, floods, earthquakes and other phenomenon.
49. The Transportation Security Administration monitors the 39 billion tons of air cargo that are transported annually by passenger and freight carriers.
50. Organic foods are certified by USDA standards.

CELEBRATE PUBLIC SERVICE

OURPUBLICSERVICE.ORG/PSRW



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