OTMs "Of the Month" Awards

OTMs also known as “Of the Month” awards is a service of the National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH) which recognizes the outstanding contributions of individuals, groups, and programs to the on-campus living communities of colleges and universities nationwide. Any person affiliated with the on-campus living community may submit or be nominated for an OTM. All OTMs must be month-specific and illustrate how the nominee went above and beyond expectations during the month of nomination. Campus winners are selected each month and are submitted to the regional level, where they may be considered for regional and national recognition. All OTM should be submitted through the OTM database: otms.nrhh.org.

Available OTM Categories

Advisor
Bulletin Board
Community
Community Service Program
Diversity Program
Educational Program
Executive Board Member
Faculty/Staff
First Year Student
National Communications Coordinator
Organization
Resident Assistant
Social Program
Spotlight
Student

Acronyms to Know

NACURH - The National Association of College and University Residence Halls
NCC - National Communications Coordinator
NRHH - National Residence Hall Honorary
RHA - Residence Hall Association
OTM - Of the Month awards
PACURH - Pacific Affiliate of College and University Residence Halls.

How do I write an OTM?

Anyone can write an OTM! It's that easy!

1. Choose your candidate: it can be a person, organization, program etc. Then think about the past month and what things stood out to you.
2. Research: First hand experience is always best and you can even ask others or interview those in charge of the programs as they can give you details that you might
have never seen.

3. **Write!**: Open up a word processing program such as Microsoft Word and start typing. This will make it easier for you to correct your OTM and then you can just simply copy and paste it onto your OTM form on the website. Be as creative and detailed as possible. It is helpful to write it as if you are doing a college level essay. Make sure that you also check for spelling, grammar and formatting errors. This will not be counted against you but it will make your OTM more professional and easily readable. Make sure to define all acronyms because not everything is universal. Also always make sure the OTM and contributions made are specific to that month only.

4. **Log onto the OTM website (otms.nrhh.org)**: Select the appropriate category from the list (General or Program) and that will lead you to the appropriate form.

5. **Submit**: Once you have all the correct information on the OTM form filled out, you can then click submit and you're done! UCR OTMs are due the 5th of every month by 11:59pm. This will allow time for them to be read and selected as campus winners to move onto the regional level. Only one OTM per category will be selected.

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**Why should I create an Account?**

Creating account is not required unless you are an NRHH Member. All you have to do is log onto the website and select either the general or program category, select what school you are from and the appropriate form will appear! Creating an account however is so easy to do and there are some added benefits in doing so:

1. Being able to create an account to keep track of all the OTM’s you have submitted.
2. Have the option to edit OTM’s even after they are submitted until submission deadline for that month passes. After this time the OTMs can only be read.
3. All contact information can be filled in by the database on the OTM form for you.
4. The online OTM form automatically counts the number of words typed.
5. The online form has some required fields to make sure that necessary information is filled out.
6. After the regional deadline, all OTM’s can be read.
7. Anyone can search for previous OTM’s

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**OTM Categories**

**ADVISOR**

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

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

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

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

**COMMUNITY**

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

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

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

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

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

FIRST YEAR STUDENT

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

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

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

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

ORGANIZATION

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

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

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

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

**RESIDENT ASSISTANT**

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

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

**Acceptable Nominees:** Resident Assistants and Multicultural Assistants.

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

**SPOTLIGHT**

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

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

**Acceptable Nominees:** Housekeepers, Maintenance, Dining Services, Campus Police, etc.
Ineligible Nominees: Undergraduate students, organizations, advisors, etc.

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

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

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

PROGRAMS

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

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

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

Diversity:
 What were the goals of the program and how were they accomplished?
 How did the program serve to promote diversity and understanding?
 What makes this program unique?
 Did the program have a lasting effect on residents?
Ten Tips for Writing a Good OTM

10. OTM nominations are due to the Associate Director (AD-NRHH) via the OTM Database (otms.nrhh.org) on the 10th of every month at 12:01am CST. Contact your Campus-level Administrator to inquire about the date that OTMs are due on your campus (OTMs may be due for your school on a much earlier date).

9. Paint a clear picture of the event, individual, or group of individuals in which you are writing about.

8. Obtain background information on the event or individuals in which you are writing about. Sometimes getting a couple of quotes or general statements from attendees gives an OTM a little extra pizzazz.

7. Aspire to max out the OTM word count (Maximum 600 Words).

6. Submit correct information on the form. Type the complete address and name of the nominator and nominee on the form in the space provided. This is the name that will be printed on the certificate if you win regionally and/or nationally. Anonymity of the nominator may be maintained by the NSRO.

5. Use the correct forms!

4. Define acronyms; they are not always universal! The only acronyms you should use are NRHH, NACURH, RHA, NCC, and region name (e.g. SAACURH).

3. Make sure you are using the correct category for your nominee. This is a common error people make. To avoid mistakes look at the criteria on the previous pages.

2. Presentation is key! Proofread the OTM to make sure you are clearly saying what you want to say. Look out for bad grammar and spelling errors.

1. Make sure your nomination is month specific! It is very important to highlight the outstanding things that the nominee did and how they did it in the month of nomination. Leave out background information that cannot be considered pertinent (ex. All this year, _______) to the month of nomination.

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