

# **Brief OTM Overview**

One of the many services of NACURH (National Association of College and University Residence Halls), Inc. is the 'Of the Month' Award, which is administered through the National Residence Hall Honorary. The 'Of the Month' process recognizes outstanding contributions to College and University Residence Halls in the following categories: Advisor, Residential Community, Community Service Program, Diversity Program, Educational Program, Executive Board Member, Residence Life Faculty/Staff, Institution Faculty/Staff, First Year Experience, Organization, Residential Assistant, Social Program, Spotlight and Student. Any school affiliated with NACURH is eligible to make or receive an 'Of the Month' award and/or nomination. The OTM must be month specific, meaning the nomination should only focus on the month for which it is written.

## ***How to set up an account...***

1. Go to <http://otms.nrhh.org/>
2. On the left-hand side of the page, there is a place to sign-in. Underneath that, click the link "Create an account"
3. Follow the steps in order to set up your username. It will first ask you for your university and then there will be a standard information page for you to fill out. Be sure to select your community from the drop down menu at the top.
4. Administrators of the database (advisors and NRHH Recognition Chair) will receive an e-mail notifying them that you've requested an account. They will be able to go in and activate your username.
5. Once you are activated you are all ready to submit an OTM!

## ***Submitting an OTM...***

1. Once you are logged into the system, there will be a set of links on the left hand side of the page.
2. Under the 'OTM Submissions' heading, click the "Submit General" link
3. Select the applicable OTM category from the drop down list (descriptions are provided on the following page).
4. Your information will automatically be entered on the right hand side. Enter the information of the person whom you are nominating on the left. Try your best to enter as much information as you know. This ensures that NRHH is able to notify the individual if they win, as well as getting them their certificate.
5. You then have space there to write your description. Keep in mind that the max is 600 words. We encourage you to get as close to that max as you can. The more detailed the OTM, the better! There is a link at the bottom of the page that will even calculate the word count for you.
6. Click 'Submit Form'
7. Congratulations, you've submitted your OTM!

## ***Ten Quick Tips for Writing Winning OTMs***

10. *OTM nominations are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month at 11:00pm. Remember that nominations for one month will be due the 1<sup>st</sup> of the following month (ex. OTMs for September are due Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> at 11:00pm).*
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.
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 (National Services and Recognition Office).
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 following page.
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.

# OTM Descriptions

## ***Diversity Program***

A program that promotes and educates about diversity and understanding. This program illustrates the importance of promoting diversity in the residence halls as well as embracing diversity in the everyday lives of the residents.

## ***Educational Program***

A program meant to educate residents about a topic, issue or idea. Programs nominated in this category can range from academic success programming, learning a new skill or promoting global citizenship, etc.

## ***First Year Student***

Any student first year student leader who excels in adapting to a new environment within their residence hall and taking an active role in their communities and positively impacting those around them.

## ***Institution Faculty/Staff***

Individuals who aid students in their academics, which includes professors, instructors, teaching assistants, counselors, and other academic affairs staff. This category is intended to recognize institutional faculty who have made a contribution to the residence life community both in and out of the classroom.

## ***Organization***

Any organization that has actively contributed to the student leadership, recognition, or other aspects of residential life during the month of nomination. This is for recognition of the organization as a whole and not just the accomplishments of a few members.

## ***Passive Program***

Any program that does not require anyone to actively run it for people to participate in it. This category is intended to recognize residential programming that occurs through billboards, newsletters, pamphlets, etc.

## ***Residence Life Faculty/Staff***

Individuals who aid residents within the housing campus community. This category is intended to recognize the Residential Life Faculty/Staff who are not eligible for the Resident Assistant category and who have made contributions to the residence life community.

## ***Resident Assistant***

Any individual within a residence hall student staff who has worked with/impacted residents on their floor or in their hall, gone above and beyond the duties of their job, supporting residents in the communities in which they work, supported their residence life organizations, and/or made outstanding contributions to the hall in which they work during the month of nomination.

## ***Residential Community***

This award should emphasize what this community has done as well as how it has supported others (both within and outside their community). This community being recognized must not be an official campus organization. Should illustrate what brings a group of individuals together and how they worked together as a group to accomplish their goals during the month of nomination.

## ***Social Program***

Any social program that focuses on resident interaction and their ability to meet new people and socialize. Programs in this category can range from being a floor social program to a campus wide program.

## ***Spotlight***

Anything that does not fall under any of the other categories that you feel is worthy of an Of the Month recognition.

## ***Student***

Any individual enrolled as a student at the institution who has made outstanding contributions to the residence halls during the month of nomination. Things to consider may be students who have made a contribution to their floor, hall, residential life organization, etc. through leadership, motivation, programming, volunteering and/or being a role model for other residents during the month of nomination.

**Below is an example of a nationally winning Executive Board Member OTM from 2012:**

*Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality - Warren Bennis*

*This quote perfectly describes the leadership characteristics of David Parker, the Residence Hall Association President, and unequivocal advocate of on-campus students. David is known by many as the guy who not only has a vision of improving the on-campus experience but also someone whom challenges and inspires RHA executive officers, Clemson University administration and his fellow on-campus residents. David combines leadership with his passion, dedication, and courage to create a unique style of advocacy that empowers a positive shared vision of one Clemson family.*

*During the month of November, David dedicated immeasurable hours to ensure the success of the Clemson Residence Hall Association in its numerous endeavors. Finding time in between classes and meetings to continuously provide support to his fellow officers and accomplish the major tasks that needed to be done. The first big challenge would be presented early in the month with Beach Bash, followed by SAACURH and then ending with the tireless and tedious task of closing out the fall semester for Residence Hall Association.*

*On November 2nd, Residence Hall Association hosted a campus-wide event that took an underutilized campus resource, our local beach, and presented the amazing free opportunities provided by Clemson Outdoor Recreation and Education (CORE). David in-conjunction with the special event director not only created the game plan but was integral with its execution. Hosting an event in a new location presented numerous challenges and tribulations that Residence Hall Association never experienced before although David did not shy away from the task at hand. Instead, David looked at each of the challenges presented as a learning opportunity and acknowledged that they could only help to improve the event.*

*One of the first initial hurdles was when university officials decided to hold an event on the same day as beach bash. This required the event to be moved back one week from its original date and disrupted the ability of numerous committed volunteers. This was no problem for David whom reached out to his fraternity and was able to fill the volunteer's gap and ensure the event was able to go on. Another hurdle presented itself when the local university transportation was not able to provide services to the campus beach. David called up local transportation companies and was able to book two charter buses to ensure on-campus students without cars were able to attend the event.*

*Just days after Beach Bash, SAACURH preparations were undertaken by the National Communications Coordinator for the upcoming regional conference. SAACURH is a vital moment for our organization as this is the only conference before executive elections. With preparations behind schedule, David found ways to assist the conference delegation by submitting regional paperwork, leading the South Carolina state meeting in his role as Associate Director of Recognition for South Carolina, and even winning the only award for South Carolina and Clemson for his four years of service.*

*Also David worked tirelessly throughout the month of November to prepare Residence Hall Association for closing out the accounts. This includes assisting with reconciling the budget and following up with the SAACURH re-cap presentation. He also is meeting three times a*

*week to ensure that all preparations for spring are completed.*

*Some leaders are your list-makers and planners, David Parker is a doer and action taker that during November showed he is able to not only dream a vision but make it a reality.*