Nominations from dues-paying states are considered for eligibility. Nominated leaders and programs should have a positive effect on the administration of state human resource programs. A state’s central human resource department or line agency human resource operations may administer nominated programs.

Programs and projects must have been operational for at least six months and must be transferable to other states. Selection criteria are based on the questions asked on the award application. Included in this packet are the specific criteria for each award and their categories. Nominations are encouraged in all areas of human resource management administration.

Additionally, please attach a one-page summary of the program and prepare a narrative answer for the questions listed below. Do not send supporting documentation. Provide a narrative answer for each of the following questions.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Title: Real World Working Challenge State: NM

Contact Person: Michael Santillanes

Contact’s Title: Internship Program Manager

Agency: State Personnel Office

Mailing Address: 2600 Cerrillos Road, Santa Fe, NM 87505

Telephone: 505-365-3691 Fax: 505-476-7806

E-mail: Michael.Santillanes@state.nm.us

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nominator: Michael Santillanes Title: Internship Program Manager

State: NM Agency: State Personnel Office

Telephone: 505-365-3691 Fax: 505-476-7806

E-mail: Michael.Santillanes@state.nm.us

DETAILS

1. Please provide a brief description of this program.

The Real World Working Challenge is an innovative program designed to increase the awareness among high school age students about potential careers with state government. It is an 8-week program in which students get an inside look at the mission, scope, and inner-workings of a particular state agency. Students learn directly from representatives of each division within the agency and learn about the roles, responsibilities and duties associated with each position therein. In the course of the program students visit various agency offices, laboratories, shops and other work sites. The program culminates with presentations in which the students propose solutions to an agency related issue in their home communities.

1. How long has this program been operational (month and year)?

This program became operational in March of 2017.

1. Why was this program created? (What problem[s] or issues does it address?)

This program was created as part of an effort to break down the walls that traditionally exist between state agencies and educational institutions. It was designed to address the lack of awareness among New Mexico’s students about the wide variety of jobs and careers available with the state government and doing so early enough that they can make informed decisions in planning for their higher education and careers. By creating opportunities for students to meet directly with state government professionals this program serves to inform and educate students as well as to demystify the work of state government and generate interest in careers with the state.

1. Why is this program a new and creative method?

This program takes a bold new approach to recruitment by encouraging agencies to proactively reach out to high school students in an extended, direct and informative way. This program is designed to be in-depth enough that it is a truly meaningful experience they are able to explore a variety of career paths and to gain valuable first-hand accounts from professionals.

1. What was the program’s startup costs? (Provide detailed information about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place.)

The primary cost of this program is staffing. There is an assigned program manager from SPO as well as the host agency liaison who will meet along with a school representative to create the program agenda in the weeks prior to the program start date. The initial program planning will require approximately 10-15 hours of preparation. The program does not require the purchase of additional materials or the use of special technology.

1. What are the program’s operational costs?

The program’s operational costs are also primarily staffing. Each presentation will last approximately 1.5 hours and each presenter will need approximately one hour of preparation time.

1. How is this program funded?

The costs outlined in the previous questions are absorbed by the agency hosting the Real World Working Challenge.

1. Did this program originate in your state?
2. Are you aware of similar programs in other states?

If yes, how does this program differ?

We are not aware of a similar state government program.

1. How do you measure the success of this program?

The success of this program is being determined based on direct feed-back from the students, teachers and agency participants all of whom gave the program a very positive review and expressed a desire to take part in future manifestations of this program.  
Participants will be tracked in the long-term to see how many end up pursuing higher education in related fields as well as permanent positions with state government.

1. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

Since its original implementation this program has been adapted into a generalized form to be easily adjustable to the wide variety of agencies that exist in the State of New Mexico.