

In June 2022, the State of Missouri established MO Appreciation (<https://moappreciation.mo.gov/>), an innovative initiative to improve and build an overall culture of recognition for the State of Missouri's 42,000+ dedicated team members. MO Appreciation came to life through the ideas and work of team members involved in the Missouri Leadership Academy. This leadership class brings together emerging leaders to build skills and explore personal and professional growth. As part of the curriculum, classes are tasked with completing a capstone project focusing on a specific area of improvement and presenting their ideas to the Governor of Missouri. After this presentation, MO Appreciation was immediately recognized as something the State of Missouri wanted to invest in and promote.

Prior to implementing MO Appreciation, surveys completed by state team members revealed that only 21% felt that they received meaningful, non-financial recognition. Additionally, only 50% of our workforce felt they received praise, thanks, or other forms of recognition. This means that, simply put, the majority of our team members felt underappreciated and undervalued. That leadership was struggling to provide meaningful recognition to their teams on a regular basis. As the nation faced unprecedented vacancies and turnover rates in the overall workforce, it was imperative that Missouri focus on this feedback to help improve the overall morale of state team members and become a more competitive, desirable employer.

MO Appreciation recognizes that there is no one-size-fits-all when it comes to recognition. Instead, MO Appreciation is an online tool available to state team members that provide ideas, support, and centralizes helpful resources as we all work together to intentionally provide meaningful recognition. Five months after the launch of MO Appreciation, [Quarterly Pulse Survey](#) (QPS) results show recognition scores are trending upward. Additionally, the state has created an entire recognition brand with MO Appreciation and has named MO Appreciation Ambassadors to work hand-in-hand with the Office of Administration, Division of Personnel to continue to drive change throughout the state.

2023 NASPEs AWARD

Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award Nomination Innovative State Human Resource Management Program

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.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Title: MO Appreciation State: MO

Contact Person: Julie Schlup

Contact's Title: Talent Development Specialist

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NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nominator: Julie Schlup Title: Talent Development Specialist

State: MO Agency: Office of Administration-Division of Personnel

Telephone: 573.522.1336

E-mail: Julie.Schlup@oa.mo.gov

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DETAILS

Please attach a one-page summary of the program. Provide a narrative answer for each of the questions. You are limited to four pages (based on regular 8 1/2 x 11-inch paper double-spaced in 12-point font). The four-page limit does not include the one-page summary.

1. Please provide a brief description of this program.

[MO Appreciation](#) is a website and overall brand to help promote a culture of meaningful recognition amongst state team members. This website highlights tools and resources aimed at rewards and recognition for our teams, including a helpful list of formal and informal recognition ideas and a branded MO Appreciation storefront. Since implementation in June 2022, the website has been visited over 70,000 times and we have established a group of MO Appreciation Ambassadors, which are volunteers from each department who are dedicated to continuing to drive the importance of appreciation and meaningful non-financial forms of recognition.

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

MO Appreciation was implemented in June 2022 and has been operational for 10 months.

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

Based on findings from 2021 team member surveys, the state recognized that a majority of team members felt undervalued and asked a team of emerging leaders to work on a proposed solution. Through research, this team felt strongly that developing a culture of meaningful recognition would allow the state to reduce turnover, increase productivity, improve team member morale, and allow Missouri to be a more competitive and desirable employer. This team presented their idea for MO Appreciation to the Governor and other senior-level leaders in February 2022 and it was implemented by June 2022.

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

It is worth noting that our very own team members brought the idea behind MO Appreciation to life through a capstone project focused on exploring opportunities to improve meaningful, non-financial recognition. The idea to centralize recognition resources and make them easily accessible as an online resource was innovative and thoughtful. Prior to this, recognition information was sprinkled amongst handbooks, internal communication tools, or not publicized at all. MO Appreciation centralizes all of the recognition opportunities throughout the state with specific guidance on how to nominate, offers helpful resources and tools (such as our new digital recognition badges and certificates), names appreciation ambassadors dedicated to driving change, and provides an extensive list of informal recognition ideas and activities for anyone's use.

5. 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.)

Program costs were minimal as internal resources were utilized. MO Appreciation project leads were representatives from multiple departments and OA-ITSD team members build the website, so each respective department absorbed the payroll. The state also collaborated with Accredible to provide digital badges and certificates through MO Credentials, which is a total investment of \$180,000 for a 3-year contract.

6. What are the program's operational costs?

The total operational cost to date is \$181,000 (\$1,000 for a kick-off event and \$180,000 for a 3-year contract with Accredible).

7. How is this program funded?

The Office of Administration absorbs costs through existing team members' salaries, as well as any costs associated with statewide award programs. Departments fund individual expenses for internal

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programs and for statewide MO Appreciation Ambassadors. Departments submit their budget each year to the legislature for approval.

8. Did this program originate in your state?

9. Are you aware of similar programs in other states?
If yes, how does this program differ?

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

The State of Missouri conducts a [Quarterly Pulse Survey](#) (QPS) with all team members for feedback.

The survey includes questions surrounding recognition. Before MO Appreciation, in October 2021, QPS reported 50% of team member say they are thanked or praised and 21% of team members say they get meaningful non-financial recognition. Just 5 months after MO Appreciation launched, November 2022 QPS reports, 55% of managers in the organization provide praise, thanks or other forms of recognition and 27% of team members say they get meaningful forms of non-financial recognition. These results show that recognition scores are trending upward. Additionally, as of the beginning of March 2023, the website has been visited more than 70,000 times, and more state entities have reached out for information, including the Missouri Supreme Court.

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

Since launching the website in June 2022, the state has also launched a MO Appreciation council made up of one team member from each of the 17 departments, as well as the Attorney General's Office. Appreciation ambassadors were hand-selected through a competitive application process by their Department Director. These statewide ambassadors will lead grassroots efforts within their respective departments, and provide a voice for team members to leaders. We have also launched MO Cred., which is a program that offers team members digital badges and certificates to recognize skills and professional achievements.

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