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MAJORITY OF AMERICANS “NOT FEELING THE LOVE” WHEN IT COMES TO RECOGNITION BY EMPLOYERS, COMMUNITY GROUPS AND OTHERS

GLENVIEW, Ill. (Aug. XX, 2011) – When it comes to getting recognized for their personal efforts, whether at work, helping others in their community or volunteering, almost 7 out of 10 Americans say their work goes widely unrecognized.

According to a 2011 survey of 1,000 Americans, fielded by TNS Worldwide and the Awards and Recognition Association (www.recognitionisrewarding.com) this summer, 69 percent of Americans have not been recognized for personal efforts in the past year—either through work, civic or volunteer programs.

“It’s no secret that given the current economy employees are being asked to do more and more, and community organizations are stretched thin of volunteers so it’s surprising that companies and groups aren’t taking time to say “thank you” to those working hard,” said Louise Ristau, executive director of ARA, the industry organization promoting recognition.

According to Ristau, it doesn’t take a lot of time or money to implement a recognition program, just a little effort.

“Taking notice of those around us giving extra effort and making a difference, can be one of the easiest things we can do—from writing a note, giving a pat on the back, or creating an award,” she said.

Ristau and the team of experts at Recognition is Rewarding.com, the Association’s recognition group, recommend starting with simple gestures that can infuse positive energy and help boost morale.

“Recognition is something we can do regardless of the status of the economy, which is particularly important when employers aren’t able to provide staff with raises and bonuses,” she said.

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GOOD DEEDS GO UNNOTICED—ADD ONE

Recognize, Reward, Repeat

The ARA has five tips for employers to start their own program to recognize their employees. All are designed to develop recognition that is equally powerful for both the organization and the employee. Tips include:

1. Make sure all employees must be eligible for the recognition.
2. Be sure that both employers and employees have specific information about what behaviors or actions are being rewarded or recognized.
3. Ensure that anyone who performs at the level or standard stated in the criteria receives the award.
4. Take steps to recognize all honorees as close to the performance of the actions as possible so the recognition reinforces behavior the employer or organization wants to encourage.
5. Be impartial. Don't design a process in which managers "select" the people to recognition. This type of process will forever be viewed as "favoritism" or talked about as "It's your turn to get recognized this month."

According to Ristau, another key to successful recognition is selecting the most appropriate kind of award. Tangible, public awards are proven to be the most effective, better than money or other means, to honor performance and achievement, she said.

Questions to ask when considering what type of award to use include:

1. Does it represent what was accomplished?
2. Is it attractive enough to wear or keep at home or in the office?
3. Is it consistent with the purpose and image of the organization and/or accomplishment?
4. Is it right for the level of representative of the importance of the achievement?
5. Is it in line with the budget/effort?
6. Is the award well-crafted from high quality/affordable materials?

For additional guidelines for award program or to find an awards retailer, visit www.recognitionisrewarding.com.

About the Awards and Recognition Association

The Awards and Recognition Association (www.ara.org), an organization of nearly 3,000 member companies dedicated to increasing the awareness of the value and significance of awards and recognition programs.