

News U Trust

APPRECIATING, DEVELOPING, AND SUPPORTING SCHOOL STAFF

VOLUNTEERS + EAP = SUCCESS

By: Kristi Coleman

Involving Volunteers is vital. Tennessee is, after all, the Volunteer State. Keep up our state's tradition. Give your community a chance to join your students in celebrating school employees.

Many hands make light work. This adage is more true than ever, especially if you're a school coordinator. Recruit help for every aspect of the EAP. From advising the A-Team to preparing goodie bags, use parents, students or members of the community, just

get people involved. The more volunteers, the smoother the program runs. Enlist, delegate and enjoy.

Students need more help and encouragement than one person can give and you need a team to share responsibility, generate enthusiasm and identify resources. Volunteers are attracted to this program because it provides an opportunity to work with students, helps them develop

leadership qualities and makes a difference in peoples' lives.

Volunteers can help with a single activity or a single event-- writing a note of thanks, a song, a letter to the editor, fixing a meal, providing supplies or preparing baked goods. Or, they can commit to helping with every appreciation day.

Following the Utrust model helps it all come together it makes for an outstanding appreciation day and everyone shares the reward.

RETURN TO THE WILD WEST

By: Rachel Lovingood

Custodian Appreciation Day is just around the corner so break out your favorite western gear and get ready! Our schools depend heavily on these "deputies of clean" so we will be using a wild west theme to honor custodians on October 13.

Check out the easy to use [ideas](#) for involving the students in your

school as they "pardner up" and says thanks to those who keep their schools clean and free of pesky villains like dust and germs. Feel free to expand on the suggestions as your creativity grows.



JOIN US ON
THE



By: Kristi Coleman

All Aboard! It's time to take a ride on the river. The 12th Annual Membership Appreciation Dinner will be held aboard the General Jackson Showboat on November 13th at 7:00 p.m. Complete your registration form today, as seating is on a first come first served basis.

A short program of awards and recognitions will be presented and we'll showcase the system that had the most outstanding participation in the Employee Appreciation Program last year. We hope that you and all of your board members will attend our appreciation dinner. An evening on the General Jackson is such a special event that it will be well worth the trip for members of your board and staff to attend.

Come join us for a fun night of entertainment and a delicious meal. We urge you to register your board early if you want them to be able to sit together and when the boat is full we will not be able to pull small row boats behind for those who register late. You won't want this ship to set sail without you. Register [online](#), by [e-mail](#) or mail to guarantee your seat at the dinner.

Great Expectations for Making a Difference

By: Rachel Lovingood

With exciting prizes and new entry rules, we at Utrust have great expectations for the writing competition of this year's Make a Difference Program!

It is open to students and adults who are willing to share their story of a school employee who has made a difference in their lives.

Two separate divisions and seventeen cash prizes mean more opportunities to win so be sure and check out the complete contest rules and regulations at www.tnuct.com.

Remember that when you take the time to show appreciation, everyone wins. Get involved and encourage those around you to share their experiences of employees who have made a difference.



Why You Should Use An A-Team?

By: Dameron Johnson

A successful Employee Appreciation Program is designed to involve as many people as possible. The A-Team is a dynamic resource to use. It is a group of selected students chosen to be leaders in the appreciation day activities. The number of students in the A-Team varies depending on the adult leaders.

By forming and utilizing an A-Team, the members learn and develop their leadership

abilities. It provides them with many opportunities to lead their peers in showing appreciation to those around them that they may take for granted.

Involvement in the A Team gives each member an increased self-worth and self-esteem. Adult leaders serve as advisers while A Team members implement the activities thus providing more people with the opportunity to join in this rewarding experience. The A-Team benefits the students, the adult leaders and the school. It is a win-win for everyone.



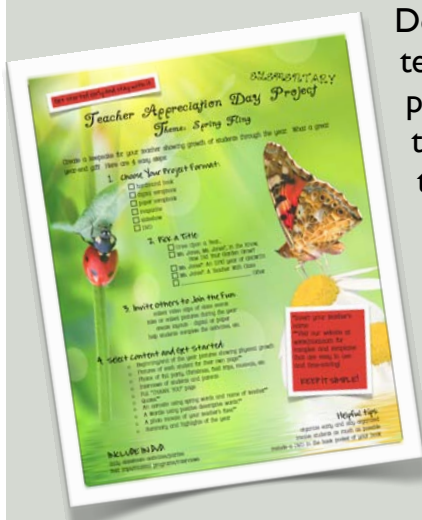
A-Team members holding Bus Driver Appreciation Signs



A-Team members tie-dyeing t-shirts for bus drivers

Spring into Action and Get Started with Your Teacher Appreciation Project

By: Dameron Johnson



Do you want your teacher appreciation project this year to be the best ever? Go to the head of the class with our Teacher Appreciation Project.

With Teacher Appreciation Day scheduled for May, one proposed activity is to create

a keepsake for teachers.

Follow our simple suggestions to make your end of year teacher gift awesome!

For elementary school we offer templates and ideas of how you can create a keepsake that will

showcase growth of the students through the school year. With upper level grades we also offer different options of ways to honor teachers using the new "Secret Service".

The key is to start the project at the beginning and continue throughout the school year. We have tips for all levels to get started-- elementary, middle and high school-- to organize and stay organized. A successful project will involve many parents and students sharing in the fun.

Samples of layouts, quotes, ideas and more are available on the Utrust website to make this a fun and rewarding project for everyone. The final product is presented to the teacher at the end of the school year. Sit back and watch the tears of joy and appreciation flow!

A-TEAM NEWSLETTERS

Taking It To Another Level

By: Rachel Lovingood

Some say that information is power and in the case of your A Team, it's not just power but excitement, fun and involvement. Utrust has created easy to use [templates](#) so that your A Team can personalize their very own newsletter.

We are supplying the general ideas and suggestions of what to include in each newsletter as well as simple to use templates. All that is required is for your A Team to put together the articles

describing the events of the recent Appreciation Day and what to expect for the next one. As students have opportunity to see their articles and pictures in the newsletter, excitement will grow.

Another fun aspect of the [A Team newsletter](#) is encouraging students to “go global”. The challenge is to see how many email addresses we can collect to send



the newsletter around the state, the country and the world. So get your students to ask relatives and friends for their emails and let's "go global" with our appreciation! Be sure and put us on your email list ustrust@tnuct.com.

New! Video Tutorials

Utrust is excited to share that we now will be posting video tutorials periodically. In our ongoing efforts to make the Employee Appreciation Program

simple yet effective, we will be posting short videos describing different elements of the packets and how to best use them. By taking just a few moments

to watch, you will be steps ahead in planning and implementing the various Appreciation Days. Click [here](#) to watch the first tutorial.





BECOME A FIVE STAR BOARD

By: Dan Tollett

Are you pleased with the way your board treats its employees? Do your employees feel that the board recognizes and appreciates the contributions they make to the success of the school system and the children who attend your schools?

We at Utrust have discovered that by taking a few simple steps, our member school districts can improve morale, enhance the relationship of employees with the students they serve, reduce unemployment costs and demonstrate the board's commitment to its employees. That's why our Trustees identified five standards of excellence in employee management, established the Five Star Award and determined that future financial incentives to member boards will be

tied to achievement of the award.

The Five Star Award is not a competitive award. It is available to each member board that meets the five standards. To achieve the award, the superintendent simply goes on the Utrust website and completes a short [form](#) certifying that the school system has met each standard.

Every board that meets all standards will be designated as a Utrust Five Star School System. An award will be presented by a trustee at a local board meeting and a news release will be sent by Utrust to the local media.

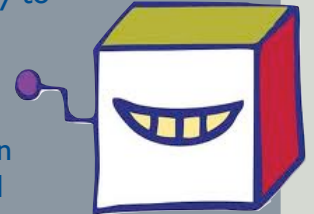
Take a look at the [standards](#) and move your board toward achieving the Five Star Award. You'll be glad that you did.

SAY THANKS WITH A SMILEBOX

By: Dan Tollett

Smilebox is a fun, simple way to make saying "Thanks" a little easier. It's a creative way to share messages of

appreciation with school employees through photos, videos, words and music in multimedia designs.



Smilebox lets you combine your photos and videos into themed slideshows, scrapbooks and greetings that you can email, blog or print.

There are more than 900 Smilebox designs--many that fit the Employee Appreciation Day themes. Just add videos or photos to the already created scrapbook, photo album or slideshow and you have an instant keepsake presentation that will make anyone feel special. It's free. Even the Club Smilebox annual membership (\$39.99 value) is free to teachers (<http://media.smilebox.com/teachers/welcome>). So get a teacher signed up for a free membership and use the program in your Employee Appreciation Days--you're guaranteed a smile.



Included in this edition will be stories highlighting all the wonderful ways students celebrated the day and honored the bus drivers who safely transport them to and from school each day. So, keep sending in your stories and you just might see your school highlighted in the next issue.

COMING SOON!

**Bus Driver
Appreciation Day
Special Edition
Newsletter**



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