

2011-2012 Student Employee of the Year Winner Adam Smith – University Advising Center

1. Describe the job or basic responsibilities of the nominee:

Adam holds multiple roles within the University Advising Center. As a summer Peer Advisor, Adam provides leadership to new Peer Advisors, works with professional staff and faculty to provide academic advising and enrollment assistance for all new students attending a new student orientation session. As a Peer Advisor during the academic year, Adam works with current KU students with current semester issues. These issues range from enrollment questions to academic or personal difficulty. He also provides general office support through excellent customer service at our front desk. As the Mount Oread Scholars and Pre-Law Student Assistant, Adam provides support for 2 key programs in the UAC. He assists with the Mt. Oread Scholar registration process and maintains the member database. He initiated and helps coordinate the Mt. Oread Scholars Student Board, and assists with the publicity and development of scholar events. He provides support for Pre-Law programs like Pre-Law Basics and the annual law school fair through publicity creation and program detail management.

2. Tell how the student exhibited reliability beyond your expectations:

As Adam's supervisor in his role as a Peer Advisor, I've come to rely on him immensely. In fact, on the rare day when I need to be away, I have called Adam. I trust his instincts, responsibility and professionalism to lead in my absence. Adam takes his job responsibilities very seriously. When he needs to be away for academic or other commitments, he communicates this in a timely fashion and always seeks to find someone else to cover his shifts. I have often scheduled Adam for 8:00 a.m. shifts or early-morning check-in shifts during orientation sessions, knowing that he will not only be there on time, but most often, he will be there early and have everything ready to go at least 5 minutes ahead of time. Perhaps more impressively, Adam consistently arrives to work with a positive attitude, helpful demeanor and outstanding customer service.

3. Describe the outstanding quality of work and service excellence of your nominee:

I began working with Adam in summer 2009 (the summer following his freshman year). That summer, he was voted Outstanding Peer Advisor of the Summer by his teammates and professional staff. Comments from those nominations are a testament to Adam's excellent work. "Adam is always very eager and ready to go. He always has a positive attitude and goes above and beyond to help out where needed, even when he was not assigned to. He is very sincere when talking to students." "Adam shows a unique willingness to learn and his overall manner when working with students is exceptional." Part of the Peer Advisor position involves managing chaos during enrollment times at each orientation session. Nominators noted Adam's strength in taking command of these chaotic (and often emotionally charged) situations, even when he was not specifically assigned to do so. "I was in awe at his command - he saw a need, took charge & helped move things along." "Adam has been quite impressive in taking command of the lab and advising HQ. He's willing to go above and beyond as well as maintain appropriate boundaries and professional standards. This excellence has only grown in the 3 years I've been fortunate enough to work with Adam.

4. Give details of a time in which your nominee showed extraordinary initiative:

From day one, Adam has showed initiative in his work in the UAC. During Peer Advisor training in summer 2010, Adam took it upon himself to address his teammates and provide additional support when he realized training was not going as well as he intended. He annually sets up social gatherings as a way to build teamwork and camaraderie within the Peer Advisor team. With the Mt. Oread Scholars, he has showed immense initiative in the development of the student board. His supervisor for that position proposed the idea of such a board to him in June 2011. By August, Adam had recruited, selected, and organized twelve former scholars and advertised the board through Orientation sessions, social media outlets: Facebook pages, a Twitter account, and copious emails to future Scholars.

As a Student Assistant, with limited direction, he made the Mt. Oread Scholars Board a flagship initiative for a fifteen year old program.

5. How does this employee's attitude exceed your expectations?

As previously noted, Adam consistently arrives to work with a positive, helpful attitude. This attitude and willingness to serve is directed not only toward the thousands of students we serve in the UAC, but also to our staff. Adam is among the first to volunteer to help, regardless of how glamorous or un-glamorous the role. He's moved boxes, filed countless folders, created a training manual that continues to be used as a model each year, and generally provides thoughtful insight into the student advising perspective. Just last week as most students were blissfully enjoying their first week of winter break, Adam was here working on projects...and brought with him a delicious berry almond crumble to share with the office. At a time of year when many of us are worn out and just ready for a break, his enthusiasm and positivity set a great example.

6. How does this employee display exceptional professionalism in his or her duties?

Adam is often mistaken for a professional staff member due to his professionalism and the respect with which he treats students. Adam is mature beyond his years, has showed exceptional initiative from early on and has, therefore, earned additional responsibilities. He has taken on projects that involved contacting other institutions to inquire about best practices. He frequently steps in to assist at our front desk - answering phone inquiries and greeting guests. He treats each student, parent, faculty or staff person with the utmost respect and does all he can to accurately and efficiently answer their questions. He often makes additional phone calls or walks to another office to inquire on a student's behalf rather than merely transferring the call to an office where he thinks the student might get an answer

7. What unique contribution has this employee given to your department?

Adam has been a part of the UAC family for over 3 years. He is irreplaceable and we will surely miss him when he graduates this May. He has become a standard with whom we compare other students and student employees. He has left his legacy on the Peer Advisor position by developing an exceptional training manual, helping develop and then showcasing standards of practice for others in this role, and by initiating and developing the Mt. Oread Scholars Student Board.