



## Volunteer Recognition Ideas Across the Generations

Here are tips from leaders of volunteers at MAVA workshop on what they have found for recognition preferences in the different generations.

### **Traditionalists**

#### **Born before 1946**

- If give an item, give something useful
- Make donation in honor of them
- Service pins are popular
- Honor years of service
- Many like recognition parties

### **Boomers**

#### **Born 1946-1964**

- No trinkets or meaningless stuff
- Like training opportunities
- Like thank you for organizational leaders
- Promote to new opportunities. Offer leadership of a project.
- Send "insider" information – such as advanced notice of new Executive Director hiring or including in organizational communication
- Provide name tags like staff have
- Send thank you to their family for sharing their time with the organization.
- Some like to be highlighted in newsletters, on website, etc.
- Mixed reaction on recognition parties – some like the networking and some feel to busy to attend

### **Generation X**

#### **Born 1965-1980**

- Send note to their works supervisor
- Give business cards for volunteer position
- Offer to be a reference
- Acknowledge in news or other ways that are public
- Add to their network, help make a connection, introductions
- Offer opportunity to develop skill or skill set
- Spontaneous email thank you
- Give volunteer positions interesting titles
- Provide electronic logo that could add to website

### **Generation Y/ Millennials**

#### **Born 1981- ?**

- Offer reference letter
- Give feedback – this generation loves feedback
- Offer to take to meetings for networking opportunities
- Offer information interview with position(s) in organization
- Offer increased responsibility or a challenge
- Gift cards popular
- Like verbal thank you.
- Give increased responsibility, a leadership role or a project to be in charge of
- Many do not like traditional recognition parties
- Handwritten notes