

*NOTE: This is an example of the level of detail and supporting information expected from quality nominations. The people and events used are fictional.*

## Outstanding Staff Award Nomination Example One:

1. How has the nominee had a significant impact on the University in the last two years?  
Consider the following characteristics in your response:
  - a. Innovative problem solving and improvements to processes or systems
  - b. A growth mindset and dedication to self-improvement
  - c. Competent and conscientious performance
  - d. Excellent customer service
  - e. Exceptional collaboration, communication, and cooperation  
(3000 character limit)

I nominate Larry Green, Program Coordinator in the Department of Administrative Operations for an Outstanding Staff Award. When the pandemic hit Austin, Green understood the impact of school closure on the department's essential workers and work-from-home staff. Within days of Spring Break 2020, he supported leadership and staff to navigate changes and pointed them to the university's resources. Most importantly, he listened to his departments staff about their needs, keeping confidentiality when necessary, and advocated consistently for safety and mental health. In his first message to team members, he wrote, "Realizing these are hard and confusing times for most of us, I want to reach out to let you know about department resources that are available to you. This is a time for us to support one another and take care of ourselves." While front line staff, including many who work in the field and not at a desk, worked from home from late March through April 2020, he supported them continuously. For example, he provided COVID-19 safety content and assisted staff in learning how to check email from home, attend Zoom and Teams calls, complete their timesheets, and submit employee feedback. He was the ears on the ground. As chair of the department's engagement council, he represented to leadership the challenges staff faced and fiercely advocated for clarity regarding job security. Additionally, in collaboration with the training manager, he collated LinkedIn Learning Working Remote Courses for the department and posted resources online to continue professional development until they were able to return to campus. Green is much more than a program coordinator. He is also responsible for maintaining and providing content for the most extensive internal website for any department in the organization. Plus, during the pandemic, he launched 21 shop TVs throughout campus that cycled through 20 consistently updated presentation slides to communicate department updates directly to employees on the front lines. His dedication to the university and staff ensures staff can safely focus on service to clients. And his integrity encourages people to collaborate and support cross-departmental initiatives.

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2. Provide an example of how the nominee's work within the last two years has contributed to and demonstrated a commitment to the University's strategic goals of People, Place, and Pursuits as outlined in [Change Starts Here](#), the University's 10-year strategic plan. (3000 character limit)

Green was the first person in the department's role, and he had to answer the question of what the role entailed. In this new role, he developed an extensive program full of discovery, innovation, and responsibility. As he soon realized, and outlined in his initial mission statement, that he was, "to promote, enhance, and advocate for a positive work environment to improve employee morale and satisfaction, increase employee participation in workplace initiatives, and empower employees to influence positive change within the department." For the past two years, he has supported supervisors, an area in need of improvement. As part of that, he has developed a 360-supervisor evaluation program to be launched early next year. His role also tracks what the leadership team made as their top priority, 88 action items from the Action Plan, developed and based upon an employee engagement survey and focus groups. The action item topics include internal communications, daily operations, human resources, pay/benefits/recognition, quality of life, technology, and training. He had to learn about each of these topics quickly. Green developed communication and tracking tools that integrated over 50 action item owners and subject matter experts throughout the past two years. He developed review processes that included the Council and leadership reviews to close items. Council members consistently state at all-hands meetings and events that they have seen a lot of change in attitude and service throughout the department due to the action items and his efforts.

3. Is there anything else the review committee should consider in reviewing the nomination? (1500 character limit)

Green has been with UT for over nine years and more than two years with his current department. With few available internal resources, he continues to learn. He has become the department's de-facto web developer for its external website. This past year, he stepped up to the plate. He taught himself how to restructure the broader departments website pages. These pages are essential to University staff, students, and external audiences. One page in particular is a popular site throughout Austin. Because it is revenue driven, the pages were in dire need of a facelift. In addition to his role, he took on this task without a blink of an eye and has published a brand-new site. Green provides the highest level of service and is a model for learning, innovation, and responsibility with how much he has accomplished in a little over two years.

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## Outstanding Staff Award Nomination Example Two:

1. How has the nominee had a significant impact on the University in the last two years?  
Consider the following characteristics in your response:
  - a. Innovative problem solving and improvements to processes or systems
  - b. A growth mindset and dedication to self-improvement
  - c. Competent and conscientious performance
  - d. Excellent customer service
  - e. Exceptional collaboration, communication, and cooperation  
(3000 character limit)

The Fiction Studies Program is unanimous in its support and gratitude for Kim Jackson, our department manager extraordinaire. Indeed, her rare degree of competence and dedication is what convinced me to take my position in the first place: she makes it possible for me to lead the department successfully, just as she makes it possible for my colleagues to thrive. I never have to check that she is following up on something because she's always on top of the business of the department. Meanwhile, she is gently making sure that we are all doing what needs to be done. Someone goofs up a purchase and Kim figures out a way to fix a thorny accounting problem. A projector is malfunctioning during a class and Kim rushes to fix it. An event needs catering and Kim insists on getting the food and drinks, setting them up, and making sure everything is in place. A cantankerous retiree doesn't bother to clean out his office, including hundreds of dusty books, and Kim comes in to take care of it on the weekend. The list of her contributions, mostly invisible and behind the scenes, is impressive and endless. Let me share a detailed example of her dedication and creativity in solving problems. A senior colleague explained how Kim handled an unusually complex situation: "I wound up having to raise about \$7000 for an event; getting ten different units involved in the funding, publicity and event planning; and just by default Kim wound up being the point person for all of it, from making hotel reservations to reserving a room for the lecture to printing up and mailing out publicity, to collecting funds from all the units to pay the guest's honorarium and to reimburse dinners and lunches. All of this was extra work for her, beyond her already full portfolio of things she does to support the faculty, staff, and students in the department.

2. Provide an example of how the nominee's work within the last two years has contributed to and demonstrated a commitment to the University's strategic goals of People, Place, and Pursuits as outlined in [\*Change Starts Here\*](#), the University's 10-year strategic plan.  
(3000 character limit)

Related to UT's strategic goals here is what one assistant professor wanted me to share about how Kim supports our intellectual mission: "As Kim told me one morning while

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arranging the room where a workshop meets, she is excited to see our department come together and grow. Two of our new initiatives would be unable to contribute to the life of the university without the dedication and solidarity that Kim shows day in and day out. She did not flinch even when these two groups added new pressures and responsibilities. We are eternally grateful to her." Another colleague told me, "I call her Saint Kim because she is so gracious about doing everything, and she does it all quickly without ever complaining about how much work is involved." Kim is a quiet but very effective leader of our staff team. She has spent extra time with several new people, training them and helping them. Her mentorship of new employees goes beyond being a supervisor to being a truly compassionate leader. She does this because she has a holistic vision of the department and feels a personal responsibility to support it: everything is important to her because she cares about our overall well-being as a department. Indeed, she often says that she loves our department--the people, our values, and our mission.

3. Is there anything else the review committee should consider in reviewing the nomination? (1500 character limit)

My colleagues often talk about how important it is to recognize Kim's unusual degree of dedication, compassion, expertise, and care for our unit. One senior colleague wanted me to share this: "Kim is the heart and soul of our department. She imbues every interaction with kindness, clarity, grace, and a heartfelt commitment. Our strong sense of departmental collegiality and esprit owes a tremendous debt to her collaborative vision, care, and responsiveness. Ms. Jackson serves our department with extraordinary distinction and care. She is highly deserving of this prestigious award in recognition of her superb performance."

### Outstanding Staff Award Nomination Example Three:

1. How has the nominee had a significant impact on the University in the last two years? Consider the following characteristics in your response:
  - a. Innovative problem solving and improvements to processes or systems
  - b. A growth mindset and dedication to self-improvement
  - c. Competent and conscientious performance
  - d. Excellent customer service
  - e. Exceptional collaboration, communication, and cooperation(3000 character limit)

Katie has been an integral part of our Advertising team over the past two years. She truly embodies the University's mission of achieving excellence in all that she works on. She is continually going above and beyond to identify ways to strengthen the brand and reputation of our program and the University. In addition to her assigned duties, Katie is always looking for new tools and ideas to better engage our staff and prospective students.

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She is continually learning about best practices to better reach our target markets through video, social media, blog content, and more. Despite being so early in her career, she embraces the challenges of a continually changing environment better than most colleagues I have worked with in my ten years at the University. Over the past two years, we have switched to new technology for day-to-day operations and have had several personnel changes. Throughout all of that, Katie maintained a positive attitude, jumped in to cover gaps while new hires were brought on, and took on new projects that have improved our program. She is a quick learner and is extremely collaborative as shown through her ability to learn new systems, ask for help when needed, and take on projects for other teams in our department. While she is not in a formal supervisory role on our team, she shows tremendous thought leadership and is a great influence on her peers and our leadership team. Katie is also authentic and brings her full self to work allowing for a more inclusive and positive environment.

2. Provide an example of how the nominee's work within the last two years has contributed to and demonstrated a commitment to the University's strategic goals of People, Place, and Pursuits as outlined in [Change Starts Here](#), the University's 10-year strategic plan. (3000 character limit)

Katie has researched and discovered many new tools that have improved our team's processes. She has introduced us to a new project management tool that we now use to keep most of our marketing operations in order, and a video platform that allows us to track performance metrics for our webinar recordings. Katie does not supervise full-time staff, but she has a presence on our team that is highly respected. People turn to her for her opinion and seek out her advice. She also supervises our student workers and does an incredible job of keeping up with each of them to ensure they succeed not only at work, but also in school and life. She has been a great mentor to many students that have come through our program. Katie is an incredible storyteller and looks for opportunities to showcase our students and faculty through creative media. She works to provide a platform to share student stories. She is also an advocate for her peers and looks for ways to improve office procedures. Finally, Katie takes ownership and pride in her work and continually looks for ways to improve our processes and content. She looks for inspiration by benchmarking peer schools to improve our website, blog, and social media, and follows through by implementing new ideas so we are staying fresh in applicants' minds.

The impact Katie has had on our team is invaluable. She goes above and beyond her day to day responsibilities to support the department and UT-Austin's enrollment goals. For example, Katie stepped in to help create and manage our email campaigns in a much larger capacity than originally planned, due to personnel changes on the team. She learned to email tool on-the-go, managing prospect list uploads and list campaigns, and providing

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support for recruiting, application, and event promotion emails. Her knowledge of the email tool is well past comprehensive, she knows this information intimately. The mastering of technology and everything related was a huge asset to the team, especially as she helped onboard myself and her new team member. She truly has helped optimize and transform how we do 'work' in addition to giving the prospective student experience her 110% - using email communications as a way to coach them through the process. Katie fully embodies the university's core purpose and values, no doubt about it!

3. Is there anything else the review committee should consider in reviewing the nomination?  
(1500 character limit)

Though Katie makes it look effortless, she has spent countless hours learning the programs and software inside and out. Despite the huge personal investment she has made in the project, she makes it clear that it was a group effort, never wanting to take all the credit. Speaking even more to her team spirit, Katie is always collaborative and understands the nature of the project and works to make people feel included and have a say, while staying on-track. She always tries to stay upbeat, looking for positive outcomes, and focusing on the good.