

Year 1 Public Description of Work for
Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

Argonne National Laboratory

Core Values Shout-Outs

This Action Applies to Rubric Item 2: Prevention: Civility or Respect Promotion Programs

Description of Work:

In July 2018, Argonne National Laboratory established a set of Core Values as the foundation of the laboratory's efforts to help create and sustain a safe, welcoming, diverse, and inclusive environment that enables each member of the Argonne community to perform their best work.

To maintain awareness of Argonne's Core Values of Impact, Safety, Respect, Integrity, and Teamwork, as well as to highlight positive behaviors related to each value and promote action, Argonne created an employee engagement program called Core Values Shout-Outs. The program encourages employees to recognize colleagues for demonstrating the core values through their behaviors. This aligns with recommendations in the 2018 National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) report that anti-harassment efforts be combined with civility or respect promotion programs as a mechanism for highlighting behaviors that faculty, staff, and students should engage in rather than focusing only on negative behaviors.

The Core Values Shout-Outs program kicked off on July 31, 2019, in conjunction with the unveiling of a set of most valued behaviors for each core value. The Shout-Outs program was created as a simple way for employees to learn about and recognize valuable behaviors, and to reinforce the shared accountability of each member of the Argonne community for creating a safe, welcoming, diverse, and inclusive work environment.

To give a colleague a shout-out, employees were asked to submit a simple online form with the recipient's name, the core value they exemplified, and a one- or two-sentence description of the positive behavior they modeled. The awardee and their supervisor automatically received an email notification. The recipient then received a button for that value. Information from the shout-outs submissions was collected in a database that was shared with the laboratory's Core Values Working Group and with laboratory leadership.

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Thanks to the simplicity of giving a shout-out and the immediacy of the recognition, the Shout-Outs program was embraced wholeheartedly by employees at all levels of the laboratory. Within weeks, it became common to see employees proudly displaying the buttons



they had earned on their lanyards. The campaign increased the visibility of the Core Values and positive behaviors not only through buttons on lanyards, but also through an internal communications promotion of the program which included digital posters, stories in the daily email employee newsletter, and information on the employee intranet. Volunteer Core Values Ambassadors in every division at the laboratory not only helped to facilitate the program but also provided increased visibility and promotion.

Originally set to run from July 31 through December 31, 2019, the program was extended to March 5, 2020, due to its popularity and the value laboratory leadership saw in it as a tool for recognition and encouragement of positive behavior. At a lab-wide All Hands Meeting on November 14, 2019, Argonne Director Paul Kearns challenged employees to achieve 3,000 Shout-Outs by the end of the program.

The laboratory community rose to the challenge, and the program ended March 5, 2020, with more than 3,400 Shout-Outs given. An analysis of the data collected through the program provided further insights which were shared at a lab wide All-Hands meeting on May 28, 2020, through a light-hearted video featuring employees from across the laboratory. This included learning that:

- Every division across the lab gave and received shout-outs.
- The core value recognized the most was Teamwork
- More than 85% of shout outs received were given peer to peer rather than by supervisor to staff

Data collected from the Shout-Outs program also was used to create case studies for discussion during training offered to all employees on learning how to identify and address situations and behaviors that are not consistent with the Core Values. This training will be offered through August 2020.

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Further evaluation of the Core Values and the Shout-Outs program was sought in a “pulse” employee climate survey conducted over three weeks in June of 2020. Specifically, respondents were asked about activities that have positively influenced their thinking or behavior including the laboratory’s focus on Core Values efforts and programs such as the Shout-Outs. Survey results are expected in late Summer 2020.

As a majority of the laboratory’s employees moved to teleworking in March 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, laboratory leadership identified a need to keep the Core Values visible to employees working remotely. Plans were developed to bring the Core Values Shout-Outs back but in a completely digital format.

Shout-Outs 2.0, the digital version, was introduced at a lab wide All-Hands meeting on May 28, 2020, to help emphasize the importance of employees staying connected while working apart. Through the laboratory Human Resources application Workday, employees still submit Shout-Outs. Instead of a physical button, a digital button appears in the recipient’s Workday account. Both the recipient and their supervisor receive notification of the Shout-Out.

Shortly after the Shout-Outs 2.0 roll out, the information from the more than 3,400 Shout-Outs in the previous campaign was merged with the new, digital version. Now, employees can view all the Shout-Outs they’ve earned in one place in Workday. Work is currently underway to create further online visibility for each employee’s shout-outs. In Fall of 2020, shout-outs will be displayed on employees’ individual intranet homepages, in their online profiles, and in the laboratory’s online directory.

What began as a means to create awareness of the laboratory’s core values and enlist employee participation in putting the values into action has evolved into a continued form of recognition and a constant, visible reminder of what Argonne values as a community. This further solidifies the Core Values as the foundation of the laboratory’s efforts to achieve its goals of expanding Argonne’s leadership in science and technology, achieving operational excellence, and building and sustaining a world-class community of talent.

Website for further information: <https://www.anl.gov/our-core-values>

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