

January 1, 2020

Dear Nomination Committee,

I am writing this letter to nominate Bruce Smithstone for the Employee of the Month. He is a fabulous employee, a huge asset to our department and is so deserving of this award and recognition.

An outstanding accomplishment that benefited a department/students

Bruce is the lead processor on the payroll team. He is directly responsible for duties including payroll deductions, including taxes, benefits and retirement savings. In my years of experience in the payroll department, Bruce's knowledge of payroll deductions is unparalleled. He seems to be a walking encyclopedia of knowledge when it comes to taxes and benefits, and he loves to share his knowledge with anyone who will listen. Bruce has consistently met established project deadlines and milestones day in and day out. I don't know of anyone else more qualified to lend his expertise than Bruce.

Extraordinary service to internal and/or external customers

Bruce's customer service skills are exemplary. He is one of the friendliest people that I know, and he always arrives with a smile on his face and a happy greeting for his co-workers. Although Bruce is responsible for his own daily tasks, he can often be found assisting other co-workers with their tasks. Bruce also has an ability to communicate effectively with all of his co-workers, from the director level to our hourly student worker. Below are just a few of the email comments I've received from his class participants:

- "Bruce is the nice payroll person I've spoken with. He was very patient and answered all my questions."
- "Bruce's knowledge of payroll is a benefit to us all! I really appreciated how friendly he was and how he made me feel at ease, when clearly I was clueless."
- "I recently took asked Bruce's a question regarding deductions. I think he could tell I was still confused at the end because he offered to additional time to assist me so that I had a clear understanding. That was so unexpected and thoughtful of him."

Inspiring leadership / Creative Innovations to service, process or work tools

Earlier this year, Bruce asked if he could put together a "best practices" training manual to share with the campus training offices. He jumped at the chance to research tax law changes that would directly impact our employees and took pride in being able to create new resources like flow charts and job aides to educate our employees. His efforts not only benefitted the entire department, but they also set an example and inspired his co-workers to stay proactive. It's those qualities that led him to be promoted to the lead processor earlier this year.

Teamwork / Exemplary efforts to nurture a climate of care, concern and civility

Despite the overwhelming amount of work that everyone has to do, Bruce consistently finds ways to help his co-workers and the other departments on campus. His willingness to assist others and his commitment to educating ODU employees is unequalled. Staff members from HR, benefits and beyond have all noted that Bruce is thorough and provides great service, and he consistently follows-through.

It is with great pleasure that I respectfully submit this nomination for Bruce to be recognized as the ODU Employee of the Month.

Sincerely,

Betty J. White,
Payroll Manager