

CRITERIA RESPONSES

In what ways has this staff member demonstrated a service leadership role toward the members of the board of trustees, administrators, faculty, students and community?

At North Arkansas College, the Board of Trustees consists of 9 members elected by the residents of Boone County. These trustees are typically not politicians but local individuals who are endeared to the college and have an interest in helping Northark provide an avenue for students from an 8-county (and beyond) area to obtain an education, a vocation and a satisfying way of life.

For most new trustees it takes a year or two of board service experience to learn, and feel comfortable with, the duties, functions, modes of operation and governance boundaries associated with the position. Our trustees, and especially the newly elected ones, find that their most valuable resource and asset is Trish Villines, Assistant to the President. From the time a trustee takes office at Northark, and throughout the six-year term, Trish is there to guide, inform and assist the board member as she takes pride in working as an energetic, capable and knowledgeable partner to the board. She has proven to be an efficient leader in helping the board stay informed, organized and productive during board meetings, committee meetings, study sessions and all other board functions. Every trustee relies on her and trusts her suggestions and input when unusual requests or problems arise. Her efficiency and dependability are appreciated and her delivery is always kind and respectful. She is an excellent liaison between the Office of the President and the Board of Trustees.

Trish has proven to be a reliable source of information and a fountain of creative ideas for the board and for the president. She is also an important member of the college leadership team serving on many search committees and college workforce teams. Her excellent work on a recently approved Federal Title III grant will provide \$1.2M for a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and Student Information System (SIS) software package. She will act as the key manager for the implementation and maintenance of the \$2.25M grant throughout its 5-year process.

Trish's primary responsibilities include all office management for the president, the board, college administrators and faculty/staff. As trustees, we rely on her input with matters involving the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, the Higher Learning Commission, the Association of Community College Trustees and various state and local education entities. Her loyalty, honesty and devotion to the college make her a major asset to everyone associated with the institution and across our community.

How does this staff member demonstrate performance in support of the Board/CEO team?

Trish Villines has served in a pivotal role since the hiring of the 4th president of North Arkansas College. The new president filled the vacant vice president of Academic Affairs position a few months later which changed the total dynamics of the leadership of the college. Trish's role as a stabilizing force between new college administrators and the Board of Trustees (BOT) was unpredictable and unintentional yet possibly the most important role in the institution for the transition period.

Her knowledge of the inner workings of the college, historical stumbling blocks and the nuances of leading the college has proven valuable to the college leadership. Her superb knowledge of board policies and regulations has earned her the reputation as the go-to person for all questions procedural in nature. The BOT chairs have relied on Trish to schedule, organize and record efficient board meetings for several years. The standards and expectations she has for her personal performance far exceeds the

institution's expectations. She never does what is expected - she always exceeds expectations and excels in every task with which she is associated.

Trish provides vital, confidential support to the president as executive assistant. She tactfully expresses her opinion and provides solid council while informing the president of potential snares or public relations threats. Her training in journalism and public relations has often been called upon in sensitive situations and she has never disappointed with her assessments and advice. She reviews most written communications from the president's office and has been very helpful with edits to achieve the intended outcomes.

Trish serves as a vital liaison between the BOT and the president. She coordinates the president's annual evaluation and the BOT's self-evaluations. She insures that each BOT member completes the evaluations so their voices are counted. She also coordinates new BOT member orientation and all BOT annual trainings.

The college's most public arm is the Durand Center located in the center of Harrison. It is the location for most of the city's events and is one of the few entrepreneurial endeavors of the college. The importance and public persistence of the Durand Center required that it be placed under the supervision of the most capable, visionary leader on campus. Trish was the obvious choice.

Perhaps the latest accomplishment was her successful attempt to write a federal Title III grant. Trish was asked by the president to facilitate writing the grant which meant pulling individuals from all parts of the college together in order to achieve institutional buy-in. The odds were not in her favor since only ten grants would be awarded nationally. Trish authored one of the ten awarded! The college was awarded \$2.25 million to accomplish the goals in the grant.

When the person identified as the grant director decided not to accept the duties after the grant was awarded, the president once again called upon Trish to come to the rescue. She accepted the challenge and has smoothly implemented the first year of a very complex process.

As if all of the afore mentioned reasons were not enough to convince the readers that Trish Villines deserves recognition, she was accepted as a national Baldrige Award Examiner. She is one of a handful of individuals selected to represent Arkansas in a process driven quality improvement program. She was selected, in part, because of her involvement leading the college to the Governors Quality Award in 2015. She wrote parts of the application and organized the site visit.

Dr. Randy Esters, the college president said this about Mrs. Villines, "Trish is certainly capable of anything she decides to do. I need her and I never want to lose her from my team but I know she is destined for important things. All I can do is appreciate how good she is for the BOT, the college and me as a new president."

How has this staff member assisted the Board/CEO team in developing or initiating innovative or special projects for your institution?

As a part of the College's commitment to continuous quality improvement, Trish Villines was one of the first to take part in extensive, in-depth training to become knowledgeable of the Malcolm Baldrige Excellence Award criteria and through the Arkansas Institute for Performance Excellence, she became certified as a statewide examiner. With this background and expertise, she helped develop the

application that resulted in Northark receiving the Arkansas Commitment Award in the very first year of application. Even more profound was her involvement with the second annual application that resulted in Northark receiving the Governor's Award for Performance Excellence, the pinnacle of recognition and the very first award distinction for any Arkansas institution of higher learning.

In addition to her regular duties, Trish also volunteered for the lead role in coordinating and developing a Federal Title III Grant application with an emphasis on Strengthening the Institution for Student Success. Against all odds and contrary to the opinions of many external consultants, Northark was awarded a \$2.25M grant, one of only nine (9) such awards nationwide. This was only possible through her commitment to the project, her degree of collaboration with other college areas, her attention to detail and her effective written communication.

Trish also serves a valuable role in editing and refining sections of the college's periodic Systems Portfolio, required by the Higher Learning Commission to maintain national accreditation through the Academic Quality Improvement Program pathway.

Trish takes her duties as overall coordinator and facilitator for the Board of Trustees and for the President's Cabinet very seriously. She is attentive to each member's questions and requests and keeps all informed as to the various college activities, special meetings, and required public notices; and all is performed with a positive, "how may I assist" attitude. Trish is a student of Arkansas politics and serves as a point of contact through her many acquaintances and statewide associates. She is one of the key staff members that help make North Arkansas College great.

What Professional Development Activities at the National and/or State level has this staff member pursued?

In 2015-2016, Trish was selected for the State-wide community college leadership program. The program provides an intense study of legislative processes that impact Arkansas college funding and regulations. It also provides a focus on leadership development skills. The in depth study of state processes allowed Trish to serve more effectively as the president's government relations liaison. In 2017, she attended the state-level government relations training provided for all two-year community college liaisons.

Trish's involvement in professional development also includes an intense commitment to the state-level Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award Program, known as the Arkansas Governor's Quality Award program. Trish has served as a volunteer trainer for the program since 2015. She trains businesses in the process for writing a quality award application, as well as examiners who assess the award applications submitted. Trish was selected by the State program in 2018 to serve as a National Baldrige Examiner and the State Quality Award program provided a scholarship to cover her expenses to attend the training. She spends her free time reading and examining business processes and results to provide meaningful feedback that helps organizations improve.

Trish attended the Higher Learning Commission 2016 Strategy Forum Workshop as a team member. The team identified that the College needed a new student feedback system. When the team returned, she voluntarily led the Higher Learning Commission Action Project in 2017-2018, which completely redesigned the customer feedback system. The new system created a comprehensive feedback system across all stakeholder groups and allowed for improved tracking of complaints and concerns.

Trish also serves as a volunteer for a national, state, and local civic group, Epsilon Sigma Alpha. The organization has an abundance of scholarships that are awarded each year and she ensures that Northark students have access to the scholarship applications. Trish has served her local Harrison Chapter for two years as president. She also became the state treasurer in 2014 and moved up the position ranks to become the 2018 State President.

What other continuing educational activity has this staff member pursued?

In 2015, Trish earned her Master's in Public Administration from Arkansas State University. She graduated with a 3.9 GPA and was selected to be a member of the Pi Alpha Alpha Honor Society.

What recognition has this staff member received for her leadership or involvement in the college or community?

Trish has been nominated as a candidate for the 2018 Outstanding Staff member. The reasons for this honor are numerous and significant but the fact is that Trish is recognized as a valuable asset by the staff and faculty, the administrators, the Board of Trustees, the Foundation Board and the President. Her work, assistance and quality input are appreciated by everyone associated with the college.

What outstanding characteristics motivated you to nominate this staff member?

When a business, or a college system, is successful there are certain people working there who can be identified as a key determining positive force driving the results. Trish Villines is a major contributor in the day to day and ongoing process of making Northark a top-rated educational institution.

Trish is the ultimate business professional as she greets on-campus visitors, balances departmental budgets, manages state and federal grants and faces continuous unseen emergencies. What you notice about Trish through each daily or unusual task is her calm decision-making process incorporated with common sense and ultimate respect for every individual she encounters. Her strong devotion and loyalty to North Arkansas College moved me, as Chair of the Board of Trustees, to nominate Trish for an ACCT 2018 Award.