



Student Employee of the Year 2024 Nomination Letter

February 2, 2024

Nominator

Matthew Olson

Nominee

Joseph Jacob Memmott
PF Acad & Athletic Bldg Care
Lead Student

Communication

Jacob is an excellent communicator. He has taken charge of leading weekly safety meetings, and he always makes sure that everyone understands what he is saying and trains effectively. Jacob does not waste words, but always makes sure to say clearly and concisely what he means. During planning for the safety meetings, Jacob always focuses on what people need to know and how he can help them understand, but also enjoy their time learning. Jacob knows that he is in a unique position to be an example to others and uses his leadership to positively impact all those that he works with. Jacob's contribution to campus truly deserves recognition. He is a massive example to those he works with. His humble example earns the respect of his peers, his supervisor, and those in upper management who interact with him. It is hardworking students like Jacob who communicate their values by their quiet actions that truly need to be recognized by awards such as this.

Digital Technology

Jacob has taken the time to master all the technology available to him in his position. Jacob doesn't spend much time in the office. He would prefer to be out working with other students, making an impact on campus and those around him. He has taken the time to master difficult machinery available to him. With the fact that I came into my position unfamiliar with what we had to work with, Jacob has helped me understand how to use some of our most useful assets. One of the tasks Jacob completed recently was working together with me to problem solve a case where asbestos-containing floor tiles needed to be sealed under floor finish to protect building patrons from potential exposure. Jacob has worked to become familiar with the floor finish and optimal techniques to repair the damage. Any work we did would be a permanent result, so I turned right to Jacob to work with me on this project. Recently, he also took charge of leading meetings for all of our employees. He quickly had to become familiar with the different technology that we use in our meetings, such as the university training LMS. Jacob caught on quickly and is now my go-to person for leading meetings.

Problem Solving

There are other examples that could be shared, but one instance of problem solving that sticks out is related to



honesty. During the summer, our whole crew took breaks together. We are limited on the time we should take breaks, and Jacob realized that the breaks were longer than they needed to be. He is willing to speak up, and did so. He is willing to speak up. Jacob looks for problems that need to be fixed or addressed, and brings them up in leadership meetings whenever he finds them. He communicates them to me, and thinks of what he can say to our crew to address the problem. Often he will bring up that something is happening repeatedly or will bring up similar details that show that he is focused on us getting work done efficiently and without problems.

Professionalism

Jacob is an excellent example of living and fulfilling the honor code. Although his shift starts long before the sun comes up, Jacob has never been late to work. He comes in consistently every day and has never missed a day since he started the job more than a year ago. He diligently works on his homework early enough to get to bed early, often sacrificing time that could be spent on recreation so that he can be a responsible employee. When at work, Jacob carries out tasks in an effective manner. Many of the assignments which Jacob has taken on are not glamorous, but he always accepts them with a cheerful attitude. He even looks for extra work to do to make sure that anything we are responsible for gets covered. Jacob is known for this. He is the standard to which my other employees work. I cannot tell you how many times my other student employees have referred to his work ethic with remarks such as “work like Jacob” or “work as hard as Jacob.” In a department such as ours, nobody outside of his direct coworkers recognizes the effort and value that Jacob brings to our campus. Even so, he goes about his duty and lifts the aspirations and performance levels of his coworkers. When he is assigned to work with others, they always finish earlier than they expect because of how focused Jacob is and how much his influence carries over into their work as well.

Intercultural Fluency

Jacob is responsible for training new employees and carrying out weekly safety and training meetings. The crew of fifteen employees that he is responsible for includes three international students from Ecuador, Colombia, and Ivory Coast. Jacob makes sure that everyone feels comfortable and knows they are welcome on the crew. Jacob takes everyone on a tour of our work area on day one so that they can start work better and feel like they are welcome. He helps them fully integrate into the crew within the first week of work. Jacob makes sure that they are introduced to each coworker and treats them as friends from day one. This has helped our crew maintain a higher retention level than we had before Jacob started. Having been a student employee in the past myself, I notice acutely how he strives to include everyone and leads by example. In our weekly safety meetings, we recognize one employee each week for their contributions. Jacob always has suggestions for me of different coworkers and why they should be rewarded. He notices their contributions and assures that others will receive recognition for their contributions, no matter who they are. He listens intently to others and always seeks to learn from everyone else's perspectives.

Career Management

Jacob knows that the position he is working in is a completely different field than the one that he plans to follow once he graduates. Even though he will be in a different field, he understands that there are many jobs on campus that may not be glamorous but need to be done. Like thousands of other student employees employed in departments such as Building Operations, Grounds, Dining Services, and Security, he knows that the job needs to be done by



somebody. I see it as courageous to take on a responsibility on campus, knowing that it will help others, even though it may not be the intended goal of his career path. Jacob is a good example of an employee who knows that a job needs to be done and is willing to make sure that it happens. Jacob knows that service comes before himself and that jobs such as stripping and waxing floors make a bigger difference than many people in this world will ever know. Jacob is always willing to volunteer and take hard jobs, even though they may be strenuous or tedious. He is always willing to try something new and learn more. As he accumulates knowledge, he shares it with other workers so that they too can learn and improve the standard of their work.

Leadership

Jacob leads by example. He knows that his example has a major impact on everyone he works with. One of his greatest attributes is consistency. Jacob gives his full effort to any task he is assigned to. During the summer, he worked eight hour shifts some days and was productive for the full time. During this time, he was assigned the arduous task of scrubbing the bricks in the hallways and rooms of our building for periods of four hours. Imagine coming to work every day, working for four hours on a ladder, thoroughly scrubbing a rough surface that almost assuredly had not received any similar treatment in at least the past 10-20 years. Jacob took the assignment and ran with it without a complaint. His work ethic has inspired me to be a better leader. I have learned from Jacob that words of leadership are great, but humble actions and a willing spirit are what actually show true leadership. Jacob's leadership is apparent in his outward focus. Each week we award a "CLIMB" card, which our department uses to recognize employees for taking responsibility and bettering the organization. Jacob gives suggestions on who we could recognize that week and gives an explanation. He watches what others do and looks to give them recognition, while not seeking any himself. He loves to share his interest and insights with others and strives to be their friend. Jacob's leadership is evident by his friendship and kindness to others. He isn't just a coworker, he is a friend. He doesn't want to be the center of attention; he wants others to understand their value and worth. Jacob is a good leader because he is a good friend.

Teamwork

Jacob is an excellent example of being a team player. He fulfills all his responsibilities without question and is willing to help others with what they need. He often finishes his tasks early and is willing to jump in and help others finish their workload so that we can meet important deadlines. Jacob strives to include everyone in meetings and discussions. Recently I asked him to sub for someone and help their two teammates in finishing their assignments more quickly. I expected them to finish in three hours, but with Jacob's leadership they finished thirty minutes earlier than expected. I believe that the others looked at his example and rose to match his work ethic. Jacob's decision to work in his current job is a celestial example of teamwork. Jacob knows that custodial and maintenance jobs are essential to the running of our university. He knows that he could go out and get another job; he knows that he could get a job related to his major. He likely will in the future. The difference between Jacob and other student employees is that he is willing to serve in a job that is not desirable. He is willing to work hard for those around him and the campus community, in a job where (other than this award) he will never receive any kind of recognition, because he is a good person. He is good to the bone. No award will change that. I believe that Jacob deserves this award because he represents the class of people who are willing to get the job done because it needs to be done, not just personal motives or advancement. It is thousands of students like Jacob, working unpleasant jobs, day in, day out, that causes this university to run. It is students like Jacob that lift up other students to run. When the other students see Jacob's willing attitude and hard-working spirit, they are buoyed up to become leaders themselves. That is what BYU is about. That is why we are here.