Recognizing What Counts

“Recognition is about acknowledging good results and reinforcing positive performance, shaping an environment in which everyone’s contributions are noticed and appreciated” (Kouzes and Posner, 2008). It is not uncommon for people to receive recognition for outstanding accomplishments such as winning a state championship or a contest, but often we fail to recognize the smaller, everyday accomplishments that are equally important, those things that contribute to larger accomplishments.

In an effort to focus on the little things, each person will get a partner. Spend some time getting to know your partner through interactions and observation. After spending some time getting to know your partner, create and design an award for this person. The focus on this award could be related to a personality trait, an accomplishment such as something that was difficult or took great effort to achieve, an event that was overcome, etc. The award should be for a personal accomplishment that would not “typically” be recognized by society or the school.

- Create a name for the award that represents what the award stands for.
- Design a shape for the award that signifies something about the award.
- Design and create the award to represent this person and his or her achievement.
- Include the person’s first name visibly on the award.
- Place the “title” or “name” of the award in a prominent place on (or above/below) the award.
- Present the award in class at our “Awards Ceremony” by explaining the accomplishment, the name, chosen shape, and significance of the items, and the traits represented.