

# 2016 Best Practices Proposal Form



**CACUBO**  
Central Association of College  
& University Business Officers

Completed proposals are to be submitted to [bestpractices@cacubo.org](mailto:bestpractices@cacubo.org) or by contacting Donna Rohlfer, Director, CACUBO Best Practices Awards, [rohlfedm@miamioh.edu](mailto:rohlfedm@miamioh.edu).  
The deadline is April 30, 2016.

## Best Practices Program Submission:

**Title:** *Safety Incentive Program at the UW-Stout Service Departments*

## Primary\* Contact Information:

*The primary contact must be a CACUBO member institution of higher education.*

Institution: **University of Wisconsin-Stout**

Address1: **817 South Broadway Street**

Address2:

City: **Menomonie** State/Prov: **WI** Zip Code: **54751**

Salutation:  Prof.  Dr.  Mr.  Mrs.  Ms.

First Name: **Jim** Middle Name/Initial:

Last Name: **Uhlir** Suffix (Jr, III, etc.)

Professional Title: **Director, Safety & Risk Management**

Email : **uhlirj@uwstout.edu**

Phone: **715 232-2188** Fax: 715 232-1565

\*Additional team contacts may be listed at the bottom of this form.

## Institution Information:

Institution:  Research  **Comprehensive/Doctorate**  Small Institutions  Community College

Year Founded: 1891

Geographical Location: Midwest (Western Wisconsin)

Number of Students: 9,535

Website: <http://www.uwstout.edu/index.cfm>

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## Statement of the Problem:

*Provide a brief statement identifying the challenge your institution encountered that benefited from your best practice.*

UW-Stout, like most universities, is facing increased medical costs in the workers compensation program. While our injury experience (both in frequency and in severity of injuries) has been relatively stable the past several years, continued increases in medical and rehabilitation costs have caused us to look for efficiencies. Plus, the continuing realities of budget cuts have further added stress to this program. Taking a look at private industry, we found that many companies with good safety records have a safety culture that encourages teamwork. While our Safety & Workers Compensation Committee (SWCC) tried safety promotions in the past, the main effort was to have individual safety awards. Now a new thought was the idea of a safety recognition program -- based on team performance – that would improve the safety culture AND hopefully, reduce workers comp costs. We started looking for team incentives. We saw that many private companies have competitions where teams of employees earn recognition items if they pass certain numbers of days without having lost time injuries. We wanted to try this with our service departments since that is where the majority of lost-time worker comp claims come from. Stout has 1,400 employees by headcount. Of these, about 160 persons work in four departments:

- Physical Plant
- Police & Parking
- Dining Services
- Procurement & Materials Management (includes Mail and Receiving)

## Identify the Solution (250-words maximum):

*Describe how you identified and developed your best practice solution including those involved with the process, impact on the organization, finances and resources.*

Starting out, we had 3 questions:

1: *“Can we form meaningful teams?”*

Answer: yes, UW-Stout already had groupings in the above departments for job safety analyses, which drive our Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and safety training programs.

2. *“Can we procure- or have donated- meaningful safety recognition items that meet state purchasing rules, and which encourage team performance?”*

Answer: yes, as long as the items are low cost, not a gift, and not a perk, per state and UW System policies, recognition items are allowed.

3. *“If we set up time milestones to reward having no injuries, aren’t we encouraging the non-reporting of injuries?”*

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Answer: at many private companies this is “no...” IF they stress the need to still report, AND IF they set their recognition milestones as being “Lost Time Injuries”, not all “Injuries,” AND IF they had light duty / return to work programs. OSHA defines lost time injuries as those that cause an absence for 3 days or more. Our hypothesis is that the injuries that:

- harm employees most
- cause most losses
- and hurt the safety culture most are lost-time injuries.

We started a pilot program with 4 levels of recognition items that teams could earn:

Level 1: 0-90 Days (90 Days): Coffee tumbler thermos

Level 2: 91-210 Days (120 Days): Insulated lunchbox

Level 3: 211-360 Days (150 Days): Polo shirt

Level 4: 361-540 Days (180 Days): Jacket

All of these items had a safety campaign logo to reinforce our goal: “365 days & ZERO injuries”

## Implementation Timeline:

*Provide a bulleted list of the steps and implementation timeline of your best practice solution.*

1. Spring & Summer, 2013: UW-Stout SWCC drafts the Safety Incentive Program proposal
2. Summer, 2013: Vice Chancellor Phil Lyons approves budget of \$ 5,000 for a pilot program (levels one & two above).
3. October 1, 2013: Program starts
4. January, 2014: All teams passed level one successfully with no lost time injuries.
5. June, 2014: All teams passed level two successfully
6. June, 2014 Lyons approves another budget of \$10,000 for continuing the program with levels three and four
7. November, 2014: All teams passed level three successfully
8. May, 2015: All teams passed level four successfully

## Benefits & Retrospect:

*Provide a brief statement of the benefits achieved by implementing the best practice solution.*

Cost for the program was a total of \$ 15,000. This was mostly for the purchase of the recognition award items listed in the four levels, above. Since the teams all surpassed their milestones, and no lost-time injuries were experienced, the savings in direct loss experience dollar numbers was \$60,312. This is calculated by:

**1.5 years of program x 8 lost time injuries expected in the 4 service depts.  
per year = 12 injuries expected**

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**12 injuries expected x \$ 6,226 average cost per injury from 2000-2012 WC data= \$74,712 expected total cost from the 4 service depts.**

**Actual lost-time injuries, and actual costs for those injuries in the 1.5 years of the program = \$0**

**Actual program expenses for the recognition items = \$ 15,000  
Net program savings: \$ 74,712 - \$ 15,000 = \$ 59,712**

The estimated cost savings above is a calculation. Actual program savings will be more evident when we compare workers comp premiums from year to year. Since our state calculates WC premiums based on a 3 year running average of experience, we expect actual savings to be more than the \$59,712 listed above. As a result of the success of the program over the 1.5 years from October, 2013 through May, 2015, Vice Chancellor Lyons approved funding for a new "Round Two" Safety Incentive program for January 1, 2016 through June, 2017, again with four levels for teams to go through without lost time injuries.

Since October, 2013, we have had injuries, and trips to the hospital for care, but the teams have made a concerted effort to return promptly to work, to create and perform light-duty tasks if they have work restrictions from the doctor, and to care for each other. We still have not had a lost time injury during this program.

For more information on our program, please see:

<http://www.uwstout.edu/healthandsafety/safety/committee/index.cfm>

## Additional Team Contact Information:

### Additional Contact #2:

Institution: UW-Stout

Address1: 817 South Broadway

Address2:

City: Menomonie State/Prov: WI Zip Code: 54751

Institution:  Research  **Comprehensive/Doctorate**  Small Institutions  Community College

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## Additional Contact #4:

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Salutation:  Prof.  Dr.  Mr.  Mrs.  Ms.

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*updated Feb 2016*