

December 2025 Golden Nuggets

Date of submission	Nominee's Name	Nominee's Department	Area #	Reason for nomination
12/8/2025	Tanner Goodman	College of Engineering Dean's Office	8	<p>For the past month Tanner has taken on the extraordinary responsibility of serving as the program manager for the Fall 2025 Engineering Senior Design Expo. This was an unexpected task which Tanner assumed due to the resignation of a colleague during the hiring pause.</p> <p>The Director of the Industrial Solutions Lab described his work as follows "Tanner worked with great passion and commitment to fully understand the needs and requirements for this complex event. Even though he had only several weeks to prepare, he took complete charge of the management of the event which included new processes including implementing a different catering plan and a different set of event volunteers. He also developed some new productivity tools that we plan to use for future events. His focus and determination were exemplary."</p> <p>Supporting this event and the student project teams took time and dedication as well as learning multiple new processes. Tanner deserves recognition for his over and above effort.</p>
12/10/2025	Angeli O'Day-Jordan, Katie Adams, Tamara Jordan Hinton, Tina Lor, Tanya Nicholson, Lauren Pickard, Angela Allen, Alicia Bartosch	Niner Central, Bursars Office, Financial Aid Office	Various	<p>During the 2025 government shutdown, VA students faced significant challenges. The VA experienced issues with Chapter 35 student payments, resulting in delayed disbursements. In addition, other benefits could not be certified during the shutdown, which coincided with Spring 2026 registration.</p> <p>In response, Niner Central, Student Accounts, Financial Aid, and Military & Veteran Services collaborated to identify affected students and provide timely solutions. The colleagues being nominated demonstrated exceptional dedication, going above and beyond to support our military-affiliated students.</p> <p>While many universities across the country were still developing plans, this team was already collecting data and implementing strategies to ensure students received the assistance they needed.</p>
12/15/2025	Claudia Sotolongo	Alumni Association	11	I worked the info table at Commencement on Saturday morning. When a family member of one of the graduates came up with a question, who spoke only Spanish. Without skipping a beat, Claudia approached the man and began answering his questions in Spanish. In the way that she approaches everyone and everything, she worked with the gentleman kindly and sweetly. I was impressed and proud to be her colleague in that moment. Not just because of her Spanish skills, but how they spring to life with her signature grace.
12/19/2025	Darlene Johnson	B.E.S&R	12	Darlene Johnson provided exceptional cleaning services for the Educational Leadership Department suite and the College of Education. She consistently went above and beyond, offered additional help, and greeted everyone with a warm smile and positive attitude. Her outstanding work ethic has been noticed by students and employees.
12/19/2025	Alonzo Mckenzie Jr	B.E.S&R	12	Alonzo consistently demonstrates professionalism and courtesy, and he is always kind and pleasant to have in our department. He treats staff and students with respect and takes pride in his work, which is reflected in the high quality of service he provides. His efforts are greatly appreciated.