

HR Exchange

State of Oklahoma Office of Personnel Management
"Celebrating 20 Years of Serving Equal Opportunity Employers"
1982 - 2002

Volume 6 Issue 1

March 2002

State Launches **CORE Oklahoma** Project

Cynthia Clegg, OPM

And we're off! The state of Oklahoma officially "kicked-off" the integrated systems project on Friday, February 22, 2002. In two meetings at the Concourse Theatre, members of the Project Team and Team leaders were introduced to state agency representatives.

The members of the Executive Steering Committee—Pamela Warren, Director of the Department of Central Services (DCS) and Cabinet Secretary of Administration; Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources; Tom Daxon, Director of the Office of State Fi-

nance (OSF) and Cabinet Secretary of Finance and Revenue; and Ron Bussert, Executive Director of the Oklahoma Department of Commerce (ODC)—were on hand to share their thoughts on what the integrated systems project means for Oklahoma state government. During his remarks, Mr. Jackson reflected that the project was the culmination of a seed planted several years ago with the report from the *Governor's Performance Team*.

The project—officially christened *CORE Oklahoma*—ushers in a partnership between the state of Oklahoma,

PeopleSoft Inc., and Maximus to replace the state's current stand-alone financial, purchasing, human resources, and payroll systems. Jerry Stillwell, OSF, who serves as the state's Project Coordinator, defined "CORE" for those in attendance:

C=Communication. Communication is critical to the project's success and acceptance;

O=Operations. The state will critically review and redefine how it accomplishes work in the new environment;

R=Reporting. A significant output for the system is providing reports needed for effective management of the state's financial resources and staff; and

E=Enterprise. The project represents the installation of an enterprise system to replace its current stand-alones.

The Project Team, comprised of staff from DCS, OSF, OPM, PeopleSoft, and Maximus, have developed an aggressive implementation schedule for going "live" with the new system in July 2003.

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OPM Revises Fringe Benefit Component of State Compensation Report

Dayna Petete, OPM

OPM announced on February 19, that revisions to the *FY 2002 Annual Compensation Report* related to the value of the state health care benefit allowance have no impact on the original report's recommendation that an across-the-board adjustment for state classified employees is not warranted this year.

The revised Report also retains the recommendation that agencies assess the market relationship of job families under their purview and consider using appropriate pay movement mechanisms for targeted job family levels and positions where justified by recruitment and retention problems—a more precise approach to correcting market pay disparities than across-the-board increases. Though the overall direct pay average for state employees is 4.5 percent below the market average, individual job family relationships vary from 80 percent below market to 40 percent above market.

OPM announced on December 12, 2001, that the original Compensation Report for FY 2002, submitted to the Governor and legislative leadership on December 1, revealed that benchmarked salaries for classified state employees trailed the competitive labor market by 4.5 percent, fringe benefits for classified state employees led the market by 9.4 percent, and as a result, total compensation for classified state employees led the market by 0.7 percent.

"Following the release of the *FY 2002 Annual Compensation Report* in early December, I asked staff members to review our calculations regarding the health care benefit allowance for the 'average' state employee," stated Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of

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From the Desk of the Administrator



Each new year provides an invaluable opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments of the past and to anticipate eagerly the opportunities of the future. This year is distinguishable from other new years in this regard only because it marks the anniversary of a very important event we will be celebrating all year—the passage of Senate Bill 339 in 1982.

What's so significant about the passage of one piece of legislation 20 years ago, you ask? For starters, SB 339 created the Oklahoma Personnel Act, which laid the foundation for enhancements in Oklahoma's personnel system that continue to this day. This Act also abolished the State Personnel Board and created two new agencies: The Office of Personnel Management, headed by an Administrator who is appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Senate, and the nine-member Ethics and Merit Commission, now the Oklahoma Merit Protection Commission. In addition, the Act was also a factor in the re-creation of the Oklahoma Ethics Commission. Significant accomplishments, all!

The Oklahoma Personnel Act had its roots in one of the first partnering efforts among state agencies. Because of the Merit System Office's inability to issue certificates of eligibles in a timely manner, the directors of two of the largest Merit System agencies, the Department of Human Services and the Department of Transportation, joined forces with the Merit System Office to develop one of the finest and most progressive automated application, examination, and certification systems in the nation—OK-CAREERS.

Over the years, we have continued to improve OK-CAREERS in many small and not-so-small ways: We have added support for Priority Reemployment, Fair Employment Practices Act, Classification and Compensation Reform Act of 1999, and Y2K conversion. We have also removed many obsolete features to keep the system trim. In the coming months we expect to add support for on-line test administration and access via the Internet.

A similar partnering effort accompanied the establishment of Oklahoma's first state-wide training and development programs

for managers and supervisors. The Human Resource Development program leveraged agency staff development resources to provide management training and technical assistance support for all agencies, with a minimum of new resources.

In 2002, our commitment to training remains the same—only the terminology has changed. Today we talk about E-learning, web-based training, CBT, on-line training, etc. We are researching, studying, and learning from the experiences of other agencies in our quest to provide training and development opportunities for state employees in an electronic format. In December 2000, DHS launched its initial on-line pilot course on sexual harassment, and currently, is in the process of preparing a Performance Management Process (PMP) course through their E-learning system. We have much to learn from them.

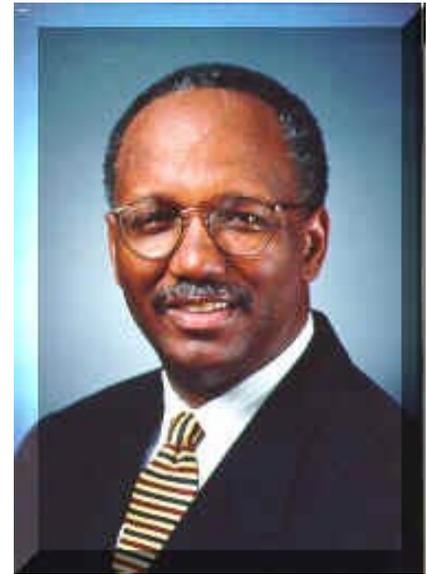
In the 20 years since the passage of the Oklahoma Personnel Act, OPM has continued to form partnerships with state agencies on a variety of issues, all of which are related to the betterment of the state personnel system. Nowhere is our belief in partnerships more apparent than in our five-year strategic plan, wherein we make a commitment to the following:

OUR MISSION

We serve the people of Oklahoma by delivering reliable and innovative human resources services to our partner agencies to achieve their missions.

OUR VISION

*Office of Personnel Management
Human Resources Provider of Choice
State of Oklahoma
Employer of Choice*



VALUES AND BEHAVIORS

Integrity

We are trustworthy. Our actions are consistent with our words and we pursue the highest good for the State of Oklahoma. We keep our promises and we do what we say we will do.

We accept full responsibility for our decisions and our actions.

Customer Service

We listen. We treat others as they wish to be treated. Our work reflects our best effort. We continually examine ourselves, our systems, and our processes to ensure that we can meet our internal and external customers' requirements.

Diversity

We value the ideas, background, experiences, and talents of each employee of the Office of Personnel Management. We respect each other. We are committed to ensuring that

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HR Director Spotlight

Brian Kirtley

Oklahoma Department of Transportation

Thirteen years ago I was looking for a decent job when I met James Howard and Cynthia Clegg (it's all their fault you have to listen to me at public meetings). I had been married and out of college for about a year, but had yet to land the six-figure entry-level job that was supposed to be waiting for me. I had never heard of the Oklahoma Merit Protection Commission and had no idea what they did. I had no professional experience and at the time competition for jobs was tough. My resume was crafted on a typewriter with only one font size. It took all the creativity I had to stretch it to 3/4 of a page. I expanded the margins on the top, bottom and both sides. I double-spaced between bullets and wrote about any high-school or college accomplishment that came to mind.

I wore my new suit to the interview. It still had the little tag near the end of the sleeve. I was ready. Enter Mr. Howard and Ms. Clegg. The first question from Mr. Howard was, "Did you find the office okay?" A question I could answer with little difficulty. From there on the questions got a little tougher. Lacking professional experience I had to rely on a brief history of hard work and a lifetime of Christian values. I added the small-town-boy-just-trying-to-make-it-in-the-big-city routine, as well. After the interview, Ms. Clegg was kind enough to cut the tag off my suit. I thought it was supposed to be on there.

A few days later I received a call from Ms. Clegg. They had offered the two positions to applicants with more experience. However, they would like to hire me as a temporary employee. I accepted. A few days later I received an offer letter with the salary amount. It was in the low six-figures (counting the two numbers behind the decimal point). It was still the most money I had ever made. Life was good. Just a few months later I became a regular unclassified employee with insurance, leave, and everything.

I don't know if I found a career in Human Resources or if it found me. Either way it has worked out well. I have been employed by four state agencies—the Merit Protection Commission, the Department of Labor, the Department of Human Services, and the Department of Transportation. Here are a few memories, lessons learned, and quotes worth sharing:

- After being sued personally by another state agency, there was a "discussion" between one of my co-workers and the attorney from the "other side" at an MPC retreat:

Attorney: "What do you think about me as a man?"

Co-worker: "I'll squash you like a bug!"

Lesson learned: Drunk attorneys are always fair game.



- I served a discharge notice on one of the worst employees in the state. She made a phone call after I gave her the discharge notice. Ten minutes later the police ar-

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Study Recommends Salary Structure for State Agency Directors

Dayna Petete, OPM

On January 9, OPM released a report prepared by Hay Management Consultants recommending that the state of Oklahoma adopt a grade and salary structure for state agency director positions based on internal equity and external competitiveness.

During the 2001 session, members of the Oklahoma Legislature and Oklahoma Governor Frank Keating approved Senate Bill 224, which required OPM to conduct a study of all agency director salaries to determine the market rate of pay for the services being performed by these directors, and to report the results of this study to the Governor and legislative leadership by January 1, 2002.

OPM contracted with Hay Management Consultants (HayGroup) to conduct this study. Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human

Resources, submitted the results of this study, which are compiled in the HayGroup's *State of Oklahoma Agency Head Compensation Report*, to the Governor, Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives, and President Pro Tempore of the Oklahoma State Senate on January 9. In addition, HayGroup consultants Neville Kenning and Greg Wolfe briefed the Governor's Cabinet and members of the fiscal staff of the House and Senate on the results of their survey. The HayGroup's *State of Oklahoma Agency Head Compensation Report* contains the following recommendations:

1. Adopt the Hay Guide Chart Profile Method of job evaluation for state agency director positions, which takes

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rived. She tried to have me arrested for assault.

Lesson learned: Always have a witness when discharging someone or you might wind up in jail.

- A manager had all of the doors taken off the employees' offices because one of the employees had a ten-minute personal discussion behind closed doors.

Lesson learned: Some people are just stupid and there's nothing you can do about it.

Over the years I have heard a lot of things that made me laugh. Having fun on the job is the most important thing you can do. It creates a great atmosphere, relieves stress and makes coming to work all the better. Here are a few of the more memorable lines I have heard:

- "Unless someone is shooting at you, it's not job stress."
- "Rule Number One—Don't sweat the small stuff. Rule Number Two—It's all small stuff."
- "There's no good reason to treat people with anything but kindness."
- "People are no damn good."
- "RIF is the ugliest four-letter word in the Oklahoma Personnel Act."
- "If it weren't for all of this piddly personnel work, you'd have nothing to do all day."
- "Make sure you go to the bathroom during working hours—it counts toward retirement."
- "I never had to fire someone I actually liked."
- "Our organizational chart looks more like a family tree."
- "There is no such thing as a personnel emergency . . . ever . . . unless you lose the director's pay check."
- "Did you know that killing that employee isn't a violation of the Merit Rules?"
- "It's more important to do the right thing rather than worry about doing things right by someone else's rules."

I've been very fortunate in my career. I've had great mentors, bosses, co-workers, and memories that will last forever. My memoirs will go on sale later this year for only \$19.95. If you prepay you'll get a pre-approved freeze exception from the cabinet secretary of your choice. Have fun and enjoy yourself!

Background Checks Workplace Security Concern

Kimberlee Williams, OPM

Just days after the September 11th attacks on the United States, Governor Frank Keating established a *Governor's Task Force on Security of State Employees*. Over the course of several months, the Task Force studied various safety and security issues relating to state employees and state property and prepared a report and recommendations for the Governor.

One of the many issues studied by the Task Force was the use of background checks in the hiring process for state employment. On January 16, Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources, presented an informal survey conducted by OPM staff that indicated approximately half of all state agencies do not conduct background investigations on potential hires.

Background investigations can be time-consuming and costly, but a full-blown investigation may not be necessary on each potential hire. State agencies may want to consider the aspects of the various jobs within the agency and have a background investigation policy that varies according to

the responsibilities of the job.

Some background investigation techniques require little cost or effort on behalf of the hiring agency. For example, agencies might require applicants to bring evidence of a college degree (such as a transcript) or a state license (such as an identification card or certificate issued by the licensing board) to the interview. (Of course, the requirement of a college degree or state license should be job-related.) And, a few phone calls to former employers can verify an applicant's employment history.

Depending on the responsibilities of the job, state agencies may want to conduct a more thorough investigation. The Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) provides criminal history information upon request for \$15.00 per individual checked. The OSBI requires at least a full name, date of birth, and Social Security number in order to do the report. The OSBI is located at 6600 N. Harvey, Building 6, Oklahoma City, OK 73116. *A Criminal History Information*

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OPM Team members Kimberlee Williams, Chief Policy Attorney (left), and Dayna Petete, Assistant Administrator for Communications and Legislative Liaison (second from right), represent OPM at the state agency General Counsel Forum Luncheon held the third Friday of each month. In January, Oklahoma County District Judge Noma Gurich (second from left) and Rose State College professor Janet Wheeler addressed the group on a proposed Legal Assistant job family for Oklahoma state government. This month Ms. Petete will address the group on human resources-related legislation introduced thus far during the 2002 legislative session. Also pictured is Assistant Attorney General Steven K. Snyder, OPM's legal counsel.

Background Checks, continued from page 4

Request Form can be downloaded from the OSBI's website (www.osbi.state.ok.us).

The OSBI requests that you ensure that the form prints as a one-page document. Contact Debbie Goodloe at (405) 858-5256, for more information regarding how to conduct an OSBI criminal history background check or to set up an account with the OSBI.

If the job will require any driving while on duty, the state agency may want to request a driving record. Certified copies of driving records are available from motor vehicle license agents throughout the state or from the Department of Public Safety (DPS) for \$10.00 each. The report goes back three years from the date of the request. A consent to release of the record is required, and a form for this purpose is available on the DPS website at www.dps.state.ok.us/accrec. Contact DPS at (405) 425-2262, for more information about obtaining driving records.

Because of the cost involved, some state agencies conduct criminal history checks and/or driving record checks only on applicants who have accepted a conditional offer of employment, rather than on all candidates or recommended finalists for a position. In regards to criminal history information, it is strongly recommended that you only request criminal conviction information, as arrests are no indication of guilt.

OPM is working with other state agencies, including the OSBI, to present training to interested HR professionals regarding background checks. An *All Appointing Authority Memorandum* will be distributed once plans are finalized.

OPM does not conduct background investigations on eligibles listed on the certificates it issues. Because the needs of state agencies vary so widely, it is not practical to do so—a criminal conviction that would eliminate a person from consideration for employment in one agency may not be an issue for another agency. In regards to its own hires, OPM requests an OSBI criminal history background check on every potential hire (including temporaries) because the nature of our business requires the handling of confidential information (such as Social Security numbers). OPM is currently considering also requesting driving records for potential hires.

CareerTechs Play Important Role in OPM Merit Testing

Hank Batty, OPM

In March, 2001, OPM entered into a partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education (ODCTE) to provide access to Merit System testing statewide. At that time, 21 *CareerTech* campuses, from Guymon to Idabel and from Afton to Lawton, began providing this service in their communities.

According to data gathered by OPM's Applicant Services Division, over 4,000 Merit System examinations, approximately 30 percent of all tests taken, were administered at *CareerTech* campuses in 2001 (see table on page 7). With the recent addition of Pioneer Career Technology Center in

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OPM Team member Rose Mabboob (right) assists Mike Wiles, Director of Student Services at the Pioneer Career Technology Center in Ponca City, in preparing for Merit System testing at his facility.

OPM Hosts Diversity Management Briefing

Brenda C. Thornton, OPM

On February 7 - 8, OPM's Office of Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity hosted a diversity management briefing with Lars H. Olsen, a Master's of Public Management student at the Southern University of Denmark. Mr. Olsen also is head of the Department of Public Sector Services and Partnering in the RAMBOLL organization in Denmark. In this capacity, his responsibilities include knowledge and relationship management in the interaction between the public and private sectors.

As a compulsory part of his Master's degree program, Mr. Olsen was required to visit other countries to seek information and interview other diversity management practitioners. In preparing for his trip Mr. Olsen discovered a report entitled, *Best Practices in Diversity Management* on the United Nations

website. This report, which was written by Neil Reichenberg, Executive Director of the International Personnel Management Association, highlights Oklahoma for its innovative way of addressing underutilization of minority representation in the workforce by using the Fair Employment Practices Act register.

During Mr. Olsen's visit to OPM, Brenda C. Thornton, Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity Director, scheduled a series of meetings with members of the OPM staff and others involved in Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action activities in state government. The purpose of the meetings was to familiarize Mr. Olsen with the various functions of

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into consideration *Know-How, Problem Solving, and Accountability*.

2. Adopt a grade and salary structure for state agency director positions based upon internal equity and external competitiveness, which narrows the gap between the current practices and the comparator state market. The state should retain the flexibility to administratively allocate positions to levels within the grade and salary structure based upon special conditions or qualifications.
3. Adjust agency director salaries that are below recommended minimum salary levels, and as appropriate, provide within-grade adjustments, taking into account such factors as time in position and performance.
4. Establish an Agency Head Salary Commission for future administration of the grade and salary structure for agency director positions.

During the course of their study, the HayGroup concluded that state agency director positions with similar job content have significant pay differences, and agency director positions with significantly different job content are paid similar pay. They also determined that the state of Oklahoma has neither identified a comparator market for agency directors nor a level in the market at which these positions should be paid.

The HayGroup also discovered that while the state of Oklahoma's current salary practice appears to be competitive with the Central and Southeastern States at the small-medium size agency director level, it trails the average practice for comparator state groups (those with similar socio-economic and population indicators) at the medium-large size agency director levels. And, when compared to Hay's Oklahoma market for similar job content (private, not-for-profit, and public sector employers), the current agency director practice trails the in-state median practice by amounts that vary from 50 percent – 130 percent, which is significant because the vast majority of agency director appointments are made from within Oklahoma.

"I concur with the HayGroup recommendations and urge members of the Legislature to take them under advisement during the 2002 legislative session for imple-



Following the HayGroup briefing on January 9, Oklahoma State Senate Fiscal Director Amanda Paliotta (center) discussed the finer points of the Agency Head Compensation Report with (l to r) Oscar B. Jackson, OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources; Tom Patt, OPM Compensation Director; and Neville Kenning and Greg Wolfe of the HayGroup.

mentation during FY 2003," commented Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources. "We need to close the gap between current practices and the state market. It is time to make an investment in the leadership of the state of Oklahoma."

HayGroup is a professional services and e-business firm. Founded in 1943 in Philadelphia, today HayGroup consultants work out of 73 offices in 35 countries.

Editor's Note: Senator Kelly Haney (D-Seminole) has introduced Senate Bill 1222 to implement the HayGroup's report.



*Questions or comments regarding
OPM's FY 2002 Annual Compensation Report or the
State of Oklahoma Agency Head Compensation Report?
Contact OPM Compensation Director Tom Patt
at (405) 522-0422 or thomas.patt@opm.state.ok.us*

Compensation Report, continued from page 1
Human Resources. "As the result of this review, we determined that it was more appropriate to use actual cost figures for the average benefit allowance for state classified employees, rather than an assumed cost based on a 'typical state employee' profile," Jackson added. "This change assures a more accurate representation of the state's average benefit costs."

According to the revised Report, the state of Oklahoma's fringe benefit costs are 6.1 percent lower than those of its competitor market, a result that does not quantify the value relationship of the state's benefits to the market, but merely compares benefit expenditures. The revised Report also departs from previous methodology by comparing direct pay and fringe benefit

costs, independent of each other, with the market rather than combining the two forms of compensation into a "total compensation" value comparison. This change was made because of the multitude of factors, cited in the revised Report, that make benefit costs an inappropriate measure of value for market comparison purposes.

"As noted in the revised Report, we are considering using a value analysis of benefits in the future, which will allow for a more accurate comparison of the state's benefits package with the market," Jackson commented. "Thus, all references to a total compensation comparison with the market have been deleted from the revised Report."

OPM is required by law to conduct an

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Ponca City, 2002 promises to expand these services even more.

In a letter to ODCTE Director Dr. Ann Benson, Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources, noted that OPM has been “impressed, although not surprised, by the professionalism and friendliness of all the ODCTE staff with whom we have worked on this project.”

“Even before the annual numbers were tabulated,” Mr. Jackson continued, “the success of the partnership was apparent when it received a *Governor’s Quality Award* and a special commendation from Governor Keating for the Human Resources Cabinet area in May 2001. By providing an essential service to Oklahomans across the state who are seeking state employment, and by showcasing the facilities and services *CareerTech* offers in local communities across the state, this partnership benefits all who participate in it.”

**2001 Statewide Testing—CareerTech Sites
(March—December 2001)**

<u>Location</u>	<u># of Exams</u>
Ada—Pontotoc Technology Center	213
Afton—Northeast Technology Center	218
Alva—Northwest Technology Center	62
Ardmore—Southern Oklahoma Technology Center	187
Bartlesville—Tri-County Technology Center	99
Burns Flat—Western Technology Center	116
Durant—Kiamichi Technology Center	200
Enid—Autry Technology Center	328
Fort Cobb—Caddo-Kiowa Technology Center	98
Guymon—High Plains Technology Center	91
Idabel—Kiamichi Technology Center	404
Lawton—Great Plains Technology Center	388
McAlester—Kiamichi Technology Center	401
Muskogee—Indian Capital Technology Center	119
Okmulgee—Green Country Technology Center	148
Poteau—Kiamichi Technology Center	194
Pryor—Northeast Technology Center	681
Sapulpa—Central Technology Center	61
Wayne—Mid-America Technology Center	82
Wetumka—Wes Watkins Technology Center	109
Woodward—High Plains Technology Center	76
Career Technology Center Totals	4,275

Personnel Assessment Uses CAPIP to Increase Level of Service

Joe Davenport, OPM

OPM’s Personnel Assessment Division has established a new partnering relationship with faculty from the University of Oklahoma’s Industrial/Organizational Psychology program. The purpose of this relationship is to recruit Industrial/Organizational Psychology (I/O) graduate students as Personnel Assessment staff members via the Carl Albert Public Internship Program (CAPIP), and secure technical and professional assistance from the OU faculty.

“The Carl Albert Public Internship Program has done a great job of bringing un-

usually talented and capable students into state government,” Personnel Assessment Director Joe Davenport commented. “The Personnel Assessment Division has hired 18 graduate students through the Executive Fellows program since CAPIP became operational in 1989. They have come mostly from the fields of I/O and Public Administration.”

“In fact,” Mr. Davenport continued, “for the past several years, every Personnel Assessment staff member except me was

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OSF Forms Advisory Group

In an effort to improve the State of Oklahoma’s budgeting process, Rollo Redburn, Budget Director, Office of State Finance, is developing an Agency Budget Advisory Group consisting of six agency fiscal and budget officers. Marilyn Capps, OPM’s Chief Financial Officer, has been selected to serve as a member of this group. Fellow group members include Dwight Stoddard, Department of Career and Technology Education; Adam Barber, Department of Human Services; Stan Van Ostran, Department of Human Services; Steve Coffman, Oklahoma Conservation Commission; Travis Monroe, Oklahoma Educational Television Authority; and Sherri Fair, Office of State Finance.



*OPM Chief Financial Officer
Marilyn Capps*

The group will meet quarterly to discuss existing and upcoming issues related to budget work programs, budget requests, strategic plans, executive budget process, and legislative process. The group will also discuss the development and progress of the new accounting, personnel, payroll, purchasing, and budgeting systems with PeopleSoft products and Maximus Consulting Services. This group will also help facilitate communications between the Office of State Finance Budget Division and agency budget staff. The group’s first meeting was scheduled for early March.

*Comments concerning the
HR Exchange? Story ideas?
Contact the Editor at
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Diversity, continued from page 5

different state agencies and to discuss the ways they manage affirmative action and diversity.

The discussions were broken up into two half-day sessions, with the first day focusing on OPM's role in diversity and the affirmative action plan process, and what agencies are doing with and through their affirmative action plans. This session allowed Mr. Olsen an opportunity to interact with the people who are responsible for managing diversity at the agency level. Individuals attending this session included Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources; Cynthia Clegg, OPM Deputy Administrator for Programs; Larry Fisher, OPM Assistant Administrator for Human Resource Development Services; Thomasine Ross, Civil Rights Coordinator, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services; John White, Civil Rights Administrator, Department of Transportation; R. Charles Smith, Civil Rights Coordinator, Department of Health, a member of the Affirmative Action Review Council and President of the Alliance for Civil Rights, Inc.; and Carole Saunders Call, EEO/AA Officer and Director of Institutional Research, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, and member of the Affirmative Action Review Council. Charlotte Carter, a graduate student at the University of Oklahoma, also sat in on portions of this discussion.



Lars Olsen

The purpose of the second session was to introduce Mr. Olsen to representatives of state agencies that have created their own diversity programs or have international operations. Attendees included Garland Morgan, former Human Resources Administrator, Department of Agriculture; Dr. Sherleen Jackson, Civil Rights Administrator, Department of Human Services; Peggy Carter, Affirmative Action Officer, Department of Corrections, and chair of the Affirmative Action Review Council; LaRonda Molina, Human Resources Director, Department of Commerce; Vickie Armstrong, Economic Development Specialist, International Trade and Investment Division, Department of Commerce; Juanita Salazar

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Pictured with Mr. Olsen (center) are (l to r) LaRonda Molina, Department of Commerce; Peggy Carter, Department of Corrections; Brenda Thornton, OPM; Mr. Olsen; Juanita Salazar Lamb, Chair, Governor's Advisory Council on Latin-American and Hispanic Affairs; Sherleen Jackson, Department of Human Services; and Vickie Armstrong, Department of Commerce.

OPM Deputy Administrator Appointed to Benchmarking Committee

Cynthia Clegg, OPM Deputy Administrator for Programs, has been appointed to a national public human resources benchmarking committee.

The benchmarking project is a joint initiative of the International Personnel Management Association (IPMA) and the National Association of State Personnel Executives (NASPE). Ms. Clegg was appointed by NASPE.

Since its inception, the Committee has conducted studies and issued benchmarking reports on Training, Recruitment and Selection, and Total Compensation. In 1998, the IPMA/NASPE Benchmarking Project released its report on the *Best Practices in Public Human Resources*.



Ms. Clegg joins the project as it completes its second survey of the public sector and prepares for the third iteration of studies. At the group's January 2002 meeting in Washington, DC, she was asked to coordinate the dialogue around defining "best practice" for the next round of publications.

The Committee established the following criteria to determine which agencies had "potential" best practices:

1. Successful over time;
2. Produced quantitative and/or qualitative results;
3. Developed recognized or recognizable

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Members of OPM's Personnel Assessment Team include (l to r) CAPIP Executive Fellows Juan Benevidez, Jamie Culp, and Suzie Marta, graduate students in the University of Oklahoma's Industrial and Organizational Psychology program, and Personnel Assessment Director Joe Davenport.

Personnel Assessment, continued from page 7

or had been, a CAPIP Executive Fellow.”

From 1989 until last year, all of the I/O Executive Fellows came from the University of Tulsa. Since July 2001, Personnel Assessment has filled three vacancies with CAPIP Executive Fellows from the I/O graduate program at OU. “Since these Executive Fellows are working on or are about to complete graduate degrees, they really hit the ground running,” Mr. Davenport commented. “They come to the job with advanced skills and capabilities and, as a result, it takes less time to train them. In addition, they usually possess state-of-the-art knowledge about their field.”

The lead professor from OU in the new partnering relationship is Dr. Michael Mumford. Dr. Mumford is a nationally-recognized I/O expert. He has authored over 100 scholarly articles and currently has over 25 articles in publication. He has over 20 years of experience in the academic and research fields.

Personnel Assessment Team members have developed a myriad of selection procedures, including the written examinations with which most state employees are familiar. In addition, they have created a new type of rating of training and experience called *Supplemental Application Questionnaires*, which job applicants complete for the purpose of assessing their job-related knowledges,

skills, and abilities. Team members also have worked with the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department (OTRD) in the implementation of the *Hogan Job Fit inventory*. OTRD uses this test for certain positions after applicants have tested for the positions and have been certified to the agency. The Job Fit Inventory carries the same weight as an interview.

Team members are in the process of performing an extensive job analysis on Highway Patrol entry-level positions and developing a new written examination in cooperation with Department of Public Safety staff.

Also “under construction” are new written examinations for entry-level Correctional Officer positions and basic level clerical job family descriptors. Other innovative new procedures being developed by Team members are a “willingness” checklist and a realistic job preview video for the Correctional Officer position. For some time, the Department of Corrections has experienced high turnover in entry-level Correctional Officer positions. Personnel Assessment Team members and staff of the Department of Corrections have created a checklist for job applicants which includes the more difficult and dangerous duties performed by all Correctional Officers. Failure of an applicant to sign off on any listed duty removes the individual from further consideration for the position. Applicants also will

view a “reality” video of the Correctional Officer job designed to eliminate applicants who will likely not stay on the job, if selected.

Perhaps the most ambitious project currently underway is the computerization of all Merit System examinations. OPM, working with the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education, is working to develop a system which would enable job applicants to take an exam on computers at testing centers around the state and receive their scores before they leave the site. This will speed up the entire application/selection process. Personnel Assessment Team members developed a Request For Proposal (RFP) for this project and submitted it to the Department of Central Services Central Purchasing Division. This RFP will soon be available to vendors who have already developed computerized testing systems.

“Personnel Assessment Team members have always been able to serve state agencies by performing the more routine work related to the development of ‘traditional’ selection procedures,” Mr. Davenport noted. “The ability of the Division to use Carl Albert Public Internship Program Executive Fellows has increased the breadth and scope of the innovative selection and assessment products and procedures we have developed to assist state agencies in doing their jobs in a rapidly changing environment.”

FYI

Outstanding graduate and undergraduate applicants are available through the Carl Albert Public Internship Program (CAPIP).

For more information, call (405) 521-6358 or log onto the OPM Website at www.opm.state.ok.us/html/policy_capip.html.

OPM Committee Calendar

Affirmative Action

Review Council

9/25/02, 10/23/02,
11/13/02, 12/11/02—8:30 a.m.

Department of Agriculture

Agency Quality

Coordinators Network

3/19/02—11:30 a.m.

Department of Transportation

Certified Public Manager

Advisory Board

Dates & Locations TBA

Child Day Care

Advisory Committee

Meets at the call of the chair

OPM State Employee Assistance

Program Advisory Council

4/24/02—10:00 a.m.

State Capitol—Room TBA

7/24/02, 10/23/02—10:00 a.m.

Office of Personnel Management

Conference Room G-91

Governor's Advisory Council

on Asian-American Affairs

4/26/02, 7/26/02, 10/25/02—2:00 p.m.

Office of Personnel Management

Conference Room G-91

Governor's Advisory Council on

Latin-American and Hispanic Affairs

4/1/02, 7/1/02, 10/7/02—2:00 p.m.

Office of Personnel Management

Conference Room G-91

Human Resources Management

Advisory Committee

Meets at the call of the chair

Committee for Incentive Awards

for State Employees

3/21/02, 5/16/02, 7/18/02,

9/19/02, 11/20/02—9:00 a.m.

State Capitol

Governor's Large Conference Room

Mentor Selection

Advisory Committee

Meets at the call of the chair

State Agency Review Committee

5/8/02, 8/7/02, 11/6/02—2:00 p.m.

Department of Agriculture

Calendar subject to change. Call (405) 521-2177 for most recent information concerning OPM Advisory Bodies and other entities staffed by OPM. Also, log onto the OPM website at www.opm.state.ok.us/html/open_meetings.htm for additional information.



Agency HR Changes Since December 2001

Compiled by Melissa Jolly, OPM

Commission on Children and Youth

Thomas Kemper

Director

Retired

Department of Corrections

Amy Bellgardt

Secretary V

Resigned

Sandra Johnston

Secretary V

Mark Lopez

HR Management Specialist III

District Attorneys Council

New Address:

421 NW 13th Street, Suite 290

Oklahoma City, OK 73103

Phone Numbers remain the same.

Employment Security Commission

Corkey Edwards

Transferred to another OESC division

Lisa Hoelscher

HR Management Specialist

Vicki Kelso

HR Programs Manager

Department of Environmental Quality

Jamie Fannin

Civil Rights Administrator

Department of Human Services

Maria Eakers

HR Management Specialist II

Office of Juvenile Affairs

Cindy Braun

Administrator of Human Resources

Lynda Estes

HR Programs Manager I

Carolyn Rumsey

HR Management Specialist III

Office of Personnel Management

Janet Anderson

Executive Assistant

Office of the Administrator

Jean-Marc Hache

Network Management Specialist

Interagency transfer to OSF

Cindy Johnson

HR Management Specialist

Management Services

Resigned

Sonja Harkey

Payroll Administrative Assistant

Management Services

Elizabeth Kettler

Administrative Assistant

Employee Selection Services

Jeffrey Musslewhite

Applicant File Room

Management Services

Resigned

Tom Patt

Director of Compensation

Management Services

James Perez

Carl Albert Public Internship Program

Executive Fellow

Workforce Planning

Cynthia Williamson

Executive Assistant

Office of the Administrator

Oklahoma Tax Commission

Heather Thompson

Administrative Technician

34 Memos Since December 2001

02-09 (2/26/02)

Proposed Permanent Amendments to Merit Rules

02-08 (2/21/02)

Quality Oklahoma Team Day 2002

02-07 (2/19/02)

FY 2002 Annual Compensation Report

02-06 (2/8/02)

Agency Payroll System Archive

02-05 (2/12/02)

Certified Personnel Professional Training

02-04 (1/24/02)

Affirmative Action Plan Utilization Analysis
Update Requirement

02-03 (2/12/02)

Groundhog Shadow Day

02-02 (1/11/02)

Agency Director Compensation Report

02-01 (1/6/02)

Criminal Background Checks for Potential State
Employees

01-74 (12/31/01)

Executive Order 2001-38, State Agency Hiring
Freeze

01-73 (12/21/01)

Salary Administration Plans

Let Freedom Ring!



On January 21, Governor Frank Keating rang the replica of the Liberty Bell (in the background to the left of the Governor), located on the grounds of the Oklahoma Historical Society, in honor of the birthday of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. OPM provides staff support for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission, which is responsible for planning and coordinating the state of Oklahoma's observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday. Governor Keating has rung the bell every year since he became Governor in 1995. In the foreground to the left of Governor Keating is longtime Oklahoma City civil rights champion Clara Luper. Incidentally, the Liberty Bell replica dates back to the late 1940s, following the end of World War II, when it was used in a U.S. Savings Bond drive. At that time, each of the 48 states was given a Liberty Bell replica to take around the state to encourage citizens to invest in U.S. Savings Bonds. Following the drive, the bell returned to Oklahoma City and has been at home at the Oklahoma Historical Society ever since.

Compensation Report, continued from page 6

annual analysis of the rates of pay in the competitive labor market and compare those rates to the state's current Merit System salary structure for classified employees. OPM must report the results of this analysis, which includes a comparison of the state's fringe benefits and those offered elsewhere in the labor market, to the Governor, President Pro Tempore of the Oklahoma State Senate, and Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives no later than December 1 of each year.

Survey sources used for the FY 2002 salary and benefit analysis include the OPM FY 2002 State of Oklahoma Compensation Survey; the Central States Salary Survey and the Southeastern States Salary Survey, both of which consist of data from states contiguous to Oklahoma; the Oklahoma State Chamber of Commerce Survey; and the Oklahoma Hospital Association Survey.

OPM has submitted the revised FY 2002 Annual Compensation Report to the Governor, President Pro Tempore, and Speaker, as well as to all agencies and individuals who received the original report. In addition, the report is on the OPM website— www.opm.state.ok.us—under "What's New".

Asking the Hard Questions—And Seeking the Solutions— Through Workforce Planning

Cynthia Clegg, OPM

How many members of your staff are eligible to retire? How many will? How do you plan to replace key technical and institutional memory? What new challenges will face your organization next year? What about the next five years? Is your organization—the people who will meet that challenge on your agency's behalf—ready? Do they have the skills? Do they know what's coming? How can you make sure they're ready for the challenge?

These are the questions OPM's new Workforce Planning Analyst is asking everyday. James Perez, graduate student in Public Administration at the University of Oklahoma, worked in Research and Planning at the Office of Juvenile Affairs before joining OPM in January 2002. He is an Ex-

ecutive Fellow in the Carl Albert Public Internship Program.

Mr. Perez has been assigned the task of developing a workforce planning model that agencies may use to systematically address the state's future workforce needs. According to Perez, such a model is "a tool that not only can be utilized to meet the present and future needs of a state workforce," but also answers the following questions:

- What major workforce recruiting challenges does the state, as an employer, face?
- What type of work environment is



Continued on page 14

OPM, Handicapped Concerns Host ADA Training

Larry Fisher, OPM

On January 16 and 17, OPM and the Governor's Office of Handicapped Concerns hosted the first Americans With Disabilities Act Coordinator Training. The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law that prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity for persons with disabilities in employment, state and local government services, public accommodations, commercial facilities, and transportation.



Steve Stokes, Director of the Office of Handicapped Concerns, addressed ADA Conference participants. Pictured with Mr. Stokes is Larry Fisher, OPM Assistant Administrator for Human Resource Development Services.

The lead instructor for the two-day workshop was Rachel Kosoy, from the Southwest Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC) in Houston, Texas. The DBTAC has been approved by the United States Department of Justice, the federal agency that enforces the ADA, as an authorized training source for the ADA.

The Conference also included an overview of the ADA, a detailed study of Title II of the law, which relates to non-discrimination requirements and program access, and a panel discussion involving several of the state's ADA experts.



One hundred seventeen participants representing 83 state agencies attended the two-day Conference, including (front row, l to r) Jean Williams and Leslie Hanska, Board of Architects; Landis Byerly, Indigent Defense System; (back row, l to r) John Maile and D.J. Miller, Used Motor Vehicle Commission; and Joel Mann, J.D. McCarty Center.

CORE Oklahoma Team members (l to r) Carol Barton, OPM; Lezlie Thiery, OPM; Jerry Stillwell, OSF; Donna Holliday, PeopleSoft; Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources; and Joe Frasca, PeopleSoft. Not pictured is Larry Fisher, OPM.



CORE Oklahoma, continued from page 1

OPM had the responsibility of identifying Project Team leaders for the HR and Payroll components of the integrated system. Lezlie Thiery, OPM Applicant Services Division, has been named HR Lead, and Carol Barton, OPM, has accepted assignment as the Payroll Lead. Larry Fisher, OPM Assistant Administrator for Human Resource Development Services, will provide technical support for the training component of the project.

Information about the *CORE Oklahoma* project may be found at www.your-oklahoma.com/coreoklahoma. The Project Team will use this site to communicate the status of the project, so make sure to check it regularly. Jerry Stillwell, Project Coordinator, assured those in attendance that the

site will be updated regularly with the most current information on the project. Contact information for the *CORE Oklahoma* Project Team is 3812 N. Santa Fe, Suite 100, Oklahoma City, OK 73118; (405) 962-2410 (phone).

Oklahoma Hosts NASPE Mid-Year Meeting

OPM welcomed members of the National Association of State Personnel Executives (NASPE) to Oklahoma City, February 1 - 3, 2002, for the NASPE Mid-Year Meeting. Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources, who served as NASPE president in 1994, hosted the event which attracted 20 participants from 15 states. States represented included Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Oklahoma, and Texas.

The three-day event featured a presentation by Al Smith, Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS) Human Resource Management Department, and his staff on the *DHS e-Learning Initiative*, and another by LeAnn Jenkins, Executive Director of the Oklahoma Federal Executive Board, on *Emergency Preparedness*. Participants also discussed *HRIS/Workforce Planning*, *Total Rewards*, *Outsourcing and Privatization*, and the *Budget Crisis In The States*.

NASPE is the recognized authority on state government human resource issues, trends, practices, and policies and serves as a leader and catalyst for the development of state human resources and is dedicated to enhancing the image of state public service. The association provides a forum for its members to share information on human resource issues and, collectively, to influence those issues through the conduct of professional research and the participation in various regional and national committees, forums and meetings, so that members can better achieve their states' missions and business objectives.

Membership is comprised of chief personnel administrators and their deputies or designees in the 50 states, five territories, and the District of Columbia.



*"Advancing the Best in
State Human Resources"*



Members of the OPM Executive Team helped welcome NASPE attendees during the Friday night reception. Pictured with Donald A. Wills, Director of Human Resources, State of Maine (second from left), are Diane Haser-Bennett, Assistant Administrator for Management Services; Hank Batty, Assistant Administrator for Employee Selection Services; and Marilyn Capps, OPM Chief Financial Officer.



Mollie Anderson, Director of the Iowa Department of Personnel (pictured above), serves as NASPE president.



Participants included (l to r) Bobbi Mariani, Director of the Division of Personnel Services, Kansas Department of Administration; Allen Reynolds, Director of the Louisiana Department of State Civil Services; Donald A. Wills, Director of Human Resources, State of Maine; John McEwen, Administrator of the Division of State Personnel, Montana Department of Administration; Linda Garrant; Tony Garrant, Assistant State Classification Officer, Texas State Auditor's Office.

needed to attract and retain a skilled and diverse workforce?

- What are primary workforce retention challenges?
- What type of recruitment methods are needed to attract new employees?
- What education and training opportunities are needed?

Mr. Perez has quite a lot of data to sort through. Currently, he is looking through OPM databases to create a “snapshot” of the state’s workforce, including trend data on turnover, salary, tenure, and age.

Mr. Perez is also collecting information from agencies on their use of exit interviews. “It’s not enough to know that people are leaving, we also need to know why they’re opting out of state service and, perhaps more importantly, why they stay.” Mr. Perez is looking to develop a system to collect information on the causes of turnover, as well as looking at reasons for retention. “In the retention study, we’re planning to look at high-achieving employees with longer tenure with state government to see what factored into their decision to stay. Clearly, this information will fuel interesting discussions and decision-making around the state.”



Larry Fisher, OPM Assistant Administrator for Human Resource Development Services (center), was invited to speak to the first class of Certified Public Managers in the state of Iowa. The first Iowa Certified Public Manager class was held January 8 and 9 at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. Iowa is one of 29 states participating in the Certified Public Manager program.

Cabinet Changes

On January 28, Governor Frank Keating announced the appointment of Howard Hendrick, Director of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, to serve as Cabinet Secretary of Health and Human Services. Mr. Hendrick succeeds Jerry Regier, who recently resigned to run for Governor.

Governor Keating also accepted Mike Smith’s resignation as Cabinet Secretary of Energy. Secretary Smith was recently confirmed by the United States Senate as Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy. On March 5, Governor Keating appointed Robert J. Sullivan, Jr. to succeed Mike Smith.

If you have an agency newsletter, please put us on your mailing list. We’d like to know what’s happening in your agency! And, thanks to all who have already done so!

Benchmarking, continued from page 8

- positive outcomes, including customer satisfaction or some type of definitive positive impact;
- 4. Innovative;
- 5. Replicable, portable and/or transferable to other organizations with (or without) modifications. Should also add value by improving service, quality, and/or productivity;
- 6. Meaningful to users of the benchmarking project data.

The following topics have been identified for future studies:

- Workforce planning
- Performance management
- Organizational effectiveness and HR development
- Employee relations
- Total compensation and classification.

What is Workforce Planning?

“Workforce planning is the strategic alignment of an organization’s human capital with its business direction. It is a methodical process of analyzing the current workforce, identifying future workforce needs, identifying the gap between the present and the future, and implementing solutions so the organization can accomplish its mission, goals, and objectives.”

“IPMA Workforce Planning Guide for Public Sector Human Resource Professionals”

David A. Dye, Co-Chair

Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., Co-Chair

IPMA Workforce Planning Task Force

Guide prepared in partnership with Cooperative Personnel Services (CPS)

Human Resources Services

and will be published Spring 2002.

FYI

On February 11, the Legislature passed Senate Concurrent Resolution 51, which provides that the 2nd Session of the 48th Oklahoma Legislature will adjourn sine die on Friday, May 24, 2002. The Oklahoma Constitution requires that the legislative session be finally adjourned sine die not later than the last Friday in May, which this year is May 31, the Friday following Memorial Day.

User-Agency Feedback Sessions Prove Productive

Cynthia Clegg and Hank Batty, OPM

OPM has hosted two “User-Agency Feedback Sessions” to seek input from HR practitioners in Merit System agencies on specific issues related to the effective operation of the state’s personnel system. OPM intends to involve every Merit System agency in at least one feedback session over the next 12 months.

On October 2, 2001, OPM met with a group of agency representatives to discuss the current rules and procedures established for pay movement mechanisms. Based on the comments received at that meeting, on November 1, 2001, OPM implemented a change in the way skill-based pay and sign-on bonuses are processed. In addition, OPM is taking the following actions:

pensation strategies used by state agency HR staff. OPM plans to publish a “best practices” guide by the end of 2002.

Participants in the October “User-Agency Feedback Session” on compensation included R.J. Barrett, Department of Corrections; Gary Sloup, Department of Transportation; James L. Howard, Merit Protection Commission; Al Smith and David Peugh, Department of Human Services; Eddie Rodriguez, Department of Rehabilitation Services; Christine Jolly, Corporation Commission; and Susan McClure, Department of Veterans Affairs.

On February 22, OPM staff hosted a “User-Agency Feedback Session” on recruitment-related issues and strategies for im-



On February 28, OPM hosted another User-Agency Feedback Session on compensation. In addition to James L. Howard, Executive Director of the Merit Protection Commission, who is pictured above (left) with Diane Haser-Bennett, OPM Assistant Administrator for Management Services, and Tom Patt, OPM Compensation Director, attendees included R.J. Barrett and Spencer Anthony, Department of Corrections; Gary Sloup, Department of Transportation; Al Smith and David Peugh, Department of Human Services; Eddie Rodriguez, Department of Rehabilitation Services; and Christine Jolly, Corporation Commission.

Salary Administration Plans: OPM is planning to offer workshops in June 2002 on developing salary administration plans (SAPs). Currently, we are negotiating with *WorldatWork* (formerly, American Compensation Association) to offer seminars in Oklahoma City. Agencies were surveyed to determine which seminars and seminar modules were preferred.

Best Practice Guide Development: OPM Team members are reviewing SAPs for the purpose of compiling a list of the best com-

proving the state’s ability to attract qualified candidates. The meeting provided agency representatives the opportunity to share their thoughts on a variety of subjects, including suggestions for streamlining OPM processes, coordination of agency and OPM recruitment initiatives, and innovative approaches to attracting more qualified applicants, particularly those from “Generations X and Y” into state government.

Continued on page 16

Resolution Creates Interim Homeland Security Office

From the Office of Governor Frank Keating

Governor Frank Keating signed Senate Joint Resolution 42 on February 21, creating an interim Office of Oklahoma Homeland Security and announced that Public Safety Commissioner Bob Ricks will serve as director on a temporary basis until December 31st or until the Legislature creates a permanent office. Ricks is a member of the Governor’s Security and Preparedness Executive Panel that has been meeting regularly since the September 11th terrorist attacks. The Governor also signed an executive order naming Ricks as the new chairman of the Security and Preparedness Executive Panel replacing Howard Barnett. Barnett, the Governor’s Chief of Staff, was recently named Co-Chair of the Citizen and Legislative Task Force on Tax Reform.

“September 11th exposed America to the very real threat of terrorism and forced state leaders all across the country to take a hard look at security issues in their individual states, and that’s exactly what SJR 42 will enable Oklahoma to do,” the Governor said. “Commissioner Ricks will work closely with local, county, and state law enforcement agencies in addition to the U.S. Homeland Security office in order to ensure that Oklahoma is prepared for any type of terrorism threat. Bob Ricks is a skilled, experienced law enforcement professional and I have complete confidence in his abilities to handle the responsibility associated with this position.”

**Future
User-Agency
Feedback Sessions**

**March 22
Classification**

**April 26
Assessment & Certification**

**May 24
Workforce Planning**

**July 26
Agency Services Unit**

Among those attending the recruitment session from Merit System agencies were: Linda Parrish, Department of Corrections; Kathy Runyan, Department of Central Services; Ed Sweeney, Department of Human Services; Cherry Williams, Department of Agriculture; Tina Kershner, Department of Rehabilitation Services; and Denise Edwards, Department of Labor.


Information concerning the next Mentor Executive selection process will be disseminated to state agencies in Spring 2002. Keep an eye on the OPM website (www.opm.state.ok.us) for further details.

Diversity, continued from page 8

Lamb, Chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Latin-American and Hispanic Affairs; and Dr. Brett Sharp, Assistant Professor and Advisor for the Public Administration Program at the University of Central Oklahoma. Mr. William Franklin, EEO/AAP consultant to OPM, attended both sessions.

"All over the western hemisphere, the lack of hands and heads will increasingly demand managers who realize the importance of diversity as a management tool," Mr. Olsen commented during his visit to OPM. "This also means new ways of working together between public and private sectors—partnering, joint ventures, etc. This is one of the reasons I chose diversity management as the subject of my master's project."

In addition to visiting OPM, Mr. Olsen arranged meetings with the State of Washington, the City of St. Petersburg, Florida, members of the United Nations organization in New York, and IPMA Executive Director Neil Reichenberg in Alexandria, Virginia.

Desk of Administrator, continued from page 2

Oklahoma's state government workforce reflects the diversity of its citizenry.

Human Resources Excellence

We offer leadership in service to the Human Resources professional community through our ongoing efforts to discover, implement, and share best practices. We are experts in the field of HR Management and share our expertise with each other and with our partners throughout state service, and both the public and private sectors. We empower each other to achieve.

Innovation

We seek innovative solutions to human resources issues. We actively encourage creative approaches to human resources management. We are willing to experiment and take risks.

Partnering for Results

We create mutually-beneficial partnerships and work with our external and internal customers on an equal basis toward common goals, recognizing the obligations we have to one another.

An excellent example of our continuing dedication to assist state agencies in achieving their individual missions is in our commitment to making the Agency Services Unit (ASU) a "one-stop-shop" for state agencies that do not employ a full-time HR professional. The HR directors of smaller agencies "wear many different hats," including HR, payroll, benefits, training, safety, appeals, grievances, etc., and must be fully competent in all these areas. By adding a

payroll and transactions component to the ASU, we will be able to provide a higher level of service to these agencies.

The passage of the Oklahoma Personnel Act in 1982 also ushered in an era during which the concepts of fairness and equity in state government employment were extended beyond the boundaries of the Merit System. For example, Senate Bill 339 contained provisions applicable to all branches of state government, including the prohibition against employment discrimination because of political opinion or affiliation, and the prohibition against retaliation for "whistleblowing".

In 2002, we continue to pursue initiatives that reach beyond the Merit System for the good of state government. This session Senator Kelly Haney (D-Seminole) has introduced Senate Bill 1222, which sets up a content grade/pay grade structure for state agency director salaries similar to the structure currently in place for classified employees. This is in response to the results of a study conducted by the HayGroup pursuant to Senate Bill 224 (2001), which required OPM to conduct a study of all agency director salaries to determine the market rate of pay for the services being performed by these directors.

During the course of their study, the HayGroup concluded that state agency director positions with similar job content have significant pay differences, and agency

Continued on page 17



In August 1981, OPM Team members (l to r) Renee Phillips, Niki Powell, Mary Taylor, and Brenda Tyler observe the printing of the first OK-CAREERS certificate, which was issued to the Department of Transportation.

Desk of Administrator, continued from page 16

director positions with significantly different job content receive similar pay. They also determined that the state of Oklahoma has neither identified a comparator market for agency directors nor a level in the market where these positions should be paid.

The HayGroup also discovered that while the state of Oklahoma's current salary practice appears to be competitive with the Central and Southeastern States at the small-medium size agency director level, it trails the average practice for comparator state groups (those with similar socio-economic and population indicators) at the medium-large size agency director levels. And, when compared to Hay's Oklahoma market for similar job content (private, not-for-profit, and public sector employers), the current agency director practice trails the in-state median practice by amounts that vary from 50 percent – 130 percent, which is significant because the vast majority of agency director appointments are made from within Oklahoma.

In 1984, the Legislature continued to build on the progressive initiatives embodied in the Oklahoma Personnel Act by passing the first Oklahoma law requiring state agencies to prepare affirmative action plans. It also required OPM to produce an annual report of the progress made by governmental entities in the area of affirmative action, including the status of the recruitment of women, men, and minorities within job categories.

This legislation was followed by passage of the Fair Employment Practices Act several years later, and OPM subsequently established the Targeted Recruitment program. This program continues to help state agencies locate and place qualified minority and female employees where special efforts are needed to correct imbalances in the workforce.

In 2002, we have continued our commitment to affirmative action and equal employment opportunity by establishing the office of Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity within OPM. The purpose of this division is to focus on the continuing changes in the state government workforce related to diversity and to come up with strategies for better managing those changes.

Separate legislation in 1982 provided major advancements in establishing a comprehensive compensation program for all state employees. A longevity payment program which rewarded employees for two or more years of service with the state also was implemented. Dental insurance was added to the state employees' health plan.

When OPM issued the first comprehensive benefits statements to state employees in the 1980s, they were enthusiastically received by state officers and employees in all branches of state government. The State Employees Flexible Benefits Act was created to provide state employees with cafeteria-style benefits programs to meet the diverse needs of the state's workforce. This program eventually grew so large that the Employees Benefits Council was created to manage it.

Continued on page 18

Kudos!
to
Greg Thomas
Office of Personnel
Management
who has fulfilled all of the
criteria to receive his
designation as an
International Personnel
Management Association
Certified Specialist and is
entitled to use the
designation IPMA-CS.



The first OPM Advisory Group meeting was held on January 22. The role of this group is to provide guidance and customer feedback regarding ongoing OPM initiatives, and to identify, monitor, examine, draft, and recommend HR policies that respond to the needs of the state workforce and to legislative and other regulatory actions. The group also will be asked to examine the impact of policies and practices, to share and discuss current and projected issues, and to consider opportunities for cooperation across state service. In addition to the agency HR directors pictured above, Amos Moses, Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department; Cherry Williams, Department of Agriculture; and Gary Wilson, Oklahoma Tax Commission; others in attendance included Diane Biard-Holmes, Department of Health; Debbie Boyer, Department of Corrections; Diana Byrd, Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System; Susan Emerson, Department of Environmental Quality; Charlotte Goebel, Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation; Linda Hall, Department of Education; Johnetta Harris, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services; Susan McClure, Department of Veterans Affairs; Debbie McCowan, Commission on Children and Youth; LaRonda Molina, Department of Commerce; Tom Rickner, Grand River Dam Authority; Jeanie Robards, Department of Central Services; Eddie Rodriguez, Department of Rehabilitation Services; Al Smith, Department of Human Services; R. Charles Smith, Department of Health; and Katie Splawn, Oklahoma Employment Security Commission.

In 2002, fringe benefits continue to be a major component of state employee total compensation. According to OPM's *FY 2002 Annual Compensation Report*, the State of Oklahoma's fringe benefit costs are 6.1 percent lower than those of its competitor market, a result that does not quantify the value relationship of the state's benefits to the market, but merely compares benefit expenditures. This year's Report departs from previous methodology by comparing direct pay and fringe benefit costs, independent of each other, with the market rather than combining the two forms of compensation into a "total compensation" value comparison. This change was made because of the multitude of factors, cited in the Report, that make benefit costs an inappropriate measure of value for market comparison purposes.

As you thumb through the pages of this issue of the *HR Exchange*, which I am proud to say is in its fifth year of publication, you will read about other initiatives

F.Y.I.

OPM Department/Division Name Changes:

The Financial Management Services Department has merged with the Administrative Services Department to become the Financial Management and Administrative Services Department.

The Employment Relations Services Department is now the Office of Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity.

The Management Information Services Department is now the Information Technology Services Department.

The Recruitment Division is now the Applicant Services Division.

The Special Projects Department is now the Office of Communications.



During Spring 1983, OPM Team members formed committees to review and rewrite the Merit Rules to implement the Oklahoma Personnel Act. Pictured above are members of one such committee: Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary for Human Resources (left), was Director of Human Resource Development for OPM; former OPM Team member Steve Loux, Director of Compensation for the State of New Mexico (center) was Assistant Director of OPM's Classification Division; and Hank Batty, OPM Assistant Administrator for Employee Selection Services (right), was Assistant Director of Recruitment.

the OPM Team is pursuing—*CORE Oklahoma*, Workforce Planning, OPM Advisory Committees and other focus groups, etc. And, despite the fact that, as someone once observed, "we live in a moment of history where change is so speeded up that we begin to see the present only when it is already disappearing," we will continue to make progress toward change, ever cognizant of

the purpose of the Oklahoma Personnel Act, upon which our commitments continue to be built: "To protect the public from improper use of authority, to protect public officials and employees from unwarranted assaults on their integrity, and to enforce the protections for classified employees and citizens under the Merit System of Personnel Administration."

Quality Oklahoma Team Day 2002

Thursday, May 9th—State Capitol



Application Deadline—April 1, 2002

Please nominate teams from your agency that have produced innovative cost-saving, revenue-generating, or service improvement projects for the State of Oklahoma.

*Applications are available on-line at:
www.opm.state.ok.us/html/hr_hrds_quality.htm*

For more information, contact

Joyce Smith, OPM Quality Oklahoma Coordinator, at (405) 521-4539