

HR Exchange

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

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July 2002

Revamped Agency Services Unit Offers "One-Stop" Service

Karen Luman, OPM

OPM's Agency Services Unit (ASU) was created by the Legislature in 1994 to assist agencies with their HR needs based upon the administrative capacity and resources of the various agencies. The ASU became fully operational in December 1995.

The first task of the ASU staff was to identify "agencies with limited resources" as those which are small in size (fewer than 100 employees), and which do not employ a full-time HR professional. Approximately 65 state agencies were identified as potential customers for the ASU staff of two full-time employees.

And, now the ASU is even more "user-friendly." 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. Since May 1, 2002, the ASU has included a payroll and transactions component with the result that it truly has become a "one-stop-shop" for those agencies with "limited resources" which it serves.

Karen Luman supervises the ASU; Kim Gomez, Sharon Dossey, and Sonja Harkey are responsible for payroll issues; and Leann Morrow, Gloria Schratwieser, and Delois Webb are responsible for personnel transactions. These teams will cross-train to ensure that all the HR needs of the ASU's customers are addressed consistently and in a timely manner. Whether members of the ASU Team function as consultants, mentors, or coaches, they are committed to establishing professional partner relationships with their customers.



Members of the OPM Agency Services Unit include (standing, l to r) Kim Gomez, Sonja Harkey, Gloria Schratwieser, Delois Webb, Sharon Dossey, (seated, l to r) Karen Luman, and Leann Morrow.

Permanent Merit Rule Amendments Effective July 1, 2002

Kimberlee Williams, OPM

Recent permanent amendments to the Merit Rules made important changes to several aspects of the Merit System hiring process. An amendment to Merit Rule 530:10-9-52 authorizes agencies to contact applicants by e-mail. E-mail addresses, when available, are now provided on certificates. Failure of an applicant to respond to an e-mail within 72 hours may result in the applicant being removed from the register. An amendment to 530:10-9-74 expands the concept of selective qualifications

to include competency in a non-English language. Merit Rule 530:10-9-76 has been amended to allow the OPM Administrator to consider written requests from agencies to extend the life of a certificate for 60 days (rather than 30 days, as previously allowed).

Other important changes include:

- Amendments to 530:10-1-2 to add definitions of the terms "break in service" and "hiring range."

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From the Desk of the Administrator



OPM and DOC Sign “Direct Hire” Agreement for Medical Professionals

Hank Batty, OPM

On May 14, 2002, OPM and the Department of Corrections concluded a professional practice licensure “Direct Hire” agreement for registered nurses and licensed practical nurses.

Title 74, Section 840-4.13(C) establishes the authority for agreements for direct hire of professional practice licensure and hard-to-fill positions. Specific guidelines for obtaining direct hire authority may be found in OAC 530:10-11. Agencies who have direct hire authority may hire qualified new employees in specified job families without obtaining their names from certificates of eligibles issued by OPM.

The DOC agreement will permit field HR staff and Health Services Administrators to hire qualified nurses with minimal delay. OPM staff will conduct a post audit of all appointments to ensure selected applicants possess the minimum qualifications required.

Pauletta Jones, DOC Recruitment and Retention Coordinator, noted, “This agreement should increase DOC’s ability to respond quickly to staffing needs in a very crucial area. The shortage of professional nurses nationwide has made recruitment especially challenging. We want to ensure that qualified and interested candidates may be hired quickly.”

“Making A Difference”

In late June I acknowledged the planned August 1, 2002, retirement of Joe Davenport, who has served Oklahoma state government for nearly 33 years. Joe’s state service career began with the State Personnel Board (now the Office of Personnel Management) in 1969 as a Classification/Examination Analyst in Training, and he will retire as Director of OPM’s Personnel Assessment Division. Joe reminded me that he has worked for four Administrators (Wallace Keating, Keith Frosco, James C. Thomas, and Oscar B. Jackson, Jr.) and during the administrations of seven Governors (Dewey Bartlett, David Hall, David Boren, George Nigh, Henry Bellmon, David Walters, and Frank Keating). As proud as Joe Davenport is of his longevity, he is equally proud that he made a difference during his career in serving the people of Oklahoma and in the lives of young professionals considering public service careers.

As I reflect on my state service career and the past 11 years with the Office of Personnel Management, as well as the 20th anniversary of the Oklahoma Personnel Act, the Office of Personnel Management, and the Merit Protection Commission, I am very proud that I have had an opportunity to work with a number of “Joe Davenports”, who made a difference while working at the Office of Personnel Management:

- James C. Thomas (former OPM Administrator and now head of the University of Oklahoma’s SATTRN Project),
- Jim Lang (former Deputy Administrator),
- Marty Irwin (former Associate Administrator),
- James L. Howard (former Director of Management Services and now Executive Director of the Merit Protection Commission),
- Jim Hazeldine (former Deputy Administrator and now Executive Assistant to the Oklahoma Transportation Commission),



- Jim Tanner (former Deputy Administrator),
- Jim Lippert (former Assistant Administrator),
- Spencer Anthony (former Director of Compensation and Workforce Planning and now a Senior Compensation Analyst for the Department of Corrections),
- Tom Menasco (former Assistant Administrator),
- Jeff Feuquay (former Assistant Administrator),
- Nancy Nunnally (former Certified Public Manager Coordinator),
- Paula Land (former *Quality Oklahoma* Coordinator and currently a Human Resources Programs Manager for the Department of Rehabilitation Services),

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Hank Batty, OPM Assistant Administrator for Employee Selection Services, responds to a question during the hearing on proposed amendments to the Merit Rules held March 8 at the Concourse Theater.

- Moving the rule on “detail to special duty” from Subchapter 5 to Subchapter 11. The new rule number is 530:10-11-110.
- An amendment to 530:10-5-51 requiring agencies to forward an employee’s request for review of an agency’s job family level assignment within seven calendar days of receipt of the request.
- Amendments to 530:10-7-1.2 to remove certain reporting requirements for pay movement mechanisms, as OPM has the capability to retrieve the information from its computer systems.
- An amendment to 530:10-7-6, remov-

ing the requirement that sign-on pay incentives be paid during the week of the eligible individual’s enter-on-duty date.

- Amendments to 530:10-7-24 to clarify the rule’s provisions and to place a limit on “stacking” of multiple skill-based pay differentials.
- An amendment to 530:10-11-51 to no longer require promotional posting of reallocated, non-supervisory positions.
- A clarification to the rule on holidays, 530:10-15-43, regarding the rate at which holidays are to be paid when the holiday is paid at a later date.
- An amendment to 530:10-15-45 clarifying that agencies have discretion to allow intermittent leave to care for a newborn child or newly-placed adopted or foster child, as part of the agency’s family and medical leave policy.

Other permanent amendments were made to clarify the rules and remove unnecessary language. All of the above-mentioned permanent amendments became effective July 1, 2002. The Merit Protection Commission has also adopted Merit Rules that became effective July 1, 2002. Those rules are available on MPC’s Website at <http://www.okmpc.org/rules.htm>.

Emergency amendments to the Merit Rules currently in effect make the rules consistent with statutory changes made during the 2001 legislative session. Among the emergency amendments are Merit Rules 530:10-23-1 and 530:10-23-3, which establish an on-the-job employee performance recognition program.

Administrator, continued from page 2

- Marian Freeman (former Chief Financial Officer and Associate Administrator),
- Jerry Starr (former Chief Financial Officer and currently Assistant Director for Administration for the Department of Tourism and Recreation),
- Janice Wadkins (former Assistant Administrator),
- Kenneth Williams (former OPM State Employee Assistance Program Coordinator),
- Freda Davis (former Executive Assistant),
- Lena Davis (former Executive Assistant

and now an Administrative Programs Officer at the Oklahoma Department of Transportation),

- Mary Riley (former Business Manager), and many, many more outstanding professionals.

So, this year, as we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Oklahoma Personnel Act, and the creation of the Office of Personnel Management and the Merit Protection Commission, we wish Joe Davenport well upon his retirement, and we acknowledge the outstanding contributions of so many other fine professionals, who invested their time, talents, and energy on behalf of the people of the state of Oklahoma.

All currently-effective Merit Rules (permanent and emergency) adopted by the OPM Administrator are available on OPM’s Website at http://www.opm.state.ok.us/html/hr_policy_rules_rule.htm. If you have questions regarding rules adopted by OPM, please contact Kimberlee Williams at (405) 522-1736 or kimberlee.williams@opm.state.ok.us.



Jobnetta Harris, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, questions OPM staff on a proposed Merit Rule amendment during the March 8 hearing.



From the Oklahoma Department of Commerce
February 28, 2002

On February 28, the Oklahoma Department of Commerce along with Governor Frank Keating unveiled a new sustainable business image campaign for the State of Oklahoma. The campaign was born out of the need to spotlight the positive aspects of the state and the achievements of its citizens.

The Department of Commerce embarked on an extensive research project over a year ago in order to accurately assess the image of the state. Deputy Director of the Office of Business Location John Reid stated, “We began by utilizing opinion research through a series of executive roundtable discussions. Hundreds of individuals representing a variety of corporate and economic interest groups partici-

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Direct Hire, continued from page 2

According to Kimberlee Williams, OPM's Chief Policy Attorney, the agreement is the third direct hire agreement aimed primarily at medical licensed professionals, following earlier agreements with the Department of Human Services and the Oklahoma State Department of Health.

If you have questions about direct hire authority, please contact Hank Batty, Assistant Administrator for Employee Selection Services, at (405) 521-6333, or by e-mail at hank.batty@opm.state.ok.us.



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pated in the research study. Findings from the research that pertained to business attraction, development and growth in the State of Oklahoma were used to create the campaign.”

Reid also said the agency seeks to position the State of Oklahoma as a sound and viable national competitor for corporate relocations, expansions and business startups. “We realized we needed a sustainable brand image for the State of Oklahoma among business leaders and corporate relocation consultants. We intend to incorporate every venue we can—print, outdoor advertising, radio, television and the web, to spotlight Oklahomans who have discovered the American Dream right here at home.”

Keating said the “Believing in the American Dream” campaign is designed to demonstrate that Oklahoma is a great place to live and work, to grow a family or grow a business. “It is time to replace the outdated images about Oklahoma. This campaign is all about identifying our best attributes, establishing our state as a world-class brand and sharing the true, modern Oklahoma with the world,” said Governor Keating.

Russell Perry, the Governor's Special Assistant for Economic Development, said, “Improving Oklahoma's reputation starts in Oklahoma. In this campaign we plan to work with local communities, citizens and our economic development allies around the state to share the many reasons we have to be proud of Oklahoma. Improving our reputation starts with each one of us, and it is our hope that every citizen will become an Oklahoma ambassador.”

USDOL Call Center Provides Nationwide Assistance

From the USDOL Website (www.dol.gov)

The Department of Labor National Call Center provides workers and employers a way to get consistent, accurate information and assistance. The Call Center provides nationwide toll-free assistance to its customers with questions about job loss, business closures, pay and leave, workplace safety and health, pension and health benefits, and workplace injuries. In addition to providing general information, the Call Center will relay any specific inquiry to the proper office without delay.

Numbers

Main Call Center Number	1-866-4-USA-DOL
Employment & Training Questions	1-877-US-2JOBS
Wage & Hour Questions	1-866-4-US-WAGE
Workplace Safety & Health Questions	1-800-321-OSHA
Energy Employees' Compensation Questions	1-866-888-3322
Federal Employees' Compensation Questions	1-866-999-3322
TTY Number for all Department of Labor Questions	1-877-889-5627

Congratulations!

Since July 1996, OPM has conducted 13 four-day training sessions for Certified Personnel Professionals—employees assigned to professional HR positions in the executive branch of state government. Not only are these individuals required to attend these sessions, they must successfully complete an examination to attain certification as an HR professional and a minimum of eight hours of training in professional HR administration each year in order to maintain certification.

The curriculum combines classroom sessions taught by a cadre of OPM and state agency “subject matter experts”, with one of the leading HR textbooks around today, *Human Resource Management*, by Robert L. Mathis, University of Nebraska at Omaha, and John H. Jackson, University of Wyoming.

The most recent CPP course was held April 9 - 12. Thirty-six agency representatives attended the four-day training. The following individuals successfully completed the CPP exam and have received the designation, “Certified Personnel Professionals”:

Barry Breckle
Office of Personnel Management

Marilyn Capps
Office of Personnel Management

Jerry Coleman
Merit Protection Commission

Jamie Culp
Office of Personnel Management

Debra Dickson
State Department of Health

Christa Elmore
CompSource Oklahoma

Melvin L. Fearrington
Merit Protection Commission

Harry Gentry
Office of Personnel Management

Laraine German
Office of Personnel Management

Rochelle Ingram
Oklahoma Employment Security Commission

Brenda Jeffries
Department of Human Services

R. Elaine Kimbrough
State Department of Education

Paula Land
Department of Rehabilitation Services

Suzie Marta
Office of Personnel Management

LaRonda Molina
Department of Commerce

Bonnie Morris
Horse Racing Commission

Robbin Parrish
CompSource Oklahoma

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Millwood Middle School Principal Nathan McGuire; HOSTS Director Noma Nelson; HOSTS Teacher's Assistant Katherine Ford; and Millwood Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Gloria Griffith.

Each semester OPM participates in the "State employees Having an Active Role in Education (SHARE) Program", a mentoring program partnering OPM employees with students at Millwood Middle School. On April 26, students in Millwood's Help One Student To Succeed (HOSTS) Program performed for Millwood students and faculty, friends and family members, and OPM mentors. During the program, HOSTS students (back row, l to r) DeAndra Ray, Ebony Pettis, Kedra Murria, Stacia Keith, Tiffanique Irvin, Christian Broussard, (front row, l to r) Alonzo Anderson, Katherine Lemons, Kayla Herron, David Blair, Chris Wrenn, Milliesia Hill, and Britney Lambert, recited "I, too, sing America," by Langston Hughes, and "The Road Not Taken," by Robert Frost.



F.Y.I.
For additional information concerning the SHARE Program, please contact Joyce Smith, OPM, at (405) 521-4539.

CPP, continued from page 4

- Tom Patt
Office of Personnel Management
- James Perez
Office of Personnel Management
- Eddie Rodriguez
Department of Rehabilitation Services
- Donna Simpson
State Department of Health
- Sharron Smoot
Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics
- Kimberlee Williams
Office of Personnel Management
- Randal Zotigh
Oklahoma Employment Security Commission



Eddie Rodriguez, Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS); James Perez, OPM; and Paula Land, DRS; debate HR issues during the April CPP training.

Dayna R. Petete, OPM Assistant Administrator for Communications and Legislative Liaison, is a CPP instructor.



The next CPP course is scheduled for October 1 - 4, 2002. Contact Hank Batty, OPM Assistant Administrator for Employee Selection Services, at (405) 521-6333, or hank.batty@opm.state.ok.us for details.

OPM Issues Second Annual PMM Report

Debra Martin-Barber, OPM

OPM recently completed the 2002 Pay Movement Mechanism Report, required by the Oklahoma Personnel Act. This report details the number of pay movement mechanisms used by state agencies and the costs associated with those actions. The Report also includes projected pay movement mechanism usage and costs for the balance of the fiscal year, based on data submitted by state agencies.

Pay movement mechanisms (PMMs) are pay authorizations that state agencies may use to increase employees' pay under certain circumstances. They include pay adjustments based upon promotion, career progression, lateral transfer, market, equity, skill acquisition, and performance. Agencies received these authorizations in 1999, as part of classification and compensation reform.

The report reveals that 58 state agencies—51 of 67 Merit System and seven of 64 non-Merit System—used PMM actions during Calendar Year (CY) 01. Agencies implemented 5,616 PMM actions for classified and unclassified employees during this period—a decrease of nearly 5,000 from the previous year's total.

In spite of this decrease, the costs for CY 01 actually increased from the previous year by slightly over three quarters of a million dollars, with market adjustments increasing by 300 percent. Given the lower number of market adjustments effected in 2001, the increased costs suggest that agencies were targeting jobs that were significantly below the market in 2001.

The annualized cost projection for all PMM usage in 2002 is \$4,022,285—a decrease of nearly 36 percent from 2001 actual costs. This seems to indicate that agencies are being conservative in their projections based on current budget uncertainties.

OPM believes that, as agencies become increasingly familiar with the PMMs at their disposal, and assuming budgets do not drastically decline, usage of PMMs will steadily increase in the future.

Members of OPM State Employee Assistance Program PSRW Honorees



Robert Stevens, OPM State EAP Coordinator; Blanche Longoria, EAP Administrative Assistant; Governor Frank Keating; Deanna Miller, EAP Representative; Warren Thompson, EAP Representative; and Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources.

April 25, 2002

Dear Governor Keating:

I am extremely pleased and honored to designate the members of the "Office of Personnel Management State Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Team" as the recipients of a Governor's Commendation and to represent the Human Resources Cabinet Department during the May 8, 2002, Public Service Recognition Week Awards Ceremony. The members of this Team include Robert Stevens, State Coordinator; Warren Thompson, EAP Representative; Deanna Miller, EAP Representative; and Blanche Longoria, EAP Administrative Assistant.

The OPM State EAP, which is voluntary, provides assistance to state agencies in their management of employees whose personal problems may have a negative impact on job performance. The OPM State EAP also assists employees and their family members who are seeking corrective help with medical or mental health problems, including alcohol or drug abuse, and emotional, marital, familial, financial, or other personal problems.

In 1995, members of the OPM State EAP Team conducted special counseling sessions for hundreds of state employees who were directly affected by the April 19, 1995, bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. And, soon after the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York City, the EAP director for the New York City Fire Department contacted Wenona Impson, the president of the Oklahoma City Chapter of the Employee Assistance Program Association, asking for experienced counselors who could conduct critical incident stress debriefings for firefighters working at the World Trade Center site. In response, Ms. Impson contacted several EAP counselors in the Oklahoma City area, including members of the OPM State EAP—Robert Stevens, Warren Thompson, and Deanna Miller. All three traveled to New York City to lend a hand. During their absence, Blanche Longoria kept the "home fires burning" here in Oklahoma City, maintaining a critical link with the hundreds of state agencies and employees who rely on the services of the OPM State EAP.

Thank you for the opportunity to recognize this remarkable team.

Sincerely,

Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., Administrator
and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources



HR Director Spotlight

Charlotte Goebel

Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation

When I learned that 2002 was the 20th anniversary of the Oklahoma Personnel Act, like many of you reading this publication, I was surprised that this blueprint for Oklahoma state government personnel administration was so recent. It was a struggle for me to remember when we didn't have good ole Title 74, Section 840-yada-yada-yada. Then again, sometimes it's a struggle for me to remember where I put my car keys.

As I reflected on the 20 years of rules, policies, and programs this one piece of legislation gave birth to, I also began to reflect on the sometimes circuitous road that I took to be able to appreciate this notable milestone. And then I got really sentimental. Why? For me, reflecting over the years that I've spent working in or near HR units in a variety of state agencies, I invariably begin to recall the long list of interesting people I've encountered. After all, before we began to call ourselves "HR professionals", we were "Personnel Officers", with the emphasis on "person". In my nearly 29 years of state service, I've been privileged to know and work with persons of great character and to also know and work with some persons who were (and are) great characters! To serve with five different agencies in my career has given me the opportunity to work with a diverse cross-section of state employees. I've been fortunate to have observed many of my co-workers exhibit a tangible dedication to their work and compassion for the public they serve. Let me share some of these folks with you.

One such person who first comes to mind was the Director of Nursing Services at the J.D. McCarty Center when I joined the staff in 1984. As I was trying to make an impression by being very professional and efficient, I was not prepared for her question to me as we assessed the first applicant pool. I was ready with answers regarding nursing certification, background information, training received, and so forth,

but I was unprepared when she asked me if I thought the applicant was kind. "Kind?" I thought. "Kind of what? Kind of hairy? Kind of goofy?" Before I could open my mouth and confirm my stupidity, she smiled and explained that the first quality she wanted in nursing staff members was a sense of kindness, a caring attitude that would translate to the gentle and tranquil nursing care she felt was paramount to provide to developmentally disabled children. Thanks, Beth Sudduth, for being the type of state employee I'm proud to have known.

Don't think, however, that the McCarty Center was some uneventful, peaceful utopia. Sometimes we were just downright raucous. The first week I worked there, two Physical Therapists came racing *down* the hallway, and a couple of seconds later, our Deputy Director came racing *up* the hallway closely followed by the Therapists. Was it an emergency? Was a child in distress somewhere? No, the Therapists were simply trying to pick up the Deputy Director and toss him in the therapeutic swimming pool. Which they did after a short footrace . . . clothes and all.

The Oklahoma Military Department brought me in contact with another memorable group of people I've enjoyed knowing and working with. When I began my state career in 1973 with the Oklahoma Military Department in Enid, OK, I enjoyed the camaraderie of veterans from World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Their inherent courage and fortitude was quickly displayed for me when just 43 days after I started work (at a *very* young age, I might add) Enid experienced what was called a "thousand-year rain." We received 10 inches of rain in an hour, and nearly half of Enid was underwater. In some areas of town, the water was roaring through natural canyons, carrying semi-trailers, houses, cars, trucks, and all manner of things in riv-



ers 14-15 feet deep. If my memory serves me correctly, we lost 11 lives in that storm, and the National Guard was activated to serve as search and recovery and as security for flooded housing additions. Trekking through creek beds where the water had slowly receded, these selfless, tireless individuals found victim after victim in a grim situation that went on for over two weeks before the final victim was recovered. They slept on cots in the armory for three or four hours at a time and survived on peanut butter sandwiches that played havoc with their systems, but they never complained. That is, until it came time to receive tetanus shots due to their exposure on their recovery patrols—these stalwart individuals began to walk backwards, stammer, and break out in a cold sweat at the sight of a thin, small needle. Then, they again bravely stepped forward and accepted the vaccination. Thanks, Lonnie Bray, Ivan Page, Charlie Frazier, Sue Schiermeyer, and all the others who made OMD a special place to work.

Oh, and did I mention the character at the Military Department who was interviewing me for a position when I was transferring from Enid to Oklahoma City? He

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Goebel, continued from page 7

was being especially considerate and was attempting to pay me a compliment. He told me he was pleased to have me as an applicant, and that “even a blind hog will root up a tater now and again.” I wasn’t sure if I was the hog or the tater in his scenario, but I appreciated his sentiment. Thanks, Jody McClain, for having been a genuine down-to-earth Okie.

Now I come to a great group of people who make up the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department (OTRD). It was this employment that caused me to realize that I’d reached a certain maturity (ah-hem) in my career. Here, I encountered Jim Thomas serving as OTRD Director after I’d first known him as OPM’s Administrator 12 years before. As they say at Disneyland, it’s a small world after all.

While at OTRD, I was employed as a Training Specialist and helped deliver *Quality Oklahoma* training in its early days. We got to meet almost every single employee of the over 700 who were employed at OTRD in 1993 - 1994. And, each one exhibited the type of cordiality and hospitality you’d expect from state employees who are Oklahoma’s front line to visitors to our state. They were working on a shoestring budget, and their entire focus was in making their facility the best it could be. All OTRD employees can be proud of what they have done over the past decade of rising operations costs and dwindling revenues. So, go out and visit one of our parks, golf courses, or resorts and spend some

time with some great Oklahomans. And, thanks, Thad Johnson and Ellen King, for giving me the support and confidence to try a diversion from HR administration.

For a brief time, I was privileged to work with the Department of Rehabilitation Services. This may have been the shortest stop in my career, but it was equally rewarding. The agency had been separated from DHS for about a year when I transferred to them, and they were still getting used to life outside the DHS structure. They remained dedicated professionals, and observing them accomplish their mission was gratifying, knowing I’d played a minor support role. Thanks to all of you at DRS who made me feel a part of your team, if only for a short while.

At last, I’ve arrived at my final destination . . . the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation. I joined the Bureau in late 1995, and it has proven to be the absolute perfect place for me to round out my career in state government. To try to keep up with the dedicated and motivated employees of the OSBI, I think I’ve worked harder in these past seven years than I thought I could. In my little corner of the OSBI world, I enjoy the company of an excellent group of individuals in the Human Resources and Training Section. We join with the Fiscal Operations Section and the Contracting & Acquisitions Section to form the Administrative Services Division, providing the infrastructure for the agency’s workforce. Words cannot express the gratitude I have for the tire-

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CPM Grad New State Agency Head

Carrie Robr, OPM

On June 4, the Environmental Quality Board announced that Steve Thompson has been appointed Executive Director of the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), effective July 1, 2002. Mr. Thompson succeeds Mark Coleman, who is retiring.

Steve Thompson is a 1970 graduate of the University of Oklahoma. He held management positions with Westinghouse Corporation and Calumet Industries, Inc. before entering public service. Since joining state government, Mr. Thompson has served as Section Supervisor for the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Section and Director of the Oklahoma Department of Pollution Control. In August 1993, Mr. Thompson was named DEQ Deputy Executive Director.



In addition, Mr. Thompson graduated from the state’s Certified Public Manager Program (CPM) in 1990. CPM is a comprehensive management-training program for state government employees. He joins a distinguished list of graduates who also are state agency directors: Betty Moore, Cosmetology Board; Jean Williams, Architects Board; Linda Campbell, Dental Board; and Anne Woody, Real Estate Commission. Mary Ann Pritchard, Director of the Department of Mines, is a CPM candidate.

Twenty-one state agencies participated in the second annual State Government Job Fair, held April 23 at Shepherd Mall. Denise Harkins and Jamie Fannin represented the Department of Environmental Quality.



OPM Deputy Administrator Newest Toll Fellow

Dayna Petete, OPM

Cynthia B. Clegg, OPM's Deputy Administrator for Programs, is one of 40 emerging state leaders from across the nation selected for the prestigious Toll Fellowship Program sponsored by The Council of State Governments (CSG).

The annual program, which is scheduled for September 28 – October 3, in Lexington, Kentucky, is named in honor of Henry Toll, a Colorado senator who founded CSG in 1933. The Program is aimed at developing the next generation of leaders from all three branches of state government. This year's dynamic program focuses on trends, critical thinking, professional growth and development, and becoming a better leader in times of term limits. The experience gives these leaders perspectives they would not ordinarily obtain during the course of their regular governmental service.

Ms. Clegg was nominated by Oklahoma Governor Frank Keating with endorsements from Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources, and state Senator Angela Monson. Ms. Clegg was selected from many outstanding applicants by a committee of state elected and appointed officials as one of the most promising leaders of state government. The Toll Fellowship alumni list of graduates is growing long and distinguished, and includes several sitting governors and members of Congress.

As Deputy Administrator for Programs, Ms. Clegg reports directly to the OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources, and is administratively responsible for the following OPM Departments: Employee Selection Services (Personnel Assessment and Applicant Services), Office of Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity, Employee Assistance Program, Human Resource Development Services, Information Technology Services, and Management Services (Classification and Compensation).

Before joining the OPM staff in June 2001, Ms. Clegg served as Associate Superintendent for Organizational Development



Cynthia B. Clegg

for the Kansas City, Missouri School District (October 1999 - April 2001). In addition to having worked for the Oklahoma State Personnel Board (now OPM) and the Oklahoma Corporation Commission, she served as Oklahoma Department of Human Services Division Administrator for the Human Resources Management Division from June 1991 to October 1999, and Deputy Executive Director for the Oklahoma Merit Protection Commission from 1983 to 1991.

Previous Oklahoma Toll Fellowship Program participants include State Budget Director Rollo Redburn, District Judge Niles Jackson, former state Representative Laura Boyd, state Representative Jari Askins, Deputy Secretary of State Dawn Amundsen, and OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources Oscar B. Jackson, Jr.

With regional offices in Atlanta, Chicago, New York, and Sacramento, and a Washington, DC office, CSG is a national nonpartisan, nonprofit public service organization. CSG serves 50 states and five United States territories and commonwealths. CSG serves as a catalyst for state leadership, building new partnerships within government and among governing entities, promoting multi-state and regional cooperative ventures and establishing vital links with the private sector and other civic leaders.

Goebel, continued from page 8

less dedication of my co-workers. Thank you, Phyllis Decker, Joyce Sturdefant, ShaVonne LaFayette, Anne Simons, Felicia Jackson, and Kim Edwards, for your daily commitment to keep the OSBI's HR/Training ship afloat. And, a big thanks to my boss, Glenda Fogleman, for being the safety net I've needed countless times.

There have been so many other people who have been a part of my career over these past 29 years that I couldn't possibly mention all of them and describe the support or assistance they gave to me. You'd recognize many of the names because I'm sure you have probably also been helped by these same dedicated state employees who quietly go about their work every day. Employees at OPM and MPC have helped all of us at one time or another, and my experiences with them have been rewarding even when they had to call to tell me I'd made an error. (Don't you hate it when that happens?)

This reflection on my career puts me in mind of something Yogi Berra once said. "If you don't know where you are going, you will wind up somewhere else." I knew when I entered state service in 1973 that I would one day retire after having worked for agencies that had missions I could believe in and leadership and workforces that I respected. How about that! I knew where I was going, and I think I'm going to get there! Life's a journey, and I'm still enjoying the ride.

OPM Streamlines On-Line Process

Randy Peter, OPM

In the past, users of the Agency Payroll, State Personnel, and Benefits Systems have had to retype an employee's social security number (SSN) each time they switched applications, or anytime they left and re-entered an application. In keeping with efforts to streamline the integrated on-line HR System, OPM's Information Technology Services Department has developed a feature that will carry an employee's SSN from one application to another.

Now, as the user enters the employee's information into any of the three applications, the SSN is saved. When the user exits that application and enters another application, the saved SSN is automatically carried along.

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**
7/23/02—10:00 a.m.
11/19/02—11:30 a.m.
Location TBA

**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**
7/24/02—10:00 a.m.
*Office of Personnel Management
Conference Room G-91*
10/23/02—10:00 a.m.
Location TBA

**Governor's Advisory Council
on Asian-American Affairs**
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 & Hispanic Affairs**
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**
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
8/14/02, 11/13/02—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 March 2002

Compiled by Melissa Jolly, OPM

Department of Corrections

*James C. Colbert
Administrative Programs Officer II*

*Debbie Lane
HR Management Specialist I*

*Mark Lopez
HR Management Specialist I*

*Linda Witten
HR Management Specialist I*

State Fire Marshal's Office

*Donna Anderson
Secretary
Resigned*

*Ronald Wheat
State Fire Marshal Law Enforcement Agent III*

Department of Health

*Tamara Hodge
HR Management Specialist
Interagency transfer to OJA*

*Don Spears
Director of OSDH Benefits/Safety
Retired*

Department of Human Services

*Maria Eakers
HR Management Specialist II
Resigned*

*Gail George
Administrative Technician/HR Receptionist*

Office of Juvenile Affairs

*Tamara Hodge
HR Programs Manager II*

*Karen Luman
HR Programs Manager
Interagency transfer to OPM*

Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

*Jobnetta Harris
Director of Human Resources Management
Retired*

Office of Personnel Management

*Allie Brown
CAPIP Executive Fellow
HRDS
Resigned*

*Victoria Clarkson
HR Management Specialist II
Resigned*

*Greg Emerson
HR Programs Manager
Retired*

Laraine German

*HR Management Specialist II
Recruitment*

*Todd Haymore
IS Network Management Specialist
Resigned*

*Karen Luman
HR Programs Manager II
Management Services*

*Leann Morrow
HR Programs Manager I
Management Services*

*Sbarie Northington
Administrative Technician II
Applicant File Room
Management Services*

Department of Rehabilitation Services

*Linda Quinton
Human Resource Assistant*

Teachers' Retirement System

*New location:
Oliver Hodge Building, 5th Floor
2500 N. Lincoln Boulevard
Oklahoma City, OK 73105
Phone numbers will remain the same.*

34 Memos Since March 2002

02-29 (5/17/02)

Fiscal Year 2003 Fund and Account Codes

02-28 (5/16/02)

*Mandatory Supervisory Training Requirement
Report for 2001*

02-27 (4/24/02)

*Report on Reallocation Decisions, Adjustments to
Pay Grades, Salary Assignments, and New
Positions*

02-26 (4/19/02)

*Compensation Seminar for Public HR
Professionals*

02-25 (4/19/02)

*Emergency Amendments to Merit Rules of
Personnel Administration*

02-24 (4/18/02)

"Take Our Daughters To Work" Day

02-23 (4/17/02)

Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW)

02-22 (4/19/02)

*FY 2001 OPM Oklahoma State Government
EEO/Affirmative Action Status Report*

Continued on page 12

IPMA Member Featured in Workforce.com for Excellent Management Ability

Reprinted with permission of IPMA News

In a recent article published in Workforce.com, IPMA member Larry Fisher, Assistant Administrator for Human Resource Development Services at the Oklahoma Office of Personnel Management, was featured due to his excellent managerial skills. When IPMA received word of this, we wanted to bring the story home to IPMA News. In the process, we interviewed not only Larry, but also his supervisor, Oscar Jackson, Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources, to discover their recipes for good management. After all, it takes good bosses to create good bosses.

Our first question to Larry was, "How has your relationship with Oscar empowered you to develop good management?" In a word, Larry responded with, "Trust." He went on to say that, "From my point of view, that is the heart of our relationship. We may not agree on processes, or approaches to work problems or situations, but neither of us believes the other is being self-serving. We simply trust each other." As a matter of fact, Larry is so pleased with Oscar's management style that he went so far as to enter Oscar in the Awesome Boss Hall of Fame web site.

As for Oscar, good management was modeled to him when he accepted an HR position at the University of Oklahoma. "It was my good fortune to work with an individual who had a strong commitment to developing young HR professionals, Len Harper. The most lasting impact Len had on us was the importance of helping staff to learn and grow as HR professionals, and to make sure they were involved in HR professional organizations. This is probably the reason I value my involvement with the International Personnel Management Association." Oscar undoubtedly brought these qualities to the Oklahoma Office of Personnel Management, where good management seems to be infectious.

To summarize, management at the Oklahoma Office of Personnel Management has succeeded due to:

- Trust
- Commitment to Staff Development
- Encouraging Membership in Professional Organizations.

IPMA News is published by the International Personnel Management Association, 1617 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, (703) 549-7100.

IPMA represents over 1,700 public sector agencies and more than 6,000 individuals in human resource departments, civil service commissions, and merit system boards at the federal, state, and local levels of government. Members are primarily human resource professionals and managers in the public sector and educators in the fields of public and personnel administration. IPMA provides a focus and forum for the discussion and exchange of views among human resource professionals throughout the United States and abroad. For more information, log onto the IPMA Website at <http://www.ipma-br.org/>.

Assessment Centers: Not Just for Police and Fire Departments Anymore!

From the International Personnel Management Association

March 19, 2002

The majority of Assessment Centers in the public sector operate primarily to assist in making selection and promotion decisions for law enforcement and fire departments. However, many organizations are beginning to realize that Assessment Centers can also be valuable resources for career development, organizational development, and succession planning. For example, information for organizational development can be obtained from Assessment Centers by summarizing data retrieved across participants by dimension. And, by comparing the skill profiles of candidates to the skills required for future positions, succession planning is made easier.

To educate HR professionals on the many different uses of information retrieved from Assessment Centers, the HR Center at the International Personnel Management Association (IPMA) has recently released an informational guide entitled, *Assessment Center Trends*. The guide includes several sample policies to review and learn from, and addresses key issues such as:

- Effectively utilizing Assessment Center results.
- Variations and additions to the Assessment Center process.
- Variations to the structure of the Assessment Center process.
- Current trends in Assessment Center research.
- Guidelines and ethical considerations for Assessment Center operations.

With overview articles and tips by Dennis A. Joiner, IPMA-CP, a specialist in the use of Assessment Center methodology since 1977, samples of Assessment Center exercises, and a list of Assessment Center consultants, *Assessment Center Trends* is an excellent tool for HR practitioners.

IPMA Members may purchase a copy

Continued on page 12



*Larry Fisher, Joyce Smith, and Oscar B. Jackson, Jr.,
Office of Personnel Management.*

OPM Releases Annual EEO/AA Status Report

Brenda Thornton, OPM

For the first time, the OPM Office of Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity published its *Oklahoma State Government Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Status Report* on the OPM Website (www.opm.state.ok.us). The FY 01 Status Report is located on the OPM home page under "What's New". Individual agency summaries may be reviewed and printed from the Website.

The report is issued on an annual basis in accordance with Title 74, Section 840-2.1, which mandates that agencies, boards, commissions, departments, and offices of each branch of state government prepare an annual Affirmative Action Plan (AAP) and file it with OPM by September 1 of each year. The current Status Report is the collated data from state agency AAPs for the reporting period beginning July 1, 2000, and ending June 30, 2001.

Highlights from the report indicate:

- ◆ Decrease of 303 state employees (0.9 percent)—34,599 employees reported in

FY 00 compared to 34,296 for FY 01.

- ◆ Increase in minority representation from 6,626 in FY-2000 to 6,651 in FY-2001 (25 or 0.4 percent).
- ◆ Overall, state government continues to employ minorities (19.4 percent) at a rate higher than the Civilian Labor Force (16.7 percent).

Continued on page 15

Assessment, continued from page 11

of *Assessment Center Trends* for \$30.00 each, and non-members may purchase it for \$50.00 each. To order, email the IPMA Publications Department, indicating order code CPR-ACTRENDS. To order online, and for more information on HR Center products and services, go to IPMA's HR Center. Orders and inquiries may also be faxed to IPMA Publications, (703) 684-0948. For more information about IPMA, and to learn more about membership, contact IPMA at (703) 549-7100. You may write us at 1617 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314.

3A Memos, continued from page 10

02-21 (4/10/02)

New Lists of Organization and Policies Approved for State Voluntary Payroll Deductions

02-20 (4/4/02)

Oklahoma Employee Benefits Coordinators Association

02-19 (3/20/02)

"Take Our Daughters To Work" Day, April 25, 2002

02-18 (3/18/02)

Pay Movement Mechanism Usage Report

02-17 (3/18/02)

Background Investigations Seminar

02-16 (3/15/02)

Voluntary Payroll Deduction Rules

02-15 (3/15/02)

State Agency Job Fair

02-14 (3/15/02)

All Appointing Authorities Memorandums & Distribution Questionnaire

02-13 (3/11/02)

The Council of State Governments' 2002 Innovations Awards

02-12 (3/8/02)

2002 United States Savings Bonds Campaign

02-11 (3/5/02)

2002 Administrator of the Year Award

02-10 (3/4/02)

Mandatory Supervisory Training Requirement Report

"Guardian" in Place to Watch Over Oklahoma

Reprinted with permission—Capitol Network News

It took two attempts, but the 6,000 pound bronze statue *The Guardian* was placed atop the State Capitol on June 7, during a ceremony which drew an estimated 4,000 to 6,000 citizens to points around the Capitol Complex to watch the historic event.

Betty Price, executive director of the Oklahoma Arts Council, was the first to speak at the event, introducing the statue's creator, Sen. Kelly Haney, D-Seminole.

"This sculpture will stand for future generations as evidence of the talents of the 21st century. And as evidence of the profound respect we have for our Native Americans whose roots are deep in our red earth," Price said.

"It is tall and will be a finial between our dome and sky," Price said. "And we take great pride that it's the first Native American sculpture to go atop any state Capitol in the United States."

Price also explained how Haney was chosen to create the statue. "Twenty months ago, the Oklahoma Arts Council began a statewide search for an Oklahoma artist to create the sculpture that would go on top of the dome," Price said. "In a blind competition, a marquette was selected by a panel of our experts from six finalists. That selection was unanimously accepted by the State Capitol Preservation Commission and, finally, the Oklahoma Centennial Commission. The winner was internationally recognized artist Enoch Kelly Haney."

"As you may know, *The Guardian* is a gift from the Haney family . . ." Haney, who waived the \$50,000 artist fee for the work, said. "And it was our great honor for our family to give this to the state of Oklahoma."

"I was blessed to be born into a family filled with love, inspiration and creativity,"

Continued on page 13



The Guardian, continued from page 12

Haney said. “My father was a master flute-maker for the Seminole tribe and my mother was a keeper of the traditions and I am sure that their spirits are with us this morning.”

Haney also addressed the crowd in the voice of *The Guardian*, explaining the travels and travails of Native Americans to Oklahoma. “I am *The Guardian*,” he said. “some think my journey began on May 2, 2002, when I was taken from the Crucible Foundry in Norman, Oklahoma and arrived here in Oklahoma City . . . and then on to the State Capitol a week ago. But my journey began long before that. It began in the 1830s with the passage of the Indian Removal Act. Thousands and thousands of us were marched half-way across the county; thousands died along the way, but we rebuilt our lives, our families and our nations here.”

Haney continued, “The years to come were not easy; there were wars—wars pitting brother against brother, tribe against tribe, and ultimately, nations against nations. Throughout the years, thousands of Oklahomans have given their lives defending this country; they died in Europe, in Asia and in mountains and deserts thousands of miles away, but they all died so that we could live free. They fought for their fellow Oklahomans; they fought for America. I will guard their memory always”

“And soon, I will be raised to the top of this Capitol Building. Inside are many guardians of this state—our governor, our legislators, our judges; they are all charged with a very sacred task of being the guardians of Oklahoma—a state that is nearing its first centennial. And I will stand guard here, over our great state, over our majestic land, over our values. My lance pierces my legging and is planted in the ground. I will not be moved from my duty, from my love of Oklahoma and all its people—people who came from far and near, people who have withstood adversities and hardships and still stand strong and proud. I will stand my ground and I will not be moved.”

Neal McCaleb, formerly Oklahoma’s Secretary of Transportation under Governor Frank Keating and currently a deputy director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs under the Bush administration, spoke and extended the President’s congratulations.



On May 15, OPM welcomed Mary Adkins, Manager of the Workforce Information Section, Kansas Division of Personnel Services, who visited with state agency HR staff and others concerning Kansas’ experience with PeopleSoft implementation. In February, the state of Oklahoma officially initiated a project involving PeopleSoft Inc. and Maximus to replace the state’s current stand-alone financial, purchasing, human resources, and payroll systems. Pictured with Ms. Adkins (center) are Cynthia Clegg, OPM Deputy Administrator for Programs, and Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources.

“He extends to you his deep appreciation and congratulations on this event and this single day you celebrate today,” McCaleb said. “It’s only right that the statue of *The Guardian*—an Indian warrior—should stand at the top of the capitol of the land of the red man—Oklahoma.”

McCaleb also introduced Governor Frank Keating, whom he called a “builder,” and listed several of the other capital projects undertaken during Keating’s time in office.

“This has been a dream of mine for 25 years—to complete American’s last capitol buildings,” Keating said. “As you may or may not know, in the history of our country, only two capitol buildings were constructed to have domes that were never completed but for years later. One was the U.S. Capitol in Washington and in 1864 Abraham Lincoln put the dome on as a statement that the Union would prevail.

“The second is our special building—the Oklahoma Capitol building. Eighty-five years later, we are making a 21st century statement that we shall prevail,” Keating said. “And, most importantly, this is our century.”

Keating celebrated the diversity and acceptance of the people of the state of Oklahoma.

“What you see behind you—the completion of this dome, this dream—and especially with this fabulous statue crafted by master artist and friend Kelly Haney, is a statement of that diversity and inclusion forever,” Keating said. “We always will be *e pluribus unum*—from many, one.”

Keating also said fears that the state may have to float more of the bill for the dome than originally expected can be laid to rest.

“This is a \$21 million project . . . and I’m pleased to say that \$20 million of that \$21 million has thus far been provided by private fund-raisers,” Keating said. “This week, . . . we were \$1.5 million short, and I made one phone call . . . to Fred Smith and the Reynolds foundation and asked, since they made the first contribution, would they be willing to make the last contribution? The Reynolds Foundation . . . said, “The check is in the mail.””

After the speeches, the statue was lifted to the top of the dome and was secured in place at about 11:30 a.m.

Haney spoke to the press and signed autographs for a few moments before leaving to climb to the top of the dome to visit *The Guardian* one last time.

“I’m going to be the last one to stand on it,” Haney said.



Representative James Dunegan (D-Calera), James L. Howard, Executive Director of the Oklahoma Merit Protection Commission, and Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources.

House Concurrent Resolution 1058 *Dunegan, et al. of the House/Herbert, et al. of the Senate*

WHEREAS, in May 1982, the Oklahoma Legislature enacted major reform legislation that established the Oklahoma Personnel Act as the statutory basis for the state Merit System of Personnel Administration, created the Office of Personnel Management as the administrative agency for the state personnel system, and the Ethics and Merit Commission (now the Oklahoma Merit Protection Commission) as a quasi-judicial entity that decides personnel-related disputes involving state employees; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature created the Oklahoma Personnel Act for the purpose of protecting the public from improper use of authority, protecting public officials and employees from unwarranted assaults on their integrity, and enforcing the protections for classified employees and citizens under the Merit System of Personnel Administration; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature created the Oklahoma Personnel Act for the purpose of establishing a system to recruit, select, develop and maintain an effective and responsive workforce; providing for administrative flexibility and adequate and reasonable protection and security for those who have entered and will enter into the service of the state; providing for the preservation and protection of the Merit System; providing policies and procedures for the selection, hiring, retention, advancement, career development, job classification, salary administration, discipline, dis-

charge and other related activities, all in accordance with principles of merit and fitness and equal employment opportunity, and maintaining a high level of morale, motivation and productivity among state employees; and

WHEREAS, under the stewardship of the Office of Personnel Management and the Oklahoma Merit Protection Commission, the Oklahoma Personnel Act continues to fulfill the purposes upon which it was founded in 1982; and

WHEREAS, the Oklahoma Personnel Act laid the foundation for enhancements in Oklahoma's personnel system that continue to this day, including the Carl Albert Public Internship Program, the Certified Public Manager Program, the State Mentor Program, the State Employee Assistance Program, the Agency Human Resource Management Plan and Self-Evaluation Report system for agencies, the Alternative Dispute Resolution Program, statewide standards for grievance resolution and progressive discipline, training and certification requirements for agency personnel officers, affirmative action officers, and grievance officers, and many more.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 48TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN:

THAT the Oklahoma Personnel Act, the

Office of Personnel Management, and the Oklahoma Merit Protection Commission have served state government and the citizens of the State of Oklahoma well for twenty years.

THAT the Oklahoma Legislature extends its congratulations to the Office of Personnel Management and the Oklahoma Merit Protection Commission on the occasion of their twentieth anniversary and the twentieth anniversary of the Oklahoma Personnel Act.

THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to the Administrator of the Office of Personnel Management and the Oklahoma Merit Protection Commission.

Adopted by the House of Representatives the 14th day of May, 2002.

Adopted by the Senate the 16th day of May, 2002.

749
SB 339 was the bill the Legislature used to create the Oklahoma Personnel Act, the Office of Personnel Management, and the Merit Protection Commission during the 1982 session.

*You are cordially
invited*

*to an observance of the
20th anniversary of the
Oklahoma Personnel Act.*

*Office of Personnel Management, and
Merit Protection Commission.*

*Wednesday, July 31, 2002.
10:00 am - Noon.*

*You will receive notice of the location
at a later date.*

*Mark your calendar for
this important event!*

Report, continued from page 12

- ◆ Increase in female representation from 18,756 in FY 00 to 18,814 in FY 01 (58 or 0.3 percent).
- ◆ Overall, state government continues to employ females (54.9 percent) at a rate higher than the Civilian Labor Force (45.4 percent).

Section 840-2.1 requires OPM to submit a copy of the annual Status Report to the Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and President Pro Tempore of the Senate. OPM provided copies of the Report on compact disk (CD) to Governor Frank Keating, Speaker Larry Adair, and President Pro Tempore Stratton Taylor on CD, as well as to each Cabinet Secretary, members of the Black Caucus, and the Department of Libraries. OPM also provided the Executive Summary from the Report to each state agency.

Questions or information regarding the report may be directed to Brenda C. Thornton, Director of Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity, at 521-3082 or brenda.thornton@opm.state.ok.us.



*House Bill 2110 (2002) changed
the name of the Department of
Agriculture to the Department of
Agriculture, Food, and Forestry,
effective June 6, 2002.*

An Election Year Reminder

Kimberlee Williams, OPM

Because campaign season only comes every two years, it is easy to forget the provisions of law relating to state employees and elections. The Oklahoma Personnel Act and Merit Rules are generally silent with regard to election-year matters; however, there are other provisions of law and rule of which state employees should be aware.

For example, Section 7-101 of Title 26 of the Oklahoma Statutes allows employees (including state employees) time to vote without loss of pay or leave. To be eligible for time off from work to vote, the employee must be a registered voter and must request the time off the day before the election day. In most cases, employers must allow up to two hours for the employee to vote, except in situations in which the employee is such a distance from the polling place that two hours is insufficient (in which case the employee must be allowed the time necessary to vote). Employers are allowed to schedule the hours which employees are given to vote. Employees whose work day begins after 10:00 a.m. or ends before 4:00 p.m. are ineligible for time off to vote under this statute.

At one time, this provision of law did not apply to school board or bond elections, but an amendment made during the 2000 Legislative Session by Senate Bill 883, removed this exception. Thus, employees must now also be allowed time to vote in school board and bond elections if the other requirements of the law are met.

Another provision of law that affects state employees is Ethics Rule 257:10-1-4. This rule prohibits classified and unclassified *state employees* (except for elected officials) to wear campaign paraphernalia while in work status. Other prohibitions in this rule apply only to classified employees. Under this rule, a classified employee may not:

- ☛ Use his or her official authority to interfere in an election or affect the result of an election;
- ☛ Become a candidate in a partisan election;
- ☛ Solicit contributions for a partisan political candidate or party committee;

- ☛ Solicit, accept, collect, disburse or handle funds for a partisan political purpose;
- ☛ Organize, sell tickets to, promote or actively participate in fundraising activities of a candidate for partisan office or of a party committee; and
- ☛ Engage in political activity while in work status, while in a uniform identifying him or her as a state employee, or while in the assigned work areas of a state agency.

Additional prohibitions apply to classified employees of the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation and the Oklahoma State Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs Control who have peace officer powers.



The rule does not prohibit classified employees from registering and voting in elections, attending political gatherings (including fundraising activities), and making voluntary financial contributions to a committee. The rule also specifically allows classified employees to express political opinions as individuals, display political paraphernalia, serve as officers of party committees, serve as election judges or clerks, and otherwise participate fully in public affairs, except as prohibited by law.

The full text of 257:10-1-4 is available on the Ethics Commission website at <http://www.ethics.state.ok.us>.

Editor's Note: This article is provided for informational purposes only and is not intended as legal advice. Any questions regarding the applicability of the above information to individual situations should be addressed to your agency's legal counsel.

2002 Election Calendar

Primary Election—August 27

Runoff Primary Election—September 17

General Election—November 5

Governor Keating Recognizes Employee Contributions During PSRW Ceremony

Dayna Petete, OPM

During a State Capitol Blue Room Awards Ceremony on May 8, Governor Frank Keating presented *Public Service Recognition Awards* to 118 state employees as part of Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW). Members of the Governor's Executive Cabinet selected individuals and teams from their respective areas to receive the commendations.

Administration Cabinet, Pam Warren, Cabinet Secretary—Department of Central Services *Electronic Claims Reporting* Team: Rebecca Smith, Nancy Westbrook.

Agriculture Cabinet, Dennis Howard, Cabinet Secretary—Department of Agriculture *Oklahoma Karnal Bunt Prevention* Team: Norma Ast, Chuck Brown, Ronnie Buckmaster, Jeanetta Cooper, Doug Dear, Carl Dudek, Soda Fleming, Terry Gregg, Kevin Martin, Bob Metz, Steve Morris, James Smith, Tom Smith, David Spears, D.L. Wilkerson, Bob Williams,

Economic Development and Special Affairs Cabinet, Russell Perry, Special Advisor for Economic Development—Department of Commerce *Oklahoma Global Roadshow 2002* Team: Victoria Armstrong, Grayson Bottom, Kevin Chambers, Christine Deerinwater, Jeff Wang, Karla Graham, Priscilla Harris, Daniel Hogan, Norma Ingle, J.C. Johnson, Orville Knight, Jim Mills, Tom O'Neill, Ron Pennington, John Robertson, Lyle Roggow, Bill Shonley, Davie Spindle, Beth VanHorn, Marcus Verner, Victoria Walton.

Education Cabinet, Dr. Floyd Coppedge, Cabinet Secretary—Dr. Edna Manning, Oklahoma School of Science & Mathematics.

Energy Cabinet, Robert J. Sullivan, Jr., Cabinet Secretary—Steve Sowers, Oklahoma Energy Resources Board.

Environment Cabinet, Brian Griffin, Cabinet Secretary—Department of Environmental Quality Land Reclamation Team: Marvin Boatright, Lauren Hardgrave, Fenton Rood, Scott Thompson.



The Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department's "OKLAHOMA! on Broadway" (see related story on page 17) Team received a PSRW Governor's Commendation and a Quality Team Day Governor's Commendation during Public Service Recognition Week, May 6 - 10. Lt. Governor Mary Fallin (center) stopped by the "OKLAHOMA! on Broadway" Quality Team Day exhibit to congratulate Team members Barbie Elder and Sandi Lomonaco.

Finance and Revenue Cabinet, Tom Daxon, Cabinet Secretary—Rollo Redburn, Office of State Finance.

Health and Human Services Cabinet, Howard H. Hendrick, Cabinet Secretary—Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care "Scholars for Excellence in Child Care" Team: Ruth Ann Ball, Jennifer Edge, Dr. Carla Goble, Jill Heise, Dr. Kermit McMurry, Sherrill Pallotta, Kathy Quinn, Jamie Rice, Nancy vonBargen.

Human Resources Cabinet, Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., Cabinet Secretary—Office of Personnel Management State Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Team: Blanche Longoria, Deanna Miller, Robert Stevens, Warren Thompson.

Military Department, Major General Stephen P. Cortright, Adjutant General of Oklahoma—Connie J. Draper, Oklahoma Military Department, Military Personnel Office.

Safety and Security Cabinet, Bob Ricks, Cabinet Secretary—Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation *Oklahoma City Police Department Task Force* Team: Charles Curtis, Mel Heft, Joann Kihega, Lynette Lee, Doug Perkins.

Secretary of State, Mike Hunter, Secretary of State—Office of the Secretary of State Information Systems Department Team: Brian Abbott, James Martin, Tod Wall.

Science and Technology, Skip Porter, Cabinet Secretary—Janet Waswo, Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science & Technology.

Tourism and Recreation Cabinet, Jane Jayroe, Cabinet Secretary—Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department *OKLAHOMA! on Broadway* Team: Deborah Burroughs, Chris Cook, Barbie Elder, Bud Elder, Sheila Elliott, Becky King, Sandi Lomonaco, Kathleen Marks, Lori Nelson.

Continued on page 17

Transportation Cabinet, Herschal Crow, Cabinet Secretary—Oklahoma Department of Transportation Central Office “Committee Who Cares” Team: Dorothy Antwine, Sharon Harwell, Tammie Bales, Pat Hernandez, Zoe Ann Barker, Randy Hogan, Angie Barnes, Linda Hulsey, Barbara Bird, Donna Jacks, Debbie Blackstock, Fonda Brousseau, Sharon Burr, Susan Cantrell, Elizabeth Cravey, Judy Dennis, Deborah Dockery, Michele Dolan, Marcella Donovan, Carole Drew, Cheryl Emerson, Cheryl Ferguson, Martha Garcia, Donna Goforth, Donna Grubaugh, Diane Grunder, Kathy Hallum, Kathy Kirkpatrick, Susan McClune, Lawana McKinley, Cecilia Monroe, Sandi Parsons, Susie Phillips, Nancy Porter, Niki Powell, Deborah Rogers, Geri Stevens, Linda Stoltz, Joyce Sumner, Josie Swearingen, Debbie Taylor, Tanya Thomas, Charlene Tucholka, Kelly Wynn.

Veterans Affairs Cabinet, Norman Lamb, Cabinet Secretary—John Updike, Claremore Veterans Center, Department of Veterans Affairs.

You may view photographs of PSRW award winners on the OPM Website at http://www.opm.state.ok.us/PSRW/page_contents.htm.

Quality Oklahoma Team Day 2002 Boasts Record Number of Participants!

Joyce Smith, OPM

OPM hosted *Quality Oklahoma Team Day 2002* on May 9 at the State Capitol. OPM sponsors this annual event in conjunction with National Public Service Recognition Week to honor state agency work teams for their initiative and accomplishment.

This year, 56 projects representing 18 different agencies were on display. Governor’s Commendation Awards were presented for 33 projects. Six projects received specialty awards. Total projects documented a combined cost savings and revenue generation of more than \$35 million. From 1992 to 2002, 449 Team Day submissions have resulted in a cumulative cost sav-

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OKLAHOMA! on Broadway

*From the Office of Governor Frank Keating
Associated Press, March 21, 2002*

Director Trevor Nunn’s London production of “Oklahoma!” arrived in New York with a special down-home touch—the Oklahoma governor taking a group of more than 100 real Oklahomans on a walk up Broadway to the March 21 premiere.

Gov. Frank Keating and the Oklahomans brought along their state’s flags and a banner for the stroll from their Manhattan hotel to the Gershwin Theater.

At a reception before the walk, Keating said, “This was the show that America saw in the worst moments of World War II. And after Sept. 11, to open another quintessentially American-excellence-and-optimism show on Broadway is a great statement of faith in the country and faith in the American family.” The group headed for Nunn’s long-awaited Royal National Theatre production of the all-American musical by Rodgers & Hammerstein. Every one of the 1,673 seats at the Gershwin Theater had been sold.

Along with Keating, the group included state government officials, two former Miss Americas and football coach Barry Switzer.

Switzer said that this would be the first time he saw the show on stage but that he had seen the movie, starring Shirley Jones, who was also at the opening.

When asked what his favorite song was, he said, “I guess the song, ‘Oklahoma, when the wind comes sweeping down the plain.’ It’s just Americana. With what we’re living today in America, I think what we have here is what Americana’s all about.”

Nunn’s production, which opened in London in 1998, was choreographed by five-time Tony award-winner Susan Stroman.

“It’s an optimistic show, looking to better days ahead. That’s what it was then in the territory. And that’s what it is today for America,” said delegation member Bud Elder, of Oklahoma’s Film Commission.

“Oklahoma has been buffeted by Dustbowl, oil bust and the Oklahoma City bombing. But we never lose our sense of humor and our sense of self-worth,” Keating said. “And this musical is so optimistic and so happy, it turns us around, and it’ll turn the rest of the country around as well.”

Set in Oklahoma at the turn of the 20th century, then a U.S. territory, the musical

opened in 1943, setting the standard for modern musicals. The work became the first musical commemorated on a U.S. postage stamp.

On Thursday, a surrey was displayed in the mezzanine of the theater in honor of the show’s musical number “The Surrey With the Fringe on Top.”

And “Oklahoma,” another number from the musical, has been the state’s official song since 1953.

Among other guests invited to the opening were an elderly couple who were standing in front of the theater, she in a mink coat and he with a cane, members of the original 1943 cast.

Paul Shiers was an understudy to one of the actors, and his wife, Vivian Smith, was a dancer.

She said, at the time “we just thought, you rehearse, you open and you have a hit. We never got tired of it.”

Following the show, the cast and special guests were to be feted at an “Oklahoma Hoe-down” at Tavern on the Green, complete with a bluegrass band, rope twirlers and a vintage turn-of-the-century carousel, plus hay stacks, sheaves of corn and lots of gingham.

After the original show, with ticket prices below \$2, Shiers said, “we didn’t even have hot dogs!”

On this night in 2002, the Oklahoma menu included such specialties as “Cornmeal Crusted Fried Okra with Chili Chipotle Sauce” and “Cured Back Country Ham with Pineapple Mango Raisin Compote.”

And one of the soloists in the bluegrass band played the great old Oklahoma instrument called “bones”—cow bones, that is.

The evening also had a touch of British class.

Nunn said the musical presents “values that are struggled over in every community worldwide. There is a streak in that community of violence and lawlessness, and therefore something that is ruthless about people who want to get their own way.”

And then, added the “Oklahoma!” director, “there is the indication that there is another way, that there is a way of compromise, of respect for each other’s position.”

The Department of Commerce' Business Licensing Initiative won this year's Quality Team Day "Red Tape Reduction Award". Richard Schwalback, Sandra Arnold, and Dan Wiland were on-hand to explain their project during Team Day.



The Department of Corrections' West Central Region Asbestos Unit, Cimarron County Project, was voted "Best Booth" at this year's Quality Team Day. DOC inmates completed asbestos abatement for the Cimarron Industrial Park Authority for \$730,669.78 compared to a \$3 million estimate by the Oklahoma Department of Labor.



Howard Hendrick, Director of the Department of Human Services and Cabinet Secretary of Health and Human Services, took time out of his busy schedule to congratulate members of the DHS Infonet Instructional E-Learning Design Team: Tina Tate, Lisa Brown, Renee Jones, and Mikki Gutierrez.



Team Day, continued from page 17

ings or revenue generation of more than \$240 million for the state of Oklahoma.

The top award, the *Quality Crown*, was presented to the *New Employee Orientation: Time Management Project* sponsored by the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. The Carl Albert Community Mental Health Center modified new employee orientation to more efficiently provide training in performance improvement (Total Quality Management) to all new employees early in their employment. The agency uses actual problems identified by new employees, such as stress and down-time, and addresses them through the six-step problem solving process, enabling new employees to experience the process "live".

Analyzing down-time (amount of time wasted during the two-day orientation process) resulted in a 47 percent reduction in wasted time.

Also during Team Day, five specialty awards were presented:

- ◆ *Best Booth*—West Central Region Asbestos Unit, Cimarron County Project, Department of Corrections.
- ◆ *Employee Empowerment*—Procurement Card Program Development and Imple-

mentation, Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education.

- ◆ *Going the Extra Mile*—PRIDE Committee, Canadian County Department of Human Services.
- ◆ *Motivating the Masses*—Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Services Value-Added Wheat Program, Oklahoma State University.
- ◆ *Red Tape Reduction*—Business Licensing Initiative, Department of Commerce.

Council Requests Survey of Agencies Regarding Services for Non-English Speaking or Reading Clients

Brenda Thornton, OPM

The Governor's Advisory Council on Latin-American and Hispanic Affairs asked OPM Team members who provide staff support to the Council to conduct a survey regarding the type of information state agencies provide to their non-English speaking/reading clients and customers. The results of this survey are detailed below:

Survey:

Services for Non-English Speaking or Reading Clients

1. Do you have non-English speaking or reading clients/customers? OPM received 119 responses—44 % (52) said Yes, 54 % (64) said No, and 2 % (3) said Maybe/Sometimes/Randomly. Those who answered Yes responded to items A through D below. Those responding No checked statement number 2 below.

A. Identify the number and title(s) of CURRENT publications provided for non-English speaking or reading clients/customers contacting agency offices. Current Publications: 21-none, 6-posters/signs, 9-books/brochures/handouts, 6-agreements/contracts/forms, 1-exams, and 7-other. Languages—18 Spanish, 1-Chinese, 1-Vietnamese, 1-Portuguese, 1-other (Farsi for Afghanistan women).

B. Identify your CURRENT provisions for communicating with non-English speaking or reading clients/customers contacting agency offices. Indicate languages. Current Provisions: 7-none, 11-have access/contract with a service, 3-use personnel from another agency, 22-bilingual employees, 15-other. Languages: 24-Spanish, 4-French, 4-German, 2-Chinese, 6-Vietnamese, 2-Portuguese, 9-other (Arabic, Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, Dutch, EFK, Estonian, Faeroese, Farsi, Gola Dialect, Guarani, Gujarati, Hausa, Hawaiian, Hebrew, Hindi, Ibo, Italian, Japanese, Kiswahili, Korean, Kpelle Dialect, Lebanese, Malay, Malayalam, Nigerian, Papiamento, Persian, Philippine, Slavic, Swedish, Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Turkish, Yoruba, and American sign language).

C. Identify the number and title(s) of FUTURE publications to be provided to non-English speaking or reading clients/customers. Indicate languages. Future Pub-



Governor Frank Keating created the Governor's Advisory Council on Latin-American and Hispanic Affairs to provide advice regarding the development and implementation of policies, plans, and programs relating to the special needs of Hispanics. This Council, which is staffed by OPM, also makes a concerted effort toward increasing statewide public awareness of problems surrounding Hispanics, and expands opportunities for Oklahoma Hispanics in education, employment, health, housing, culture, and recreation. Council members pictured with Governor Keating include: Jerry Orellana, Matthew Mollman, John Lopez, Juanita Salazar Lamb, Oscar Quiroga, Guillermo Rojas, and Yolanda Charney. Also pictured is Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources.

lications: 19-none; 18-other languages (12-Spanish, 4 Vietnamese, 2 other).

D. Identify any planned provisions to communicate with non-English speaking or reading clients/customers contacting agency offices. Indicate languages and projected effective dates. Planned provisions: 21-none; 3-have access to or contract with a service; 5-bilingual employees; 13-other.

Languages: 11-Spanish; 1-French; 1-German; 3-Vietnamese; 1 Portuguese; 4-other (Italian).

2. Due to the nature of our agency function(s), there is no need for special arrangements to be made to provide agency publications or services for non-English speaking or reading clients/customers.



In Memoriam

Senator Larry Dickerson (D-Poteau)

May 13, 1956 - March 7, 2002

Senator Dickerson co-sponsored every OPM request bill from 1995 to 2002.

Discrimination Complaints Training Attracts Employees From 12 Public Sector Entities

Brenda Thornton, OPM

State law requires individuals who investigate complaints of employment discrimination in executive branch agencies to complete four days of initial discrimination complaints investigator training either conducted or approved by OPM; a minimum of one investigation under the guidance of a senior Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) investigator; a minimum of six hours of classroom instruction or 0.6 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) in training each calendar year; and other annual training that may be announced by OPM. Persons who complete annual training must submit proof of completion that is acceptable to OPM.

OPM coordinates, in cooperation with the *Oklahoma Alliance for Civil Rights, Inc.*, training for all individuals who investigate complaints of employment discrimination in executive branch agencies. The *Alliance for Civil Rights* is composed of individuals, in the public and private sectors, employed in the areas of personnel, affirmative action, and/or equal employment opportunity. Members assist and support affirmative action and equal opportunity personnel by identifying recruitment sources; serving as a network for professional information and development in the area of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action; disseminating information to schools, organizations and agencies; and advocating for progress in the area of Equal Opportunity.

The most recent training conference was held May 21 - 24, 2002, at Metro Technology Center/Springle Lake Division in Oklahoma City. Presenters included Michael Johnson of Brightline Compliance, as well as certified Senior EEO investigators, Civil Rights Administrators, and other HR professionals. Eighteen employees representing 12 public sector entities attended the training:

Department of Corrections

Jennifer Elledge & Deborah Robison

Department of Environmental Quality

Jamie Fannin

Department of Human Services

Clarese Amadi, Joan Barnett, Nancy Ellis, Sherleen Jackson, Barbara Tefft, Charlotte Wyatt



R. Charles Smith, President, *Oklahoma Alliance for Civil Rights, Inc.*; Brenda Thornton, Director, OPM's Office of Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity; and Michael Johnson, *Brightline Compliance*.

Office of Juvenile Affairs

Charles Dawson & Ramona McPherson

Department of Labor

Dale Archer & Michael Taylor

Oklahoma Military Department

Larry Jordan

Oklahoma Transportation Authority

Cheryl O'Rourke

Department of Veterans Affairs

Paula Kirby & John McReynolds

In addition to state agency staff members, representatives from the Northern Oklahoma Development Authority, Tulsa County Sheriff's Department, and the Eastern Workforce Investment Board attended the four-day training.

The curriculum of the discrimination complaints investigator training is designed to provide participants with a current knowledge of Oklahoma and federal equal employment opportunity laws and rules; theories of discrimination and burdens of proof; planning and conducting complete and impartial investigations; techniques for interviewing witnesses; collecting relevant evidence; documenting the record of investigation; and preparing the written report of investigation.

OPM will certify that an individual has completed the training requirements for investigating complaints of discrimination after OPM: (1) determines the person has

completed the initial training requirements; (2) receives a recommendation from the senior EEO investigator under whose guidance one or more investigations have been conducted that the person seeking certification has demonstrated competency in conducting investigations. OPM will send notice of certification to the employee and to the employee's Appointing Authority if the individual is a state employee.

Kudos

Natasha Riley, OPM Personnel Assessment Division, will make a presentation entitled, "Best Practices of Administering Structured Interviews," at the annual meeting of the National Association of State Personnel Executives (NASPE), August 17 - 20, in Indianapolis. OPM's structured interview manual, "Developing and Administering Structured Interviews," was nominated for a 2002 NASPE Rooney Award.

OPM Is Looking for a Few Good . . . Mentor Executives!

Dayna Petete, OPM

OPM announced June 17 that it is seeking nominations for the State Mentor Program. The Oklahoma Legislature created the State Mentor Program in 1994 to develop the executive potential of employees in all branches of state government, with a special emphasis on women, racial minorities, and individuals with disabilities.

Any state employee may nominate another state employee to participate in the State Mentor Program. OPM recommends, however, that interested employees ask their agency directors to nominate them. Nomination criteria include demonstrated leadership qualities; outstanding achievement record; outstanding recommendations by supervisors or peers; special knowledge of state systems; and completion of the Certified Public Manager Program or similar achievement. The deadline for nominations to reach OPM is Friday, August 16, 2002, 5:00 pm. Nomination forms are available in state agency personnel offices and on the OPM Website at <http://www.opm.state.ok.us>.

OPM will provide a State Mentor Program application to each state employee nominated for participation in the Program

and will review each application to determine whether the applicant meets the minimum qualifications for the Program. To be eligible for selection as a Mentor Executive, an applicant must have a bachelors' degree and three years of professional experience in Oklahoma government; currently occupy a professional-level position in Oklahoma state government; and have achieved a "Meets Standards" rating on his or her most recent performance evaluation since January 1, 2000. Additionally, applicants must complete a post-offer, pre-hire, work-related criminal background investigation.

OPM will solicit state agency endorsement of those employees who meet the minimum qualifications. Employees who receive the endorsement of their supervisor and Appointing Authority will participate in a multi-part selection process that consists of an in-basket exercise, leaderless group exercise, and interviews. Final selection of Mentor Executives is scheduled for late Fall 2002; employees selected to participate in the State Mentor Program will begin their two-year management rotations in January 2003.

Each state employee selected to partici-

pate in the State Mentor Program will become a Mentor Executive and, during his or her two-year management rotation, will be assigned to a policy-level manager in his or her employing agency and three other state agencies. This manager will serve as a mentor and will be responsible for instructing the Mentor Executive in the agency's purpose and functions, and instilling a sense of professionalism and public service. Mentors also may serve as a source of career guidance and reference after the management rotation is completed.

"Any organization, whether in the public sector or private sector, has an obligation to assist its employees by providing training and development opportunities," Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources, noted. "These opportunities, however, are only as beneficial as the participating employee makes them. At the end of the two-year management rotation, each Mentor Executive who has taken advantage of the opportunities provided by the Program should return to his or her state agency more experienced in public policy decision-making and better prepared to contribute to the fulfillment of the agency's goals and mission."

"Participation in the State Mentor Program benefits state agencies, as well," Jackson added. "The Program provides state agency directors the opportunity to utilize the knowledge, skills, and abilities of an outstanding state employee who has been identified by the Mentor Selection Advisory Committee as possessing executive potential. In addition, participation in the State Mentor Program also offers agency directors and policy-level managers the prospect of providing Mentor Executives with invaluable opportunities to participate in the discussion and resolution of a multitude of ever-changing issues and challenges, as well as access to the individuals who shape the policies that guide Oklahoma state government."

Contact OPM's Office of Communications at (405) 521-2167 for information.



Members of the Mentor Selection Advisory Committee (l to r) Robert Thompson, Oklahoma State Senate; Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources; Linda Parker, Executive Director of the Department of Rehabilitation Services; Bill Franks, Director of Intergovernmental Relations for Governor Frank Keating; and George Humphreys, Research Director for the Oklahoma House of Representatives; met June 13 to discuss plans for the selection of the next group of Mentor Executives.

State Agencies Co-Host Annual *Take Our Daughters To Work*[®] Day Observance

Cynthia Williamson, OPM

For the past 10 years the Ms. Foundation has encouraged adults to take girls to work with them and has asked employers to design activities based on the girls' skills, talents, and curiosity. The Ms. Foundation has highlighted the importance of sustaining girls' natural strength and confidence through their teenage years and into adulthood.

On May 1, 2002, OPM, the Department of Corrections (DOC); the Department of Human Services (DHS); and the national sponsor, the Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women (OCSW); sponsored the fourth annual *Leadership Connection* in coordination with the *Take Our Daughters To Work*[®] Day national event. This year OPM expanded the event to include young men.

Approximately 92 participants attended this year's *Leadership Connection*, which featured presentations by Colonel Rita Aragon, Oklahoma Military Department; Senator Angela Monson, Oklahoma State Senate; and Cherokee Ballard, *5 Alive News* anchor. Also, Ashley Johnson, a junior at Douglass High School, performed a modern dance routine.

Members of the *Take Our Daughters To Work*[®] Day committee included: Janet Anderson, OPM; Juan Benavidez, OPM; Debbie Boyer, DOC; Misty Brandon, OPM; Rochelle Ingram, OESC; Debbe Leftwich, OCSW; Blanche Longoria, OPM; Tina Tate, DHS; Carolyn Williams, OPM; and Cynthia Williamson, OPM.



Attorney General Opinion 02-023 (June 6, 2002) provides that the Grand River Dam Authority (GRDA) cannot provide additional benefits to the general manager and top administrative officials in the form of tax-sheltered deferral plans or supplemental retirement plans because those benefits are not specifically authorized by State law, nor can they be fairly implied from the explicit authority given to the GRDA.



New Employee Orientation Important

James Perez, OPM

Do you remember your first day at work? Was it filled with confidence or was it filled with anxiousness? Were you able to fit into your work environment right away or did it take you awhile to realize who did what at your agency?

While HR personnel look for prevalent reasons why employees leave their agencies or why employees tend to be unhappy during their employment with an agency, one aspect that is often overlooked by both HR and agency management is whether the employee received a proper orientation when starting on the job. In addition to asking the obvious questions of whether exiting employees received adequate pay or opportunities in career advancement, organizations are starting to ask questions such as: Did the employee get off to a good start the first day that he or she started at the agency? Did it seem as if the employee had a hard time adjusting to the expectations of the job?

Many HR professionals realize that how well an employee is oriented during the first couple of weeks on the job influences how long it takes the employee to reach his or her full potential. Many employees start a new job not knowing what to expect from their work environment. Since they are often eager to prove themselves and to "fit

in" at the workplace, they have questions about their organization and the expectations placed upon them by others.

Since most people believe that first impressions are important in setting the stage for everything that follows, formal new employee orientation (NEO) processes allow agencies to make a lasting impression on the employee, and the new employee to make a smooth transition into the agency's workforce. While HR professionals recognize NEOs as essential to establishing the foundation for the new employee's career within an agency, there are other reasons the NEO is important to an agency:

- Provides concise and accurate information about job duties.
- Encourages confidence and helps the new employee adapt faster to the job.
- Contributes to a more effective, productive workforce.
- Improves employee retention.
- Promotes communication between the supervisor and the new employee.
- Introduces the new employee to departmental goals, policies and procedures, and organizational culture within the agency.

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- Relieves the new employee's anxieties about starting a new job.
- Conveys the agency's expectations.

An effective employee orientation encompasses more than just passing out the employee handbook and completing paperwork. OPM includes the following components in its NEO:

- A tour of the agency including some, or all, of its facilities. Include introductions to managers and staff and follow up visits to receive information about the department or office and its role in achieving the agency mission.
- Meetings with agency leadership to discuss the agency's overall mission and vision.
- A meeting with the department head to answer any questions about the orientation or about the agency.
- Involve employees in assessing the effectiveness of the orientation process.

Orienting new employees takes time and effort, but benefits your new employees and, ultimately, your agency. An orientation paints a compelling picture of the agency; it is important not only to make the orientation as comprehensive as possible, but also to make it positively influence the employee's attitude toward the agency and the employee's role.

OPM Hosts Annual Legislative Briefing

Dayna Petete, OPM

On June 11, OPM hosted a briefing concerning HR-related legislation passed during the 2002 session, which ended May 24, 2002. Approximately 117 agency HR professionals and general counsel staff members were in attendance.



Hank Batty, OPM Assistant Administrator for Employee Selection Services, makes a point at the June 11 briefing.

Dayna R. Petete, OPM Assistant Administrator for Communications and Legislative Liaison, shared information on legislation related to affirmative action; the Carl Albert Public Internship Program; state employee compensation, military leave, lateral transfers, trial periods, and personal infor-

mation; State Mentor Program; employee recognition programs; recruitment; reduction-in-force severance benefits; the unclassified service; voluntary payroll deduction; and the whistleblower act.

Also on the program were Steve Edmonds, Executive Director of the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System; Mitch Parsons, Executive Director of the Employees Benefits Council; and Dana Webb, Director of Legislative/Regulatory Affairs for the Oklahoma State & Education Employees Group Insurance Board.



On March 29, OPM hosted a Background Investigations Briefing for state agency HR professionals. Guest speaker was Debbie Goodloe, Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation.



The Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs Control was one of 21 state agencies participating in the second annual State Government Job Fair on April 23. During the day-long event, OPM distributed more than 1,000 employment applications, processed over 280 applications, and tested 64 applicants.

OPM Advisory Group and User-Agency Feedback Group Activities



Jerry Stillwell, Project Coordinator of CORE Oklahoma, addressed members of the OPM Advisory Group on April 12. Members of the Advisory Group provide guidance and customer feedback regarding ongoing OPM initiatives. Members of the group include Donnita Heck, Department of Human Services; and Debbie McCowan, Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth.



OPM hosted a User-Agency Feedback Session on assessment and certification on April 3. Attendees included Sandi Scott, Department of Public Safety, and Joanie Batty, Department of Rehabilitation Services. The purpose of these sessions is 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 during the year.

Attendees at OPM's User-Agency Feedback Session on classification included Terri Berry, Department of Rehabilitation Services; Jack Dobbins, Oklahoma Tax Commission; Kanda Woods, Oklahoma Tax Commission; Cynthia Williamson, OPM; Vicki Kelso, Oklahoma Employment Security Commission; Margot Barnes, Department of Human Services; David Peugh, Department of Human Services; and Brian Kirtley, Department of Transportation.

