

A publication of the

State of Oklahoma Office Of Personnel Management

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION REVIEW COUNCIL ADDS NEW MEMBERS; R. CHARLES SMITH HONORED



Pictured from left to right: Oscar Jackson, OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary; Brenda Thornton, OPM Director of Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity; Jonathan Small, AARC Member, Insurance Department; R. Charles Smith, Immediate-Past AARC Chairman, Department of Health; State Representative Jabar Shumate, AARC Vice-Chairman; Currie Ballard, AARC Member, State Senate; Harold Roberts, AARC Chairman; Sylvia Morales, AARC Member; State Representative Mike Shelton, AARC Member; and Linda Williamson, Administrative Assistant, OPM Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity.



Brenda Thornton, Director of Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity

During the final meeting of the 2009-2010 review period, the Affirmative Action Review Council (AARC) introduced two new members, Jonathan S. Small II, and Currie Ballard. Both members were appointed by Senate Pro

Tempore Glenn Coffee: Small to fill a vacant seat and Ballard to replace R. Charles Smith.

Jonathan Small is currently the Director of Government Affairs with the Oklahoma Insurance Department. He holds an Associates of Science degree in Business from Oklahoma City Community College and a Bachelors of Science degree in Accounting from the University of Central Oklahoma. He previously held the titles of Associate Research Analyst, Auditor/Accountant, and Fiscal Analyst with the Oklahoma House of Representatives from 2005 through 2009; and Budget Analyst with the Oklahoma Office of State Finance from 2003 until 2005. Small is married to Kristina and they have two children, Jasmine (3 years) and Savanna (1 year).

Currie Ballard is a former employer of General Motors, collector of African American history, guest curator for the Oklahoma Historical Society, and Historian in Residence for Langston University where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree. He developed an African/American History curriculum for the Oklahoma City Pub-

lic Schools and was not only appointed to a Congressional Task Force to recognize the contributions of slave labor in the construction of the U.S. Capitol but also testified at a congressional hearing held by the Committee on House Administration on this subject, becoming one of only four non-congressional members of a committee appointed to make recommendations to Congress. He has been the guest or made appearances on all the major networks and several television programs including BET Tonight, CBS This Morning, CNN, NBC Nightly News, PBS American Experience, Oprah Winfrey Show, and Tony Brown's Journal. He has been the subject of or contributor to various newspaper and magazine articles including American Legacy Magazine, Black Issues in Higher Education, Dallas Morning News, Los Angeles times, Newsweek, USA Today, and Wall Street Journal. He has also served on the Oklahoma Human Rights Commission.

At this same meeting, R. Charles Smith, former Chairman of the AARC, was honored by Oscar B. Jackson, Jr. with a Governor's Commendation for his many years of service to the council and the State of Oklahoma. He will continue to present the affirmative action plan for the State Department of Health before the AARC.

With the election of new officers, Harold Roberts was elected as Chairman and Rep. Jabar Shumate was elected as Vice Chairman.

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2009 State Charitable Campaign Raises \$637,231.75! Central District State Charitable Campaign Raises \$540,097!

Marek Ferguson, State Charitable Campaign Director, reports that the 2009 State Charitable Campaign, which ended December 31, 2009, raised \$637,231.75, which is a 5.59% increase over the \$609,660 raised during the 2008 Campaign. The Central Oklahoma District 8, which includes Canadian, Logan and Oklahoma counties, raised 84.9% or \$540,077 of the statewide total.

The 2009 State Charitable Campaign Awards Celebration for District 8 was held February 2nd at the United Way of Central Oklahoma office in Oklahoma City. The 2009 SCC results were announced and agencies were recognized as noted below.

Most Contributions – Department of Human Services
\$100,638.98

Largest Percent Increase – Department of Corrections
485% Increase (\$5,238 Increase)

Highest Per Capita – Oklahoma Department of Pharmacy \$308.83 Per Capita Giving

Gold Medal Awards – 10% or higher increase in total \$ raised

- Council on Judicial Complaints
- District Attorneys Council
- OETA
- Office of Personnel Management
- Office of State Finance
- Office of the State Auditor & Inspector
- Oklahoma Banking Department
- Oklahoma Board of Pharmacy
- Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics
- Oklahoma Corporation Commission
- Oklahoma Department of Corrections
- Oklahoma Department of Education
- Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management
- Oklahoma Department of Human Services - Logan County
- Oklahoma Department of Labor
- Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
- Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services
- Oklahoma Department of Securities
- Oklahoma Department of Tourism and Recreation
- Oklahoma Department of Transportation
- Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs
- Oklahoma Election Board
- Oklahoma Employee Benefits Council
- Oklahoma Employment Security Commission
- Oklahoma Health Care Authority
- Oklahoma Horse Racing Commission
- Oklahoma Human Rights Commission
- Oklahoma Insurance Department
- Oklahoma Law Enforcement Retirement Board
- Oklahoma Military Department
- Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Board
- Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System
- Oklahoma School of Science and Math
- Oklahoma State Board of Cosmetology
- Oklahoma State Board of Examiners for Long Term Care Administrators
- Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation
- Oklahoma State Department of Health
- Oklahoma Workers Compensation Court
- Physician Manpower Training Commission
- Professional Engineers & Land Surveyors Board
- State ABLE Commission
- State of Oklahoma Arts Council
- Supreme Court of Oklahoma
- Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust



Pictured from left to right: Marek Ferguson, SCC Director, United Way of Central Oklahoma; Karl Willett, 2009 SCC Loaned Executive, Department of Corrections, accepting the "Highest Percentage Increase" trophy presented to the Department of Corrections; Karen Jacobs, Department of Human Services, who also serves as Chair of the Oversight Committee for State Charitable Contributions, accepting the "Single Largest Contributor" trophy awarded to OKDHS; and Justin Jones, Director of the Oklahoma Department of Corrections, who was designated by Governor Brad Henry to serve as 2009 SCC Chair.

Silver Medal Awards – 5% to 9.99% increase in Total \$'s raised

- Office of the Secretary of State
- Office of the State Treasurer
- Oklahoma Department of Human Services
- Oklahoma Real Estate Commission
- Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
- Oklahoma Turnpike Authority

Bronze Medal Awards – 1% - 4.99% increase in Total \$'s raised

- Oklahoma Department of Libraries
- Oklahoma State and Education Employees Group Insurance Board
- Oklahoma Teachers Retirement System
- Oklahoma Tax Commission
- Oklahoma Department of Commerce



Pictured from left to right: 2009 SCC Chair Justin Jones, 2009 SCC Loaned Executive Karl Willett, with Judge Michael Porter, Oklahoma Corporation Commission, the winner of the 2009 Kia Rio. The following individuals had an opportunity to win the car valued at \$12,000 and was donated by the Oklahoma Department of Corrections Employee's Association: Jennifer McCoy, Department of Veteran Affairs; Thomas Larson, Office of the Governor; Michael Neander, Department of Veterans Affairs; and Virginia Lorenz, Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System.



Work Begins on Total Compensation Statement

Tom Patt, Assistant Administrator for Management Services

In April of last year, all State employees received a document that may have changed the way they thought about their employment with the State of Oklahoma. The document was the Total Compensation Statement, which provided a comprehensive snapshot of all of the tangible benefits they receive as State employees. In addition to showing the direct “cash” compensation that each employee receives in the form of base salary and annual longevity payments, the statement itemized the state’s contributions to benefits, including the benefit allowance (which covers core insurance benefits); contributions to the defined benefit plan and the Sooner-Save defined contribution plan; and the cost of statutory benefits such as Social Security, workers compensation, and unemployment compensation. In addition, the statement provided an estimate of the value of each employee’s paid time off benefits based on the employee’s current hourly rate, as well as general information about the insurance and retirement benefits available to employees.

Last year’s Total Compensation Statement was developed jointly by the Office of Personnel Management, the Employees Benefits Council, and the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System. Input was also provided by the Teachers Retirement System, Law Enforcement Retirement System, the Department of Wildlife Conservation, and the Police Pension and Retirement System. This group collaborated over a four-month period to insure that the information contained in the statement was accurate and the format easy to follow.

This year, the same agencies have are again putting their collective heads together to issue the 2010 Total Compensation Statement. Representatives from those agencies who are involved with the project this year are:

- Theresa Walters, CORE Group
- Stacy Bonner, CORE Group
- Dan Melton, Employees Benefits Council
- Frank Wade, Employees Benefits Council
- Brian King, Employees Benefits Council
- Patrick Lane, Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System
- Tom Patt, Office of Personnel Management
- Everett Slavik, Office of Personnel Management

The look and feel of this year’s Total Compensation Statement will be essentially the same as last year’s document but will be updated with current salary and benefit value information. In addition, recipients will be directed to a survey on employee benefits hosted on the Benefits Administration System website. Through the survey, employees will be polled on their opinions on the value of the state’s various benefit programs, which will prove invaluable to the State’s benefit planners as they consider options for changes in the future.

The new edition of the Total Compensation Statement is planned to be published near the end of March. As with last year’s document, hard copies will be distributed through the agency benefit coordinators. The working group is confident that this year’s edition will be as well received as last year’s and will prove to be an invaluable resource for state employees regarding their total rewards package with the State of Oklahoma.



Open Enrollment Health Plan Changes

Brian King, Communications Officer, Employees Benefit Council

Two health maintenance organizations (HMOs) are enjoying big gains in state employee membership following the most recent Option Period enrollment, coordinated by the Employees Benefits Council.

Among active state employees only, the biggest winner was Oklahoma City-based GlobalHealth, which added 47.53 percent to its alternative plan and 46 percent to its standard plan. GlobalHealth now has 5,880 active state employees on its roster after gaining 1,870 during the Option Period. Global also helped itself by expanding its HMO coverage to more parts of Oklahoma, including Lawton, Ardmore and Enid.

PacifiCare saw an increase of 1,246 members. The HMO now has 4,560 members from the employer group. PacifiCare’s alternative plan had a 39.38 percent increase while its standard plan gained an even 20 percent.

Three of the five health carriers experienced losses of state employees and their families in a year that saw the active state employee population drop by nearly 500. HealthChoice lost a combined 1,470 members from its High and Basic plans, but gained 21 in the HealthChoice S-Account. HealthChoice High, which is by far the most popular health plan among active state employees, experienced a decline of 6.85 percent.

While PacifiCare and GlobalHealth posted big gains, the other two available HMOs, Aetna and CommunityCare, are now serving fewer members. Aetna saw 851 state employees go to other plans and CommunityCare had a net loss of 1,213.

An interesting trend in employee enrollment continued as Plan Year 2010 began. Sixty-one percent of state employees now have dependents included in their coverage. That’s two percent higher than 2009 and four percent more than 2008. Just 11 years ago (1999), only 41 percent of state employees included dependents.



Employees Benefits Council

Row 1: Andrea Moon, Department of Public Safety; Carol Fletcher, Department of Central Services; Susie Robinson, EBC; Gina Blaylock, Agriculture; AnaMarie B. Garcia, OKDHS; Carolyn Rumsey, OKDHS; and Debbie Simmons, GRDA.

Row 2: Ray Kongsala, Department of Rehabilitation Services; Lee Cohlmia, District Attorneys Council; Traci House, Health; Everett Slavik, OPM; Cynthia Williamson, Department of Public Safety; Amber Sheikh, EBC; and Deanna Packhorse, Department of Tourism and Recreation.



Inaugural EBC Wellness Certification Program Graduation

Brian King, Communications Officer, Employees Benefit Council

STILLWATER – Wellness coordinators representing a dozen different state agencies have more knowledge and renewed excitement about wellness and motivating others after completing a certification program at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater Feb. 22 and 23.

The two-day event, coordinated by the Employees Benefits Council (EBC) and OSU’s Center for Executive and Professional Development at the William S. Spears School of Business, included nine faculty presentations, a final exam and awards ceremony. Subjects included the power of influence, influencing health behavior, the strength of teamwork, leadership and culture change, and effective communication.

“Wellness is all about building a culture of health,” EBC Executive Director Philip K. Kraft said. “It is a vitally important part of what we do at EBC for our fellow state employees. So we need our partners, the wellness coordinators, to be effective leaders in their agencies.”

Participants in the certification program included Gina Blaylock, Department of Agriculture; Lee Cohlmia, District Attorneys Council; Carol Fletcher, Department of Central Services; AnaMarie Garcia and Carolyn Rumsey, Department of Human Services; Traci House, Department of Health; Ray Kongsala, Department of Rehabilitation Services; Andrea Moon, Department of Public Safety, Deanna Packhorse, Department of Tourism and Recreation; Debbie Simmons, Grand River Dam Authority; Everett Slavik, Office of Personnel Management; and Cynthia Williamson, Turnpike Authority.

2010 OSCPM Officers Installed

In the photo to the right:

The officers of the Oklahoma Society Certified Public Managers are (left to right) Paula Printup-Porter, OHCA, President; Rachel Herbert, OBMLS, Membership Chair; Paula Green, OKDHS, Treasurer; Barbara Taft, OCTP, 2008 President; and Susan Bohl, Immediate Past President.

Not pictured:

Kayla Jackson, OKDHS, Secretary, and Annette Myers, OKDHS, President-Elect.



Oklahoma Hosts 2010 IPMA-HR Southern Region Conference

Tom Patt, Assistant Administrator for Management Services

Mark your calendars for April 24 - 28, for those are the dates of the 2010 Southern Region Conference of the International Public Management Association - Human Resources (IPMA-HR), to be held at the Sheraton Hotel in beautiful downtown Oklahoma City. The conference is being hosted by the Oklahoma Public Human Resources Association (OPHRA), which is the Oklahoma chapter of IPMA-HR. Human resource professionals from state and local public entities in eleven southern states will be in attendance at this conference.

This is the second time that Oklahoma has had the honor of hosting this conference, with the last occasion being in 2001. The theme this year is "Continuing to Power the Future with HR." The agenda begins with a hard-hitting opening session by Kyle Eastham, a motivational speaker with a black belt in three martial arts: Judo, Aikido, and Karate. Kyle draws principles from his martial arts experience to help organizations break free of mediocrity and advance to excellence in their fields. Other speakers include HR practitioners, academicians, and legal experts who will provide workshops on a variety of topics, including employment law, collective bargaining, social networking, and other issues currently facing the HR community.

In addition to all of the informative workshops, there will be organized social events, an enjoyable golf tournament, and the opportunity to see the sights of Bricktown in downtown Oklahoma City. All in all, we believe the IPMA-HR Conference will prove to be one of the highlights of your professional career this year. Please don't miss it!

New Corrections Administrator of Personnel



Greg Thomas began his career in human resources in 1989 when he came to work at the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). As an analyst in the Classification Division, Greg joined the Classification team of Joanie Batty, now the HR Director of Rehabilitation Services. While at OPM, Greg worked his way up through the ranks starting in the Classification Division as a Personnel Specialist I and then later serving as an analyst in the Recruitment Division before returning from detail to the Classification Division. As a staff member of the Classification Division, Mr. Thomas served in positions of various supervisory, managerial, and administrative capacities such as Senior Personnel Specialist, Human Resources Manager I, Human Resources Manager II, and Director of the Classification Division. Mr. Thomas served in this position until April of 2007 when he accepted a promotion with the Oklahoma Department of Corrections (DOC) as a Human Resources Manager. On February 1st Greg was promoted to Administrator of Personnel, filling the vacancy of Linda Parrish who accepted the position of Deputy Director of Administrative Services. Greg has also been on the OPHRA Board of Directors for the past 5 years in the position of Treasurer. Mr. Thomas is a life-long resident of Oklahoma where he graduated from Lexington High School and later of East Central University in Ada.

Agency HR Manager Spotlight:

Lucinda Meltabarger

HR Director, Office of State Finance

*"Two roads diverged in a wood,
and I -- I took the one less
traveled by, and that has made
all the difference."*

-Robert Frost

Lucinda Meltabarger took a convoluted career route to end up in Human Resources; but in the end it was the right road for her. When she was in college, Lucinda took a part-time job with Wal-Mart Stores. It was her intention to work until she completed her degree and then get a "real job." She worked in several areas and departments in the store and finally ended up working in security. For two years, she walked the salesfloors of stores in the Oklahoma City area, pretending to shop, and catching shoplifters. It was a fun job at the time, but Lucinda would not want to do it again. She says "at the time, I was twenty and believed I was immortal and bulletproof. Now that I'm older and wiser, even the idea of that job scares me!"

Lucinda's part-time job turned into a career when Wal-Mart offered her a job as a Loss Prevention District Manager and relocated her to Tampa, Florida. She spent the next eleven years being responsible for safety, security, and inventory losses for a district of ten stores. Lucinda eventually returned to Oklahoma and started looking for another career. This time it was the law that attracted her. "I wanted to go to law school, so it seemed practical to work as a paralegal," Lucinda states. After working for an oil and gas law firm, her next paralegal job was with the Oklahoma Health Care Authority. She really liked the agency and when a position opened up in Human Resources, she gladly took it.

Ten years, a marriage, two kids, and two degrees later, Lucinda is the Human Resources Director for the Office of State Finance. If you ask Lucinda what she likes the best about being in Human Resources, she will tell you that

she likes being a problem solver. "I feel that my job is to make everyone else's job easier," she says. Whether it's a supervisor needing help with an employee, an employee wanting to file a grievance, or a fellow HR professional who needs help in drafting policy; all are areas in which she feels she can assist someone else. One of her favorite stories is

working on a personality conflict between a supervisor and an employee. "They were both good people," she remembers, "they just brought out the worst in each other." Lucinda sat down with both of them while they discussed their problems. As an outsider, she saw where each "pushed the buttons" of the other one. Once they had established what wasn't working, Lucinda facilitated a written agreement between the two on how to avoid future conflicts. "It really worked," she says, and in the end the employee and supervisor had an improved relationship and the employee eventually got promoted.

If you ask Lucinda what she likes least about being an HR Director, the answer comes quickly. "I miss training." As someone who has the "training gene," as she phrases it, teaching is the highest calling. Training and Development was the area she specialized in while at the Health Care Authority. In that role she facilitated employees getting necessary training and also taught classes. Now that she is an HR Director, she is not able to focus on training like she once could. To help her exercise this "training gene," Lucinda teaches classes for the Office of Personnel Management's HRDS division. For the Spring 2010 Semester, she will be teaching Cultural Competency and the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. She also is an adjunct professor at the University of Phoenix, Oklahoma City campus, where she is currently teaching Business Ethics.

"When I first entered the workforce, I never thought about a career in HR," Lucinda says, "now I can't imagine doing anything else." Few people have taken Lucinda's path to arrive in Human Resources, but for her, it "has made all the difference."





NASPE Encourages Use of GovLoop for HR Networking

Hank Batty, Deputy Administrator for Programs

The National Association of State Personnel Executives (NASPE) has turned to GovLoop, a social network for government employees, as a vehicle to enhance communication among its members and their various HR responsibilities.

Last year, NASPE organized networking committees, including classification/compensation, recruitment and retention, workforce planning and information technology, who met periodically through conference calls to discuss critical issues, problems and approaches within their functional areas. This year, NASPE is encouraging all interested state HR practitioners to sign up with GovLoop groups that have been established in those fields (plus a new group on health care benefits. Like better known social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace, GovLoop enables its members to keep in touch with friends and colleagues across the web, form interest groups, and create blogs, forums and discussions. As more state HR professionals join these groups, NASPE hopes to integrate these tools with the existing conference calls to enhance professional development for all its member states.

NASPE staff will conduct a series of informational conference calls in March to answer questions about GovLoop and instruct interested HR professionals on how to sign up. If you are interested and are unable to call in on one of these sessions, you may wish simply to sign up yourself on GovLoop. It's so easy, even I was able to do it without assistance! If you have any questions about GovLoop or the NASPE groups, please do not hesitate to contact me at hank.batty@opm.ok.gov.



Hay Job Evaluation Training Provided to HR Professionals

Tom Patt, Assistant Administrator for Management Services

On Tuesday and Wednesday, January 26 and 27, 35 HR professionals from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and ten other state agencies convened in

the Fifth Floor Conference Room of the Office of Personnel Management to receive training in the Hay Point Factor Job Evaluation System. The training was provided by Greg Wolf, a HayGroup consultant, who led the group through two days of lecture and practical exercises designed to give them a better understanding of how to identify the important aspects of jobs and evaluate them using the Hay's system.

Job evaluation is the formal process to create a job worth hierarchy to enable employers to pay employees appropriately for their contributions to the organization. The Hay Point Factor System has been used by the state for nearly a quarter century to analyze job family levels in the State's classified service and place them into the classified pay structure according to their relative size and scope. The process has also been used by several state agencies in evaluating their unclassified jobs and placing them in a formal pay structure.

The Hay Point Factor system was developed by the Hay-Group, a large compensation consulting firm with offices throughout the world. The system measures the different elements of a job and produces an overall score. This score is then used with a conversion table to determine the pay band assignment.

The process focuses on the job itself, not the person doing the job. Each job is assessed by examining three main elements of job content which are common to all jobs to one extent or another:

1. Know How – the levels of knowledge, skill and abilities (however acquired) which are required to perform the job successfully.
2. Problem Solving – the complexity of thinking required to perform the job when applying Know How.
3. Accountability – the impact the job has on the organization and the constraints the job holder has on acting independently.

A panel approach is normally used in the job evaluation process to assure that all jobs are evaluated in a thorough, fair and consistent manner. OPM refers to the panels who review state classified jobs as "Job Content Review Committees (JCR)." Normally, such JCR Committees consist of 5 – 7 trained evaluators.

Unfortunately, job evaluation is a process that requires regular practice to maintain proficiency. Since fewer JCR Committees have been convened in recent years, OPM has been faced with a dwindling cadre of evaluators with current skills. The replenishment of the pool of potential JCR Committee members was one of the principal reasons for offering the course. We hope that agencies will send their trained evaluators to JCR Committees at every available opportunity, so that they will maintain their skills.

Upon completion of this training course, many participants expressed the opinion that they had a better appreciation the relative value of jobs within their agencies.



Epidemiologist On Board At Employees Benefits Council

Brian King, Communications Officer, Employees Benefit Council

The science behind state employee wellness recently got a boost when the Employees Benefits Council added Amber Sheikh, B.D.S, M.P.H., as its

new epidemiologist for the OKHealth program.

An epidemiologist studies how often diseases occur in different groups of people and why. Epidemiological information is used to plan and evaluate strategies to prevent illness and as a guide to the management of patients in whom disease has already developed. Sheikh will spend much of her time focusing on cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

The OKHealth Wellness program is offered to all active state employees to empower them with tools to adopt a healthy lifestyle that will lead to decreased risk factors such as overweight and obesity, smoking, lack of exercise and an unbalanced diet.

“My position’s overarching goal is to provide the evaluation results to support the OKHealth Wellness program in creating a culture of health among all state employees,” Sheikh said.



An essential feature of the epidemiologist position is to maintain participant confidentiality. OKHealth has instituted strict protocols for data transfer and storing the program data in confidential manner. The evaluation results are only presented in aggregate reports.

Sheikh is a native of Pakistan. She and her husband both earned degrees in dental surgery and practiced dentistry before going abroad to pursue post-graduate studies. They arrived in the U.S. about seven years ago. Sheikh now has a master’s degree and more than four years of experience in public health.

“I strongly believe in public health’s role in prevention efforts,” Sheikh said. “My interest in P.H. began at the college level when I participated in a public health effort to take preventive dental services to children through partnerships with schools.”

Sheikh is married to Fahad Khad, who is also a state employee. He works in the Department of Health’s childhood lead poisoning prevention program. They are the parents of a two year-old son, Nyel.

“My position’s overarching goal is to provide the evaluation results to support the OKHealth Wellness program in creating a culture of health among all state employees,”



Kayla R. Jackson Named 2009 Certified Public Manager of the Year

Joyce Smith, Quality Oklahoma and Productivity Enhancement Programs Coordinator

Department of Human Services employee Kayla R. Jackson was named 2009 Certified Public Manager of the Year by the Oklahoma Society of Certified Public Managers®. Jackson is a social services specialist IV and TANF supervisor at the Crossroads 55J office. She has been with OKDHS since December 1985 and is a 2006 CPM graduate. Jackson is the daughter of Gene and Deanna Jackson of Alva.

“I know so many other Certified Public Managers that are so deserving, and for me to receive this acknowledgement was such a surprise and honor. Being a part of the Oklahoma Society of Certified Public Managers has made me a more complex manager and the relationships I have formed have proven to be invaluable,” said Jackson after receiving the award.

Jackson was 2009 OSCPM membership chair. She also helped staff the Multiple Sclerosis Walk refreshment booth and the society’s Quality Oklahoma Team Day booth, wrapped and delivered gifts as part of the Salvation Army Christmas Project, and helped host the CPM graduation reception.

Jackson’s fellow CPMers say she is dedicated, supportive, attentive, and works diligently. One described her as “jumping into the leadership position with both feet and never stopped helping to grow our organization.”

At OKDHC, Jackson has served as the chair of her county office’s Employee Recognition Committee for 10 years and provided assistance to the OKDHS State Games. She serves on several advisory boards for TANF programs in the Oklahoma City area, including the HIRE Program at Moore/Norman Technology Center, the Elite Program at Mid-Del Technology Center and at Rose State College’s Empower Program.

In honor of Jackson’s accomplishments and hard work, Gov. Brad Henry issued a proclamation declaring Dec. 4, 2009, as “Kayla R. Jackson Day” in the state of Oklahoma.

In the photo to the right: Oscar Jackson, OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary reads the Governor’s Executive Proclamation recognizing Kayla Jackson, OKDHS of “2010 Certified Public Manager of the Year





Staff leaders for EBC and OSEEGIB came together Feb. 10 for a joint meeting at the First National Center in Downtown Oklahoma City. On the front row are OSEEGIB Administrator Frank Wilson (left) and EBC Executive Director Phil Kraft.



EBC and OSEEGIB Working For State Employees

Brian King, Communications Officer, Employees Benefit Council

On January 1, 2010 the Oklahoma State and Education Employees Group Insurance Board (OSEEGIB) began operating with a new Administrator, Frank R. Wilson. Phillip K. Kraft, Executive Director of the Employees Benefits Council (EBC) immediately reached out to Wilson upon learning of his new position at OSEEGIB. Both Directors recognize they serve unique and important roles for state, education and other public employees, retirees and their families. Kraft suggested the agencies meet on a regular basis, sharing information and improving communications between the agencies.

Wilson embraced the idea of regularly scheduled meetings with the agencies senior staffs. "I think this is a very worthwhile endeavor," Wilson said. "I want to thank Phil for reaching out to me. We both should be pulling the rope in the same direction. These two agencies should definitely work together moving forward."

Kraft and his senior staff hosted the first meeting of the agencies' staff leaders on Wednesday, February 10, at EBC's offices in Downtown Oklahoma City's First National Center. Division leaders from both agencies described the responsibilities of their departments and the status of several projects. The teams discussed mutual challenges and possible solutions. It was iterated time and again throughout the meeting that the perceived duplication of responsibilities between the agencies is more of a perception than reality. However, the meeting also revealed areas where the agencies could help each other perform with optimum efficiencies by consolidating efforts and resources.

Kraft and Wilson agreed after the meeting that the spirit of cooperation between the agencies was enjoyed and beneficial to all. The March meeting will be held at OSEEGIB's offices in Landmark Towers. The plan is to continue alternating meeting sites in the future. "Our place isn't quite as exciting as this place (the iconic and historic First National Center), but the parking will be easier," Wilson said.



Agencies Address Budget Shortfalls Using HR Tools

Tom Patt, Assistant Administrator for Management Services

During the past several months, we have all become keenly aware of the downturn in state revenues and the impact on stage agency budgets. During the previous year, agency allocations were initially reduced by 5 percent, then eventually cut by 10 percent. While some agencies have been able to absorb these budget reductions by reducing travel and curtailing purchases, others have had to resort to more drastic measures that directly impact their employees, including furloughs, voluntary outs, and reductions in force.

Of the three options available for reducing payroll costs, furloughs have been the favored choice of agencies, primarily because they have the least impact on agency operations. Furloughs involve placing employees on involuntary leave without pay for a specified number of hours per month throughout the year. Although furloughs result in reduction in employee pay, they generally do not affect an employee's retirement benefit or leave accrual. Since the beginning of 2009, fourteen agencies have implemented furloughs to address budget reductions.

Voluntary outs have been the second most popular choice of agencies for dealing with current budget situation, since they involve the provision of financial incentives to employees to voluntarily terminate their employment to reduce or eliminate the adverse effect of an imminent reduction in force. From 2009 to the present, eight agencies have actually offered voluntary outs to their employees, and several are currently in the planning stages.

The least desirable option from both the agency and employee perspective is the use of reduction in force (RIF). Since it involves involuntary separation of employees from their positions and possible separation from the agency, it is highly disruptive and can be severely demoralizing. The procedure itself is complex, involving the preparation of a plan, issuance of notices, and other actions within established time frames. Failure to adhere to procedural requirements can be the basis for employee appeal of a RIF action to the Merit Protection Commission. For these reasons, RIFs have been the option of last resort for most agencies; and they are usually used only when other alternatives fail to produce sufficient cost savings. As of this writing, three agencies have implemented RIFs, and a few others are actively considering the option.

For more information on the above options or for assistance in planning and implementing them, agencies are encouraged to contact the OPM Compensation Division at (405) 521-6307.

EEO and Affirmative Action...An Agency Director's Perspective

Richard Hatcher, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation

It is a great time to be living in Oklahoma. Our wildlife and our wild places are healthier and more diverse than just about any time since statehood. And likewise our state's citizenry is a rich and diverse mix of cultures and communities.

Our vision at the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation is to have a workforce and a customer base that is reflective of all the different people that live in the state. We want to have the most talented, most diverse workforce of any agency in the state and we want all Oklahomans to experience the wonders of the outdoors.

We want the best of this mix of people and talents to come work for us. However, building a diverse workforce takes time, and it takes hard work. It is more than sitting at a booth at a career fair. It takes more than good intentions. It takes research and it takes a proactive approach.

We pride ourselves on hiring the best-qualified applicants through a process of standardized testing in many positions, and oral interviews in all positions. We had suspected that our difficulty in hiring minorities was that our applicant pool reflected the face of our constituency—primarily male Caucasians mainly living in rural areas. So in April we began asking candidates taking our test to complete an equal opportunity applicant data form. Sure enough, of the 93 people who volunteered to complete the form, the majority were Caucasians and only two were African American, two were Hispanic, one was Asian and 14 were American Indians.

Then we asked Oklahoma State University for their EEO figures. Of the 153 students enrolled in a Natural Resources Ecology and Management degree, one is African American, three are Hispanic, and 18 are American Indians. As we suspected, we not only are not getting enough minorities applying for our positions, but also there aren't enough minorities pursuing fish and wildlife management degree options. Or in the language of our agency, there are not enough fish in the pond where we are fishing. I want to point out that our agency is not underutilizing American Indians.

Now that the problem is more clearly identified the question becomes, how can we get more fish in our pond? Just like transforming a pond into a great fishing spot, there isn't a singular solution and no matter what actions are taken, results won't happen overnight.

We met with the administration at Langston University to discuss how we could work together to recruit more minorities. Currently Langston offers an Agricultural Sciences degree (Natural Resources option) which qualifies Langston students to compete for our technician, biologist and game warden positions. However in an effort to strengthen the degree program, Langston administration agreed to add a couple classes to their current curriculum.

Additionally, we have partnered with Langston to offer a pair of internships dedicated to Langston students interested in wildlife careers. And we will also sponsor two students from Langston to attend the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' (SEAFWA) annual conference where they can make connections with the best wildlife professionals in the southeastern United States. SEAFWA is an organization whose members are the state agencies with primary responsibility for management and protection of the fish and wildlife resources in 15 southeastern states.

We will continue to have a booth at Langston's Career Fair as well as several other state universities. But we will also offer seminars on campus and provide tours of our facilities. In short, we will work to create a strong interest in a wildlife career in students whose background may

not have exposed them to the personal satisfaction of making a career in wildlife.

Many of our most passionate and dedicated employees grew up with a fishing pole in their hand and love for the outdoors instilled in them at an early age. This plays a big role in what makes them great employees and propels them to choose a career in the wildlife field. Unfortunately, many minorities do not have that same opportunity—we want to change that too. We have a wide variety of programs to reach out to minority youth including the Close to Home Fishing program, the free Wildlife Expo, the Archery in the Schools program and more. Our goal in these efforts is to ignite a spark in the imaginations of young people, a spark that we hope will lead them to a lifelong burning passion for the outdoors—and maybe even a career at the Wildlife Department.

Obviously our approach is not a silver bullet. It will take time, and it will take work. But it's better than just sitting behind a table at a career fair wondering why we haven't reached our affirmative action goal.





Oklahoma Compensation and Unclassified Positions Review Board Submits Report

Shirley Russell, Director of Legislative Affairs

The following recommendations were voted on and approved by the Compensation and Unclassified Positions Review Board at its December 17, 2009 and January 21, 2010 meetings. The recommendations were then submitted in a report to the Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the State Senate:

Total Compensation Statement: In the spring of 2009, the State provided each employee with a Total Compensation Statement. This statement, which was modeled after similar documents provided by many employers in both the private and public sector, provides each employee with a complete picture of the full value of their compensation package with the State, including both direct (cash) and indirect (benefits) components. We believe this statement serves as an excellent retention tool for State agencies as they compete for talent with other employers in the labor market. Accordingly, we recommend that the State continue to provide these statements to all employees on an annual basis.

State Minimum Wage: The elimination of the indexing component in the state minimum wage is the focus of our recommendations this year, since indexing has served to create an unfunded and unpredictable financial liability for state agencies each year as the poverty index inexorably moves upward. Moreover, as the minimum wage increases the pay of those whose pay falls below the minimum level each year and the pay of other employees remains stagnant, pay differences that were intended to recognize tenure, performance, or complexity of duties are eroded, forcing agencies to provide additional pay increases to remedy the situation.

We recommend that the indexing feature be deleted from the statute, Title 74, O.S. Section 840-2.16 and that the minimum wage remain at \$8.80 per hour. This minimum wage level can be monitored and be revised in conjunction with overall pay increases to address market competitiveness.

Longevity Pay: Results of the 2009 Annual Compensation Report indicate that the state's classified pay rates are 15.47 percent below the market pay rates for comparable benchmark jobs, which is a very slight improvement from the market deficit of 16.12 percent identified in the 2008 Report. However, it would be a mistake to infer from these numbers any real improvement in the state's competitive position in the market. In reality, the economic recession which has gripped the country throughout this past year appears to have caused employers to be very conservative in awarding pay increases, which in turn has contributed to a slowing of pay growth in the market. This has had the effect of keeping state classified pay from losing ground in its relationship with the market this year, in spite of the fact that state employees did not receive a general pay increase.

At the request of the Review Board, an analysis was prepared to determine the cost to the state of increasing the Longevity Pay Program Payments to account for inflation between when the payments were last adjusted (1989) to the present. Using the inflation calculator and adjusting from 1989 resulted in escalating each of the longevity payments in the schedule by approximately 74.5%. The cost to the state under the current Longevity Pay schedule is \$43,714,652 and the cost of indexed longevity would be \$76,279,425. Total payroll for the state is approximately \$1.48 billion and the additional cost would be approximately 2.2% of payroll.

Although current revenue shortfalls and the likelihood of the continuation of those shortfalls in the foreseeable future have severely restricted the state from taking any meaningful steps this year to improve its competitive position in the market, the state cannot afford to be complacent and must be prepared to address pay concerns when funds are available.

Since the Longevity Payment Schedule was last adjusted in 1989, we recommend that the Legislature review the appropriateness of indexing longevity pay to the rate of inflation from that year forward.

Approval of Unclassified Positions: The Oklahoma Department of Central Services requested approval to establish seven (7) new unclassified positions and move seven (7) unclassified positions currently employed pursuant to Governor's Letters to DCS's unclassified authorization under Title 74, O.S., Section 840-5.5. The request for the new positions is based upon recommendations and findings of Treya Partners, a private consultant hired by DCS to assess the State of Oklahoma procurement activities. The Office of Personnel Management has reviewed the requests. Below is an analysis of each request along with OPM's recommendation.

• Three (3) post auditors, one (1) Chief Auditor, one (1) Assistant Director of Central Purchasing Division, one (1) Professional Errors and Omissions Liability Adjuster and one (1) Strategic Sourcing Manager. These positions are currently hired pursuant to Title 74 Section 61.3, "Governor's Letters...experts and assistants". OPM believes they are more appropriately listed among the unclassified jobs in Title 74, Section 840-5.5 (37).

• Two (2) Strategic Sourcing Managers. These positions will manage the strategic sourcing team, delivering and executing all strategic sourcing efforts.

• Three (3) Strategic Sourcing Assistant Managers. These positions will be critical in taking a lead role in the strategic sourcing team, working in a team environment and interacting with state-end users and supplier executives.

• Two (2) Printing Services Brokers. DCS is in the process of modernizing its printing services capabilities in the Central Printing Division. These two positions would have the responsibilities of managing the printing services for the state.

DCS indicates that these positions have highly specialized duties and responsibilities that are not adequately reflected in existing classified Job Family Descriptors (JFDs). The agency further states that incumbents must possess unique qualifications and that utilizing the unclassified service would allow greater flexibility in hiring, compensating and retaining qualified personnel.

OPM's analysis of the DCS request indicated the agency's contention is correct in that there are no appropriate matches of the positions' duties and responsibilities in comparison with current classified JFDs. Also, the highly specialized qualifications necessary for these positions and the compensation that will be required to recruit and fill them suggest that the unclassified service may provide needed flexibility to DCS.

Based upon OPM's analysis, the Oklahoma Compensation and Unclassified Positions Review Board supports the Department of Central Services request and recommends that seven additional unclassified positions and the conversion of the seven Governor's Letters appointments be authorized under Title 74, O.S. Section 840-5.5.

IPMA-HR CERTIFICATIONS (since 11/01/09) 1/5/2010

Linda Hall, IPMA-CP; State Department of Education.

IPMA-HR RECERTIFICATIONS (since 11/01/09) 11/09/2009

Doyle Fortney, IPMA-CP; Department of Health.

12/31/2009

Oscar Jackson, IPMA-CP; Office of Personnel Management.

NOTE:

Please advise Janet Anderson at Janet.Anderson@opm.ok.gov of IPMA-HR and SHRM certifications and recertifications.