### Office of State Employment Relations

## NEWS & VIEWS

Volume 9, Issue 1 April 2007

# FROM THE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE: Behind the Scenes at OSER

By Karen Timberlake

This edition of News & Views centers around the "behind the scenes" workings of the Office of State Employment Relations. Through the articles presented here, we hope to give you greater insight into how and why we do what we do to, as our motto goes, serve the people who serve Wisconsin.



Karen Timberlake Director, OSER

We have been devoting significant time, energy, and resources to better coordinating the State's outreach and recruitment efforts in the name of ensuring that we are reaching the best and most diverse candidate pools available. In her article on page 12, OSER's new Agency Services Bureau Director, Linda Kowalewski, makes the point that many of her private sector colleagues weren't aware of the many fine career opportunities with state government and didn't know how to apply for a state job. Of course we must reach people like Linda, who brings 16 years of valuable experience to her new role, in order to continue to meet the State's workforce needs. Her feedback emphasizes the importance of the work we have ahead of us. In this edition, we also highlight a new initiative to raise the profile of state employment with veterans groups, and raise the profile of veterans as a labor pool with state agencies.

With the changing demographics of the state and national workforces, we will also need to be directing more attention toward retention and knowledge transfer strategies within agencies as more and more experienced state employees retire. Linda Heisler's article on knowledge journaling presents one strategy that the Department of Health and Family Services has used successfully to ensure that critical processes are documented to assist in training new employees and ensuring continuity of operations. More of these strategies can be found on the workforce planning website (<a href="http://workforceplanning.wi.gov/">http://workforceplanning.wi.gov/</a>) and even more will be forthcoming through the continuing efforts of the ongoing workforce planning work groups.

Finally, this will be my last contribution to News & Views, at least in my current role, as I will be moving over to join the Department of Health and Family Services as Executive Assistant. It has been an honor and a privilege to have served as OSER Director for the last four years. I have been very fortunate to have worked with the very talented and dedicated staff of OSER over the last four years. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank all of the OSER staff with whom I have worked for their many contributions to the office and to state employees and job applicants alike. State employment offers us so many opportunities to learn, to grow, and to serve. Find your next opportunity at <a href="https://www.wisc.jobs">www.wisc.jobs</a>, and all best wishes to you.

(Editor's Note: Karen's last day with OSER was Friday, March 16, 2007. Jennifer Donnelly took office as OSER Director on Monday, March 26, 2007. We will miss Karen and look forward to working with Jennifer.)

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#### Special points of interest:

- AA—what it is and isn't
- Knowledge Journaling
- ELA/EDMA
- · Marketing the State
- Wisc "dot" Jobs



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#### NEW WORKFORCE PLANNING & FACT BOOK

By Jamie O'Donnell, OSER

The 2005-2009 *State of Wisconsin Workforce Planning & Fact Book* is complete and is posted on the OSER website at the following address: <a href="http://oser.state.wi.us/docview.asp?docid=6309">http://oser.state.wi.us/docview.asp?docid=6309</a>. Now that the first enterprise workforce plan is complete, the beginning stages of the next plan are already in the works.

It is our intention to continue to produce this plan on a biennial basis. However, the timing of the next planning cycle has been moved forward by several months. The reason for this change is to ensure that agencies engaging in workforce planning will have their plans completed prior to the start of their budget planning process. To this end, OSER will provide training to the agencies on workforce planning beginning in August 2007. The completed plans will need to be submitted to OSER at the end of May 2008.

Feedback we have received from most agencies has been very positive. Particularly noted was the usefulness of this planning process to the management teams, specifically increasing the awareness of the challenges that they will be facing in the near future. This process has been a great learning experience for us all and we look forward to improving and refining this process the next time around.

# ENTERPRISE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY: EXPANDING OUR HORIZONS



By Patricia Almond, OSER

In the April 2006 issue of OSER News & Views, we introduced the Enterprise Leadership Academy (ELA) pilot program. This pilot was developed in response to our awareness of upcoming retirements and a possible shortfall of leaders, which create a significant workforce planning issue for the State as an employer. Investing in the development of leadership and management skills not only contributes to stronger skill sets, it also expands managers' and supervisors' abilities to be more effective in developing future talent for their organizations. The ELA pilot was offered through OSER in conjunction with University of Wisconsin-Madison's Certified Public Manager program. Thirty participants from various state agencies were selected through a nomination process to participate in the program. A formal graduation was held on December 13, 2006, in the Assembly Chambers at the State Capitol, with Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton as the keynote speaker.

As we closed out the pilot program, we gathered final evaluations and input from the participants to help us identify what we should retain in the ELA and what topics should possibly move into our proposed newest program, the Enterprise Management Development Academy (EMDA). The EMDA would be targeted to new and aspiring managers with emphasis on building

strong foundations for management and leadership skills. The ELA would retain its focus on advanced leadership and management skills. At present, we are planning to initiate the EMDA as a pilot program just as we did with the ELA. Participants will be selected through a nomination process. We anticipate a cohort group of 30 individuals for the EMDA. Participants would have self-study as well as in-class time over a period of a year.

We are delighted at the positive response and support we have had from all levels across the agencies, including the executive level. It affirms the State's commitment to ensuring top quality managers and supervisors in the coming years.

We look forward to sharing more information as it becomes available.

To find out more information about the ELA program, please visit the program website at <a href="www.ela.wi.gov">www.ela.wi.gov</a> or you may direct questions about the program to Patricia Almond, Administrator of the Division of Merit Recruitment and Selection at

Patricia. Almond@wisconsin.gov.

# KNOWLEDGE JOURNALING: MUCH ADO ABOUT SOMETHING

By Linda K. Heisler, DHFS

The problem. Many of us talk about potential loss of important organizational knowledge and experience as the Baby Boomer generation (1946-1964) begins to retire, yet few of us have implemented a systematic approach to determine where and with whom crucial knowledge resides within our organizations. Only a handful of us have taken steps to ensure that key knowledge is recorded, codified, retained and easily retrieved. Few have implemented metrics to determine the potential monetary cost associated with losing critical organizational knowledge and experience. We are adept at managing all manner of assets and liabilities, other than our intellectual capital. We know the percentage of state employees who are retirement eligible over the next ten years, but have we calculated the net worth of their knowledge?

What to do about it. Those who are experts in the field talk about two kinds of knowledge: tacit and explicit. We've done a better job with managing explicit knowledge—the stuff of databases, portals, and directories: the more concrete, quantitative data. Tacit knowledge is more qualitative, less tangible, harder to define, store and retrieve. It includes the depth of understanding accumulated over the lifespan of one's career. One way of accessing tacit knowledge is through knowledge journaling.

Knowledge journaling: what is it? A knowledge journal is a slice of organizational history and institutional knowledge from the individual or workgroup perspective. It isn't a formal cookie-cutter template with fillable blanks; there isn't a one-size-fits-all recommended form. At the individual level, knowledge journaling is an ongoing written narrative that begins the first week of one's employment, is maintained by the employee consistent with records management policies, and concludes with completion of the formal exit interview. At the individual level, knowledge journaling can include but isn't limited to:

- Status reports—bulleted highlights of activities and goals updated monthly
- o Best practices and processes
- o Experience and expertise
- o Skills and competencies
- Tips and tricks

- o Learning opportunities—helpful courses and weblinks, mentors, coaches, peer advisors.
- o Technical needs—software, licenses, hardware.
- O Important contacts—names, phone numbers, street and e-mail addresses.
- Colleagues, peers in home and other agencies who are doing similar work.
- o Exit interview—What worked well? What would you/should the agency do differently? What are your concerns? What could have the agency done to keep you?

At the workgroup level, knowledge journaling includes:

- o Cookbook-style manuals
- o Workplans and workgroups
- o Project plans and meeting summaries
- Schedules and timelines
- o Procedures and protocols
- o Contracts and budgets

Why bother? Like any other strategic business tool, it takes time to implement knowledge journaling; however, the results are worth the effort. Knowledge journaling brings the individual and the work unit into better strategic alignment with the Agency's mission and goals, helps reduce duplication of effort and resources, and provides a wealth of information for

- o Coaching and mentoring new employees
- o Cross training experienced employees
- O Determining whether or not to fill a vacant position at the same level/classification
- Managing projects and delegating
- o Managing change, re-organizations, transitions and emergencies

Why bother with knowledge journaling? Because it makes good business sense. Don't wait until your employees are announcing their retirement to begin.

R. MARTIN LUTHER KING said, "Human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability—it comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to be co-workers."

# ADVANCED LABOR RELATIONS COURSE OFFERED

By Michael Soehner, OSER

Did you know that OSER offers a three-day Advanced Labor Relations (ALR) Course for Supervisors and Managers? The State's labor law was designed to promote and maintain fair, friendly and mutually satisfactory employment relations and ensure the availability of a suitable system for peaceful adjustment of whatever controversies may arise. In simple terms, we call this labor peace. For state employees, this is accomplished through the daily implementation of the 19 labor agreements we have with the various unions. These agreements, combined with work rules, agency policies and a willingness to engage in ongoing, open and constructive dialogue with the union and employees regarding issues in the workplace, provide the framework for how we treat each other with fairness and respect as we accomplish the services we provide to the people of Wisconsin.

For labor peace to happen, supervisors and managers need to understand and implement fairly the provisions of union contracts and the labor laws. The ALR course provides the tools necessary to (1) understand management, union and employee rights, (2) provide a fair interpretation of benefits provided in labor contracts and, when necessary (3) conduct a fair investigation of alleged employee misconduct or delinquency, (4) provide corrective discipline to restore employees to productive members of your team and (5) resolve disputes through the grievance process when other attempts at dispute resolution fail.

Information regarding taking this training can be found on the OSER website at <a href="http://OSER.state.wi.us">http://OSER.state.wi.us</a>, Training, OSER Training.

#### AFFIRMATIVE ACTION DEMYSTIFIED

By Pepe Indalecio, OSER

Oftentimes when the phase "affirmative action" is used, it is perceived as a government program involving preferential treatment or quotas. This is a misperception of the program, since this is not how the State of Wisconsin conducts its business. To some extent, the news media plays a critical role in how the concept of affirmative action is conveyed and subsequently understood by the public. This article addresses some of the misconceptions and illustrates when affirmative action is used in the state hiring process.

Wisconsin Statute, Chapter 230.03(2), provides the guidance that governs the parameters under which affirmative action can be applied. The overall goal of the State is to have a workforce that is reflective of the people we serve. One approach to achieving a diverse workforce is to undertake specific measures, i.e., affirmative action, in order to attain these goals. According to the state statute, affirmative action is carried out for the purpose of ensuring equal opportunities, eliminating the substantial disparity in the representation of women, racial/ethnic minorities and persons with dis-

abilities in comparison to their availability in the relevant labor pool and eliminating the present effects of past discrimination.

Though it is a popular misconception that the Division of Affirmative Action (DAA) is exclusively about the promotion of affirmative action initiatives, the reality is most of the efforts initiated by this division are actually directed toward ensuring equal employment opportunities. These initiatives cover a wide range of employment practices which include maintaining a harassment-free work environment, reasonable accommodations for applicants and employees with disabilities, procedures for filing discrimination complaints, hiring based on the merit system, balanced interview panels, recruitment activity plans and other related activities.

The DAA administers only two affirmative action programs—Expanded Certification and the Targeted Opportunities Program (TOPjobs)—that are dedicated strictly to the principles of affirmative action. These

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## DEMYSTIFIED (CONT.)

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two programs are intended to remove barriers that have historically excluded women, racial/ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities from participating in the personnel process, thus promoting equal opportunities. These programs are not a panacea, but they are designed as temporary measures to eliminate the present effects of past discrimination.

Expanded Certification enables applicants the opportunity for further consideration. For openings in underutilized positions, this initiative allows additional names of racial/ethnic minorities, women, or both to be included on the certification list. These applicants must otherwise be qualified individuals who have passed the exam and possess the knowledge, skills, training and experience for the position. Expanded Certification allows these individuals the opportunity to be interviewed with no guarantee of employment. There is no preferential treat-

ment or quota. The ultimate hiring decision is based on the qualifications of the individual.

The Targeted Opportunities Program (TOPjobs) is designed to address the lack of representation of women, racial/ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities in state service for underutilized positions. For college students entering their junior or senior year or students enrolled in a two-year technical or vocational school program, TOPjobs provides internship opportunities in order to receive practical work experience and exposure to employment in the public sector.

It is evident that myths and misunderstandings about affirmative action contribute to distrusting the program. The reality is that even though the State of Wisconsin promotes affirmative action programming as a part of personnel processes, the majority of efforts in this area are geared toward providing equal opportunities for all applicants.

#### **OUTREACH INITIATIVE FOR DISABLED VETERANS**

By Travis Dillon and Yer Vang, OSER

To broaden Governor Doyle's commitment to veterans, OSER is pleased to announce an initiative to promote the hiring of veterans, particularly disabled veterans, in state government. Our veterans have sacrificed much and they deserve the best veterans program and services that our state can offer. As we have seen in news accounts over the past few months, one of the challenges facing veterans as they adjust to civilian life is securing employment. Veterans comprise an important segment of the Wisconsin workforce. We know that our veterans have the talent and character to excel in state government.

The Disabled Veterans Hiring Support Outreach Initiative is an OSER-driven project, in collaboration with the Departments of Workforce Development and Veterans Affairs. The initiative is directed at improving the visibility of hiring veterans, in particular disabled veterans, in state government and to improve the State of Wisconsin's ability to assist veterans as they look to secure state employment, while at the same time improving our ability to recruit and retain a talented and diverse workforce. This initiative contains three elements.

One of the three elements is an outreach effort targeted toward disabled veterans that will make resources better available for their job search. We have created and will expand upon a Veterans Resources page on the WiscJobs website. The goal of the web page is to organize effectively the vast array of information, forms and website links that are available to veterans. Veterans can use this page to begin their job search process within state government, but also will have available other information and links that would be useful for all veterans. In addition, OSER will be looking for opportunities to provide training to enhance the use of WiscJobs by disabled veterans. Specifically, this effort will enhance the outreach to veterans in their job search process by training the County Veterans Service Officers who provide assistance to veterans.

#### **OUTREACH** (CONT.)

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The second element of the initiative is the agency outreach effort targeted toward increasing the visibility of disabled veterans as potential candidates to state agencies and the University of Wisconsin System. This section of the initiative aims to promote the positive aspects of employing disabled veterans, including the benefits of using the noncompetitive appointment process.

The third element is data management and reporting of veterans in state government. We will evaluate current reporting processes and identify any possible improvements that can be implemented to enhance the State's ability to report the hiring of veterans in state government.

## WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL STUDY COMMITTEE ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

By Demetri Fisher, OSER

Mid-year of 2005 University of Wisconsin (UW) System President Kevin Reilly put together an admissions advisory group in response to criticisms that the UW System was failing in its mission toward diversity in its student population. This effort was put forward for the entire UW system. There have been historically different criteria for how campuses admit different students across the UW System. For example, the UW-Madison has long considered race, ethnicity and socioeconomic factors as a part of its admissions process, but other campuses used a set academic formula with almost no considerations for other factors. The UW System has over 120,000 students spread across 24 two-and fouryear colleges and universities as well as graduate schools. The admissions advisory group, which was chaired by the UW System's Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, initially requested all campuses to model their programs for uniformity after the UW-Madison's admission policy.

State Senator Glenn Grothman (R-West Bend) has been very critical of the UW System's approach to this issue. He established a Special Legislative Committee on Affirmative Action to examine the State's affirmative action (AA) program and how affirmative action relates to the university's admissions policy. The Committee consists of four state representatives, at least one state senator and 12 public members. The Committee has been charged with the mission to review state and municipal affirmative action programs and provisions.

There is also a focus on UW admissions policies as they relate to the proposed changes recommended by the UW Board of Regents. Additionally, there was interest in examining state agencies' contracting and minority business activity, including the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE). From these program and policy evaluations, the Committee may develop recommendations to the State Legislature for changes in state law subject to approval by the Assembly, the Senate and the Governor.

To date there have been three meetings. The first meeting occurred on October 4, 2006. Committee member Robert Gregg of the Boardman Law Firm set the stage by providing background information on statutory provisions in state AA and equal opportunity programs. He emphasized that AA was not about quotas and delineated that Wisconsin's oldest AA program is, in fact, the preference point system for veterans. Subsequent speakers testified regarding various employment and contracting programs and detailed how AA operated within their respective programs. The questions from the committee members were mixed. Some members commented in support of AA programs while others expressed concerns and doubts about the value of AA policies. Toward the end of the first session, Senator Grothman indicated he intended to invite Ward Connerly to the second meeting in December. Mr. Connerly is a national figure who is a very outspoken critic of affirmative action. Representative Tamara Grigsby (D-Milwaukee) and member at-large Vicki Washington

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## AA STUDY COMMITTEE (CONT.)

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voiced their concerns regarding this particular speaker and stated that they would like to provide the committee with other speakers of equal recognition to balance the ongoing discussion.

The second meeting was held on December 19, 2006. Ward Connerly was scheduled to make an appearance and provide testimony before the committee regarding his thoughts on affirmative action. This meeting was anticipated to be highly charged as the room overflowed with students and community members as well as attracting media attention. Connerly provided his personal reflections about the pitfalls relating to affirmative action. His argument against affirmative action was that as a policy, affirmative action is patently unfair, poor public policy and unconstitutional.

At the January meeting, UW Chancellor John Wiley gave an eloquent presentation to the Committee. He shared personal experiences of people he had known in his life and career who deeply valued the need for diversity in education. He stated that having a diverse campus enhances the educational experience of every person involved. He also intoned that academics alone was not a very good basis upon which to predict the success of a given student but other factors needed to be considered for admissions. His words struck a chord with many in the room, and there appeared to be an enhanced understanding of the University's position regarding its admission and diversity policies from his presentation.

There have been approximately twelve presentations to date made in all three meetings, mostly in support and favoring the value of affirmative action. The only exception was Mr. Connerly's presentation which combined some facts and figures regarding different programs and personal stories against affirmative action initiatives. Most of the debates and conversations have been substantially between Senator Grothman, Senator Lena Taylor (D-Milwaukee) and Representative Tamara Grigsby (D-Milwaukee) concerning political and social ramifications on both sides of this issue.

Despite the debate and controversy which have surrounded aspects of this special committee, university officials are still moving forward with plans to maintain race, ethnicity and socioeconomic considerations in its admission policy, similar to the holistic approach employed on the Madison campus. State affirmative action policies regarding contracting and hiring remain in place and there have been no internal predications toward any changes to policy at this time. The committee has at least one more meeting planned in May 2007. Thus far, there have been no motions put to the floor for a vote and no resolutions are pending. Though there is still much work to be done regarding the direction the Committee has taken, the entire proposition can be viewed as a work in progress.

#### COMPENSATION PLAN SURVEY COMPLETED

By Paul Ostrowski, OSER

During the first three weeks of December 2006, permanent and project nonrepresented employees covered by the State of Wisconsin Compensation Plan were given the opportunity to complete a survey regarding their pay and benefits. The information obtained from the survey will be used to help determine the content of the 2007-2009 Compensation Plan, which will be recommended to the Joint Committee on Employment Relations in the spring for approval.

In the past, most of the information gathered from non-represented employees was obtained by holding five to eight Compensation Plan meetings during the fall of even numbered years. Because of declining attendance at these meetings, it was necessary to create a more convenient method for employees to provide input. The survey covering 12 areas of compensation, either covered by the Compensation Plan or by statute and administrative code, was developed for this purpose.

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## COMPENSATION SURVEY (CONT.)

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Over 1,100 of the approximately 6,540 employees covered by the Compensation Plan chose to complete at least one of the survey sections covering 12 areas of compensation. As expected, the General Wage Adjustment (GWA) section received the most responses. Other sections receiving comments from at least 70 percent of the respondents were Broadbanding, Parity, Leave Benefits and Insurance Benefits. Employees were also given space to comment on compensation-related topics that were not specifically covered by the survey questions. In addition, employees could provide input outside the survey, either by attending a Compensation Plan meeting held on December 13, or by submitting written comments directly to the OSER Bureau of Compensation.

Although analysis of the data collected was not yet completed at the time this article was written, looking at a sample of the comments it is obvious that nonrepresented employees' opinions regarding compensation varied greatly. For example, there appears to be a large number of employees who want annual increases to be based on

merit, but there is probably an equally large number of employees who think that they should be entirely mandatory. Another large group think a combination of both discretionary and mandatory would be appropriate. This latter group suggested that a certain amount (such as a certain percentage or a cost of living increase) be given across-the-board with the remainder of the funds available then distributed as discretionary increases. There were also those who took a different approach and commented that increases for supervisors should be equal to or more than those of the employees supervised. On the other hand, some said that increases should be totally independent of collective bargaining and based on the labor market for the work performed. There were a few who thought that increases should be seniority-based, with some of these employees suggesting the development of seniority-based grids.

As in the past, the contents of the 2007-2009 Compensation Plan and the issues addressed therein will largely be dictated by the size of the Compensation Reserve signed into law as part of the biennial budget bill.

#### LABOR MARKET SURVEY METHODOLOGY

By Dana Denny, OSER

Every two years, in preparation for compensation plan development and collective bargaining, OSER conducts an external labor market study during the summer of the even-numbered years. Depending on the number of classifications investigated, anywhere from 675 to 800 Wisconsin municipal and private sector employers (including the five surrounding states—Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Michigan and Minnesota) will randomly receive OSER compensation surveys. The total number of employers included in the random sample is determined by the U.S. Standard Industry Classification (SIC) industry code assigned to their organization by the federal Department of Labor.

Labor market information is obtained from employers through mailed questionnaires and telephone follow-up. Survey participants are asked to match positions within their organizations to benchmark job content descriptions provided by OSER. Bench-

mark positions are based on current state job classifications and are included in the survey if (1) suitable counterparts exist within the competitive external labor market, and (2) counterparts possess common job qualifications and job content to similarly matched State of Wisconsin classifications. Surveyed employers are requested to provide July cash and benefit compensation information for the year in which they receive the survey.

The survey collects three types of information:
(1) General Demographics, including general data relative to the type of industry surveyed, the total number of unionized and non-unionized positions, and the duration of existing collective bargaining agreements, if applicable; (2) Employer Benefit and Compensation Practices, or information regarding employee benefits, recent and projected pay increases (both lump sum and base building) and compensation structure adjustments; and (3) Direct Compensation Practices, or average salary amounts paid to employ-

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### LABOR MARKET SURVEY (CONT.)

(Continued from page 8)

ees, their general hours of work, and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) status of surveyed benchmark positions. Prior to analysis, each questionnaire is thoroughly reviewed and coded by compensation professionals using data management and statistical software. Telephone follow-up is also used to confirm job matches and clarify compensation responses.

#### CLASSIFICATION SURVEY PROGRAM IN PROGRESS

By Pat Waterman, OSER

Each biennium OSER is involved in a survey program. Surveys may be requested by an agency, the University or the unions, or if OSER sees the necessity. Survey reasons include significant problems with classification plan administration, recruitment and retention, technology changes, classification specifications being outdated or other such concerns.

There are two separate types of surveys: (1) a compensation (labor market) survey as described in the previous article; and (2) a classification survey that involves deciding which occupational areas are experiencing the most significant problems and then looking closely at those classifications by reviewing position descriptions and/or interviewing (auditing) benchmark positions in the various agencies and campuses.

This article will address the classification surveys being conducted this biennium. OSER solicited survey requests from state agencies and prioritized those requests based on the justifications provided by the agencies as well as OSER's internal assessment. This limited scope survey program recognizes the limited staff resources within OSER and the significant workload burden surveys place on state agency human resources and program staff.

Occupational areas that are currently in the process of a classification survey are Boiler Safety and Elevator Safety Inspectors; Education Consultants, Coordinators and Specialists; Education Administrative Director; Public Instruction Supervisor; Human Resources Specialists; Instrument Makers; Program and Planning Analysts; Student Status Examiners; Teacher Assistants; Transportation Customer Representative 1-4, Field and Lead; and Victim Services Specialists. One of the primary goals of the surveys is to simplify the classification structure. This classification simplification was addressed in the October 2006 issue of this newsletter. Another primary goal is to ensure the classification specifications accurately reflect the work performed and the tools used to perform the tasks assigned to positions in these classifications.

Each survey is being managed by OSER, although some agencies are taking the lead in conducting the actual review. Surveys are being conducted using the whole job methodology, using position descriptions (PDs) and information gathered during in-person interviews (i.e., audits) to assess the work. PDs are relied upon heavily during the analysis of the information presented to OSER. The importance of accurate, up-to-date PDs in this process cannot be overstated.

The OSER Survey Managers have conducted periodic meetings with Agency Survey Coordinators throughout the survey cycle to discuss progress, problem solve and coordinate the survey activities on a statewide basis. After the review is completed, the OSER Survey Manager will analyze the results and revise or develop the appropriate classification specifications to more accurately identify the work that is being done by the various levels (if applicable) of each of the classifications. The specifications are then reviewed by the Agency Survey Coordinators and subject matter experts with recommendations sent back to OSER.

## **CLASSIFICATION SURVEY (CONT.)**

(Continued from page 9)

Currently in the 2006-2007 process, most of the OSER Survey Managers are at the point of analyzing the results of the review that was done and working on developing specifications. We are anticipating this step will be accomplished in time for the upcoming negotiations

The Division of Merit Recruitment and Selection (DMRS) is coordinating with the Division of Compensation and Labor Relations (DCLR) to complete the labor market surveys and propose the pay range as-

signments connected with these occupational surveys in order to prepare for negotiation of the 2007-2009 labor agreements because the assignment of a pay range to a classification is a mandatory part of bargaining. When this step is done and negotiation of the labor agreements are final, the survey can be implemented at the negotiated effective date and positions are reallocated as necessary.

More complete information on these surveys and their progress can be found in the October 12, 2006, bulletin OSER-0142-MRS and by selecting the Quick Link to 2006-2007 Classification Surveys on the OSER website at <a href="http://oser.state.wi.us/">http://oser.state.wi.us/</a>.

## EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION PROGRAM: STATE EMPLOYEES HONORED WITH AWARDS

By Robert Toomey, OSER

The ornate Governor's Conference Room in the State Capitol was the backdrop for the November 2006 State Employee Suggestion Program annual awards ceremony. The event was a formal way to honor state employees whose innovative ideas improved Wisconsin state government services and processes, and whose suggestions were judged by the Employee Suggestion Board to be the cream of the crop for the past fiscal year. More on the award-winners later; first let's take a look at what this program is about.

Throughout the year, the three-member Employee Suggestion Board receives, reviews, and recognizes employee suggestions that are successfully implemented at state agencies. Employee suggestions are first analyzed for feasibility and implemented at the agency level before they are forwarded to the Employee Suggestion Board. The Board meets several times a year to decide on regular awards, and then holds the annual awards ceremony to honor the best of the best.

The current board members appointed by Governor Doyle are: Sandy Drew (chair); Gene Dalhoff; and David Vriezen. At least one board member must be a current state employee; Drew works at the Investment

Board and Vriezen at the Department of Commerce. Dalhoff—executive director of the Baraboo Area Chamber of Commerce—brings a perspective from outside state government. OSER provides support to the



Drew, Dalhoff, Vriezen

Board and program coordination. The current program coordinator is Robert Toomey of OSER.

The purpose of the State Employee Suggestion Program—created in 1954—is "to encourage and reward unusual and meritorious suggestions and accomplishments by state employees promoting economy and efficiency in the performance of any function of state government" (excerpt from Wis. Stats., sec. 230.48). Suggestions may entail cost-savings, but the majority of suggestions do not result in tangible cost savings; rather they involve better ways of doing things, improving processes and customer service.

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## **EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION PROGRAM (CONT.)**

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The annual award winners for fiscal year 2005-06 were:

## • Individual Suggester of the Year 2006: TONY JOHNSON



Johnson and Drew

(Department of Veterans Affairs) was honored for creating a design concept, assembly and completion of casket carriers for Northern and Southern Veterans Cemeteries. The completed casket carriers fulfilled the Cemetery Director ex-

pectations, and are functional and visually acceptable. The work requirements included a metal enclosure to accommodate moving a casket, permanently attached to the frame of a utility vehicle, to rotate a minimum of 90 degrees with inside rollers and a roll-up rear door. After assembly was completed, painting and graphics were completed by an outside vendor so the casket carrier would represent the cemetery and ensure the dignity and respect that moving a veteran's casket would require. Net Cost Savings: Total, \$33,853. Average Annual Savings: \$6,770.

#### • Group Suggestion of the Year 2006:

## TRACI BREWER and KATHLEEN KOCH

(Department of Natural Resources) were recognized for updating DNR's computer inventory prior to reviewing licensing agreement. This revealed 569 computers that were no longer being used by



Koch and Brewer

the agency. Cost Savings: \$359,289 for one year. Average Annual Savings: \$71,858.

• Agency Coordinator of the Year 2006: KEVIN HUGGINS (Department of Natural Resources) was honored for his outstanding work as agency coordinator. Kevin worked diligently to revive DNR's participation in the State Employee Suggestion Program and his efforts yielded great success.



Huggins and Drew

#### • Agency of the Year 2006:



**DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RE-SOURCES** (Secretary Scott Hassett)
The Department of Natural Resources was honored as Agency of the Year for its active participation in the Employee Suggestion Program and for the innovative ideas submitted by DNR employees.

Hassett

The suggestion program website—<a href="http://Suggest.state.wi.us">http://Suggest.state.wi.us</a>—contains detailed in-

formation on how to make a suggestion, the review and evaluation process, criteria for awards, and a record of suggestions that have been previously recognized, past annual awards, contact information, and the history of the program. The suggestion form is available on the website. Employees may fill in the form, and then print and route it to their agency coordinator for review.

Questions about the State Employee Suggestion Program may be directed to Robert Toomey at the Office of State Employment Relations, telephone (608) 266-0664 or e-mail Robert.Toomey@Wisconsin.gov.

#### **EAP AT WORK**

The employee assistance program (EAP) is a confidential, voluntary work-site program to assist state government employees affected by behavioral, medical or productivity concerns or problems. EAP helps in the prevention, identification and resolution of these problems and concerns.

EAP also is available to help employees deal with critical incidents or potential layoffs or agency restructuring. Family members are also eligible for EAP services.

In short, EAP informs the employee about the available resources best qualified to assess, diagnose and/or treat an issue confronting the employee. For more information, please visit us on the web at <a href="http://oser.state.wi.us/section.asp?linkid=26">http://oser.state.wi.us/section.asp?linkid=26</a>.

### **OSER VIEWS FEATURE**

#### **OSER WELCOMES NEW BUREAU DIRECTOR**

Introducing Linda Kowalewski, Agency Services Bureau Director, OSER/DMRS

> OSER would like to welcome Linda Kowalewski (pronounced Kahvahleske), who has replaced Leean White in the Division of Merit Recruitment and Selection.

Over the past 16 years, Linda worked in the private sector for Kraft Foods. Linda started her career with Kraft Foods at the Oscar Mayer facility in Madison, WI, in positions of Production Supervisor, Night Superintendent, Assistant Human Resources Manager and Associate Human Resources Manager. Linda spent the next three years of her career with Kraft Foods at the Beaver Dam facility and then the next three and one/half years at the Sussex Facility as the Human Resources Manager.

Linda brings a vast amount of experience in both operations and Human Resources and is excited about moving from serving the private sector to the public sector.

Linda says, "I am very eager for the rollout of "Wisc.Jobs" to the public site.

"As I have been sitting through various meetings since coming to state service, I have heard various comments where people feel that the State is not looked upon as a preferred employer.

"Coming from the private sector, I believe that people would love the opportunity to work for the State but there is a lack of knowledge on how to go about doing it. When it was announced through my previous employer that I would be leaving Kraft Foods and taking a state position, I couldn't count the number of calls that I received asking how I heard about the position and how you go about applying for a state position.

"I believe that the State is a preferred employer, and as we continue to grow our communication processes through networking and expanding WiscJobs to the public, we will continue to bring qualified candidates to our open positions.

"I am excited to be a part of the process with the State that will make that happen."

## NEW WISCJOBS ADDRESS: WWW.WISC.JOBS

By the "Wisc.Jobs" Team: Tammy Haack, Jennifer den Daas, Jennifer Gebert and Jamie O'Donnell, OSER

WiscJobs, the State's on-line employment resource, offers the official notification of classified civil services jobs. In an effort to continue to improve our recruitment methods, OSER has been working diligently to make this site more user-friendly. The goal is to allow applicants to apply and navigate the site in a more intuitive process. We want applicants to find this site easy to use so they continue to come back and see what jobs are being offered with the State of Wisconsin. We hope that our efforts will do exactly that!

Our efforts include changing the address of the website so it is shorter and easier to remember. (The old address will continue to work.) Our new address is www.Wisc.Jobs. You will notice that with this web

address, there is no .com, .gov. etc.; only .jobs. This internet extension is the newest type available and may be unknown to many. We are very excited to be the pioneers for this new address type.



We anticipate that by the end of March 2007, our new and improved Wisc. Jobs website will be available. You also may notice the Wisc.Jobs logo in more places or hear about it on the radio. Along with improvements to the website, OSER will be working to market the website through many other sources. We want everyone to know about the State as an employer.

Please don't forget to check out the new site. We hope you'll enjoy using Wisc.Jobs!

#### **OSER Training Offerings for 2007**

By Robert Toomey, OSER

OSER is the central personnel/human resource management agency for Wisconsin state government. OSER offers several "niche" training programs to provide agency supervisors, managers, and human resource staff with information, tools, and resources to help them do their jobs.

Advanced Labor Relations (ALR): In-depth examination of significant, complex issues in labor-management relations facing state managers and supervisors. This three-day participatory program is presented by experienced labor relations staff with group exercises and discussion, actual and hypothetical case studies, and role-playing. Limited to supervisors, managers, and nonrepresented staff. Upcoming Sessions: June 19-21; August 21-23; October 9-11; and December 4-6.

Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity (AA/EEO): The Division of Affirmative Action offers training to agencies' affirmative action advisory committees according to their specific needs. For information on this customized training, please email Janice.Faust@Wisconsin.gov.

Classification Training: Modular sessions over a total of three days on the topics of Classification Overview; Reclassification; Personnel Management Surveys; and WERC Appeals. The target audience for this training includes Human Resources Managers, Human Resources Specialists, Human Resources Program Coordinators, and Human Resources Assistants. Upcoming Sessions: June 26-28 and November 13-15.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Coordinator Training: Designed to provide EAP coordinators with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to effectively carry out their roles and functions within the State of Wisconsin's Employee Assistance Program. Take one or both days of this program. Upcoming Session: June 28-29.

#### **How To Advance in the Wisconsin Civil Service:**

Provides state employees with information about promotions, reclassifications and transfers within the Wisconsin Civil Service System. Such information can be used to plan realistic and attainable career decisions.

Half-day program open to all interested state employees. Please check the web site for future session schedules.

#### Management: Personnel Administration—

Introduces supervisors and managers to the important concepts of state human resources and personnel management. Topics covered include: Position Descriptions; Staffing/Hiring overview; AA/EEO; Performance Evaluation; EAP overview; and Labor Relations. Attendance in this three-day class fulfills part of the statutory training requirement for new supervisors. Upcoming Sessions: June 12-14; Aug. 7-9; Sept. 26-28; and Dec. 11-13, 2007.

Management: Leadership—Introduces supervisors, managers, and other attendees to the fundamentals of management, leadership and supervision. Explores concepts of supervision and communication in a variety of settings using different leadership methods and techniques. Attendance in this two-day class fulfills part of the statutory training requirements for new supervisors. Upcoming Sessions: May 16-17; July 17-18; Sept. 25-26; and Nov. 28-29.

**Reasonable Accommodations Training:** The Division of Affirmative Action offers training to agencies interested in learning more about Reasonable Accommodations. For information on this customized training, please email Janice.Faust@Wisconsin.gov.

**Staffing Training:** The purpose of this program is to provide human resources specialists with training on the important elements of recruitment and selection: Preliminary Staffing Activities & Related Policies; Recruitment & Retention; Exam Development & Scoring; and Registers & Certification. Four modules are offered over six days; participants may attend some or all as needed. Upcoming Sessions: May 2, 3, 7-10; and Dec. 11, 12, 17-20.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Complete details about OSER training programs – including program descriptions, schedule/availability, registration procedures, and fees – may be found in the Training section of our web site (<a href="http://OSER.state.wi.us">http://OSER.state.wi.us</a>), which also contains other information on training and learning.



#### ON THE OSER WEBSITE

We would like to call your attention to some items available on the OSER website.

Wisconsin Workforce and Planning Fact Book 2005-2009:

http://oser.state.wi.us/docview.asp?docid=6309

2005-2007 Collective Bargaining Agreements (Final Printed Versions)

http://oser.state.wi.us/subcategory.asp?linksubcatid=1181

We urge you to explore and use our website at <a href="http://oser.state.wi.us">http://oser.state.wi.us</a>.

#### WWW.WISC.JOBS REPLACES COB

We're on the Web! oser.state.wi.us

The Office of State Employment Relations is changing the printed format for announcing vacancies in Wisconsin state government. Effective in June 2007, the Current Opportunities Bulletin (COB) will no longer be published.

In July 2004, <a href="www.Wisc.Jobs">www.Wisc.Jobs</a> became the official notification of employment opportunities in state government. We continued to print the Current Opportunities Bulletin (COB), although it was no longer an all-inclusive list of state employment opportunities. Applicants using only the COB may have missed announcements for job vacancies.

In June, we will be replacing the COB with the new Wisc.Jobs Bulletin, a one-page listing of all jobs available on <a href="www.Wisc.Jobs">www.Wisc.Jobs</a>. The most current, permanent classified state employment opportunities will be listed on-line at <a href="www.Wisc.Jobs">www.Wisc.Jobs</a>. Internet access is often available at local job centers and public libraries at no cost.

#### April 2007

#### **Editorial Staff:**

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#### WORKPLACE WISDOM

"Efforts and courage are not enough without purpose and direction."

By John F. Kennedy

"Nothing in the world will take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than the unsuccessful person with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts.

Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan 'press on' has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race."

By Calvin Coolidge



#### CONTRIBUTOR SPOTLIGHT

Linda Heisler—Linda is the Training Director with the Department of Health and Family Services.

Travis Dillon — Travis is the Enterprise Recruitment Specialist with the OSER Division of Merit Recruitment and Selection.

Demetri Fisher — Demetri is the Administrator of the OSER Division of Affirmative Action.

Michael Soehner — Mike is a Labor Relations Specialist-Chief in the OSER Division of Compensation and Labor Relations.