



November/December 2021

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Dedicated Difference Makers

The Department of Health and Human Services is dedicated to helping people live better lives. “Good Life. Great Mission” is what we pride ourselves on, and we could not do what we do without the Teammates who show up day after day, year after year to make a difference.

Friday, October 22nd the Department of Administrative Services recognized over 400 Nebraska teammates for over 7,000 combined years of service to the State. Teammates from across all divisions received medals commemorating years of service from ten to twenty five.

To commemorate their service teammates were recognized in a ceremony which took place at the Capitol. Each teammate’s name was called by DAS State Personnel Director Kevin Workman, and they were given a decorative coin inscribed with their years of service. Teammates also had their picture taken with DAS Director Jason Jackson. After the ceremony, Teammates were invited enjoy light refreshments with their guests. The event was a wonderful opportunity to thank teammates for their dedication to Nebraska.

Bryson Bartels was one of the longtime teammates recognized for his dutiful years of service to Nebraska. Bryson is a legislative coordinator in the communications and legislative services division of DHHS. Before joining legislative services, Bryson worked as an SOS employee. Bryson began his time in legislative services in July of 2000. He describes looking for more career stability at that time, and a chance for career advancement. Bryson’s favorite thing about legislative services has been the constant change. “There is always something new. This is an exciting place to work! Nothing is ever dull,” he remarked. Bryson went on to

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What Can Communications Do for Me?

Helping Nebraskans live better lives is at the center of everything we do. However, finding the best way to connect with your audience can be difficult, and it is important that we get the right information to the right people in a timely manner. This is where the Office of Communications (OCOM...yes, we are trying out a new brand to see if it sticks) comes in. OCOM is a wealth of resources for everyone at DHHS. Communications works to promote the mission, priorities, and brand image of the Department by communicating and coordinating accurate, helpful, timely, and clear information in a variety of ways through media relations, public information campaigns, graphic design responsibilities, and even internal or external communication needs. Whether it is through a communication request (submitted via the intranet), or an email, we can help! “It’s all about connecting our message with our audience, the more

we can engage Nebraskans, the more positive impact we can have,” said Sam Sullivan, digital and social media specialist in the OCOM.

In the Box and In the Know are great opportunities to share information with other teammates of DHHS internally. These options are especially engaging, as they allow others to comment and like posts much like traditional social media platforms. The CONNECTIONS newsletter is another means for sharing information. CONNECTIONS will now feature a full-page spread for every department, utilizing this space can maximize your informational reach. “We want every DHHS division and area to know that this office is committed to supporting their communications needs,” said Director of Communications Khalilah LeGrand. “As we prepare for next year, we will

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Dedicated Difference Makers (continued from page 1)

express that his twenty-five years is a huge career milestone. Bryson described twenty-five years as humbling. “It was a fast twenty five years, I’m thankful to have had the opportunity to reach this milestone. A lot of people don’t get that chance,” he said. Thank you Bryson for your dedication to helping Nebraskans live better lives.

A full list of recognized teammates and their years of service is below. Congratulations to you all and thank you for your dedication to our state!

Ten Years of Service

- Donna Allgayer
- Kristin Augustine
- Shane Bailey
- Abby Barth
- Douglas Bauch
- June Baum
- Rex Bavousett
- Robert Beals
- Joyce Belding
- Elizabeth Bennett
- Danielle Bookman
- Francis Botelho
- Rebecca Bourlier
- Angie Bubak
- Lisa Buchta
- Zachary Buhrman
- Caroline Cardona
- Kelly Cole
- Chad Cooke
- Tracy Daake
- Tracey Doeden
- Michael Enriquez
- Kathy Ford
- Lori Frodsham
- Gabriella Garcia
- Hilda Gomez
- Rachel Gonzales
- Martha Gonzalez
- Melissa Greedy
- James Grof
- Nancy Gusler
- Jamie Habon
- Megan Hampton
- Rebecca Harisis
- Laurie Haszard
- Cheryl Heimann
- David Hill
- Hope Holmes
- Brett Hopkins
- Paul Howard
- Dorothea Howell
- Treasa Hunt
- Kristi Hurley
- Amy Jappert
- Melanie Jones
- Meagan Kimpston
- Jared Knoble
- Kara Koinzan
- Cathy Kotschwar
- Theresa Kratochvil
- Rachel Kreifels
- Susan Landon
- Susan Lassek
- Gary Leffler
- Ramona Lenhart
- Benjamin Leseberg
- Patrick Marlatt
- Sheri May
- Kyle McConnell
- Rebecca McDonald
- John Meals
- Larry Merwin
- Melissa Meyer
- Samantha Mooney
- Gregory Moser
- Virginia Mueller
- Nicholas Neemann
- Mary Negron
- Carrie Nemnich
- Michelle Newill
- Curtis Nielsen
- Rachel Nygard
- Ashley O’Neill
- Wanda Osterbuhr
- Connie Pitts
- Cathleen Plager
- Keith Powell
- Beth Ramirez
- Olga Ramirez
- Ronda Rasmussen
- Angela Reimers
- Silki Remalia
- Duane Remmers
- Sandra Reyes
- Brittnay Rieflin
- Carie Robinson
- Maria Royle
- Stephanie Runge
- Jacqueline Schmucker
- Lori Scholl
- Amy Schools
- Dennis Scott
- Carol Sheldon
- Julie Shields
- Benjamin Silverman
- Kathleen Smith
- Elizabeth Sorensen
- Samantha Sorensen
- Michael St Cin
- Bill Sterkel
- Wendy Stevenson
- Shantell Trevino
- Shelly Turecek
- Janine Uldrich
- Justin Waddell
- Dain Weiss
- Ashley Wiebelhaus
- Amy Wilkason
- Ryan Wills
- Allison Wisco
- Lori Woita
- Geri Young
- Staci Zuerlein
- Patrick Davey
- Sonia Diaz
- Denise Drake
- Staci Ellermeier
- Karen Eveans
- Marcia Fiala
- Suzanna Glover-Ettrich
- William Hamik
- Diane Heithoff
- Nichole Hersh-Eilenstine
- Stephen Holmgren
- Karen Houseman
- Tracy Jablonsky-Lage
- Deborah Johnsen
- Mikayla Johnson
- Kathy Karsting
- Jeriann Keller-Heuke
- Debra Kolman
- Stacy Krieger
- Sarah Lacey
- Stephanie Lofton
- Dawn McDuffee
- David McManaman
- Christopher Nemetz
- Monica Nimmich
- Aaron Parde
- Linda Paulson
- Tammy Pedrick
- Eva Ramirez
- Coleen Reiley
- Josie Riepenkroger
- Andrea Riley
- Patricia Sandoval
- Stacy Schenk
- Lisa Schultis
- Sharron Scott
- Jill Sluka
- Jeri Weberg-Bryce
- Andrea Wenke
- Amy Winter
- Trampis Wrice
- Rebecca Young

Fifteen Years of Service

- Aaron Adams
- Roger Anderson
- Tami Badertscher
- Kristin Bertrang
- Olivia Biggs
- Mary Binder
- Sandra Brandt
- Sherri Browning
- Stephanie Bruhn
- Tamara Buscher
- Kristie Christianson
- Richard Clarence
- Heidi Crabtree-Hastings
- Ryan Crilly
- Jianping Daniels

(Continued on page 3)



Dedicated Difference Makers (continued from page 2)

Twenty Years of Service

- Tammy Allison
- Jeffrey Armitage
- Marci Athey-Graham
- Sue Bain
- Laura Bugay
- Stacy Claassen
- Timothy Cleary
- Jack Cooley
- Sheri Dawson
- Evelyn Desilets
- Kimberly Divis
- Karen Friday
- Gloria Garza
- Cathy Geiser
- Darrell Gressley
- Shannon Grotrian
- Brenda Guenther
- Norma Hamilton
- Tami Hassebrook
- Stephen Havelka
- Claudia Hernandez-Ibarra
- Brenda Jackson
- Julie Johnston
- Jessica Keuten
- Brenda Kincanon
- Angelina Krotz
- David Lane
- Janette McCabe
- Michael McCormick
- Gary McNeil
- Anthony Mitzel
- Carol Neneman
- Elizabeth Noble
- Paul Palazzola
- Gregory Penner
- Cristina Petet
- Stephen Poppe
- Karey Roberts
- James Robinson
- Sally Ryan
- Mary Scott
- Kristine Silhacek
- Alene Smith
- Jason Swedlund
- Jeff Tassemyer
- Lois Versaw

Twenty-Five Years of Service

- Renee Miller
- Tracy Miller
- Millicent Myres
- Amanda Nawrocki
- Teresa Neal
- Jacque Orvis
- Joshua Parde
- Janae Phillips
- Jenny Prentice
- Sharilyn Rayburn
- Harold Schilling
- Lyle Schmidt
- Patrice Schmidt
- Kerri Schuerman
- Jody Schultz
- Dee-Dee Staack
- Brenda Steinheider
- Ray Suchan
- Lisa Thoene
- William Varicak
- Catherine Wiles
- Kee-Sha Adams-Parks
- Bryson Bartels
- Diana Blythe
- Tracey Bonneau
- Cindy Brown
- Jennifer Carper
- Ernie Drent
- Kandy Eisenbarth
- Douglas Fuller
- Roger Geery
- Cynthia Harmon
- Amy Harms
- Abigail Hawthorne
- Kayla Hawthorne-Roberts
- Jeff Hubl
- Leo Jary
- Rex Kennel
- Jill Krause
- Julie Lavicky
- Angie Lewis
- Christopher Mendoza

DHHS Unveils New Leadership Cohort RISE



Respect, Inspire, Serve, and Educate, are at the center of DHHS' brand new leadership cohort RISE. Founded in September, RISE is a way for our people leaders to grow and develop their teams from the top down. "We're giving leaders the opportunity to give

something back," said Brittnay Rieflin, Leadership and Development Manager for the program. The RISE cohort was specially curated by Brittnay Rieflin, L&D Manager, Anne McCarthy, Training Coordinator, Holli Penner, Training Coordinator, and Emily Claussen, Training Coordinator. Together, Rieflin, McCarthy, Penner, and Claussen make up the DHHS Learning and Development Academy Team, responsible for learning and development opportunities across the state.

The new program, RISE, is composed of instructor-led sessions and pre- and post-course work designed to develop the leaders of today! RISE provides DHHS' people leaders with the training they need

to revolutionize their impact, all at no additional cost. Each of the outcomes for the program have been specifically chosen for and tailored to the Department's people leaders. Outcomes of the program include defining personal values, identifying principles and qualities of authentic leadership, maintaining and engaged team, communicating through the generational gap, delegating with confidence and more. "We're supporting the people who support people," said Rieflin about the curriculum.

RISE grounds participants in the tried-and-true foundations of leading people and teaches innovative ways to practically apply the skills to your day-to-day role as a leader. RISE benefits everyone at DHHS. By focusing on the people leaders that impact teammate experiences, the program makes real change. "Ultimately building our leaders means that we're building everyone, we know the impact that leaders have on their team," said a member of the learning and development academy team.

(Continued on page 6)



What Can Communications Do for Me? (continued from page 1)

be doing more mining for stories and exploring innovative ways to tell the story of DHHS.” In addition to information dissemination, DHHS Communications provides resources such as business cards, fact sheet templates, letterhead, logos, and power point templates, all of which can be used by your department to further your efforts and ensuring the DHHS brand.

Communication can be challenging, so let the experts in OCOM help!

Celebrating Global Peer Support in Nebraska

In recognition of Global Peer Support Celebration Day, the Division of Behavioral Health, Office of Consumer Affairs (OCA) hosted a virtual event to recognize, reflect and celebrate our peer supporters and highlight the impact and contributions they make in supporting others in their recovery journey.

The old adage “you can’t understand someone until you walk a mile in their shoes” seems tailor-made for October 21, which was Global Peer Support Celebration Day (GPSCD). The day is an

annual celebration of peer supporters, peer support services, and recognition of their work in helping their peers. Peer supporters work with individuals with mental health, substance use, and or trauma-related challenges as they move forward along the continuum of recovery and inclusion.

Here are some of the appreciation that OCA received about the value of peer supporters. Thank you Peer Supporters for all that you do!

For Maria:

“
I would like to recognize Maria for all of the hard work she does as a peer support specialist. She is always going above and beyond! She cares deeply about her clients and takes the time to show them that. She even offers support by taking clients to different locations to help them do things such as pay rent. I am inspired by her humility and desire to help others.
”

Global Peer Support
Celebration Day

October 21st

For Chris:

“
Chris is a strong advocate for individuals in recovery and he spends time making his community a better place.
”

Global Peer Support
Celebration Day

October 21st

For Casey:

“
Your work is changing lives! Your family is so proud of your selflessness and the work you do. You are continuing to grow and inspiring others. Thank you for setting such an amazing example for us all!
”

Global Peer Support
Celebration Day

October 21st

For Andrew:

“
Andrew is very passionate about the peer support that he offers for those in recovery at the crisis facility that he works at. He has worked very hard at his own recovery, and is a devoted worker, fun colleague, and an excellent dad. His mission has always been to help those who are here to have a second chance with sobriety and mental health issues. Thank you Andrew!
”

Global Peer Support
Celebration Day

October 21st

Every Woman Matters Reaches 30 Years of Service in Nebraska

Every Woman Matters (EWM) is not just a phrase in Nebraska but a program that has been serving women in the state for 30 years. Every Woman Matters helps women receive lifesaving screening for breast and cervical cancer. The program has served over 100,000 women since the program began. The goal of the screening program is to find cancers early when treatment is most effective. The EWM program has provided over 130,000 mammograms and 150,000 pap smears. These screening tests have diagnosed 1,387 women with breast cancer and 98 women with invasive cervical cancer. Since the program began in 1991 breast cancer mortality rates have decreased 30%. Finding breast and cervical cancer early increases treatment options and survival. With early detection 1,428 women have been able to detect abnormal cervical changes before they became cancerous.



“When I started with the program, I [nor] my mom had never been screened or had a mammogram. Within three years, I got a birthday card in the mail saying “by the way I got a mammogram.” We are here and we are making a difference,” said Marketing Coordinator Tracey Bonneau. EWM has three programs different programs Nebraska women can qualify for. The Screening program, the Diagnostic program, and the Pap PLUS program.

The EWM screening (screening means regular testing to see if a person is healthy or sick) provides breast and cervical cancer screening, including pelvic exam, Pap test, clinical breast exam and screening mammogram. It also provides heart disease and

diabetes screening including, a blood pressure check, cholesterol check, blood sugar (glucose) check, and health and wellness information. To qualify for the screening program, one must be a U.S. Citizen or permanent resident, woman aged 40 to 74 without insurance. Health status is not a factor in program eligibility, as long as you fit the program criteria.

The EWM Diagnostic program is another great resource for women in Nebraska. The diagnostic program deals screenings that require a follow up, such as a breast lump or abnormal Pap test. EWM breast diagnostic services including breast ultrasound, diagnostic mammograms, surgical consultations and breast biopsies. Cervical diagnostic services include colposcopies, and consultations. To qualify for the diagnostic program one must be a woman aged 18 to 74 (for breast diagnostic services), aged 21 to 74 (for cervical diagnostic services), and meet income requirements. Program participants may have insurance. All participants must be a U.S. citizen or Permanent resident.

EWM Pap PLUS is another option for qualifying for Nebraska’s. Per the U.S. Preventative Services Task Forces (USPSTF) Cervical Guidelines, cervical cancer screening should begin at age 21 regardless of sexual activity and other risk factors. For this reason, the EWM Pap PLUS program is open to men and women age 18 and older. Eligible Nebraskans are encouraged to enroll.

If you are a woman who is interested and considering participating in the program, you can enroll in Every Woman Matters and/or the Nebraska Colon Cancer Screening Program (NCP) by calling (800) 532-2227 to request a Healthy Lifestyle Questionnaire (HLQ) or you can click on the “ENROLL NOW” button below to fill out the online HLQ.

- Filling out the HLQ will help EWM and NCP determine what services are best for you.
- Please be sure to answer all questions. If you don’t we will call you or send the form back and this could delay important health screenings.
- Do not make an appointment with your health care provider until you receive a screening card from our office for the services that you are eligible for.
- If you are not eligible for services, you can still get health education.

If you or someone you know would like more information about the Every Woman Matters program, visit the website [here](#) or call (402) 471-0929.

New Leadership Cohort RISE (continued from page 3)

One of the first projects that cohort one has been asked to work on are inclusion statements. Inclusion statements demonstrate a leader's commitment to building an inclusive, and welcoming environment for their team. Cindy Krolikowski, YRTC-K Facility Operating Officer, is a member of cohort one and has been a DHHS people leader for 9 years, and in her current role for 3 years. You can read Cindy's inclusion statement below, for an exclusive look into exactly what it means to participate in RISE and be an inclusive leader.

If you are a people leader looking to continue your personal development journey, you are encouraged to look out for RISE cohort two! Details about cohort two will be announced in 2022. A similar program, ASPIRE, for teammate professional development is also on the way. ASPIRE will be announced in the upcoming year. To learn more about RISE, you can visit the RISE website [here](#) or reach out to any member of the Learning and Development Academy Team previously listed via email.

Cindy Krolikowski's Inclusion Statement:

"At YRTC-Kearney, we welcome Diversity and Inclusion, so that everyone feels a sense of belonging at the facility and to the DHHS community. This is our greatest strength and opportunity to grow and become the best we can be, to help all that we serve. We all have differences in who we are, what we have done, and how we think. Which brings many ideas, suggestions and skills to help all of the youth and families we serve across Nebraska, to feel valued, heard, included and a sense of belonging in their community.

With all our voices Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging, YRTC-Kearney strives for excellence in the success of the youth and employees. Helping them to strive to explore and find their skillsets that they do well and help with building, and uncovering ones that they may not have known they had or were apprehensive to display and share. So that the youth and staff become stronger and can help others in their families and community to strive for excellence and that their voice matters."



Cohort 1
September 2021
- August 2022

DHHS
Academy
Leadership
Course



Jamie Kramer



Steve Johnson



Shannon Grotrian



Cindy Wiesen



Matt Thomsen



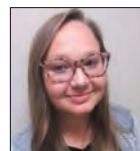
Stephen Havelka



Kris Boe Simmons



Alyssa Rager



Ashley Meyer



Darla Hopwood



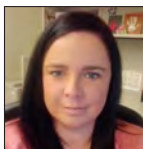
Nicole Vint



Angie Ludemann



Brad Fuchs



Danielle Kerkman



Camella Jacobs



Melissa Weyer



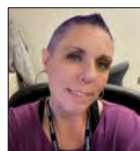
Kristen Smith



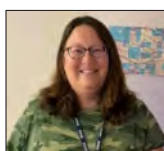
Beth Buhr



Jana Peterson



Dawn LaBay



Amy Redden



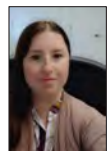
Nanette Simmons



Brook Gurule



Cindy Krolikowski



Elizabeth Davila

Divisions of Medicaid and Long-Term Care and Policy and Plan Management Welcome New Deputy Directors

Todd Baustert has been promoted to Deputy Director for Project and Performance Management. Todd joined the team in 2015 and has served in leadership roles in the managed care and policy areas. As a member of the managed care team, he helped to develop the current Heritage Health Medicaid program and served as the contract administrator for the United Healthcare Community Plan contract. As a member of the Policy unit, Todd developed Nebraska's section 1115 substance use disorder (SUD) demonstration waiver program. Since 2019, Todd served as the Administrator for the Demonstration Waivers group within the Policy and Regulations unit where he oversaw the implementation of the SUD waiver program and acted as one of the project leads for the Medicaid expansion program. Prior to joining Nebraska Medicaid, Todd founded a real estate investment company that owns and manages rental housing in the Omaha area. He also spent 10 years as an issues management and communications consultant with a Washington-based public affairs firm, where he managed legislative and regulatory projects for Fortune 50 companies and industry trade associations.

Linda Morrison will serve as the Deputy Director for Economic Assistance and has already hit the ground running. Linda brings a wealth of knowledge and experience leading large operations teams, having started her career with 16 years in the call center

management field, culminating in her role as Site Director for a 500-seat dedicated customer service call center site for General Motors. Linda's past work experience includes eight years in positions of increasing responsibility at Wellcare Health Plans, exclusively serving government sponsored health plan members. She has held Vice President of Operations positions with population health management companies Healthways, Navvis Healthcare, and ConcertoHealth. Linda is an Omaha native and is thrilled to be serving clients in her home state!

Matt Ahern will serve as the new Deputy Director for Policy and Plan Management. Matt has 19 years of experience working in health care, coming from the State of Utah's Medicaid program, serving as the Assistant Director for the Bureau of Managed Healthcare. In that capacity, he worked with various MCOs and oversaw a variety of projects and programs. Before working with Medicaid, Matt was a healthcare administrator, managing medical groups and facilities.

Though new to Nebraska, Matt has been impressed with the people he has met and the sense of community that they all share. Along with his wife and 5 kids (4 girls and 1 boy) whose ages range from 16 to 7, Matt and his family are excited about becoming a part of this community and making a new home here!

Congratulations to these teammates!

WELCOME

ABOARD





In Gratitude

Messages DHHS teammates have received thanking us for the work we do every day to help people live better lives

"I'm searching for the MLTC worker who worked on my case, she is based out of Lincoln, NE. I would like to tell her thank you and you are awesome! If you see this, I would love to talk with you! You encouraged me to apply for DHHS employment and I got it! You encouraged me more than you know!"

THANK YOU!

Off the Clock

After receiving earned vacation leave, Connie Cohen-Nelson decided to use some of her hard-earned vacation time for fun in Chicago! Connie planned to see four Cubs games in four days! It is great to see you enjoying your time Connie. We hope it was a blast!



Make the Connection...

DHHS Public Website: www.dhhs.ne.gov

DHHS Employee Website: <http://dhhsemployees/>

DHHS Helpline: 1-800-254-4202, (402) 471-6035 in Lincoln, or via e-mail at dhhs.helpline@nebraska.gov

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