

# News 'n Views

March 2012

Department of Workforce Services

Volume 9, Issue 1

## Thousands attend 2011 Career Expo



**CAREER EXPO** — Roy Schultz, the state director for the U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Services, assists a veteran at the Arkansas Workforce Centers' Career Expo Nov. 3 at Verizon Arena in North Little Rock.

### *140 exhibitors offer jobs, education and training opportunities at event*

More than 3,100 job seekers attended the Arkansas Workforce Centers' Career Expo held Nov. 3 at Verizon Arena in North Little Rock.

This was the third year for the event, which was sponsored by the Department of Workforce Services and Arkansas Workforce Centers.

The event featured 140 exhibitors, including employers, education and training providers, and veterans organizations, with more than 8,500 job openings. Many job seekers left the event with interviews or jobs.

"The 2011 Career Expo was a huge success," said Department of Workforce Services Director Artee Williams. "An impressive group of employers and education and training providers partnered with us this year, many of them bringing job openings to the event. Our

Additional Pictures  
on Page 12!

goal was to let job seekers know that although it is difficult right now, there are jobs available."

New this year, the expo featured a Veterans Center to assist veterans with their employment needs. Many veterans are returning from deployment and transitioning back into the civilian workforce.

Exhibitors at the Veterans Center provided employment information and assistance to around 400 veterans or spouses who were looking for jobs or seeking to upgrade their skills.

In addition to the Veterans Center, a mini-Arkansas Workforce Center was featured with several comput-

• See Expo Page 12

## Two centers celebrate grand openings

Two Arkansas Workforce Centers recently held grand openings to celebrate their new locations.

The Arkansas Workforce Center at Benton moved to 400 Edison Ave. The new facility provides more space and better parking.

"The overall environment is more conducive for services," said Allen Ledbetter, the Department of Workforce Services local office manager.

Several other partners are located at the facility, including the Central

Arkansas Planning and Development District (which provides the Workforce Investment Act services) and Arkansas Rehabilitation Services.

The office provides numerous employment services including résumé assistance, interviewing tips, services to veterans and training assessments, as well as various programs including Unemployment Insurance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Trade Adjustment Assistance and the Arkansas

• See Centers Page 11

## 8 managers named

Several new Department of Workforce Services managers were recently named, including seven local office managers and a new training manager.

Kelly Aaron

Kelly Aaron was recently selected as manager of the Department of Workforce Services office in Walnut Ridge. She replaced Elizabeth Roberts, who retired after

• See Managers Page 13

# DWS launches IT projects that improve customer service

## EZARC

Unemployment Insurance claimants can now file a claim for benefits from the comfort of their own homes thanks to EZARC.

EZARC is the Department of Workforce Services' Internet application for taking initial, additional and re-opened UI claims.

"EZARC brings Arkansas' UI initial claims-taking process into the Internet age," said Ron Calkins, the assistant director for Unemployment Insurance.

In many ways, EZARC is an extension of LOARC. With LOARC, claimants had to report to the local offices to file claims on the agency's Intranet. EZARC, which was launched in August 2011, allows claimants to file a claim from any PC that has Internet access, thus reducing foot traffic at the local offices.

"While many claimants still may have to report to a local office after filing a claim on EZARC, the time spent in the office is significantly less," Calkins said.

In many cases, claimants will still have to come to the local offices, such as to file an Emergency Unemployment Compensation claim, but any claimant who files a claim that does not have any issues will no longer have to report to the local office, Calkins said.

Claimants also can continue to file their weekly claims via ArkLine (the weekly call-in system) or ArkNet (the weekly online claim system).

Arkansas is now one of 35 states with a similar online claim filing system. Because the system is online, additional Internet security and coordination with the Social Security Administration were necessary. The hard work by agency Information Technology staff, however, made the launch possible.

"I am extremely proud of the work performed by our UI Technical Unit and IT staff who ultimately made EZARC a reality," Calkins said.

## UI-AJL Interface

In addition to being able to file an unemployment insurance claim from home, UI claimants can now register for work in the same online system.

Previously, claimants who filed UI claims also had to register for employ-

ment in the Arkansas JobLink system, which is Arkansas' version of the America's JobLink web-based system for employment services.

A new interface between the EZARC/LOARC and AJL systems now make it easier for claimants to register for work.

By answering just a few simple questions, AJL is automatically populated with claimants' information.

Besides eliminating a duplication of effort and reducing staff time, the

interface also assists clients with their employment needs.

"This interface not only gives job seekers and claimants immediate access to more than 9,000 jobs available across the state each day, but it also allows DWS to use any existing record from previous years to accelerate the registration process," said Jim Case, the program manager who oversees the AJL system. "This interface is a win-win for both parties."

• See IT Projects Page 15



**PROMIS** — Labor Market Information and Information Technology staff pose for a picture at a luncheon recently to celebrate the launch of PROMIS, the Program to Measure Insured Unemployment Statistics.

## PROMIS

The Department of Workforce Services' Bureau of Labor Statistics unit reached a milestone recently with the implementation of PROMIS, the Program to Measure Insured Unemployment Statistics.

The PROMIS system captures the characteristics of the insured unemployed in Arkansas by allowing DWS to use unemployment insurance claims to determine claimants' ages, education levels, their most recent jobs and other demographic information.

The program will not only give DWS staff a better picture of the types of Arkansans filing UI claims, it will allow staff to assist employers looking to locate in Arkansas. With the system, DWS will be able to provide information regarding the workforce in specific areas of the state.

"The data benefits Arkansas

because it provides a picture of those who are unemployed," said Bernadette Coleman, the BLS program manager who oversaw the PROMIS implementation.

More than half of the states are participating in the program, which is a mandate for all states by 2013. The new program will ensure more accurate Local Area Unemployment Statistics, which include the civilian labor force statistics such as the employment and unemployment numbers and unemployment rate.

Staff working with the LAUS program began using the PROMIS system with January 2012 data. Staff have been using the system to determine Mass Layoff Statistics since July 2011.

"With this information, there is much potential," Coleman said. "Perhaps someday soon we will be able to develop jobs to fit the characteristics of those who need the work!"

# Mature worker honor given to 4 employers

*Bank of Ozarks named ambassador*

The Arkansas Workforce Investment Board and Department of Workforce Services recognized four Arkansas employers in May 2011 for their efforts to recruit and retain mature workers (those age 50+).

This was the fourth year the AWIB and DWS have partnered with the Governor's Work-Life Balance Initiative to present the Mature Worker Friendly Awards.

"Each year we recognize some outstanding companies from around the state," DWS Director Artee Williams said. "Each of these employers incorporate innovative practices and policies to ensure the mature workforce stays employed, engaged and remains a vital part of society."

Bank of the Ozarks, a previous three-time winner, was inducted as an ambassador. The bank will no longer have to apply for the award and will serve as a leader and example for other companies.

The Arkansas Educational Television Network in Conway was recognized for the third year in a row and will be inducted as an ambassador later this year.

Also honored were White County Medical Center in Searcy and St. Vincent Health System.

Other previous winners also include Saline Memorial Hospital at Benton (a two-time winner), Medic One Ambulance Service at Jonesboro and Nabholz Construction Corp. at Conway.

The Mature Worker Friendly Awards were developed by the Arkansas Mature Worker Initiative, an AWIB-led program that was implemented in 2006 to increase the awareness among employers of the need to hire and retain mature workers. As the baby boomers retire, employers will see a dramatic shortage in the labor force and a lack of skills among the next generation.

The initiative has evolved to not



**MATURE WORKER AWARDS — TOP PHOTO:** Gov. Mike Beebe (right) and DWS Director Artee Williams (left) present the Mature Worker Friendly Ambassador Award to Tim Hodnett, the senior vice-president and human resources director for Bank of the Ozarks. Bank of the Ozarks was previously a three-time winner and earned the status of ambassador in 2011. **SECOND ROW, LEFT:** Gov. Beebe presents the Mature Worker Friendly Award to Peter Banko, the president and chief executive officer for St. Vincent Health System. **SECOND ROW, RIGHT:** Gov. Beebe poses with Pamela Williams, the HR director for White County Medical Center at Searcy. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Gov. Beebe recognizes Allen Weatherly, the executive director and CEO for AETN. AETN is a three-time winner and will be inducted as an ambassador in 2012.

only educate employers but to assist mature workers with finding employment through the Arkansas Workforce Centers.

The initiative also stresses the importance of keeping mature adults actively engaged in volunteer activities as well. Research shows that mature adults who stay active through work or volunteer activities live longer.

The Mature Worker Friendly Awards are a part of the overall Governor's Work-Life Balance Awards ceremony, which honors employers for their efforts to help employees balance both the needs of work and life. This year will mark the fifth year DWS and the AWIB have partnered with the initiative and the tenth year for the overall awards program.

# 10 project plans chosen for implementation

Department of Workforce Services senior management selected 10 Leadership Development III project plans for implementation.

The DWS Leadership Development Program is an 18-month program that prepares staff to become effective leaders. As part of the requirement for graduating from the program, participants must develop and present a project plan that will enhance agency services and/or save money.

The following graduates demonstrated leadership skills and developed outstanding project plans that will enhance agency operations or will improve services to clients. A brief description of each project plan is included.

- **Sam Bryant and Yiiko McDaniel** – Add additional questions to the ARKNET system to verify pertinent information regarding an unemployment insurance claim so the week in question will process. These changes will reduce the amount of time personnel spend reopening claims, provide better customer service to claimants and reduce customer complaints.
- **Tyler Cain** – Payroll Document Imaging Project that will turn paper Payroll documents into electronic documents, thus saving space, paper and money.
- **Stephanie Carlo** – Develop standard operating procedures for Disaster



**LD III PROJECTS** — DWS Leadership Development III graduates pose for a picture at a luncheon held to celebrate the approval to implement their project plans within the agency.

National Emergency Grants.

- **Jason Eaton** – Transfer the job retention letter and “good news” letter for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families clients from the Department of Human Services to DWS.

- **Sommer Faulkenberry** – Develop a computer interface that allows claimants to access individualized information regarding the status of claims, appeals and other matters.

- **Donna Holder** – Add new employer accounts to the table unemployment insurance claimants use in order to

select their last employer when filing a claim.

- **James Jones** – Develop an online forms catalog directory.

- **Kesha Rogers** – Develop an improved employer/claimant questionnaire regarding independent contractor issues.

- **Earnest Sweat** – Create an agency notification system.

- **Walter Zgleszewski** – Train staff and implement a guide for users in employer relations and how to use the Arkansas JobLink system.

## 2 receive management certification

*Stevenson, Williams receive Arkansas Governmental Manager certificates*

Two Department of Workforce Services employees received management certifications from the Arkansas Public Administration Consortium in 2011.

Rena Stevenson, a fiscal support specialist in Employer Accounts Services, and Nickolas Williams, an information systems coordination specialist in IT Support, received the Arkansas Governmental Manager certification through APAC.

APAC is part of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock's Institute of Government and is a cooperative program involv-

ing UALR, Arkansas State University at Jonesboro and the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

In order to receive AGM certification, or state-level certification, graduates have to complete six two-day courses and a project plan.

The AGM program is one of the prerequisites for the DWS Leadership Development program.

The Certified Public Manager program is the next level — or national level — of certification after AGM. APAC offers the certification as well.



**APAC GRADUATES** — Nickolas Williams (left) and Rena Stevenson (right) received their Arkansas Governmental Manager certification.

# DWS reaps benefits of recycling program

The Department of Workforce Services' efforts to go "green" are paying off — literally.

Gov. Mike Beebe's Executive Order 09-07 and Act 1494 of 2009 require state agencies to develop and implement Strategic Energy Plans, or StEPs, that will reduce an agency's operating budget devoted to energy consumption and promote practices that will reduce energy and waste.

As part of that initiative, DWS began an agency-wide recycling program. Because of efforts from DWS Little Rock offices and 15 central Arkansas offices, nearly 80 tons of paper, aluminum, plastic and cardboard were recycled in 2011, earning the agency more than \$6,260. This is a huge increase from the more than \$3,700 the agency earned in 2010. Other local offices have similar programs.

"DWS employees are becoming aware of the benefits recycling can have not only in their communities, but in the agency overall," said Tyler Cain, the chair of the Central Office committee. "We can do our part individually, but when we pull together as a team, the results are outstanding."

In fact, DWS' recycling program is serving as a model for other state agen-



**RECYCLING COMMITTEE**— The DWS Central Office Recycling Committee poses for a picture recently. Committee members include (left to right) Steve Hicks, Kathy Drago, Tyler Cain (chair), Cara Benton, Jim Grant, Letti Whitaker, Paul Marus, Sally Porter and Bob Furman. Not pictured: Judy Duncan and Charlette Davis.

cies as they look for ways to meet the governor's mandate.

According to the 2011 statistics, DWS made most of the money by recycling paper. A total of 137,800 pounds were recycled, bringing in \$5,373.40. A total of 21,320 pounds of cardboard were recycled, yielding \$824.16, and 740 pounds of aluminum and plastic brought in \$62.96. It hasn't been determined yet what to do with the extra

money, but the recycling committee is looking at ideas that will result in better information and services for employees.

The recycling program is just one of the many ways DWS is reducing energy, costs and waste. Other efforts include reducing paper by using network printers, utilizing the vehicle fleet for out-of-town travel, and installing automatic lighting and water sensors.



**2011 TRAINING SUMMIT** — Randy Frazier, a professional motivational speaker and president of More Than Leadership, made a presentation about going from "good to great" to Department of Workforce Services staff in December at the agency's Third Annual Training Summit. At the summit, staff also received an update on agency accomplishments and other programs. Staff also collected 2,322 pounds of food in the annual food drive to help needy families. See Page 6 for pictures.

## Agency orientation revamped

*Sessions held every two weeks for intermittent, full-time employees*

The Department of Workforce Services recently revamped its new hire orientation, which is now held every two weeks.

"We are conducting orientations every two weeks so that new hires can get the information as soon as they begin employment with us," said Beverly McCollum, the Human Resources manager.

The orientation is available to intermittents and full-time employees.

The sessions provide an overview of agency services, give staff a better understanding of how their department fits in with the agency, introduces staff to Payroll and covers benefits available to those who qualify. It also gives staff an opportunity to meet Payroll and HR staff and ask questions.

Staff at the Central Office attend in

person in the fifth-floor conference room. Local office staff participate via the Bridgit online conference system.

"New hire orientation has been going well," McCollum said. "We have had a good mix of in-person Central Office personnel, as well as employees from the local offices joining by Bridgit."

Bridgit allows local office staff to view the PowerPoint presentation and hear the presenters.

Sessions are held every other Tuesday (at the beginning of a new pay period) from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Supervisors and managers are committed to ensuring that all new employees have access to the sessions that are available the Tuesday following the employee's start date.

Staff with questions can call McCollum at (501) 682-3716.

# 2011 Food Drive

Department of Workforce Services offices around the state collected 2,322 pounds of food for local charities. The Central Office collected 582 pounds, nine local offices collected 928 pounds and 812 pounds was donated at the DWS Training Summit in December. Many thanks goes to everyone who donated to help feed needy families!



Central Office



Blytheville



Hot Springs



Camden



Malvern

# NEWS .... across .... the .... state

**CENTRAL OFFICE** — Kevan Smith, the son of G. Tina Smith, who works in the Director's Office, worked as a lead gaffer with the state and lighting crew at the royal wedding in London.



Kevan Smith

Aasiyah Scoggins, the granddaughter of Nona Scoggins, an administrative specialist in the Mail Room, was recognized for being on the Honor Roll and having perfect attendance and good conduct. She is a third-grader at Clinton Magnet Elementary School in Sherwood.



Aasiyah Scoggins

**CONWAY** — Cpl. Justin Phillips, the son of Cindy Phillips, a retired UI investigator, recently completed four years of service with the U.S. Marine Corps.

**FORT SMITH** — Rose Davis, a workforce specialist in the Trade Adjustment Act unit, received the Making a Difference Award. Davis was honored by the Fort Smith Adult Education Center for her assistance to students.

**HOT SPRINGS** — Fourteen children participated in the Arkansas Workforce Center at Hot Springs' Take Our Daughters and Sons' Work Day. The theme was Invent the Future. Participants were informed about job opportunities available in the community. Staff also volunteered for the United Way's Day of Caring community service project at the Abilities Unlimited resale shop, which has a clothing closet for job seekers.

**JACKSONVILLE** — William L. Ridgeway Jr., an interviewer in the Jacksonville office, recently received his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree

from Colorado Technical University. Ridgeway also earned a Doctorate of Commissioner Science, a Boy Scout degree, through the Quapaw Area Council's Commissioner College. This is the highest level of commissioner training that can be achieved by a Boy Scout commissioner. He serves as the commissioner for the Three Rivers District in the Quapaw Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America. In addition to completing his degree and training, Ridgeway also recently married Carole Whitted of Maumelle.

Theresa Cates, a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families specialist in Jacksonville, recently had some of her paintings on display at the Student Council room at Pulaski Technical College in North Little Rock. Her artwork also can be seen at the Red Door Art Gallery in North Little Rock.

Jacksonville Manager Charles Danner recently completed a Bachelor of Theology degree from St. Gregory's University at Shawnee, OK. This is Danner's second degree.

**MONTICELLO** — Christie Maxey, an automated adjudication specialist in Monticello, won the Ms. Drew County pageant recently. Maxey also won the Ms. Photogenic and Ms. Congeniality categories, as well as Interview and People's Choice.



Christie Maxey

Evie Kinnaird, the granddaughter of Pam Lowry, an AAS supervisor, was born Oct. 21, 2011. She weighed 7 pounds and was 19.5 inches long. She is Lowry's first grandchild.

**NORTH LITTLE ROCK** — Veterans representatives Walter Zgleszewski and Nancy Smith received certificates of apprecia-



**RECOGNITION** — Dr. Corbet Lamkin, the president of Southern Arkansas University Tech at Camden (left), presents a plaque for meritorious service to the college to DWS Director Artee Williams (right).

tion for participating in the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System National Disability Awareness Month Job Fair.

**PINE BLUFF** — Tracy Oliver-Gary, the daughter of Dorothy Oliver, with the DWS Training unit, and Walter Oliver, manager at the Little Rock office, was one of five teachers selected nationwide to receive the 2011 Teaching Tolerance Award for Culturally Responsive Teaching. Oliver-Gary teaches at Burtonsville, MD.

Gov. Mike Beebe recently appointed William Campbell, the Pine Bluff manager, to the Arkansas Pygmalion Commission on Nontraditional Education. Campbell is currently president of the McGehee School Board and is a member of the Board of Directors for the Arkansas School Boards Association.

**ROGERS** — David Hill, the son of Doyce Hill, an area operations chief, recently graduated from Harding University in Searcy with a degree in business management.

**WALNUT RIDGE** — Auggie Wicker, the son of Andrea Wicker, a claims technician in the Walnut Ridge office, won fourth in a state barbecue grilling competition.



**RACE FOR THE CURE** — Clint Stoerner, a former University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and NFL quarterback (far left), and Anthony Lucas, a former U of A and NFL wide receiver (far right), pose with DWS staff who participated in the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. Stoerner and Lucas were honorary co-chairs of the 3 Miles of Men for the race. More than 120 DWS staff participated and raised more than \$3,000 for the cause, which funds breast cancer awareness research.



**RELAY FOR LIFE** — [PHOTO ABOVE] Julie LaRue, Janet Edgar and Kristina Coleman, with the Hot Springs office, represented the DWS Relay for Life team in Hot Springs at the Rock-n-Relay event held prior to the race. The Hot Springs office raised \$1,375.75 for the American Cancer Society.



**HONORED** — Emma Lay, an Automated Adjudication System manager, was honored recently as one of the finalists for the Arkansas State Employees Association's State Employee of the Year award. Lay was one of 32 state employees nominated and one of the five finalists.



**GROUND FLOOR DECORATIONS** — [PHOTO TO RIGHT] Ground Floor staff at the DWS Central Office show off their holiday decorations recently. The floor decorates each year for the holidays.



**CRC MILESTONE** — Fifteen local offices were recognized recently for helping more than 1,000 job seekers achieve an Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate. The offices are Batesville, Blytheville, Camden, Fort Smith, Hope, Hot Springs, Jacksonville, Jonesboro, Little Rock, Paragould, Pine Bluff, Searcy, Texarkana, Walnut Ridge and West Memphis. The CRC program was launched four years ago. Since then, more than 36,500 CRCs have been awarded statewide, and more than 7,500 employers have reported wages for employees who have a CRC.



**CONFERENCE** — DWS Director Artee Williams (second from left), poses for a photo with Dominic “Butch” Signorelli (left), Angelo Zambrano (second from right) and Ronda Ball (right) at the Arkansas Career Development Association Sharing Resources and Opportunities Mini-Conference. The conference provided information and networking opportunities for career development facilitators around the state.



**VISIT** — Phil Harris, the assistant director for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (left), poses with Kathleen Sebelius, secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, recently. Sebelius visited Arkansas to talk about job creation, workforce development and the American Jobs Act. While here, Sebelius heard a success story from a TANF client and learned more about Arkansas’ program.



**TANF AWARDS** — Phil Harris, the assistant director for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (left), and DWS Director Artee Williams (right), pose for a picture with TANF staff who were honored for outstanding service to clients. Eight staff received STAR Awards at the 2011 TANF Staff Training Conference. Recipients were (second from left to right) Angela Beauchamp, Connie Hendrix, Chris Guerrini, Tammy Smith, Sharon Stringer and Linda Rockwell. Not Pictured: Lacle Gilkey and Michelle Harris.



Walnut Ridge Business Expo



Jonesboro Business Expo



Searcy Business Expo

## Retirements

**Kathy Terrell**, DWS UI Claim Technician, Non-Mon Pilot Project, Feb. 28, 2011

**Gloria Grayson**, Fiscal Support Analyst, TANF Monitoring, Feb. 28, 2011

**Leah McCalmon**, DWS Workforce Specialist, Rogers, Feb. 28, 2011

**Suzanne Smith**, DWS Workforce Specialist, Blytheville, Feb. 28, 2011

**Lessie Virgil**, Auditor, WIA Monitoring, April 29, 2011

**Linda Pruitt**, Fiscal Support Specialist, Cashier/Data Entry/Imaging, April 29, 2011

**Allan Pruitt**, Attorney, Office of Legal Services, April 29, 2011

**Veronica Knight**, DWS Workforce Specialist, TANF Little Rock Local Office, May 17, 2011

**Dora Flanagan-Hughes**, Training Instructor, Searcy, June 10, 2011

**David Morgan**, DWS Workforce Specialist, Pine Bluff, June 30, 2011

**Evelyn Waters**, DWS Field Manager I, Conway, June 30, 2011

**A. Delois Hare**, DWS Field Manager I, Helena, June 30, 2011

**Linda Harris**, DWS Workforce Specialist, UI Customer Support, July 31, 2011

**Lillie Miles**, DWS Claims Adjudicator, Combined Wage Unit, July 31, 2011

**Edward Johnson**, DWS Workforce Specialist, Rogers, July 31, 2011

**Lauren Blindman**, DWS Workforce Specialist, Searcy, July 31, 2011

**George Vickers**, DWS Program Monitor, TAA/DLW Programs, Aug. 31, 2011

**Wilma Gill**, DWS Area Operations Chief, Deputy Director, Aug. 31, 2011

**Beverly Brown**, Administrative Support Supervisor, Charge Unit, Aug. 31, 2011

**Margaret Stiefel**, Research Project Analyst, Bureau of Labor Statistics Programs, Sept. 30, 2011

**Bryan Scott**, Print Shop Supervisor,

Logistics, Oct. 28, 2011

**Judith Thompson**, DWS Division Chief, Contributions, Oct. 31, 2011

**Elsie Rogers**, DWS Program Operations Manager, ICESA/FARS – Cost Accounting, Nov. 18, 2011

**Janis Curtner**, DWS Workforce Specialist, Little Rock UI Operations, Nov. 30, 2011

**Louise Bellflower**, DWS Workforce Specialist, Harrison, Nov. 30, 2011

**Danny Helms**, DWS Field Tax Rep, Field Audit, Dec. 31, 2011

**Sharon Reeves**, Payroll Services Coordinator, ICESA/FARS – Cost Accounting, Dec. 31, 2011

**Edna Wilson**, DWS Unit Supervisor, Employer Accounts Services, Dec. 31, 2011

**Cynthia Phillips**, DWS UI Investigator, UI Benefit Accuracy Measurement (BAM), Dec. 31, 2011

**Terry Jaggears**, DWS Field Manager I, Fayetteville, Dec. 31, 2011

**Picture to Right** — James Jones, a program support manager in Financial Management (left), presents a certificate to Bryan Scott, who retired recently (right).



**Picture to Left** — Bryan Hicks, the assistant director for Financial Management (right), presents a certificate to Elsie Rogers, who retired in November (left).



**Picture to Right** — DWS Deputy Director Ron Snead (right) presents a letter of appreciation to Terry Jaggears, who retired recently (left).

## Deaths

**Chess Bartlett**, a retired veterans representative, died March 22, 2011.

**Jim Gann**, a retired local office manager at Paragould, died June 23, 2011.

**Lillie Green**, a retired job service interviewer in El Dorado, died April 3, 2011.

**Don Johnson**, a retired veterans representative at Magnolia, died Sept. 9, 2011.

**Joe McBroom**, a retired veterans representative, died Sept. 25, 2011.

**Sharon (Vera) Rektor**, a former IT programmer, died Sept. 29, 2011.

**Delaine Russell**, a retired Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force manager, died May 17, 2011.

**Jerry Vandiver**, a retired local office manager at Batesville, died May 28, 2011.

**Emmett Wade**, a retired Employment Services supervisor at Russellville, died June 3, 2011.

**Dorothy Webb**, a retired Labor Market Information employee, died Oct. 19, 2011.

**DAV AWARDS** — [PHOTO TO RIGHT] Lt. Gov. Mark Darr (left) and Wally Tyson, the national Disabled American Veterans commander (far right), present awards at the Disabled American Veterans 65th Annual Convention held in North Little Rock. Receiving the Employer of the Year award was Dean Inman with American Railcar Industries (second from left). American Railcar has facilities in Paragould, Marmaduke and Kennett, MO. Also honored was David Slochowsky, a local veterans' employment representative in the Department of Workforce Services office at Paragould (second from right). Slochowsky received the Veteran Employment Specialist of the Year award for his efforts to assist employers in their search to hire veterans.



Centers

continued from Page 1



**GRAND OPENINGS** — [TOP PHOTO] Arkansas Workforce Center staff at Benton join community leaders for a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the center. [PHOTO TO RIGHT] A ribbon-cutting ceremony recently was held at the Camden center.

Career Readiness Certificate program.

A representative from College of the Ouachitas (formerly Ouachita Technical College) at Malvern visits the center each week to provide Career Pathways Initiative services to clients.

The Arkansas Workforce Center at Camden recently relocated to the Southern Arkansas University Tech Uptown Center at 237 Jackson St.

The new location allows staff to refer clients to the college for additional services to help them become work-ready.

“By relocating to the SAU campus, we can streamline this process even more and make the necessary referrals to our educational partners on-sight,” DWS Director Artee Williams said.



The center provides various employment and educational services to both employers and job seekers.

Besides DWS and SAU Tech, other partners include the Southwest

Arkansas Planning and Development District (which provides Workforce Investment Act services), Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and Division of Services for the Blind.

Expo continued from Page 1

ers for résumé preparation and job searches. Workforce Center staff also reviewed résumés and provided feedback, and a mobile unit was available to provide additional employment assistance.

Attendees also could attend various workshops throughout the day to learn more about résumé preparation, interviewing tips and job search techniques.

**CAREER EXPO** — Department of Workforce Services and Arkansas Workforce Center staff assisted more than 3,100 job seekers at the Arkansas Workforce Centers' Career Expo Nov. 3 at Verizon Arena in North Little Rock. Staff pictured in blue shirts are Robin Melrose, Mena [sitting, far right]; Mary Stegall, Forrest City [standing, far right]; Janet Edgar, Hot Springs [below]; Angela Glasgow, Central Office [second picture to right]; and Dale Speight, Searcy [bottom right picture]. The picture at the bottom left corner shows a job seeker at the Résumé Center.



## Managers

continued from Page 1



Kelly Aaron

more than 34 years of service.

As manager, Aaron oversees the daily operations of the Walnut Ridge office, which provides services such as job placement, Unemployment Insurance, Transitional Employment Assistance and veterans services to residents of Walnut Ridge and Lawrence and Randolph counties.

Aaron originally worked for the state from 1989 to 1992. She began working for DWS in 2001 as an intermittent in the Walnut Ridge office. She later transferred to the Jonesboro office, where she worked as an interviewer. Aaron was promoted to program supervisor in the Newport office in January 2007 and later transferred to the Walnut Ridge office, where she became a program supervisor before being named manager.

Aaron studied business administration at Arkansas State University at Jonesboro and Black River Technical College at Pocahontas. She also has completed several courses with the Arkansas Governmental Manager program.

She works with the Walnut Ridge Chamber of Commerce, county officials, local businesses and community leaders to assist them with their employment needs. She also works with other partner agencies and programs, including Black River Technical College and the Career Pathways Initiative. She is a member of the Walnut Ridge Business and Professional Women's Organization.

Aaron has two boys, Dylan and Preston, and is very involved in their sports programs.

"It is an honor to have been promoted to the manager's position," Aaron said. "I am very fortunate to have a dedicated, well-trained, professional staff that works very hard and takes pride in their professional, timely services administered to our clients. I am excited to have this opportunity to serve this agency in this capacity."

DWS is a partner agency at the Arkansas Workforce Center at Walnut Ridge, which is located at 116 W. Elm St. For more information about center services, call (870) 886-3556.

## Gail Allen

Gail Allen was recently named training project manager for the Department of Workforce Services Training Office. She replaces Kaye Lewis, who retired after 34 years.



Gail Allen

Allen has worked for DWS for about five years. Prior to working for DWS, she worked for an insurance company for more than 28 years and served in various positions in the company's training department.

As training manager, Allen is responsible for scheduling training for staff. She also advises staff of training requirements and availability, develops contracts for services, coordinates with outside sources for training and coordinates the DWS Leadership Development Program.

Allen has a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology/Gerontology degree from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

"I have enjoyed working with local office managers and staff these last nine months," Allen said. "It gives me the opportunity to utilize my professional and training skills. I strive to develop my skills on a continuous basis, and I am always willing to accept even greater challenges."

To find out more about training, contact Allen at (501) 682-1710 or gail.allen@arkansas.gov.

## Jackie Donaldson

Jackie Donaldson was recently selected as manager of the Department of Workforce Services office in Newport.

As manager, Donaldson oversees the operations of the Newport office, which provides Employment Services, Unemployment Insurance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and veterans services to residents of Jackson and Woodruff counties.



Jackie Donaldson

Donaldson has worked for DWS for 20 years, starting in January 1992.

She previously served as a program supervisor for Unemployment

Insurance and Employment Services for almost three years in Newport and has extensive knowledge of DWS programs.

Donaldson graduated from Newport High School and has a business secretary certificate from the USA Training Academy at Jackson, MS, and a computer operations diploma from South Central Career College at Jonesboro.

Her management philosophy includes having open lines of communication with her staff and making the office an enjoyable place to work.

"Treat people like you want to be treated, and the office will run smoothly," she said.

DWS is a partner agency at the Arkansas Workforce Center at Newport, which is located at 7648 Victory Blvd., Suite B. For more information about center services, call (870) 523-3641.

## Mary Golden

Mary Alicia Golden was recently selected as the supervisor of the Department of Workforce Services satellite office at Cabot.



Mary Golden

The Cabot office, which serves as an extension of the Jacksonville office, provides various employment services such as job placement, Unemployment Insurance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, services to veterans and training assessments to the citizens of Cabot and Lonoke County.

Golden has been with the agency for 10 years. She initially began working for DWS when her husband, who is in the Air Force, was stationed in Jacksonville. She has worked in Employment Services and Unemployment Insurance, having served as an automated adjudication specialist and a program monitor in the UI Technical Unit.

Golden has a bachelor's degree in sociology and business from the University of Tampa in Tampa, Fla. She was a 2008 DWS Leadership Development Class II graduate, and her project plan concerning "no issue"

• See Supervisors Page 14

## Supervisors

continued from Page 13

AAS cases was selected by senior management for implementation.

"I am a firm believer that to be an effective leader I must set the example by demonstrating compassionate and respectful service to all of my customers, employers and claimants," Golden said. "It is in serving them well that I can lead best in the community. My staff and I want to strive to render remarkable services to our customers."

DWS is a partner agency at the Arkansas Workforce Center at Cabot, which is located at #1 City Plaza, Suite C. For more information about center services, call (501) 941-2185.

## Joyce Hill

Joyce Hill was recently named manager of the Department of Workforce Services office in Helena.

Hill oversees the daily operations of the office, which provides job placement, Unemployment Insurance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, services to veterans and training assessments for residents of Helena and Phillips County.



Joyce Hill

Hill began working for DWS in October 2007 as a Transitional Employment Assistance regional supervisor in the TANF unit.

Prior to working for DWS, Hill worked for the Mississippi Department of Corrections as a drug assay technician, has been a GED/TABE instructor and worked in medical administration.

She received a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice degree from Mississippi Valley State University at Itta Bena, MS. She received a master's degree in business administration from Colorado Tech University in Colorado Springs, CO.

Hill is a career development facilitator, completed the Arkansas Governmental Manager program, and is certified to administer the KeyTrain assessments and TABE test.

"As manager, I am looking forward to preparing our customers and participants to become competitive in the global economy and to be the best they can be by providing services that enable them to succeed," she said. "I

want to be able to continue to move our state of Arkansas from 'good to great' with great workplace skills."

The DWS office is located at 819 Newman Drive. For more information about services, call (870) 338-7415.

## Diana Kirkdoffer

Diana Kirkdoffer was recently selected as manager of the Department of Workforce Services office in Conway.

As manager, Kirkdoffer oversees the daily operations of the Conway office, which provides Employment Assistance, Unemployment Insurance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate and veterans services to residents of Faulkner and Van Buren counties, as well as surrounding areas.



Diana Kirkdoffer

Kirkdoffer has worked for DWS for two years, beginning as a re-employment services specialist in the Russellville office. As manager, she develops and maintains good working relationships with local employers, community organizations, partner agencies and the public.

Prior to working for DWS, Kirkdoffer was a facility manager for the Arkansas Federal Credit Union.

Kirkdoffer has a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree from Williams Baptist College in Walnut Ridge. She also is a certified global career development facilitator.

"As a new manager to DWS, I look forward to being able to contribute to the continued success of our organization as we move from 'good to great.'"

DWS is a partner agency at the Arkansas Workforce Center at Conway, which is located at 1500 N. Museum Road, #111. For more information about center services, call (501) 730-9894.

## Rick Michaud

Rick Michaud was recently named manager of the Department of Workforce Services office at Rogers and the satellite office at Siloam Springs.

Michaud oversees the daily operations of the Rogers and Siloam Springs

offices, which provide job placement, Unemployment Insurance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, services to veterans and the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate program for residents of Rogers and Siloam Springs.



Rick Michaud

Michaud began working for DWS in June 2010 as a UI interviewer and later became a local veterans' employment representative at the Fayetteville office.

Prior to working for the agency, Michaud participated in the Veterans Administration Work Experience Program from December 2009 until May 2010. He served 22 years in the Army, retiring as a first sergeant in 2005. Michaud served two tours in Iraq during the Operation Desert Storm and Iraqi Freedom campaigns. From 2005 to 2006, he worked for BAE Systems as an instructor and trainer on the New Equipment Training Team.

Michaud has a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree from John Brown University at Siloam Springs and will soon finish his master's degree in business administration from Webster University at Fayetteville.

He has two bronze stars for valor and meritorious service, three meritorious service medals, seven good conduct awards, 10 Army achievement medals, seven Army accommodation medals, and other numerous military awards. He received a letter of appreciation from former President George W. Bush and a former Army chief of staff.

"I look forward to joining the Rogers and Siloam Springs team as we continue to provide professional, courteous service, helping others to overcome barriers during these turbulent economic times," Michaud said.

DWS is a partner agency at the Arkansas Workforce Center at Rogers, located at 100 N. Dixieland Road, and the Arkansas Workforce Center at Siloam Springs, which is located at 809 S. Mount Olive St. For more information about services at Rogers, call (479) 636-4755. For information about services at Siloam Springs, call (479) 524-5181.

• See Williford Page 15

## Clothing Drive

Department of Workforce Services staff in central Arkansas donated several large bags of clothes to the Big Brothers Big Sisters Clothes Drive.

“Thank you all very much,” said Community Outreach Coordinator Tammy Reynolds. “You helped us out a lot. All the proceeds from the clothes went back into our program.”

Anyone who would still like to donate clothes can call (501) 375-4483 to schedule pickup.

**Williford** continued from Page 14

### Alice Williford

Alice Williford was recently selected as manager of the Department of Workforce Services office at Forrest City.



Alice Williford

As manager, Williford oversees the daily operations of the Forrest City office, which provides job placement, Unemployment Insurance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and veterans services to residents of Forrest City and St. Francis County. She also coordinates with other agency partners.

Williford has worked for DWS for five years, having worked in both the Unemployment Insurance and Employment Services programs.

She has an associate degree in business administration from East Arkansas Community College in Forrest City. Williford also is a career development facilitator and an instructor and administrator for KeyTrain, the first phase of the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate program. She is the secretary at New Hebron Missionary Baptist Church and is vice-president of the Forrest City Lions Club.

“It is my goal as manager of the Forrest City local office to improve the way we provide services to the customers in our community,” Williford said. “I want to network with our community leaders to provide other resource options for our customers.”

DWS is a partner agency at the Arkansas Workforce Center at Forrest City, located at 300 Eldridge Road, Suite 2. For more information about center services, call (870) 633-2900.



**SCHOOL SUPPLIES DONATION** — Gwen Vault, a program operations manager for ICESA/FARS Cost Accounting and Payroll (left), stands with Sharon Reeves, retired Payroll Services coordinator (middle), and Kim Jones, the assistant personnel manager (right), behind school supplies the Central Office donated as part of the collection effort of the Arkansas State Employees Association's Central Little Rock Chapter. DWS staff donated 12 boxes full of supplies that went to area students in need. In addition to spearheading the donation drive, the Payroll unit coordinated the yearly Open Enrollment Benefit Fair, National Payroll Week and a lunch-and-learn session that focused on identify theft prevention.

## IT Projects

continued from Page 2

### Tax 21 Project

The systems employers use to register their business with the Department of Workforce Services and report their wages recently was updated to make it more user-friendly for staff and employers.

The ongoing project will modernize and correct any issues with the UI tax rate calculation, data validation and Tax Performance System. As a result, the system runs more efficiently.

“It saves DWS money because wages are entered faster, lessening the length of time extra help workers are required each quarter to assist with the keying of wages,” said Ron Calkins, the assistant director of Unemployment Insurance.

Some of the modifications that have already been deployed have resulted in a reduction of one-to-two weeks in the time it takes to key quarterly wages.

### WOTC

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit program has completed the successful conversion to a new secure, automated, web-based system.

The WOTC program provides tax credits to employers who hire employees from 11 hard-to-serve target groups: recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, military veterans, dis-

abled veterans, vocational rehabilitation clients, ex-felons, designated communities, summer youth, food stamp recipients, Supplemental Security Income recipients, long-term family assistance clients and Ticket-to-Work recipients.

This new system is based on the one currently used by several states. It allows companies to print their certifications instead of waiting for them to be mailed. They also can input their information through the program instead of mailing it to DWS.

Kellye George, the WOTC program operations manager, said employers are excited about the upgrade.

“The companies receive their certifications extremely fast, and we continue to receive positive feedback regarding the automated program,” she said.

By conserving resources and reducing waste, the new system also contributes to the agency's efforts to “go green.”

“This has allowed WOTC to go green and save approximately 25,000 sheets of paper a month,” George said.

The system also will replace an outdated system and better equip DWS to expeditiously process ever-growing numbers of WOTC applications and, thereby, better serve Arkansas' employers.