Customers vote Conway office one of best

Residents of Faulkner County recently voted the Arkansas Workforce Center at Conway as First Runner-Up for Best Employment Agency.

“I am extremely proud of our staff at the Conway office for achieving this recognition,” Department of Workforce Services Director Artee Williams said. “This honor is extremely important because it came from our customers and reflects the outstanding customer service the Conway office provides.”

Around 30 employees from DWS, Workforce Investment Act programs and other agency partners work at the Conway office, which provides

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18 staff complete leadership program

Eighteen Department of Workforce Services employees graduated from the fourth Leadership Development Program in April.

A ceremony honoring the graduates was held at the Holiday Inn Presidential in Little Rock.


Graduates were selected by DWS senior management to participate in the 18-month program, where they learned about agency programs and services and developed leadership skills.

Participants also were required to complete a comprehensive project plan that would improve agency services or save money.

The agency implemented the program to address succession planning and provide an opportunity for career advancement within the agency. Previous classes graduated in 2006, 2008 and 2010.

Twenty-two staff were selected for the next class, which began this month. Those selected by senior management for the program had to submit a comprehensive résumé and a 200-word summary explaining the benefits and goals they hoped to achieve through the program.

Those selected for the LD5 program are as follows:

• Melissa Bailey, UI Technical Program Monitor, Searcy.
• Falonda Brazile, Trade Adjustment

• See Leadership Page 7
GRAND OPENING — Arkansas Workforce Center staff, city officials and members of the Brinkley Chamber of Commerce hold a ribbon cutting ceremony at the Arkansas Workforce Center at Brinkley. The center held a grand opening after relocating to 401 W. Fourth.

Brinkley, Helena centers relocate recently

Two Arkansas Workforce Centers recently relocated, providing additional space for staff and customers.

**Brinkley**

The Arkansas Workforce Center at Brinkley moved to 401 W. Fourth St. The office, which assists residents of Monroe and Prairie counties, was previously located at 1116 N. Main St., where it had been for about 30 years.

“This move provided more space to allow Workforce Center partners to serve more customers and to have additional space to add more partners,” said John Brunson Jr., the area workforce director for the Central Arkansas Planning and Development District.

Center partners include CAPDD (which provides Workforce Investment Act services to adults, youth and dislocated workers), Crowley’s Ridge Technical College-Adult Education, Tri-County Rural Health, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Social Security Administration, Legal Aid and Veteran Affairs.

**Helena**

The Arkansas Workforce Center at Helena relocated to 819 Newman Drive.

The new location consolidated staff from two different Helena locations and the Marianna office, allowing staff to better serve residents of Helena, Marianna and surrounding counties.

“The new location allows staff from multiple offices to assist job seekers and employers at one central location,” said Department of Workforce Services Director Artee Williams. “Staff will be able to host job fairs at the new site and better network with employers in the area.”

Besides DWS, other partner agencies include the Arkansas Human Development Corporation.

Both centers assist employers and job seekers with their employment needs. Each is equipped with a computer lab, and job seekers can receive résumé and job placement assistance.
Visual aid clarifies dress code policy:

Lance recognized for dress code Power Point idea

Department of Workforce Services employees now have a visual reference when determining if their clothing adheres to the dress code policy.

The Power Point, which was e-mailed to all agency employees and incorporated into New Hire Orientation, gives examples of proper and improper clothing for work. Deputy Director Ron Snead said the Power Point clarifies the current agency policy.

“When people dress professionally, our clients respond most of the time professionally,” Snead said. “You have that whole atmosphere of a professional work environment.”

Snead said the agency should give the impression that state government is a professional organization with professional people who dress professionally.

“Overall, we’ve done very well [since the Power Point was distributed],” Snead said. “I think staff have adhered to it, and we’re very appreciative of that too.”

The idea for a visual reference came as a result of a project plan by Timothy Lance, a graduate of the Leadership Development 4 class. DWS senior management recognized Lance recently for his idea.

Find jobs, career expos on Facebook

DWS now has a Facebook page. The page can be accessed by going to www.facebook.com/Arkansas. Workforce and already has more than 100 “likes.”

“Social media continues to play an important role, especially among our younger customers,” said DWS Director Artee Williams. “We wanted to reach out to them and let them know that we have jobs available and services that we can provide to assist them with their job search.”

A job order is posted each day, and a listing of upcoming career expos also can be found at the site.

Information Desk now taking calls

Customers can now receive immediate assistance thanks to the new Information Desk that began operating this spring.

“The DWS Information Desk was created to serve as a single point of contact for our clients and also to connect them with subject matter specialists within DWS,” said Joe Milligan, the IT Support manager and information security officer.

Dorthy Caldwell, a Local Veterans’ Employment Representative in Pine Bluff, came up with the idea for the Information Desk, which falls under Milligan’s supervision.

The Information Desk staff also follow up to ensure callers’ issues are resolved.

“In addition, we hope to gain better understanding of our DWS customers’ needs, which will help us to reduce duplicate efforts across departments and alleviate the local offices’ call volumes,” Milligan said.

Currently, two staff work on the Information Desk: Corina Parra and Jessica Durham. They can be reached by calling 1-855-225-4440 or (501) 682-2121.

SPIRIT OF 110 AWARD — DWS staff (l to r, Rhonda Barfield, Gerrita Williams, Dexter Brown, Lateisha Moore, Sudha Bande and Verna Gilliam) pose with a certificate DWS received at the Spirit of 110 Recognition Event recently. DWS was honored for promoting volunteerism within the agency. Others not pictured include Don Childers, Laquanda Donahue-Lott, Bernadette Coleman, Kynata Taylor, Ruth Jones and Gwen Vault.
Several Temporary Assistance for Needy Families employees were recognized at the 2012 TANF Staff Training Conference recently for outstanding work in the TANF program.

“We could not provide quality customer service and assistance to TANF clients if it weren’t for our hard-working, dedicated staff,” said Phil Harris, the assistant director of the TANF program. “These awards are just one small way of honoring our employees for all that they do to help Arkansans not only find a job but succeed in life.”

Three TANF staff with fewer than three years of TANF experience received the Rising Star Award for their overall performance. Recipients were Michelle Harris, support staff in Blytheville; Carol McDearmon, a workforce specialist in Russellville; and Julie LaRue, a program supervisor in Hot Springs.

Two TANF employees with more than three years of experience received the Star Award. Winners were Vanessa Smith, a workforce specialist in West Memphis, and Don Gibson, a program supervisor in Jacksonville.

Harris also honored Elroy Willoughby, the TANF division chief, with the Champion of Change Award for his overall dedication to the TANF program.

In addition to recognizing TANF staff, local offices that exceeded performance goals were honored as well. Offices that received the 2012 TANF A.S.K. (Assessments, Sanctions, and Keying activity hours timely) Awards were Harrison, Hot Springs, Forrest City, Monticello and Searcy.
Three employees receive APAC honors

Three Department of Workforce Services staff received the Arkansas Governmental Manager certification recently through the Arkansas Public Administration Consortium.

Graduates were Tammy Dragon, Central Office; Dollie Fountain, Employment Services at the Arkansas Workforce Center at Little Rock; and Walter Zgleszewski, veterans representative in North Little Rock.

Graduates completed six two-day courses and a project plan to receive the certification. DWS uses the AGM as part of the selection process for the Leadership Development Program.

APAC is part of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock’s Institute of Government and is a cooperative program involving UALR, Arkansas State University at Jonesboro and the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

EO CONFERENCE — DWS Equal Opportunity Manager Gloria Johnson speaks at the Local Equal Opportunity Conference recently in Little Rock. DWS and Workforce Center EO managers and staff attended the conference, where they received updates regarding EO law and policies.

DAV AWARD — Larry Woodle, the Local Veterans’ Employment Representative in Conway (second from right), received the Veteran Employment Specialist of the Year award recently from the Disabled American Veterans. Also pictured are Col. Peter Gauger with the Arkansas Air National Guard (left), Lt. Gov. Mark Darr (second from left), and Russell Cook, an LVER in Russellville (right). Ricky Young, an LVER in Fort Smith, was named the DAV state commander for 2012-2013.
3 employers recognized at luncheon

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

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

“We are pleased to recognize three outstanding employers this year who are going above and beyond when it comes to recruiting and retaining mature workers,” DWS Director Artee Williams said. “These employers deserve to be recognized and serve as examples for other employers.”

The Arkansas Educational Television Network is a three-time winner and was inducted as an ambassador this year. AETN joins Bank of the Ozarks, which was inducted as an ambassador in 2011.

Liberty Bank and White County Medical Center (a two-time winner) were the other two winners. These two companies join other past winners: St. Vincent Health System, 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 only educate employers but to assist mature workers with finding employment through the Arkansas Workforce Centers. It also stresses the importance of keeping mature adults actively engaged in volunteer activities.
Hall, Purifoy named managers

Dan Hall

Dan Hall was recently named manager of the Department of Workforce Services office in Mountain Home.

As manager, Hall oversees all agency programs, coordinates activities with partnering agencies at the Arkansas Workforce Center, and networks with area businesses.

Hall began working for DWS in February 2011 as a workforce specialist and Local Veterans’ Employment Representative. He is knowledgeable about the Unemployment Insurance program, Kuder College and Career Planning System, veterans benefits and other programs. He completed veterans and employment training courses offered by the U.S. Department of Labor. He previously served as a lieutenant in the Baxter County Sheriff’s Office and was elected twice as the county judge.

Hall is a graduate of the Community Development Institute at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway. He also has senior law enforcement and instructor certifications from the Arkansas Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Training.

He is the commander of Disabled American Veterans Chapter 30 and is active in the Veterans of Foreign Wars Honor Guard and American Legion.

“My personal goal is to ensure that every job seeker and every job provider in the area is aware of our commitment to serving their needs through an array of resources at our Workforce Center and to provide these services at the highest level of competence, courtesy and commitment because we care,” Hall said.

DWS is a partner agency at the Arkansas Workforce Center at Mountain Home, located at 1058 Highland Circle, #20. For more information, call (870) 425-2386.

Kenya Purifoy

Kenya Purifoy was recently named manager of the Department of Workforce Services office in Fayetteville.

As manager, Purifoy oversees agency programs and services, manages the daily activities of staff, and assists customers and other partner agencies.

Purifoy began working for DWS in 2001 as a document examiner at the Fayetteville office. A year later, she became an unemployment insurance interviewer. In 2003 she transferred to Arkadelphia. Purifoy moved back to Fayetteville in 2007, where she was a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families case manager until being named office manager. She has worked with various programs including Work Pays, Transitional Employment Assistance, Trade Adjustment Assistance, the Automated Adjudication system, Job Services and the fraud unit.

Purifoy received a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology in 2006 from Henderson State University in Arkadelphia. She is knowledgeable about numerous agency programs including KUDER, NORM, Arkansas JobLink and Unemployment Insurance.

“I am very excited to be named the manager of the Fayetteville office,” Purifoy said. “I look forward to helping our staff assist both employers and job seekers in the Fayetteville area.”

DWS is a partner agency at the Arkansas Workforce Center at Fayetteville, located at 2143 W. Martin Luther King Blvd. For more information, call (479) 521-5730.

LeChasity Coleman, Fiscal Support Specialist, Central Office.

Kelly George, Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program Operations Manager, Little Rock.

Lauren Goins, Human Resource Analyst, Central Office.

Shannon Jones, Automated Adjudicator, Jacksonville.

Genia Keeling, UI Investigator, Jonesboro.

Julie LaRue, Transitional Employment Assistance Regional Supervisor, Hot Springs.

Jennifer Lederman, Workforce Specialist, Conway.

Justin Majors, Trade Adjustment Assistance Program Operations Manager, Little Rock.

Amy Minger, Fiscal Support Specialist, Central Office.

Scott Morgan, Local Office Manager, Dumas.

Jeremy Nixon, Hearing Officer, Appeals Tribunal.

Kenya Purifoy, Local Office Manager, Fayetteville.

Jamie Rumenapp, Field Tax Auditor/Supervisor, Central Office.

Makesha Shelton, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program Monitor, Central Office.

Richard Smith, UI Services Manager, Central Office.

Larretta Rena Stevenson, Employer Accounts Services Unit Supervisor, Central Office.

Joshua Jacob Taylor, Workforce Specialist, Camden.


Yolanda Williams, TEA Program Supervisor, Little Rock.

Nickolas Williams, Information Security Analyst, Central Office.

Each of the students will be assigned a mentor from among senior management or from a previous class. The mentor will give direction and guidance during the 18-month program.

employment services to both employers and job seekers.

“To be voted First Runner-Up for Best Employment Agency by the citizens of Faulkner County is a great honor!” Diana Kirkdoffer, the DWS Conway office manager, said. “The Conway Workforce Center strives each and every day to make a difference in the lives of those we serve, and to receive such an honor communicates to our employers that Faulkner County recognizes our efforts. Our goal for the upcoming year is to be the best as we move from ‘good to great.’”
CENTRAL OFFICE — Dexter L. Brown, the fiscal support supervisor for Administrative Disbursements, was promoted to U.S. Army Sergeant First Class.

Carl M. Danley, a field tax representative in the Central Office, welcomes Carter Marceo, who was born July 12, 2012. Carter weighed 8 pounds, 8 ounces and was 21 inches long.

Congratulations to Ron Calkins, assistant director for Unemployment Insurance, Joe Milligan, information security officer, and Keesa Smith, chairman of the Board of Review, for participating in the Little Rock Marathon. Calkins and Milligan completed the half marathon, and Smith completed the 10K.

The American Institute for Full Employment recently awarded DWS the 2012 Full Employment for Best Practices Award for its commitment to employing unemployment insurance claimants by using proactive policies and innovative programs.

FORT SMITH — Rose Davis, who works with the Trade Adjustment Assistance program in Fort Smith, was featured in the June partner spotlight section of the IRS Health Coverage Tax Credit Program’s newsletter. Davis was featured for her support for displaced workers and employers.

Ricky Young, a Local Veterans’ Employment Representative in Fort Smith, and his band Mr. Cabbagehead & the Screamin’ Radishes recently performed at the Arkansas-Oklahoma State Fair in Fort Smith.

HOT SPRINGS — Hot Springs Local Office Manager Janet Edgar recently was voted as the workforce readiness director for the West Central Arkansas Society for Human Resource Management.

JONESBORO — DWS staff at the Jonesboro office recently held a Job Fair Boot Camp for Transitional Employment Assistance clients. Clients received information about the Career Pathways Center, college enrollment and résumé tips.

MONTICELLO — Terence Roberson, the son of Gaye Roberson, a workforce specialist in Monticello, recently graduated from kindergarten. Terence is the nephew of Kim Jones, assistant personnel manager.

Ashlyn Crawford, the daughter of Lindsay Crawford, a workforce specialist, recently graduated from kindergarten.

Aaron Taylor, a Re-employment Services specialist, and his wife, Jenni, welcome Liam Sullivan Taylor, who was born June 12, 2012. Liam weighed 9 pounds, 5 ounces and was 21.5 inches long.


WALNUT RIDGE — Dusty Warnix, an Automated Adjudication System writer in Walnut Ridge, and his wife, Angela Warnix, welcome the newest member of their family — Bently Taylor Warnix who they adopted July 9, 2012.

WEST MEMPHIS — Mary Cotton, an interviewer in West Memphis, welcomes two new grandchildren. Michael Kaleb, who weighed 5 pounds, 14 ounces, and Ma’Kenzie Kelyse, who weighed 5 pounds, 12 ounces, were born June 19, 2012, at Northside Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia.
Department of Workforce Services and Arkansas Workforce Center employees assist thousands of job seekers and employers each year at numerous job fairs and business expos around the state. These pictures highlight just a few of the recent events, which include Magnolia, Little Rock, Hughes, Sherwood and Jonesboro.
Relay for Life

RELAY FOR LIFE — [PICTURE TO RIGHT] Department of Workforce Services employees in the Hot Springs office raised more than $1,000 for the American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life: Decades of Hope foundation. Staff participated in several fundraising events to raise the money for the organization.

Job Shadowing

JOB SHADOW — [PICTURE TO RIGHT] Department of Workforce Services Director Artee Williams (left) poses with his niece Kennedi Carroll recently. Carroll, a fifth-grader at Murrell Taylor Elementary School in Jacksonville, shadowed Williams for the day.

[PICTURE BELOW] Several children of DWS employees at the Hot Springs office participated in the Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work event recently. The theme was Building Opportunity: 20 Years of Education, Empowerment and Experience, and ages ranged from 6 to 15. Participants explored career opportunities and learned the importance of being community leaders.
Training Program

TRAINING PROGRAM — [PICTURE TO LEFT]
Governor’s Dislocated Worker Task Force Division
Chief Jay Bassett (left) and Thomas McCloria, a
Trade Adjustment Assistance tech (right), pose with
representatives from Arkansas Tech University -
Ozark recently at their training facility in Fort Smith.
The Department of Workforce Services is partnering
with the university to train students for air condi-
tioning and refrigeration repair and maintenance.
Also pictured are Dr. Ken Warden, chief business
and community outreach officer (second from left);
Chancellor Joe Blondin (center); and Bruce Sikes,
chief academic officer (second from right).

Donations

DONATIONS — [PICTURE TO RIGHT]
Assistant Personnel Manager Kim Jones (left)
and Gwen Vault, program operations manager
in Financial Management (right), display the
items DWS employees donated to the Women
and Children First shelter for mothers and chil-
dren affected by domestic abuse. The donation
drive was coordinated with the Arkansas State
Employees Association.

Payroll Week

PAYROLL WEEK — [PICTURE TO
LEFT] DWS Payroll staff celebrated
National Payroll Week recently. An edu-
cational seminar with a presentation by
the Arkansas Federal Credit Union was
held for employees. Pictured (left to
right) with certificates for good perfor-
ance are Jennifer Parks, Assistant
Director for Financial Management
Bryan Hicks, Ardary Taylor - Payroll
services coordinator, Dorean Scott,
Deputy Director Ron Snead and Kevin
Lee.
Retirements
Brenda Mahan, Non-Mon Pilot Project, Feb. 1
Charlie Hampton, Internal Audit & Security, Feb. 15
Irma Phillips, Hot Springs, March 1
James Case, Employment Assistance, April 1
Rodney Boice, Arkadelphia, April 1
Barbara Bahnks, Rogers, April 1
Raymond Short, Rogers, May 1
Russell Pollard II, FIRE, May 12
Julia Johnston, Russellville, June 30
Annette Trotter, Monticello, June 30
Gladys Canady, UI BAM, June 30
Debra Kempf, UI BAM, June 30
Nancy Smith, UI Technical, June 30
Brenda Floyd, FIRE, June 30
Danny Moye, UI BAM, June 30
Roxanna Epperson, Russellville, June 30
Jerry Davis, Monticello, June 30
Ruby Davis, Helena, July 1
Jean Williams, BLS, July 31
Robert Greene, Magnolia, July 31
Freddie Lee, TAA/DLW, July 31
Donzella Westbrook, Forrest City, Aug. 31
Florcia Thomas, TANF, Little Rock, Aug. 31
Laguanna Williams, Harrison, Aug. 31
Mary Lane, Cashier/Data Entry/Imaging, Aug. 31
Bonita Campbell, Contributions, Sept. 28
Jessie Cain, UI BAM, Sept. 28
Kenneth Hood, Conway, Sept. 28
Alicia Prewitt, Conway, Sept. 28

Deaths
Peggy Smith, an Administrative Specialist II at the Appeal Tribunal, died February 27, 2012.

Teri L. Mitchell, a DWS workforce specialist in Benton, died June 24, 2012.