

# News 'n Views

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Department of Workforce Services

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Arkansas Workforce Investment Board

## CRC program recognized around state

### *More than 3,000 awarded, 100 employers on board*

Gov. Mike Beebe announced the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate program in January, and since then more than 3,000 certificates have been awarded around the state.

The CRC is a free workplace-readiness credential implemented by the Governor's Workforce Cabinet. It assures employers that potential employees have the necessary skills in reading, math and locating information.

"One of the most frequent requests we get from businesses is for more comprehensive advance screening of potential employees," Gov. Mike Beebe said. "The CRC will give Arkansans confidence in their own skills and qualifications, while helping employers improve the effectiveness of training dollars and streamline hiring decisions."

The certificate not only builds job seeker confidence, it reduces employee turnover, increases a graduate's chances for hire and boosts economic development.

About 100 employers around the state have made it a part of their hiring practices or expressed interest in the program.

To obtain a CRC, job seekers must first pass the KeyTrain® instruction with a Level 4 in Reading For Information, Applied Mathematics and Locating Information. They are then referred to take WorkKeys®, a proctored assessment created by ACT, who developed the college entrance exam.

Upon passing WorkKeys® with a Level 3, 4 or 5 in all three areas, they receive a bronze, silver or gold CRC signed by the governor and directors of the Department of Workforce Services and Arkansas Workforce Investment Board.

A gold certificate shows that a job seeker has the core employability skills for approximately 90 percent of the 15,000 jobs profiled by WorkKeys® in the three skill areas. A silver certificate means they have the skills for 65 percent of the profiled jobs, and a bronze certificate means they have the skills for about 30 percent of the jobs.

To find out how to contact a CRC partner agency, go to [www.ArkansasAtWork.org](http://www.ArkansasAtWork.org) or call 1-866-757-2999.



*Photo by Kirk Jordan with the Office of the Governor*

**AWARDS** — George Greason, CEO of Bank of the Ozarks at Little Rock (l to r); Bill Hannah, CEO of Nabholz Construction Corp. of Conway; Billie Ann Myers, former president of AARP Arkansas; Gov. Mike Beebe; and Ryan Kibler, president of Medic One Ambulance Service of Jonesboro, pose for a picture recently at the Governor's Work-Life Balance Awards ceremony. All three companies received the Mature Worker Friendly Award, which was presented during the ceremony.

## Three AR employers honored for benefits to mature workers

The Arkansas Workforce Investment Board and Department of Workforce Services partnered with the Governor's Work-Life Initiative to honor three Arkansas employers for their dedication to hiring and retaining mature workers (those age 50+).

Nabholz Construction Corp. of Conway, Medic One Ambulance Service of Jonesboro and Bank of the Ozarks of Little Rock were this year's recipients at a ceremony recently held at the Peabody Hotel in Little Rock.

"All three recipients demonstrated that they have policies and practices in place to recruit and retain mature workers," said DWS Director Artee Williams.

The Mature Worker Friendly Award is part of the Governor's Work-Life Balance Awards, which are presented each year to employers who provide resources that support employees in balancing the needs of work and family.

The need to keep those 50+ in the workforce is a concern across the country. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 43 percent of the current workforce will be eligible to retire in the next eight years, and 61 percent of new entrants (those age 16 to 25) to the workforce are not fully qualified.

The mature worker award and an educational campaign to inform employers about

this looming crisis have been spearheaded by the Arkansas Mature Worker Initiative, which was designed to increase the awareness of keeping mature workers in the workforce. The initiative also serves to connect mature workers to employers through the Arkansas Workforce Centers.

The AWIB serves as the lead agency for the initiative and partnered with the following to ensure the program's success: DWS, AARP Arkansas, the Governor's Office, the Department of Higher Education, Department of Human Services, Economic Development Commission, Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges, and Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce and Associated Industries of Arkansas.

Partners met with employers around the state to educate them about the need to retain these qualified workers. The initiative also participated in job fairs to assist with connecting mature workers to employers.

Because of the initiative's work, Arkansas was selected by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices as one of eight states to participate in a policy academy to explore ways to keep the mature population in the workforce or active through volunteerism.

# DWS names new directors, managers

## Ron Calkins

Ron Calkins was recently named the assistant director of Unemployment Insurance. He replaces Hugh Havens, who retired after more than 36 years.

Calkins is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Unemployment Insurance program, which includes Benefit Accuracy Measurement, the Customer Support Unit, Automated Adjudication System, UI Technical and Federal Programs, the Charge Unit, Contributions, Imaging and the Mailroom, and UI Research and Planning and Reporting.

"I am confident that Ron will provide the leadership and direction that is needed for this major DWS program that serves thousands of Arkansas clients and employers," said DWS Director Artee Williams.

Prior to his new position, Calkins served as the deputy assistant director for the UI program and previously was a hearing officer for the Arkansas Appeal Tribunal, an attorney for the Office of Chief Counsel and the chief hearing officer for the tribunal.

He obtained a juris doctorate from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock School of Law and has a Bachelor of Arts in History from Louisiana State University at Shreveport.



Ron Calkins

## Joe Franklin



Joe Franklin

Joe Franklin was named the director of the New Hire Registry program on June 10.

The registry collects information regarding new employees from all employers, profit and non-profit, in the state. The information is used to detect and prevent public assistance fraud. Franklin will provide orientation to new employers and speak to business groups about the registry. He also will work with the contractor that provides technical support to ensure performance standards are met.

"I am pleased to welcome Joe to the DWS senior management team and know he will serve the agency well in this new capacity," said DWS Director Artee Williams.

Franklin is a graduate of Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, IL, where he received a Bachelor of Science in Radio and Television. He also has additional credit hours toward a master's in public administration.

Franklin will continue as administrator for the Arkansas Career Readiness

Certificate program. He previously served as the assistant director of human resources and support services for the Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services, commissioner on the Arkansas Parole Board, liaison for minority affairs and state agencies for the Governor's Office, and communications and education officer for the Secretary of State's Office.

## Tanya Plunkett

Tanya Plunkett was recently named the agency controller in the DWS Financial Management and Administrative Services unit.

She is responsible for the completion of the annual report and closing book for DWS, reviewing bank account reconciliations, following financial trends to detect problems and ensuring the agency is following the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and Generally Accepted Governmental Accounting Standards.

She has a bachelor's degree in business administration with a major in accounting and a Certified Public Accountant license. Plunkett previously retired from Legislative Audit with 31 years of service.



Tanya Plunkett

## Jay Bassett



Jay Bassett

Jay Bassett recently became the new division chief for the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force.

He coordinates the task force services when it is notified of a layoff or closure and oversees the Trade Adjustment Assistance and Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance programs.

Bassett has a juris doctorate from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock School of Law and a bachelor's degree in history and psychology.

He spent most of his career with Alltel and Windstream Communications in federal and state regulatory compliance, management, reporting, legal and legislative research, and emergency response and preparedness plan development.

## Judy Duncan

Judy Duncan was appointed July 14 as the area operations chief for Area III. She replaces Mary Cotton, who retired earlier this year.



Judy Duncan

As AOC for Area III, Duncan oversees the following local offices: Newport, Blytheville, Forrest City, Helena, Jonesboro, Paragould, Walnut Ridge, West Memphis and Wynne.

She has worked for DWS since 1979 and previously served as a manager for the Walnut Ridge and Newport offices. Duncan also served as an Employment Services supervisor and a regional supervisor for six local offices.

Duncan is a Certified Employment Manager, a graduate of the DWS Leadership Development Program and represents DWS on the National Steering Committee for America's JobLink, the DWS and Workforce Investment Act labor exchange program.

## Evelyn Waters

Evelyn Waters was named manager of the Conway office on July 14. She replaces Skeet Morse, who retired earlier this year.

Waters has worked for DWS since 1976, having served as an interviewer, Employment Services program supervisor in Conway and Employment Services regional supervisor.

Waters is a Certified Employment Manager and has received numerous awards and recognition during her tenure. Some of these include the State of Arkansas Governor's Quality Award, the Son Martin Courtesy Award from the International Association of Workforce Professionals (formerly the International Association of Personnel in Employment Security), a Certificate of Recognition from former Gov. Bill Clinton and a Certificate of Appreciation in 2004 from DWS.



Evelyn Waters

## Randal Kingston



Randal Kingston

Randal Kingston was appointed July 14 as the manager of the Paragould office. He replaces Jim Gann, who retired recently.

Kingston has worked for DWS since 1978. He previously served as an acting project analyst for the UI Technical Unit, Unemployment Insurance program supervisor, Local Veterans' Employment Representative and interviewer.

He is a Certified Employment Manager.

# 18 honored as leaders at ceremony

Eighteen Department of Workforce Services and Arkansas Workforce Investment Board employees graduated June 6 from the second Leadership Development Program in a ceremony held at the Holiday Inn Presidential in Little Rock.

Graduates are Angela Buhmester, Belinda Hodges, Ben Baxter, Beverly Hefley, Carmen Edwards, Cindy White-Hamilton, Dejanette Smith, Eddy Morton, Jana Kindall, Jim Case, Joy Ross, Mary Golden, Maurice Porchia, Mike Gleghorn, Pat Warbritton, Sharon Walker, Teresa Tharpe and Tracii Laettner.

Graduates of the 18-month program attended two-day classes every other month, learned about agency programs and developed leadership skills.



**LEADERSHIP GRADUATES** — The following DWS and AWIB staff are graduates of the second Leadership Development Program: (front row, l to r) Mike Gleghorn, Mary Golden, Cindy White-Hamilton, Pat Warbritton, Beverly Hefley, Ben Baxter, Tracii Laettner and Carmen Edwards; (second row, l to r) Maurice Porchia, Angela Buhmester, Jim Case, Jana Kindall, Belinda Hodges, Teresa Tharpe, Sharon Walker, Dejanette Smith, Joy Ross and Eddy Morton.

They also were required to complete a comprehensive project plan that would benefit a department, division, or improve a program or service.

Senior management has implemented several of these plans, with others soon to follow.

The program was implemented by both

DWS and the AWIB to address succession planning and career advancement issues. The first class of 18 graduated in July 2006, and several have received promotions as a result.

The third leadership development class will begin in October. The nomination period ended July 31.



## Eight staff receive APAC certification

Eight Department of Workforce Services employees received management certification from the Arkansas Public Administration Consortium May 8 at the Capitol.

APAC is located within the University of Arkansas at Little Rock's Institute of Government. It is a cooperative program of UALR, Arkansas State University at Jonesboro and the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

APAC provides training and education for managers and leaders from the public and nonprofit sectors.

The Arkansas Governmental Manager Program is the state certification of the Certified Public Manager Program and requires the completion of six two-day courses and a project plan.

AGM graduates are Sandra Burch, who is stationed in the Blytheville office, and Stephanie Carlo, Marcia Chandler, Kay Davis, Delores Hall, Belinda Hodges and Rex Platt from the Central and Little Rock offices.

The Certified Public Manager Program is the national certification. Individuals must first complete the AGM program and then complete five additional two-day courses, 146 contact hours and successfully pass a national test.

CPM graduates are Stephanie Carlo, Jim Case and Rex Platt, all from the Central Office.



**APAC GRADUATES** — [Top photo] The following DWS employees received the Arkansas Governmental Manager certification recently: (front row, l to r) Sandra Burch, Rex Platt and Stephanie Carlo; (second row, l to r) Delores Hall, Belinda Hodges and Marcia Chandler. Not pictured: Kay Davis.

[Left photo] Rex Platt, Stephanie Carlo and Jim Case (l to r) recently received the Certified Public Manager certification.



**RETIREMENT** — Charles McGowan, a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program specialist for Forrest City (right), presents a plaque to Titus Arnold, a DVOP in El Dorado (left). Arnold retired recently after more than 19 years.



**RETIREMENT** — DWS Director Artee Williams (right) presents a plaque to Mary Cotton, the area operations chief for Area III (left). Cotton retired after more than 33 years.



**RETIREMENT** — Cindy Varner, the assistant director for Employment Assistance (left), presents a certificate to Al Crumby, the Labor Market Information division chief (right). Crumby retired after more than 33 years.

**Retirements**

**Ozella Williams**, Little Rock, Dec. 28, 2007  
**Judith Nichols**, Malvern, Dec. 31, 2007  
**Willie Henry**, Hope, Dec. 31, 2007  
**Michael Caldwell**, Hope, Dec. 31, 2007  
**Judy Atchison**, Fort Smith, Dec. 31, 2007  
**Alinda Andrews**, Board of Review, Jan. 31, 2008  
**Patricia Murphy**, Financial Management, Jan. 31, 2008  
**Carolyn Felts**, Walnut Ridge, Jan. 31, 2008  
**Mary Cotton**, Area Operations Chief, Feb. 29, 2008  
**Ava Williams**, TAA/DLW, Feb. 29, 2008  
**G. Al Crumby**, Labor Market Information, Feb. 29, 2008

**Titus Arnold**, El Dorado, Feb. 29, 2008  
**Jimmy Gann**, Paragould, Feb. 29, 2008  
**Stephen Short**, Harrison, March 31, 2008  
**Jackie Starkey**, Harrison, April 14, 2008  
**Jesse James Jr.**, Little Rock, April 30, 2008  
**Dorothea Mitchell**, Searcy, April 30, 2008  
**Donna Cook**, Information Technology, June 30, 2008  
**Jerry Meeker**, Unemployment Insurance, June 30, 2008  
**Harold Lemons**, Area Operations Chief, June 30, 2008  
**Floyd "Skeet" Morse**, Area Operations Chief, June 30, 2008  
**Hugh Havens**, Unemployment Insurance, June 30, 2008



**RETIREMENT** — Joe Franklin, Ron Snead, Roger Harrod (l to r) and Ron Calkins (far right) present a gift to Hugh Havens, the assistant director of Unemployment Insurance (second from right), at a reception recently. Havens retired after more than 36 years of service.



**RETIREMENT** — William Campbell, the Pine Bluff office manager (right), presents a plaque to Jim Gann, the Paragould office manager (left). Gann retired after 33 years.

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

**APPEAL** — Brandon Harris, the nephew of JoAnn Turner with the Appeal Tribunal, was accepted to Governor's School.

Alyce Green, Turner's niece, was nominated for the United States Achievement Academic Who's Who in Mathematics Award.

**BENTON** — Ken Justice, an interviewer in the Benton office, was recently a guest speaker at the Fiction Writers of Central Arkansas meeting in Little Rock. Justice's short prose/poetry work *The Portrait* and his first novella, *All the Time in the World*, were published.

**CENTRAL OFFICE** — Angela Kyle, with Internal Audit & Security, gave birth to Isabella Grace on July 6. Isabella weighed 8 pounds, 3 ounces and was 21 inches long.

Rita Kone (formerly Carr-Waller), who works in the DWS Monitoring Unit, married James Kone June 14 at a ceremony held at Sen. Tracy and Cassandra Steele's home. The couple live in Little Rock.

Jayla Anderson, the granddaughter of Carl and Gwen Vault, received the Presidential Excellence Award. Anderson will be in the sixth grade in the fall. Carl Vault works in the Imaging Unit, and Gwen Vault works in Financial Management.

Makayla Fleming, the niece of Dexter Brown in Financial Management, recently job shadowed Brown. "I like working with other people, so it was no big deal for me," she said. "I like working with my



**VETERANS HONORED** — Rufus Garlington, who works in unemployment insurance at the Little Rock office (right), poses with Sen. Mark Pryor (left) recently at an event at the Arkansas State Veterans Cemetery to honor all veterans who have died in combat. Garlington is a member of the American Legion Post #74 in North Little Rock.



**FIT FIVE** — Lynda Lopac, Leah McCalmon, Cheryl Floyd, Chris Gates and Michelle Schwirian, with the Roger's office (l to r), won first place in the Fit for Five contest sponsored by Channel 5 (KF5M) in Fort Smith. The contest stressed physical fitness, and participants were required to practice proper nutrition, exercise and monitor their progress during the five-week period.

Uncle Dexter Brown. It was fun!"

Jerry Meeker, in UI Research, received his Bachelor of Science in Computer Science from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Moya Edwards, who works in Equal Opportunity, received a Bachelor of Arts in English from Philander Smith College in Little Rock.

Doris Rush, in Purchasing, was a panelist at a procurement workshop for Arkansas Certified Minority Business Enterprises that was sponsored by the Arkansas Economic Development Commission.

**CONWAY** — Justin Phillips, the son of Cindy Phillips, a UI investigator, recently graduated from Marine boot camp in San Diego. He also completed marine combat training and is undergoing military occupation specialty training.

**FAYETTEVILLE** — Timothy Farley, an LVER in Fayetteville, recently received the Outstanding Non-Traditional Student Leadership Award from the University of Arkansas.

**FORT SMITH** — Brad Means, the son of Gary and Jeannie Means, an interviewer in the Fort Smith office, married Amy Martin. They live in Russellville, where Brad is a

nursing major at Arkansas Tech University at Russellville. Amy is a graduate of ATU and works for the public school system.

**HOPE** — Delois Muldrew, the Transitional Employment Assistance supervisor at the Hope office, recently saved two lives on two separate occasions. Muldrew assisted a pregnant lady who was choking. Because the Heimlich maneuver could not be performed in this case, she rubbed the back of the lady's throat and neck, which alleviated the problem.

On a separate occasion, Muldrew stopped to assist a driver who was parked and having a seizure. She placed his car in park, notified his family and assisted with getting him home safely.

**PINE BLUFF** — Ruthie Garrison, a Work Pays case manager in the Pine Bluff office, has written and published a book titled *Thirty Thieves of Innocence*. The book is based on the trials and tribulations of her mother's life.

**ROGERS** — Kimberly Yarbrough, the daughter of Bruce and Jeannie Bowen, an AAS adjudicator in the Rogers office, graduated with a Master of Arts in Teaching from Harding University at Searcy. She was inducted in the Alpha Chi Honor Society and is a third-grade teacher with the Bentonville School System.