

# CONNECTIONS

DAS HUMAN RESOURCES BUSINESS CENTER

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## New vendor for state drug testing

**T**esting. Testing. One, two, three. Approximately 40 personnel agents from various state organizations gathered on March 4 to meet Connecticut's new drug testing vendor, The Newport Alliance Group. The Department of Administrative Services Strategic Planning Unit oversees the management of the contract. Cheryl Welton, who has supervised the contract since October, said, "With a new vendor comes new questions. I wanted to get everyone involved together so they could listen to the vendors presentations, meet the account managers and ask questions."



The meeting included presentations from Richard Radebach who spoke about the different methods, procedures and types of drug and alcohol testing, and Dr. Susan Green, the Medical Review Officer, who covered the mechanics of the tests themselves and her role in the event of a positive test. Both are from The Newport Alliance Group. Also, Larry Tauro, from the Department Of Transportation, and Jim Vincent from The Lexington Group spoke about the Employee Assistance

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## The Scoop on SCOPE

**T**he data gathering phase for the State Coalition On Pay Equity (SCOPE) is well underway. The Department of Administrative Service's Human Resources Business Center (DAS/HRBC) is currently involved in discussions with agency human resources representatives and union officials, while having selected a number of incumbents to fill out questionnaires.

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# Checking the list, then checking it twice

**W**hy have two lists when you can have one? That's the theory behind giving customers a simpler way of choosing candidates who have applied to the State Police Trooper trainee examination and the applicants from the Protective Services trainee police exams.

"What we're doing is making things easier for our customers and saving the state money at the same time," said Dr. Pamela Libby of DAS' Human Resources Business Center's

(HRBC) Staffing Office. HRBC is giving customers like the Department of Public Safety and Children and Families the opportunity to pick an applicant from one list instead of two. Instead of re-testing for the Protective Services trainee police, which DAS no longer does, HRBC is giving its customers the opportunity to choose from the list containing the trooper trainee applicants.

Repeat testing also saves time. Instead of having the customer wait while applicants go through the lengthy process of

oral, written, and physical exams, the list is updated and given to agencies to begin their recruitment process. "Even the candidates win," said Libby. "Instead of candidates applying to both the State Police Trooper exam and then applying to the Protective Services trainee police exams, they can simply test for one, but be considered for both."

If your agency would like a copy of the application pool. Please contact DAS' Dr. Pamela Libby at (860) 713-5205.

## ADA is on its way

**S**uzanne Liquerman's American with Disabilities Act (ADA) training is way ahead of schedule. "As of February 1999 we've trained approximately 370 people on ADA," said Liquerman. No small task. Liquerman does a number of training sessions in the New England area and says, "We have more people trained in Connecticut than any other New England state. That says a lot for our program."

The training sessions are flexible to the needs of the customers. Liquerman constantly scrutinizes her evaluation forms and makes adjustments to make the training better. "We mold the training to meet the customers' needs," said Liquerman. "Let us know what issues affect you and your business, and we'll fit the training to meet those demands."

"Now we're entering our third phase," said Liquerman. Beginning in July, Liquerman will

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### Drug testing continued,

Program's and the Substance Abuse Professional's roles as part of the drug and alcohol testing process.

Tracey Butler from the Department of Correction who is managing her agency's transition to the new vendor, had some concerns. "I must admit when I first heard of the change I was very concerned. We were worried about how different and how difficult the transition would be. Now after listening to their presentations and asking questions, I'm feeling much more comfortable about the whole thing and my worries have faded."

# RSIs can turn you into a working stiff

by Dana Citarella

**I**f you ever feel like work is making you sick, you may be right.

According to a study conducted by the University of Connecticut Health Center, many state employees suffer from repetitive stress injuries (RSIs).

RSIs are problems in the joints, muscles, and associated tissues that develop through repeated exposure to unhealthy work habits. Common RSIs include tendinitis, low back pain, and Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.

The UConn study reports that, due to some basic precautions taken at the workplace, the national rate of RSIs reported have dropped over past three years.

The study found many factors, such as cramped working conditions, extensive phone use, improper lighting, and poorly-designed chairs which may be increasing employees' risks of developing RSIs.

Mike Barletta says DAS is currently working with UConn to begin implementing precautionary measures to alleviate workplace stresses.

"We are communicating with UConn to select an appropriate pilot study," Barletta said. "We also must review the costs for these measures and figure out if the proper funding is available."

DAS and UConn conducted this study in response to 1998 legislation calling for a study on how to reduce RSIs in the state. State Representative Steve Fontana provided guidance on the project direction.

## ADA Training Schedule

The following dates are all full-day sessions. Each training seminar will cover: Definition of Disability, Essential Functions and Reasonable Accommodations, Medical Examinations and Disability-related Inquiries, and Direct Threat. All dates are 8:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

<b>April 13</b>	<b>April 20</b>
<b>May 6</b>	<b>May 11</b>
<b>May 18</b>	<b>June 10</b>
<b>June 15</b>	<b>June 23</b>

Each training session will be held at the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue. The training session is \$85.00, payable to Treasurer – State of Connecticut. Transfer invoices are also accepted.

**For more information contact  
Suzanne Liquerman at  
(860) 713-5057**

## **SCOPE scoop continued,**

"The NP-3 Clerical bargaining unit's questionnaires have been distributed and a majority of them have already been returned," said Joe Lefkowski of HRBC. "And the P-2 Social and Human Services bargaining units will have their questionnaires distributed in mid March, followed by the P-5 Administrative and Residual surveys."

As all of the data begins to roll in, an extensive analysis will be conducted by the HRBC staff to determine if significant changes have occurred in jobs requiring attention of the Master Evaluation Committee. The committee uses a point factor system in determining proper salary alignment. If there is a significant change, then the committee considers a re-evaluation.

"It's an easy theory to follow," said Lefkowski. "We want to establish an accurate and standard job specifications for all jobs, and properly evaluate and compensate job classes in the state system."

# News and Notes

*Helpful information for the HR professional*

## Let us look it up

**W**ith technological advancements progressing in leaps and bounds, HRBC is not about to be left behind. Quite the contrary. HRBC's website continues to grow and add pertinent information requested by our customers.

Recently added to the website are job descriptions. Simply plug in the job title and click the button marked "Get the Jobs." The search engine will bring up the job title, class code, bargaining unit, pay plan and more.

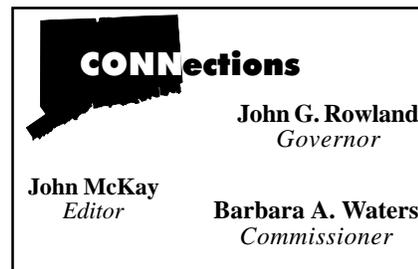
More interested in Compensation Plans? The website has the information you're looking for. You'll need Adobe Acrobat 3.0 to view the plans, but you can download it right from the website.

The HRBC continues to grow and change to meet the needs of its customers. Check the website often to see what's new and interesting. If you have something you'd like to see, click the "Feedback" button at the top of the screen and let us know how we can help.

## **ADA continued,**

introduce half-day sessions focusing on ADA and reasonable accommodation. This particular topic has been a growing demand from customers.

"Organizations don't know what they are required to do to accommodate a person with a disability," she said. These half-day sessions will address such topics as, attendance, performance, conduct and leave. "Very touchy subjects in ADA if you don't know the rules," she added.



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