

CONNECTIONS

DAS HUMAN RESOURCES BUSINESS CENTER

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In sync with their customers

Streamline the Audit/Review Quality Assurance process and educate to make customers more self-sufficient. That's what Toni Alphonse, manager of the HRBC Audit/Review Quality Assurance Unit, was asked to do when she was recruited from the Department of Children and Families. "It's safe to say I was not well liked when we began instituting changes to the Audit/Review Quality Assurance system," said Alphonse. "But we've come a long way."

Previously, the Unit did a lot of hand-holding with their state agency customers in correcting Audit/Review Quality Assurance data entries.

"Customers simply didn't have the resources and the necessary amount of training needed," said Alphonse. The HRBC Audit/Review Quality Assurance Unit has since changed all of that.

Previously, the unit was inundated with processing paperwork and half hour phone calls that could easily be avoided if customers had the right resources. They began walking through corrections with their customers, explaining how and why certain procedures worked, which empowered customers to fix errors themselves.

"It was like night and day," said Alphonse. "Our customers became self reliant, the errors dropped, and we began to have a better relationship with them." Customers are also voicing their opinions to improve Audit/Review Quality Assurance. The unit frequently receives suggestions from customers on what changes can be made to improve the process. Alphonse and her team admits that they can't think of everything, and enjoy hearing input from customers where there wasn't any feedback previously. Bob Cosgrove in DAS' Management Information Solutions office has been an invaluable resource to the unit in implementing these changes and improvements.

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From L to R: Yolette Tappin, Toni Alphonse, Desi Harris (back) and Juanita Woolfolk

Teaming up for success

They can build a better applicant pool. It's that time of year again, as DAS' HRBC office and the Department of Correction (DOC) team up to welcome the new pool of Correction Officer applicants.

In June, both HRBC and DOC monitors were on the grounds of the Maloney Correctional Institution in Meriden administering the physical exam for Correction officer applicants.

"We're finding better qualified applicants for a couple of reasons," said Dr. Pamela Libby, HRBC's head

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of examination services. "We revised and updated the written exam which produced a more qualified class of applicants."

The physical exam consists of four stations: sit and reach (testing flexibility), sit-ups, pushups and a 1.5-mile run. Candidates are tested and scored on all events, and by the time they leave, are notified if



Get set, Go! HRBC's Dale Greenwood prepares applicants for their 1.5-mile run.

they passed the physical assessment, and receive a letter scheduling them for their oral interviews. "We've really got this thing running just as smoothly as it can," said Libby. "Every year I look forward to partnering up with DOC on this project. We make a great team."

HRBC and DOC broke cyber-ground last year by putting the Correction officer application on the Internet. Since then, their pioneering efforts have been recognized in such national publications as *Public HR Magazine*, *Government Technology Magazine*, and The National Association of Personnel Executives newsletter *State Personnel View*.

sidebar

With 190 standards to meet, the Department of Correction (DOC) is on the threshold of achieving its first national accreditation with the American Corrections Association (ACA). DOC received a grade of 98 percent approval with the ACA's strict rules and procedures for compliance. "We are very proud of this achievement," said Major N. Garcia of DOC. "With 250 hours of training, plus a 40-hour classroom course, we're ready."



The Connecticut DOC has one of the most comprehensive training curriculums; it offers countless hours of training and class room instruction to make their officers, staff, and cadets some of the most well-trained professionals to come out of the academy. Congratulations and good luck DOC!

www.hrbc.cool

Did you miss the last issue of *CONNECTIONS*? Was there something you read there and now you can't find your hard copy? Not to fear, The Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Communications Office has put all issues of *CONNECTIONS* since January 1999 on their website. Also, the recently updated *Handbook for Appointed Officials* is also now available online for customers to refer to and print.

To view either the electronic version of *CONNECTIONS* or the *Handbook for Appointed Officials*, viewers will need to have Adobe Acrobat Reader. It can be easily downloaded and installed onto your computer from the DAS website.

That's not all. The DAS HRBC website has added a number of resources to help HR professionals including: HR search engines; federal government information, like the Department of Labor; HR associations; salary survey information; benefit research websites; and other state personnel and human resources home pages. The DAS home page is www.das.state.ct.us

Customers continued

Their mission didn't stop there. When Alphonse and her team hosted APS User Group meetings at the Department of Transportation, they were lucky to get 20 to 25 participants. After they introduced their "fix and learn" theory, so many people were attending that they were almost in violation of fire safety codes.

"We now have 65 to 70 people every time," said Juanita Wolfolk, an Audit/Review Quality Assurance administrator. The unit also ensures that customers have the right resources.

"It's very important to have certain manuals and contracts at your fingertips when doing data entry," said Alphonse. "We made sure that each agency customer as well as our Audit/Review Quality Assurance administrators all had the necessary resources."

Alphonse and her team had a vision of how the Audit/Review Quality Assurance Unit was supposed to function. Her vision and goals were clear and she was able to get the support she needed. The team is just beginning to see the fruits of its labor, and is now getting into its designated role as consultants to customers with one-on-one training.

New HRBC manager makes his Mark

The Human Resources Business Center (HRBC) is happy to announce the appointment of Mark Chmielecki as their new compensation manager.

Previously, Chmielecki was the director of compensation for Heublein in Hartford. He was responsible for all salaried compensation programs including executive compensation, deferred compensation, and salary structures. Chmielecki also

designed competency definitions for all functions to use as the basis for performance evaluations and compensation programs.



“Mark’s experience and accomplishments are very impressive,” said DAS Commissioner Barbara Waters. “We’ll look to him to lead the way in developing a new and exciting vision for the compensation program of Connecticut.”

Chmielecki will be working closely with HRBC Program Manager Joe Lefkowski and the Compensation/Classification team. His primary objectives will be to play a key role in assessing the current structure of Connecticut’s compensation plan, and developing a strategic plan and vision.



“I’m pretty excited about the whole thing,” said HRBC’s Nina Davit. As well she should be, she beat out almost 50 other applicants. Nina Davit from the Human Resources Business Center has been invited to present her training session, *Building Skills for the Millennium*, at the National Association for Government Training & Development’s annual conference (NAGTAD). Her presentation will be in Wilmington, Delaware in September. “Part of my training session includes CareerPower which has had tremendous success here at DAS. Work is so much more than going to your office, working for eight hours, and then going home,” said Davit. “So it’s important to have the skills and attitude to actually enjoy work. This really validates

CareerPower and everything we’ve been doing here at DAS for the past six months.”

Suzanne Liquerman will also be “on tour” this summer. Her presentation will be featured at the Disability & Business Technical Assistance Center’s national conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. Connecticut has trained 585 individuals based on her training model. “Connecticut’s Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) program was chosen over everyone else’s,” said Liquerman. Every state will have a representative at the conference to hear about the progress and strides DAS is making in Connecticut concerning ADA. “I’m really thrilled about the whole opportunity,” added Liquerman.

Workers’ Comp-entent

Changes in workers’ compensation regulation and statutes? How would you know? Who would you ask?

Well, if you were at the June 18 worker’s compensation meeting at the Department of Transportation you’d have all the answers.

HRBC’s Mike Barletta hosts informational meetings on changes in workers’ compensation policy and procedure. Various agencies attended including the Department of Correction, State Comptroller, and Judicial offices. “Our attendance is usually pretty good, but I’m always worried that an agency might be missing our meetings. The material covered in these sessions is extremely important,” said Barletta.

Paul King and Eric Rentz from the Workers’ Compensation Commission safety staff gave a presentation on the services and abilities offered by their agency. “We work in a consulting role with agencies to address their needs to help them comply with all the regulations out there,” said King.

Afterwards, Mike Petosa, also from the Worker’s Compensation Commission, gave a comprehensive overview of statute changes affecting workers’ compensation. Petosa’s presentation covered everything from major statute changes in 1993 to recently changed laws affecting everyone in the workers’ compensation field.

If you’d like your name placed on the Worker’s Compensation Committee meeting distribution list, please contact Vickey McCray at (860) 713-5031.

CONNECTIONS will next be published on September 17

Feeling up to PAR?

Authorization of PARS payments for FY 98-99 for state managers will become effective on September 24, 1999. A three-percent salary increase will be paid out October 22, 1999 to all managers who qualify. A bonus pool is created for each agency based on the number of participating managers and is calculated at a specific rate for each fully eligible manager. Additional award bonuses will be made available to managers who have exceeded expectations and performed in an outstanding manner.

Employees who are hired or promoted into managerial classes during the year will receive a reduced salary increase depending on the date of appointment. Managers who transfer from one agency to another during the year will receive their payment by the employing agency at the time of the payout.

Each agency will receive rosters of their current or former managerial employees, their job titles, salary groups, current salaries, new salaries (factoring in the three-percent PARS increase) and lump sum payouts over the maximum of the range.

Certificates for managers receiving Performance Recognition Awards should be ordered by the agency offering the awards. They will be able to order directly from the contractor (Putnam Group Limited).

Questions relating the administration of the PARS program can be directed to Bill Gills at (860) 713-5192.



CONNECTIONS

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