

# 2025 NASPEs AWARD

## *Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award Nomination Innovative State Human Resource Management Program*

Nominations from dues-paying states are considered for eligibility. Nominated leaders and programs should have a positive effect on the administration of state human resource programs. A state's central human resource department or line agency human resource operations may administer nominated programs.

Programs and projects must have been operational for at least six months and must be transferable to other states. Selection criteria are based on the questions asked on the award application. Included in this packet are the specific criteria for each award and their categories. Nominations are encouraged in all areas of human resource management administration.

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### PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Title: MOMENTS Mentoring                      State: MO

Contact Person: Kaitlyn Cook

Contact's Title: Senior Talent Development Specialist

Agency: Missouri Office of Administration, Division of Personnel

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### NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nominator: Kaitlyn Cook                      Title: Senior Talent Development Specialist

State: MO                      Agency: Missouri Office of Administration, Division of Personnel

Telephone: 573-522-2655

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#### ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST:

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### DETAILS

Please attach a one-page summary of the program. Provide a narrative answer for each of the questions. You are limited to four pages (based on regular 8 1/2 x 11-inch paper double-spaced in 12-point font). The four-page limit does not include the one-page summary.

1. Please provide a brief description of this program.

MOMENTS is a new statewide mentoring program accessible to all active State of Missouri team members in participating agencies. The Missouri state workforce is filled with capable and knowledgeable team members, all of whom have something to offer others. MOMENTS allows team members to connect through mentoring relationships across the state to grow and learn together. Mentoring drives innovation by promoting continuous learning, professional development and alignment with organizational values. By having access to peer mentorships, state team members have an overall better workplace experience, which translates to higher quality customer service for Missouri citizens.

2. How long has this program been operational (month and year)?

MOMENTS has been operational for one year and two months, as it launched in January 2024.

3. Why was this program created? (What problem[s] or issues does it address?)

MOMENTS was an initiative created by a Missouri Leadership Academy (MLA) team as their Capstone Project. The team's vision was to create a statewide mentoring program that focused on team member soft skill and career skill enhancement, formalized mentoring relationships that improve collaboration for professional development across the Missouri workforce. By connecting ambitious mentees with proven leaders, we can shape the next generation of leadership within the State, setting ourselves and our customers up for excellence for years to come. Mentoring is also a proven method to increase team member engagement and productivity, promote emotional health, and strengthen organizational connections that build a stronger, more confident workforce.

4. Why is this program a new and creative method?

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### *Innovative State Human Resource Management Program*

Concept: In our research, no other state government has a statewide mentoring program.

Instead, other states have mentoring programs within their departments, agencies, or teams.

As a statewide, interagency mentoring program, MOMENTS offers an opportunity for Missouri team members to broaden their perspectives and gain new insights by working alongside others employed by different agencies, from various backgrounds, and career paths, fostering our culture of learning and collaboration.

Process: Team members can apply to participate in MOMENTS year-round. However, there are Quarterly Match Groups consisting of two-week application windows to boost application submissions, followed by a matching process where an algorithm built by our internal data team creates suggested matches based on career skills and soft skills chosen by mentees and mentor in their applications. Mentees receive a personalized list of suggested mentor matches. Mentees can choose a mentor from their list or manually search for a mentor in the MOMENTS database. Mentoring partners are responsible for working together to determine meeting cadences and mentorship objectives.

5. What was the program's startup costs? (Provide detailed information about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology, and staff already in place.)

There was no startup cost associated with launching MOMENTS except for our existing staff's time and involvement. Our team initially invested approximately 40 hours into researching and demoing various mentoring platforms before opting to build our own in-house, internal database for MOMENTS. From there, our team along with Information Technology Services Division (ITSD) and Strategy People Analytics (SPA) teams, invested approximately 100 hours over the span of several months developing the MOMENTS database, website, communication plans, trainings, and statewide administration processes before launch.

6. What are the program's operational costs?

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The only operational costs are FTE hours spent maintaining and administering the program. Statewide administration is approximately 5 hours per week, and 1 hour or less per week for department administrators.

7. How is this program funded?

Any MOMENTS costs are funded through our core budget.

8. Did this program originate in your state?

9. Are you aware of similar programs in other states?

If yes, how does this program differ?

While other states have mentoring programs within their departments or teams, MOMENTS differs because it is accessible to all Missouri state team members in participating programs allowing for vast networking capabilities and new perspectives shared across agencies.

10. How do you measure the success of this program?

The primary metric we use to measure the success of MOMENTS is the participation rate or number of active participants. In the administrator portal, we can view a breakdown of the number of active mentees and mentors, and those with an active mentoring partner. We see a rise in application submissions during Quarterly Match Groups.

We also monitor participant feedback responses and post-participation (post-mentorship) surveys.

11. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

During the first Match Group in January 2024 there were 550 applications submitted. This number has more than doubled with 1,006 Missouri state team members actively participating. MOMENTS program coordinators host quarterly Office Hours providing program information to interested team members, and Mentee & Mentor Trainings for new participants where they learn participant expectations, how to be an efficient mentee and mentor, conversation

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*Innovative State Human Resource Management Program*

guidance for deeper connections, and more. Mentoring resources are continuously created and shared with participants to ensure they have tools to make the most of mentorship.

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## MOMENTS One Page Summary

MOMENTS is the State of Missouri's statewide mentoring program. The program was born out of a Missouri Leadership Academy (MLA) team's Capstone Project initiative, which identified a need for improved training and development opportunities based on the results of our organizational health survey, the Quarterly Pulse Survey (QPS). With consistent turnover rates and a large percentage of our workforce nearing retirement eligibility, implementing an innovative professional development opportunity that fostered our culture of learning and belonging was deemed essential. Thus, the MLA team envisioned a vast, easily accessible mentorship program to connect ambitious team members. Research indicates that employees with mentors are likelier to remain in the organization, receive promotions, and experience better mental and emotional health. Encouraging mentorship connections helps team members feel supported through their development, ultimately aiding in retaining them and the skills they bring to the state.

Beginning in 2023, we met with several mentoring platform vendors to understand the necessities for implementing a successful mentorship platform and demoed their products. After careful consideration, we decided to build an in-house mentoring database. Our team worked with the Information Technology Services Division (ITSD) and Strategy and People Analytics (SPA) teams to create MOMENTS, a low-maintenance, flexible peer mentoring program focused on skill building wherein team members can submit applications, connect with partners, access mentoring resources, and complete feedback surveys. The SPA team developed a matching algorithm that generates mentee and mentor matches based on skills selected during the application process. Communication and marketing plans were designed to gain department buy-in and promote the program across the state. Comprehensive trainings were created offering essential mentoring tools to participants.

The launch of MOMENTS in January 2024 was met with an overwhelmingly positive response. Over 550 team members applied during the first application window, and over 150 attended the first two Mentee & Mentor Trainings. The consistent feedback from team members is that they value the opportunity to enhance their professional development while building relationships, and the ability to share their knowledge and guidance in formalized mentoring conversations. Our workforce, filled with driven, knowledgeable individuals, can now build connections across the state and gain new perspectives by engaging with from other agencies, backgrounds, and work histories. As of March 2025, there are roughly 1,000 active participants, with the participant pool continuing to grow.

State team members are eager for career guidance, relationship building, and feeling connected to the organization. MOMENTS, with its low-budget implementation, minimal FTE maintenance costs, and ease of access for participants, is a concept that can be easily transferred to other states looking to provide additional professional development opportunities to their team members.