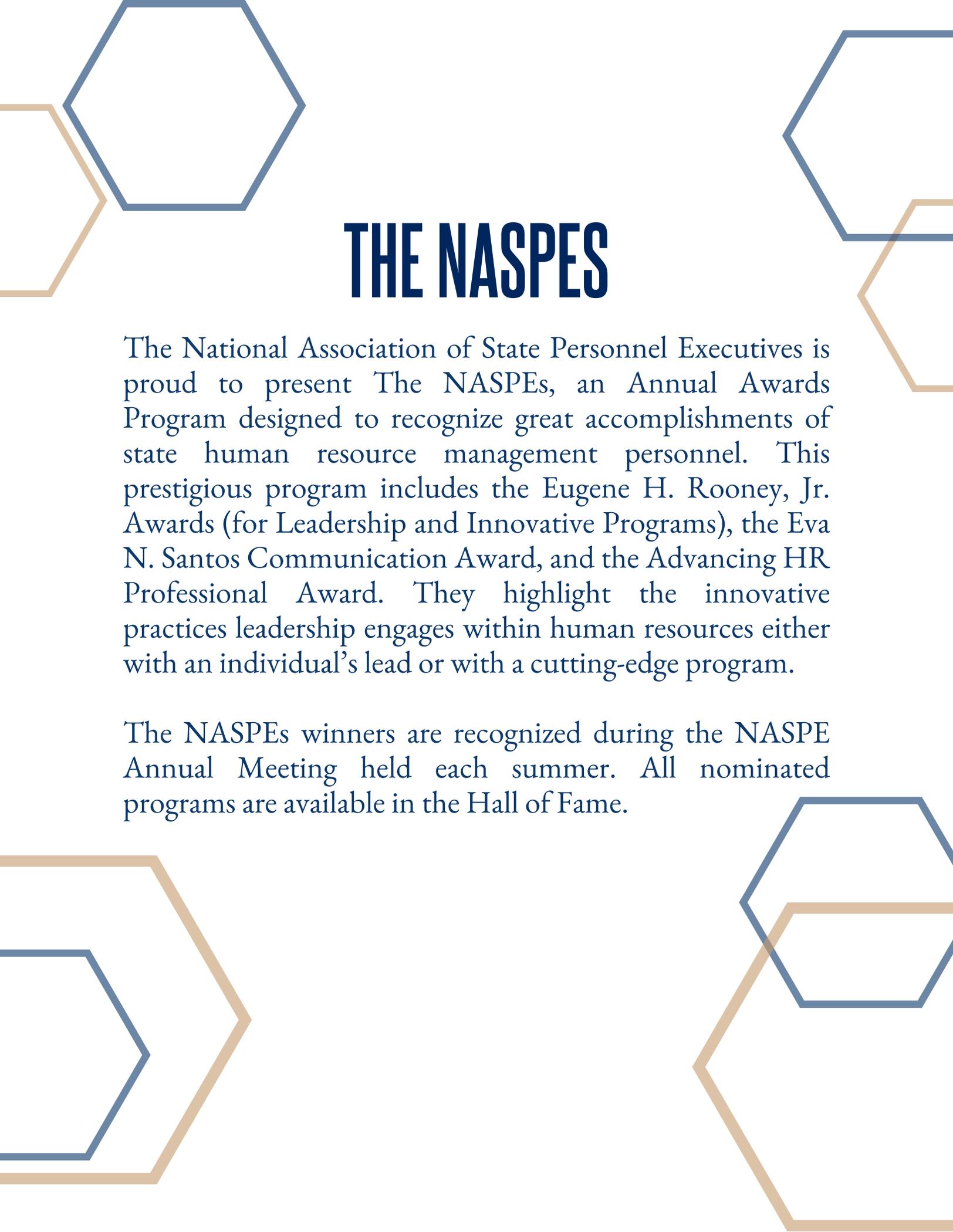




The 2025
naspe_s
AWARDS PROGRAM

HALL OF FAME BOOKLET

The page features decorative hexagonal shapes in blue and gold. A large blue hexagon is in the top left, and a smaller gold one is partially visible to its left. In the top right, a blue hexagon is partially visible, with a gold one below it. In the bottom left, a gold hexagon is partially visible, with a blue one below it. In the bottom right, a blue hexagon is partially visible, with a gold one below it.

THE NASPES

The National Association of State Personnel Executives is proud to present The NASPEs, an Annual Awards Program designed to recognize great accomplishments of state human resource management personnel. This prestigious program includes the Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Awards (for Leadership and Innovative Programs), the Eva N. Santos Communication Award, and the Advancing HR Professional Award. They highlight the innovative practices leadership engages within human resources either with an individual's lead or with a cutting-edge program.

The NASPEs winners are recognized during the NASPE Annual Meeting held each summer. All nominated programs are available in the Hall of Fame.

EUGENE H. ROONEY, JR. AWARDS

Innovative State Human Resource Management Program

The **NASPE Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Awards** were established in memory of Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. who served as NASPE President at a time of great growth for the organization. The program recognizes innovative state human resource management practices that ensure access and equity while enhancing productivity and service delivery. It also recognizes individuals who exemplify the character, qualities and influence that Rooney had on state personnel administration. NASPE presents an award to one program and one individual during the NASPE Annual Meeting. An Award of Merit also may be presented to one other program.



Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. served as state human resources administrator in Massachusetts. He was well-respected for his role as a reformer and innovator—and, most importantly, valuing individuals and their commitment to public service. He served in several roles during his 21-year public service career.



To NASPE President Juan Williams and Executive Director Leslie Scott Parker,

I enthusiastically endorse Sarah Kerley for NASPE's Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award for Leadership in State Human Resource Management. Serving as a Director At-Large at NASPE, Sarah also serves as Chief Administrative Officer at the Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS). Sarah is a cornerstone on my CMS executive leadership team. She is leading the charge to reduce barriers to hiring and creating a pipeline for younger talent to start working at the State of Illinois, and to hopefully *stay* at with State of Illinois. In the past year alone, Sarah has spearheaded the expansion of our relationships with higher education, developed capacity to manage aspects of the statewide employee experience, and piloted an intern-to-hire program that is allowing agencies to bring in fresh talent, at the ground level, for hard-to-fill positions.

Always striving for innovation and efficiency, Sarah played a critical role in updating the State's application process from a paper application to an online application. Sarah designed and helped get passed the most significant changes to Illinois' Personnel Code since its inception in 1955 that helped move the State's arcane and arduous hiring process into the 21st century. Part of that reform was intended to address both recruitment and retention challenges where Sarah laid the groundwork for what is now our Really Great Careers marketing campaign. In 2024, this campaign achieved 76 Million impressions across social media, television, radio, and online search engines. She also leads our statewide recruitment team and our diversity and inclusion team, which hosted and/or participated in 400+ events across the State over the last year to meet the people where they are. Because of these efforts, we have made strides in increasing several aspects of our applicant pool diversity including work experience, ethnicity, and geographic location.

Under Sarah's leadership, since 2019, Illinois has cut its vacancy rate almost in half to 8% from 14%, reduced its average time-to-hire to 111 days down from over 400, and increased the State's overall workforce by nearly 10% up to over 55,000 from just over 50,000. While there are more metrics I could share that would further explain Sarah's indelible impact on Illinois' approach to hiring today, the reality is no data point could effectively encapsulate Sarah's human-centered approach to her work. Whether you are an applicant, a seasoned employee, or the Governor, Sarah's approach to helping you solve your issue is the same. She gives her all, always in all ways.

Ultimately, the State of Illinois continues to grow its workforce, with much credit due to Sarah Kerley. With her experience and achievements, Sarah would make an exceptional awardee of the Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award for Leadership in State Human Resource Management.

Thank you for your consideration,

RAVEN A. DEVAUGHN

Director

Illinois Department of Central Management Services

2025 NASPEs AWARD

Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award Nomination Leadership in State Human Resource Management

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.

NOMINEE INFORMATION

Nominee: Sarah Kerley Title: Chief Administrative Officer

State: IL Agency: Central Management Services

Telephone: 312.718.1317

E-mail: Sarah.Kerley@Illinois.gov

Brief Biography of Nominee (One paragraph, please): As Chief Administrative Officer, Sarah is responsible for the State's personnel and labor functions and is the liaison to the Governor's Office and State agencies, with an emphasis on improving efficiency, quality, and transparency in State hiring and personnel functions. She leads the development and administration of the State's merit employment system for approximately 45,000 State employees. In addition, she oversees the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) to develop equity-based workforce diversity and inclusion strategies to cultivate and retain a richly diverse, high-performing workforce.

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nominator: Cynthia Johnson Title: Deputy Director

State: IL Agency: Central Management Services

Telephone: 312-848-0242

E-mail: Cynthia.johnson3@illinois.gov

ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST:

- Meet all eligibility requirements • Meet deadline requirements
- Include a complete nomination packet • Conform to all copyright laws

2025 NASPEs AWARD

Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award Nomination Leadership in State Human Resource Management

DETAILS

Provide a narrative answer for each of the questions. You are limited to four-pages (based on regular 8 1/2 x 11" paper double-spaced in 12-point font). Also, provide one letter endorsing the nominee's achievement. Do not send supporting documentation.

1. Describe how the nominee has demonstrated leadership by participating on major state government committees, task forces and/or special projects related to state human resource management.

Sarah was the visionary and mastermind behind the creation of the State of Illinois' "really Great Careers" campaign. Although the State had not previously advertised commercially in many arenas, Sarah recognized that the State needed to be more proactive in reaching potential candidates in today's highly competitive environment. As a result of her vision and leadership, the "Really Great Careers" campaign was created and shared on television, radio, and social media, resulting in a very significant improvement in applications for postings of over 1,800%! In 2024 alone, the Really Great Careers campaign has secured 76 Million impressions across multimedia platforms, including social media, television, radio, and online search engines.

The Department of Central Management Services Diversity & Inclusion team is tasked with helping to ensure equity in personnel activity for the State. Sarah has overseen the growth of Diversity & Inclusion team from its inception into its current staff of eleven employees supporting four Employment Plan Councils. Sarah's stewardship of this team has ensured its work forges ahead and provides value to the State of Illinois.

2. Describe how the nominee has demonstrated exceptional leadership in the field of human resource management beyond your state human resources organization.

For 50 years, the State of Illinois' employment decisions of the Governor's Office and other state bodies were all subject to approval by a federal court under a Consent Decree. By creating strong internal governance on hiring practices including the establishment of Compliance and Hiring Resource Teams, drafting and implementing a Comprehensive Employment Plan, and enforcing policies and procedures that safeguard the integrity of the State's hiring process, the State was finally able to end the court's oversight. Sarah was the primary architect and driving force in the work to create, enact, and enforce all these important safeguards and assure the court that the hiring practices for the State of Illinois were in good hands.

3. Describe the nominee's leadership and/or management skills in implementing human resource management programs.

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2025 NASPEs AWARD

Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award Nomination Leadership in State Human Resource Management

In 2019, Sarah began the work to lead the State's efforts to modernize its Human Resources functions, most notably moving from a paper application process to a fully online electronic one. That change alone accelerated hiring for the State and began to reverse years of declining headcount. The work to modernize continues, as the State is moving toward completion of its transition from a mainframe computer system supporting employee records to an electronic one, using the same system as candidates apply to. Once completed, HR processes will be all in one place, allowing State HR teams to do their work more efficiently and effectively.

The State of Illinois' Personnel Code was established in 1957 and was not designed to support modern HR operations. Under Sarah's leadership, multiple legislative changes have been made to the Code to align with and support the goal of efficient, transparent HR function. Without Sarah's spirit, expansive knowledge of HR function, and vision of how the Code could better ensure the success of the State, the changes to the Personnel Code, which, in turn, allow for the improvement of the State's HR technology and processes, would not have been possible.

4. Describe how the nominee has demonstrated leadership within the NASPE organization in support of NASPE's mission to share information on human resource issues so that members can better achieve their state's mission and business objectives. Include evidence of local or national acclaim in the field and influence on other states' personnel executives.

Sarah has a passion for the NASPE community. She is deeply interested in the challenges and successes of other States and is always happy to share her insights and learned lessons. As a result of her interest and recognition of the importance of NASPE's work, she serves on NASPE's Executive Committee. In addition, Sarah oversaw Illinois' preparation as host of NASPE's July '24 national convention.

5. Describe any relevant state human resource management programs or initiatives that were successful because of the nominee's involvement.

While Sarah's leadership has innumerable impacts on the State of Illinois, one achievement that stands out is the impact her efforts have made on the number of State of Illinois employees. For calendar year 2024, the State experienced a 7% year-over-year increase. That increase increased the State workforce to a level that had not been seen since 2009. This shows Sarah's effectiveness, initiative, and drive have greatly benefited the people of the State of Illinois.

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EUGENE H. ROONEY, JR. AWARDS

Leadership in State Human Resource Management

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Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. served as state human resources administrator in Massachusetts. He was well-respected for his role as a reformer and innovator—and, most importantly, valuing individuals and their commitment to public service. He served in several roles during his 21-year public service career.

2025 NASPEs AWARD

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

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PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Title: Indiana Manager Central State: IN

Contact Person: Zachery Mackramer

Contact's Title: Director of Learning & Development

Agency: Indiana State Personnel Department

Mailing Address: 402 W. Washington Street, Room W161, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Telephone: 317-402-8026

E-mail: ZMackramer@spd.IN.gov

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nominator: Marci Rautio Title: Deputy Director of Field Operations

State: IN Agency: Indiana State Personnel Department

Telephone: 317-213-8589

E-mail: MRautio@spd.IN.gov

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2025 NASPEs AWARD

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

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.

Indiana Manager Central (IMC) launched in February of 2024, and has been a successful initiative in responding to the needs of managers at all of our state agencies while advancing the governor's pillar of strengthening education and workforce training. This innovative and evolving program has set a new standard for centralized professional development for managers within our agencies, aligning perfectly with the governor's vision to enhance training outcomes and build a robust, skilled workforce. By focusing on equipping managers with essential skills and fostering continued learning through manager development, the program ensures that training initiatives are effectively implemented across a variety of subjects. Through a dynamic curriculum that addresses core HR functions, IMC aims to centralize the best practices and provide managers with the resources they need to effectively support and guide their teams. By strengthening the skills of managers, IMC has the potential to create a positive ripple effect on the broader workforce and leave a lasting impact on agency outcomes.

There are nineteen unique manager-specific training topics that are centered around Employee Benefits, Compensation & Organizational Design, Employee Relations & Accommodations, Learning & Development, Talent Acquisition, and Performance Management. Each of these trainings are conducted 100% virtually and are offered at least once every three months, with a capacity of 100 attendees per session. So far, over IMC workshops have had over 3,000 attendees, and newsletters are read by almost 5,000 managers monthly.

IMC also has a monthly newsletter that features:

- A "Dear HR..." column for write-in questions from managers.
- Linked articles to LinkedIn, Harvard Business Review, etc. on relevant topics for managers. For example, an article on Navigating Conflict in Your Team.
- A monthly blog relevant to managers and thematically tied to the month's trainings.
- Links to register for workshops taking place that month.
- Featured LinkedIn Learning courses.
- Relevant updates for managers. For example, reminders about interim performance appraisals or how they can support their employees on completing their open enrollment elections.

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

IMC launched in February of 2024.

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

This program addresses the need for managers to be constantly developed and trained within their roles. At first, this program created the opportunity for a manager to attend a training

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2025 NASPEs AWARD

Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award Nomination

Innovative State Human Resource Management Program

(let's say Conducting Effective Interviews with Talent Acquisition) on an as needed basis, with each topic being offered once every three months. We were able to recognize that we are creating more work for ourselves, as HR Professionals, when these managers make mistakes or overlook important parts of their roles, we flipped the script and started to truly give them everything that they need to be successful in their role as a manager.

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

While several of these sessions already existed as one-off things that some agencies did utilize, others opted out of, etc. Ultimately, there was a lot of recreation of the wheel happening when training wasn't offered upfront to managers. Therefore, the team came together to streamline these sessions and ensure that the offerings met the needs of our managers. Originally, these sessions were being held in-person or with a hybrid audience, but immediately we recognized the need to go fully remote to mitigate complex technological needs and to center the learning of our managers.

This program is the State of Indiana's first, centralized training program that is fully geared towards the learning and development of managers. Individual contributors are welcome to attend these sessions if they are interested in skilling up, but the content is geared towards managers that are actively overseeing staff and working to support them through a variety of difficult and complex topics.

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.)

The program has the following components:

- One staff member that oversees the administrative components of the program, among several other programs (75% of time spent on IMC).
- All content is run through our LMS, SuccessFactors Learning, which is a platform that we use for other parts of our business, too. We did not purchase SF for this program but rather built the program around our LMs.
- Presenters from all six subject matter areas, all of which do other job duties on top of these trainings (5-10% of time spent on IMC).
- Partnership with the Communications team to develop and disseminate the monthly newsletter.

When we launched the program, we brought together all our facilitators for a full day workshop and paid for their lunch. Therefore, the only upfront costs for the program included lunch for twenty people and several clickers for any in-person training requests. Totaling in at less than \$300, all of which are optional costs to absorb.

6. What are the program's operational costs?

There are no specific program operational costs. Outside of the salaries for the employees that present, which typically occupies two hours of their time every three months. Even the most

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2025 NASPEs AWARD

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

frequently requested trainings only occupy ten hours of their time in a three-month span of time.

7. How is this program funded?

Our staff salaries are funded through our general funds.

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?

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

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

We measure success through both workshop attendance and participant assessment.

Workshop Attendance: Total attendance to date includes...

- Staff from 65 unique agencies.
- A grand total of 3,000+ attendees.

Participant Assessment: Participant assessment tells us...

- The content of this workshop supported my development as a professional. 4.63/5.00
- The content was applicable to my role. 4.68/5.00
- Based on my experience today, I am likely to attend future workshops in this series. 4.72/5.00

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

Since the inception of the program, it has grown twice with additional programmatic elements:

- Menu of Offerings – this is an opportunity for an agency to bring their managers together and request a specific training for their entire team. For example, our presenters traveled several hours to Logansport State Hospital to deliver training on Identifying Unconscious Bias and Managing SuccessFactors as a Hiring Manager. This allows the agency to fully skill-up all their managers at once, if attending at their own leisure does not meet the needs of their leaders.
- Manager Onboarding Workshops – now as a part of the promotional / hiring process, anytime someone steps into a role as a manager within the State of Indiana for the first time, they take part in a two-half-day workshop series where they are introduced to our systems, presented with each topic they are responsible for as a manager, and are gifted the space to work through employee issues within the first five weeks of their new role.

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2025 NASPEs AWARD

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

One-Page Summary of IMC Course Offerings

Facilitation Team	Workshop Title
Learning & Development	Navigating the Multi-Generational Workplace as a Manager
	Engaging Your Team in a Learning Culture
Talent Acquisition	Managing SuccessFactors as a Hiring Manager
	Conducting Effective Interviews
	Navigating Interview Central
Compensation & Organizational Design	Navigating Compensation as a Hiring Manager
Employee Relations	Understanding Workplace Accommodations
	Understanding Extended Leaves of Absence
	Engaging in Difficult Conversations
Benefits	Fostering Wellness in the Workplace
Workforce Strategy & Performance	Aligning Business Results with Employee Performance
	Conducting Effective Evaluations as a Manager
	Engaging in Effective Feedback as a Manager
	Preventing & Improving Poor Performance
	Measuring Progress & Utilizing Feedback as a Manager
	Setting Performance Goals & Expectations as a Manager
	Setting Expectations for New Employees
	Building a Culture of Accountability as a Manager
	Fostering & Pursuing Continuous Employee Development as a Manager

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2025 NASPEs AWARD

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

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PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Title: State Workforce at a Glance (SWAG) State: LA

Contact Person: Lindsay Ruiz de Chavez

Contact's Title: Public Information Director

Agency: Louisiana State Civil Service

Mailing Address: 1201 North Third St, Suite 3-280 Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802

Telephone: 225-219-9462

E-mail: Lindsay.ruiz@la.gov

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nominator: Byron P. Decoteau, Jr. Title: State Civil Service Director

State: LA Agency: Louisiana State Civil Service

Telephone: 225-342-8274

E-mail: Byron.decoteau@la.gov

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2025 NASPEs AWARD

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

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.

Link: [SWAG - Login](#)

ID and Password will be made available at the time of review

State Workforce at a Glance (SWAG) compiles demographic information on the State's workforce from different data sources into one, easy-to-use format for internal State Civil Service (SCS) staff. SCS collects data from those state agencies from both the LaGov HCM system and from those non-LaGov HCM agencies (PeopleSoft, Workday & Banner) via a data transfer process. We combine this information together to make a complete, statewide data picture. SWAG allows the user to look "at a glance" as well as the ability to drill down to a specific job title at a specific agency. There is also the availability for 5 and 10-year trending information. Charts and graphs can then be copied and inserted into reports or presentations. The data is updated one a week based on new headcount data.

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

The program has been up and running for eight months, having launched on July 1, 2024.

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

Before SWAG, there was no way for State Civil Service to easily track/trend statewide employee demographics since there are multiple data sources for this information. A majority of state agencies report information to SCS via the LaGov HCM system while non-LaGov HCM agencies, mainly Higher Education, maintain employee information and payroll in several different HRISs (PeopleSoft, Workday & Banner) and submit information to SCS via a data transfer

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process. To answer any demographic questions, custom queries were built to retrieve the information for that requestor.

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

SWAG takes both sources of state employee data, combines the information and presents the user with a graphical interface that is easy-to-use. The ability to look at surface level statistics or do a deeper dive by agency or job title and present the information in a professional chart or graph is new for SCS. The layout is identical no matter which demographic item search is utilized. In addition, rank-and-file staff never had access to any of these data items previously (unless a specific data request was made).

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.)

No additional purchases were made by SCS and existing programming and HR staff built/maintain the system.

6. What are the program's operational costs?

Program uses existing programming and HR staff to build/update/maintain and free chart software (Chart.js). No additional cost to SCS for this program.

7. How is this program funded?

Program uses existing agency funding for programming and HR positions. No additional cost to SCS for this program.

8. Did this program originate in your state? Yes

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

If yes, how does this program differ?

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

We are aware that several other states have a “dashboard” for statistics but the combination of employee information from 4 different HRISs (LaGov HCM/SAP, PeopleSoft, Workday & Banner) as well as the ability to do a by agency/by title search is a granular function.

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

Both SCS executive-level and SCS staff-level employees have access to this information. SCS users can quickly and easily utilize the demographic information in SWAG for their daily work or special projects. Graphs and charts can be copied and pasted into reports and presentations. The ability for instant 5 and 10-year analysis of the information in an easy-to-digest format is a first for this agency.

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

SWAG is a constantly evolving data center. Currently, the most commonly requested employee demographic items are displayed. However, the data items evolve to include additional information as a need arises for the information. For example, we recently added FLSA status as a category based on an agency need to quickly identify Non-Exempt and Exempt employees. We also are working on a similar interface for transactional data (Transactions at a Glance or TAG) which will utilize multiple data sources and present personnel transactions in an easy-to-use manner for the user to research or trend. In addition, plans are in the works to allow external HR Directors at the various agencies to have the ability to run information for their particular agency via SWAG.

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

2025 NASPE Nomination Form Cover Page – State Workforce at a Glance (SWAG)

The State Workforce at a Glance (SWAG) application compiles demographic information on the state of Louisiana’s workforce from different data sources into one, easy-to-use format for internal State Civil Service (SCS) staff. SCS collects data from those state agencies from both the LaGov HCM system and from those non-LaGov HCM agencies (PeopleSoft, Workday & Banner) via a data transfer process. We combine this information on a weekly basis to make a complete, statewide data “headcount” picture. However, some data items are specific to LaGov HCM agencies due to HRIS limitations in the non-LaGov HCM systems or are specific to the State’s classified workforce due to SCS authority for data requirements.

SWAG allows the user to look “at a glance” as well as the ability to drill down to a specific job title at a specific agency. There is also pre-rendered 5 and 10-year trending information, with analysis, to assist the user to quickly disseminate the information. The resulting visual aids can then be simply copied and inserted into user-specific reports or presentations.

Current SWAG Categories and subcategories include:

- Age: Actual Age / Average Age / Generational Groups
- Appointment Type: Classified and Unclassified
- Education (Classified only): Highest Level Achieved / Degree or Certificate Obtained / Field of Study
- Gender
- Location (LaGov HCM only): Work Location / Residence Location
- Race
- Salary: Actual Salary / Average Salary / Annual Salary Thresholds
- Veteran Information (LaGov HCM only): Veteran Status / Veteran Count by Personnel Area
- Workforce Classification: FLSA Status / Workforce Classification
- Years of Service

The ability to view these demographics not only at a widescale level, with a myriad of grouping selection options, but also with the capability to narrow the search down to the job title within one agency is a huge step forward for state employee reporting. The ability to provide prerendered trending information as well, with fiscal year or calendar year timeline options, further provides detailed information for the user without any manual calculations.

This application was built entirely by existing SCS staff in the Applications & Data Management Division and uses free software to create the visuals. No additional cost to SCS was incurred.

2025 NASPEs AWARD

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

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PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Title: Human Resources Division, Center of Expertise for Investigations
State: MA

Contact Person: Michele Heffernan

Contact's Title: General Counsel

Agency: Human Resources Division
Mailing Address: 100 Cambridge St. Suite 600, Boston, MA 02114

Telephone: 617-692-0916

E-mail michele.heffernan@mass.gov

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nominator: Michele Heffernan Title: General Counsel

State: MA Agency: Human Resources Division

Telephone: 617-692-0916

E-mail: michele.heffernan@mass.gov

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2025 NASPEs AWARD

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

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.

The Center of Expertise for Investigations (COE) is a twelve-person unit dedicated to the investigation of allegations of violations of the sexual harassment, discrimination, workplace violence, and domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking policies. The unit also investigates allegations of retaliation related to complaints made pursuant to one of the policies. The unit is a resource to all executive department employees (approximately 50 thousand employees). Our employees are able to report allegations through their agency human resources or directly to the COE. The unit's goal is to conduct the investigation within 60 business days and produce a quality fact finding report that will support the agency in any necessary action it needs to take post-investigation.

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

The COE was established in February 2019, with a staged roll-out throughout the Executive Department. It became available to all employees by January 2020.

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

The advent of the "Me Too" movement caused Massachusetts to look at its processes for reporting and investigating complainants of sexual harassment. At that time, sexual harassment investigations took place at the agency level. We learned that having a decentralized process impaired our ability to determine how many complaints had been made, investigated or remediated. In addition, it was apparent that agencies were determining their own standards for when to

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investigate, the investigation process, and any remedial efforts. This discovery reaffirmed that it was important for leadership to be certain that the employees work in safe and supportive environments and are heard and have their complaints taken seriously. As a result, the decision was made to create a centralized investigation unit, staffed with a team of specially trained investigators, whose sole purpose is to investigate these complaints. This centralized approach allows for consistency across the executive departments so that each employee involved with an investigation could expect the same experience regardless of their employing agency. The initiative was expanded to include all the state-wide policies related to a hostile or unsafe workspaces, therefore, complaints related to discrimination, workplace violence, domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking as well as sexual harassment were included in the unit's mission.

The program provides:

Consistency of approach: best practices are consistently applied across the

Commonwealth so that each employee's concern is managed thoroughly and fairly

Efficient use of resources: full-time trained investigators dedicated to the work of managing investigations

Accountability for results: the COE tracks key metrics for all of its investigations including: Types of allegations; time to resolve complaints; cost of paid leave, if

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applicable, and outcomes

Reporting that informs necessary training: the outcomes of investigations

informs training needs across the Commonwealth to reduce workplace violations

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

Based on survey results, we believe Massachusetts to be an innovator with a centralized investigation unit that can be accessed by any executive department employee and is dedicated to allegations of these policy violations. This process allows for an unbiased investigation without any pre-conceptions based on rumor, conjecture or favoritism. In addition, we have found through this unbiased process, the COE has been able to identify worksites that have issues that are simmering, which allows management the opportunity to address them, objectively, thereby avoiding additional complaints or litigation. Further, the investigators serve as witnesses in any litigation that results from an investigation.

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.)

The COE was initially projected to be staffed by a director and five investigators budgeted at \$400,000 for the first year of operations. Since then, staffing has increased to twelve, with one director, three senior investigators, seven investigators and one intake specialist.

6. What are the program's operational costs?

1.2M annually

7. How is this program funded?

The program is funded through the Human Resources Division's appropriation.

8. Did this program originate in your state?

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

If yes, how does this program differ?

We recently became aware of a new program in Rhode Island

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

The COE has become a safe space and an effective resource for employees to report issues in their workplaces. The number of complaints filed at the COE grew at the rate of 20% over the first three years, finally leveling out at around 750 annual filings. Following intake interviews, ultimately 36% of complaints went forward with a full investigation. The complaints that were not investigated because the complaint was not related to one of the policies the COE investigates were referred back to the employing agency to be addressed. Since the unit's inception, the number of substantiated complaints is trending downward with only 26% of investigated complaint having an outcome of substantiated.

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

The number of complaints filed, far exceeded those predicted by the cross-secretariat working group that advised on the establishment of the unit. The number of investigators doubled within the first two years. The unit is also proactive to provide education and resources to Commonwealth agencies. The COE hosts drop-in sessions and monthly seminars to promote the unit and address workplace issues prior to complaint.

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“The measure of a country’s greatness is its ability to retain compassion in times of crisis.” – Thurgood Marshall. It is within this spirit that the Massachusetts Human Resources Division’s Center of Expertise for Investigations (COE) is nominated. Like many organizations, the Commonwealth looked inward when the “Me Too” movement came into the forefront. We asked ourselves, “how are we doing?” and we realized we could not satisfactorily answer the question. Why? Because across our 11 secretariats that employ almost 50,000 people, our processes were decentralized and complaints were not tracked. As an organization we were left in the untenable position of not knowing if our workplaces were safe and supported.

The COE was established in 2019 to serve as a centralized investigations unit for employees’ complaints related to sexual harassment, discrimination, workplace violence, and domestic violence. We wanted a vehicle that would be compassionate to complainants but fair to respondents during the process. We believe we have landed on a system that does just that. The unit is staffed with ten specially trained investigators, an intake specialist and a Director. Any employee within the Executive Department can file a complaint if they want to report a policy violation. The complaint is reviewed within days to determine whether it falls within the COE’s scope and should be investigated. The investigations are confidential and unbiased, with the goal of all participants to be treated with respect. There is a two-tier report review to ensure consistency in the application of the policy and the law before being sent to agencies for appropriate action.

While growing steadily, the number of filings has leveled out in recent years to 750 new complaints annually. We now have insight into employee complaints, consistency in investigations, and the ability to adjust our annual mandatory trainings to address problem areas. We believe this process is truly innovative.

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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.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Title: Mississippi Leadership, Excellence, and Development (LEAD) Program State: MS

Contact Person: Michael Finley

Contact's Title: Director of Training and Development

Agency: Mississippi State Personnel Board

Mailing Address: 210 East Capitol St Suite 800, Jackson, MS 39201

Telephone: 601-359-2718

E-mail: Michael.finley@mspb.ms.gov

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nominator: Michael Finley Title: Director of Training and Development

State: MS Agency: Mississippi State Personnel Board

Telephone: 601-359-2718

E-mail: Michael.finley@mspb.ms.gov

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DETAILS

Mississippi LEAD (Leadership Excellence And Development) is a two-year program designed to strengthen the leadership skills of state government executives through monthly webinars and quarterly events. Participants explore leadership topics including accountability, change management, and problem-solving. Quarterly events focus on topics specific to Mississippi state government like the legislative process, legal updates, and understanding appropriations bills.

Mississippi LEAD participants must:

- Be an employee of a Mississippi state government agency
- Be in one of our Top 3 pay grades of each pay plan
- Be willing to commit to the two-year commitment to finish the course
- Agree to complete all course requirements entirely and on time
- Be nominated by his or her agency head
- Complete the application stating why he or she should be considered for this program

The two-year curriculum includes:

YEAR 1		YEAR 2	
Jan	Accountability Leadership in the Public Sector	Jan	Crisis Leadership for Senior Leaders
Feb	Ethical Leadership in State Government	Feb	Negotiations and Conflict Management
Mar	Communication Skills for Effective Leadership	Mar	Performance Management and Building a High-Performing Team
Apr	Navigating Government Leadership with Emotional Intelligence	Apr	Building a Strong Organizational Culture
May	Strategic Time Management for State Leaders	May	Innovation and Creative Problem Solving for Process Improvement in the Public Sector
Jun	Decision Making for Senior Leaders	Jun	Collaborative Leadership and Building Strategic Alliances
Jul	Problem Solving for Senior Leaders	Jul	Adaptive Leadership
Aug	Enhancing Critical Thinking for Senior Government Leaders	Aug	Executive Presence and Influence
Sep	Strategic Risk Management	Sep	Leadership in a Digital Era
Oct	Strategic Thinking and Planning for the Public Sector	Oct	Leadership Resilience and Well Being
Nov	Leading Change: Strategies for Senior Leaders	Nov	Succession Planning in the Public Sector
Dec	Project Management for Senior Leaders	Dec	Capstone Exercise

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1. Please provide a brief description of this program.

The Mississippi Leadership, Excellence, and Development (LEAD) program is a two-year virtual initiative designed to equip senior leaders in Mississippi state government with advanced leadership skills. This program aims to build a community of visionary leaders capable of driving change, fostering collaboration, and enhancing the effectiveness of state government operations.

Details about the program may be found here: <https://www.mspb.ms.gov/training-development/mississippi-lead>

Video explaining the program: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dW7MINDwT3k>

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

The program has been operational for 16 months. It started in January 2024. The first cohort will graduate in December 2025.

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

In June 2023, MSPB hosted its first Leadership Summit for agency heads and senior executive leaders in state government. This one-day event was the first leadership event for leaders at the executive level.

Because MSPB received overwhelmingly positive feedback from Leadership Summit attendees, the Mississippi LEAD program was created to address the leadership skills training gap for senior state government leaders. Previously, there were no course offerings for senior state government leaders.

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

The unique combination of asynchronous and synchronous modules requires technology such as a course creation platform, a Learning Management System, and virtual hosting such as Zoom. With approximately 45% of state workers working outside the Jackson metro area, we wanted to address the needs of all participants, no matter their location. The asynchronous monthly course covers strategic leadership topics such as change management, critical thinking, crisis leadership, and negotiation skills. The quarterly training is offered in-person or via a virtual platform and covers topics germane to Mississippi state government, such as an overview of the legislative budget process and meetings with state senators and representatives.

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5. What were 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.)

The Mississippi State Personnel Board already had an existing license for the course creation software. We did not have a learning management system (LMS). After reviewing vendor offerings, we decided on LearnWorlds, which costs approximately \$2,500 per year. In-house training specialists create the course content.

6. What are the program's operational costs?

Operational costs such as course creation and LMS management are covered by in-house personnel. As explained, the ongoing yearly cost is approximately \$2,500.

7. How is this program funded?

The Mississippi LEAD program is funded through the budget of the Mississippi State Personnel Board. Each year, the legislature allocates funds for MSPB to conduct training.

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?

We are aware of senior leadership training in other states, but not with a program that is set up for the length of time ours is, as well as the monthly/quarterly style format training being offered.

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

Currently, the program's success is measured by in-house evaluations utilizing Kirkpatrick's Level I and Level II evaluation format. Each quarter, a survey is sent to each participant, asking for their reaction to the course. For the Level II evaluation, each module has quizzes throughout to test the participant's knowledge. Each module also has a final exam at the end of each module. Each participant must pass the final exam to complete the course successfully.

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

Due to the success, we have internally reorganized our training department to meet the program's needs. We recently started our second cohort in January 2025, and we are eager to learn their thoughts and evaluations of the course.

Recently, a new participant asked if we could organize a field trip to the state capitol while the legislature is in session. This was a wonderful idea, and we plan to include a trip soon.

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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.

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

Mailing Address: Harry S Truman Building, 301 W. High Street, Suite 430 B, Jefferson City, MO 65101

Telephone: 573-522-2655

E-mail: Kaitlyn.Cook@oa.mo.gov

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nominator: Kaitlyn Cook Title: Senior Talent Development Specialist

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

Telephone: 573-522-2655

E-mail: Kaitlyn.Cook@oa.mo.gov

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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.

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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.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Title: HR Learning Portal State: WV

Contact Person: Sheryl Webb

Contact's Title: Director

Agency: West Virginia Division of Personnel

Mailing Address: 1900 Kanawha Blvd. E., Bldg. 3 Suite 500, Charleston, WV 25305

Telephone: 304-304-558-3950

E-mail: Sheryl.r.webb@wv.gov

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nominator: Sheryl Webb Title: Director

State: WV Agency: West Virginia Division of Personnel

Telephone: 304-558-3950

E-mail: Sheryl.r.webb@wv.gov

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DETAILS

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1. Please provide a brief description of this program.

The HR Learning Portal, a valuable online resource was created to support HR professionals.

This portal serves as a comprehensive guide and starting point for those navigating the complex field of human resources. As such, it offers a variety of resources designed to help you succeed in your role including:

Guidance on key HR policies and procedures

Access to relevant laws and regulations

Links to Division of Personnel resources and agency-specific information

Training materials and tools for professional development

This portal is a go-to resource to begin or continue ones journey in HR. The site is regularly updated with training and content to ensure it meets the evolving needs of our HR community.

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

September 13, 2024

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

Human Resources is complex. When a merit system is added to the HR complexities, it can be challenging for HR staff to know where to go for resources that will provide them with the information that is needed.

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

Other states centralize HR information, but this portal provides steps on how to use the resources. It provides foundational concepts and groups HR information into commonly used areas, so that an employee will know how to navigate the resources whether they have come from the private sector or have been in the public sector for their HR career.

5. What was the program's startup costs?

This system is set up in Google Workspace. Agency staff built the site and have provided the content for it.

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6. What are the program's operational costs?

There are no additional operational costs to run this program.

7. How is this program funded?

The program is funded with agency funds.

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?

Arizona may have an HR program that may be similar. I was unable to locate it on a public site if they do.

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

This program is still in its infancy. The data for the number of visits to the page is being tracked. The WVDOP is getting ready to make changes to the site location and promotion and will be measuring the changes in the data in greater detail after the adjustments are made.

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

The initial page had a basic structure for the materials that are included today. Upcoming events are now on the main landing page, additional training and resources have been added.

HR Learning Portal

Home

- Foundational Concepts
- ✓ Hiring and Retention
- ✓ Compensation
- ✓ Employee Support
- ✓ Employment Law
- ✓ Position Management
- ✓ Performance Management
- Upcoming Events

Introduction to Government HR Structure & Functions

It might be helpful to think about HR as a tree. The foundational concepts of "merit," "laws, rules, policies," and "shared definitions" serve as the deep roots that anchor the entire structure. These roots establish the foundational principles of fairness, legality, and clarity in HR practices, just as roots provide stability and nourishment to a tree. These foundational elements ensure that HR decisions are based on merit, comply with regulations, and maintain consistency in terminology and procedures.

Branching out from these roots are the five key areas of HR:

- Recruitment, Onboarding, and Retention
- Compensation
- Employee Support
- Employment Law
- Position Management
- Performance Management

Each of these areas represents a vital aspect of HR management, akin to the branches that extend from the tree's sturdy roots. They encompass specific functions such as hiring, benefits administration, legal compliance, workforce planning, and performance evaluation, which are essential for the overall health and growth of the organization.

By understanding HR in this analogy, HR professionals can appreciate how the deep roots of merit, laws, rules, policies, and definitions provide the necessary foundation for cultivating effective HR practices across the organization. Just as a tree flourishes with strong roots and expansive branches, organizations thrive when HR operations are grounded in foundational principles and supported by diverse functional areas that contribute to organizational success.

Job Aid for HR Structure

2021-2022

Upcoming Events

HR Learning Portal

Home

- Foundational Concepts
- ✓ Hiring and Retention
- ✓ Compensation
- ✓ Employee Support
- Payroll
- Personnel Transactions
- Record Keeping
- Leave Accruals
- Progression Dates
- Travel
- ✓ Employment Law
- ✓ Position Management
- ✓ Performance Management
- Upcoming Events

Leave Accruals

Employees of West Virginia State Government receive outstanding paid leave benefits, and leave is earned and accrued from the first day of employment. This includes annual (vacation) leave and sick leave, as well as paid time off for other activities such as jury duty and military leave. The resources on this page focus on two primary leave types: Annual leave and sick leave.

How to Use These Resources

To get started, we recommend reviewing the DOP Administrative Rule, which outlines the legal aspects of leave and the protections available to employees.

After that, explore the websites on Sick Leave Accrual and Annual Leave Accrual for more detailed information. Be sure to utilize the Accrual Calculation Chart, which helps differentiate between employees with varying tenures—remember, the longer you are in a position, the more leave you accrue. We also offer an online class, *Emergency Situations/Inclement Weather*, that summarizes many of the aforementioned resources.

DOP Administrative Rule (2022), sections 14.3, and 14.4

The Administrative Rule is the statutory code that governs the Division of Personnel (DOP). It outlines guidelines for classification plans, pay structures, open competitive examinations, promotions, layoffs and recalls, appointments, dismissals, demotions, and other human resource matters in accordance with the West Virginia Code.

Sick Leave Accruals

State employees enjoy generous sick leave that is separate from other leave. More information is available on this webpage.

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- Conform to all copyright laws

EVA N. SANTOS COMMUNICATION AWARD

The **Eva N. Santos Communication Award** was named in memory of Eva N. Santos, who served as NASPE president and through her leadership sought to recognize excellence in state government HR Communication. Winners of the Award are recognized during the NASPE Annual Meeting. In addition, award-winning efforts will be publicized in press releases, letters to governors and policymakers, and the media.



Eva Santos was appointed HR Director of the State of Washington in 2005 by Gov. Christine Gregoire and served in the position until her death in December 2012. She was a leader and innovator in state human resources and understood the important role of communication in effective HR leadership. As NASPE Awards Committee Chair, she established the Communication Award to recognize outstanding achievement in state HR communication.

2025 NASPEs AWARD

Eva N. Santos Communication Awards

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.

NOMINATION INFORMATION

Title of Nomination: Toolkit for Executive Order 24-04: Increasing Employment Opportunities in Washington State Government State: WA

Contact Person: Mia Navarro

Contact's Title: Deputy Chief Cultural Officer

Agency: Washington State Office of Financial Management State Human Resources Division

Mailing Address: 1500 Jefferson St SE, Olympia, WA 98501

Telephone: (360) 790-5857

E-mail: mia.navarro@ofm.wa.gov

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nominator: Mia Navarro Title: Deputy Chief Cultural Officer

State: WA Agency: Washington State Office of Financial Management State Human Resources Division

Telephone: (360) 790-5857

E-mail: mia.navarro@ofm.wa.gov

ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST:

- Meet all eligibility requirements • Meet deadline requirements
- Include a complete nomination packet • Conform to all copyright laws

2025 NASPEs AWARD

Eva N. Santos Communication Awards

DETAILS

Feel free to include links to websites and snapshots as part of your nomination.

1. Please provide a brief description of the submission. - [Executive Order 24-04 Tool Kit](#)

Executive Order 24-04 | Toolkit | Part One

Increasing employment opportunities in Washington state government

In this toolkit you will find initial guidance on the following:

- [Agency plans for competency-based hiring](#)
- [Anti-bias training and objectives](#)
- [Communication and organization change management plan](#)
- [Competency-based hiring](#)
- [Competency-based hiring resources](#)
- [Examples of how to eliminate degree requirements on job postings](#)
- [On-line recruiting system consistency guidelines](#)
- [On-line recruiting system standardization checklist](#)
- [Pay equity lens guidance](#)
- [Toolkit for improving equity in hiring and recruiting](#)

Future releases will include equity competencies, pay equity plan guidance and reporting process, OLRs demographic data reporting process, and the statewide equity competency assessment.

EO 24-04 does not technically apply to higher education institutions, but we do encourage higher ed institutions to take steps to meet the intent of the EO in your organization. [SHB 2216](#) regarding college degree requirements does apply to higher ed, so institutions of higher education will want to consult with their Assistant Attorney General for any questions regarding that legislation.

Our intention is to provide guidance and support that is helpful for agencies to implement this EO. As we release guidance and information, we want to know if it is meeting that mark, and if not, we want to hear from you what additional information and support would be helpful. Some of the future support under consideration include additional training resources, guidance to help determine whether or not qualifications such as English proficiency, driver's licenses, lifting 50 lbs., etc. are essential to a position, support for applicants with this change, and ways agencies can share information and promising practices with one another.

Toolkit

- Agency plans for competency-based hiring
- Anti-bias training and objectives
- Communication and organization change management plan
- Competency-based hiring
- Competency-based hiring resources
- Eliminate degree requirements as the only way to qualify for jobs
- OLRs consistency guidelines
- Pay equity lens guidance
- Toolkit for improving equity in hiring and recruiting

Information session

- Information session video - 3/5/2025

Related

- Bill to eliminate degree requirements that are unnecessary
- Executive Order - Increasing employment opportunities
- Department of Enterprise Services
- Office of Equity

Research

- Skills-based strategies for the public sector - National Governors Association research publication

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Eva N. Santos Communication Awards

In December of 2024, outgoing Governor Jay Inslee signed Executive Order 24-04: Increasing Employment Opportunities in Washington State Government (EO 24-04). EO 24-04 instructs agencies to remove barriers to state employment such as unnecessary degree and other requirements and move towards skills and competency-based hiring. Washington State Human Resources (State HR) created the EO 24-04 toolkit to help agencies implement this EO.

The Toolkit is organized into sections based on the feedback provided from state agencies as to what they would need in order to successfully implement and operationalize the EO. It includes:

- Agency plans for competency-based hiring – to learn from each other and identify enterprise progress
- Anti-bias training and objectives – targeted intervention based on data demonstrating a key barrier to employment for historically marginalized communities is during the interview
- Communication and organization change management plan – a key ask from smaller agencies with fewer specialized positions to build this resource
- Competency-based hiring resources – templates and best practices for agencies to use to move from degree/years of experience requirements to competencies in job descriptions, application assessment and interview questions
- Applicant Tracking System consistency guidelines – training and other resources to create standard processes in a federated environment to ensure a more consistent candidate experience and enterprise data
- Pay equity lens – templates and guidance for agencies to use to ensure best practices are followed when determining pay for new hires
- Improving equity in hiring and recruiting – a set of resources for the full-cycle recruitment process to help recruiters and hiring managers to mitigate bias and ensure full equal opportunity of all applicants to compete for the job

2. How long has the submission been in existence?

A cross-agency team began building the policy/executive order and its resource material in October of 2023. Initial drafts and templates were shared with an enterprise HR manager and DEI meetings in February of 2024, and went through an iterative feedback cycle to ensure that the final policy (including key milestone deadlines to demonstrate progress) were feasible to implement and to ensure agencies were prepared to operationalize the policies once they were in effect. The Executive Order was signed in December of 2024, and the toolkit formally published in January of 2025.

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3. Why was this submission created?

Feedback from state agencies across the enterprise highlighted a key challenge to meeting requirements outlined in previous Executive Orders and SHR directives was the lack of resources and clarity on expectations. After reviewing an initial draft of the Executive Order, agencies identified specific resources or information they would need in order to change their practices and procedures to be able to achieve the outcomes identified in the EO.

The toolkit is a compilation of all of the resources requested from agencies so that they could be successful in meeting the requirements of the EO. The EO has four main sections: Hiring Standardization (use of the Applicant Tracking System NeoGov), Improving Access to State Employment, Improving Washington State Government's Equity Competency, Recruitment and Hiring Requirement (addressing unconscious bias in hiring), and Pay Equity.

https://governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/24-04%20-%20Hiring%20%28tmp%29.pdf

This toolkit is an example of user-centered design. Agencies were involved from the beginning to identify the core components of the toolkit and what specific resources should be included. Every resource that is included in the toolkit was also built with a diverse representation of folks including hiring managers, recruiters, change management professionals, DEI professionals, HR specialists, and job applicants to ensure all of the people involved in the hiring process had input so that the resources were applicable to helping achieve the intent of the EO.

4. How does this submission support the goals and objectives of your agenda/department?

Washington State HR has four strategic priorities:

- 1) A division of work that is focused on impact (to the communities we serve)
- 2) A culture of belonging where every SHR team member has the tools, skills, bandwidth, and clarity of expectations to thrive in their role
- 3) The HR community and systems are "ready" to transition to the OneWA ERP.
- 4) Our systems and work are proactively addressing the priorities of the Legislature, Governor, and agency priorities and agile enough to pivot when necessary

This EO and toolkit supports all four of our strategic priorities. Specifically:

- The only way that we can have an impact on the people we serve is if we have a workforce that is representative of the people we serve and has the skills to provide culturally relevant services. We have extensive data to show that we are not yet providing that impact consistently across government and a key lever identified to achieve greater impact is to remove the barriers to employment that many qualified individuals (who have the skills to provide greater impact) are facing.

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Eva N. Santos Communication Awards

- Building this toolkit required investing in the growth and development of our State HR team members and HR team members across the enterprise. Additionally, the toolkit includes training and templates and provide additional on-the-job training for HR leaders and hiring managers to help support their ability to carry out their functions with this new expectation of how work should be done in Washington.
- The consistency guidelines/trainings for the applicant tracking system is creating a more standard process across our state (which has a fully federated recruitment practice) including definitions. This is a key readiness activity for all HR systems that needs to occur before moving to a centralized ERP.
- The toolkit was fully co-created from identifying key components to all of the details in each of the resources to ensure the user and their priorities were centered in its design. It was also done prior to the signing of the EO to ensure agencies were proactively prepared to implement the EO as soon as it was signed.

5. Have you been able to measure the effectiveness of this submission? If so, how?

We are measuring effectiveness in a series of different ways:

- Communication effectiveness (of questions received) – initially, we were getting dozens of emails, teams messages, phone calls, and in-person questions from state agencies about the EO and what they need to do to meet the requirements. After the formal publishing of the toolkit in January of 2025, the number of questions significantly decreased to now it is less than one formal question per day.
- System readiness (% of agencies with complete ATS data) – prior to publishing the training and resources for how to use NEOGOV, data was inconsistent across the enterprise. Currently, all agencies are now using the applicant tracking system in a way that ensures candidate demographic data is now showing up in all steps outlined in the recruitment process so that we can now pull enterprise data to see where people may be disproportionately falling out in the process.
- Removal of barriers (% of job postings that do not have a degree requirement unless required by law – currently all jobs posted on the careers.wa.gov website have either skills qualifications or contain a degree + alternative pathway requirement unless a degree is required by law to perform the essential functions of the job (i.e. medical practitioner).

As this is a newly established toolkit, these are the initial measures we have identified that we can review to determine the effectiveness of the toolkit as a whole as well as whether the resources are helping to change processes. Once the toolkit has been in place for a longer time, we will develop additional measures to identify whether the toolkit is helping to change outcomes (i.e. demographic makeup of our workforce, time-to-hire, etc.)

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ADVANCING THE HR PROFESSION AWARD

The HR professional's role continues to evolve from transactional to strategic. This award will recognize programs and efforts within state government that address the changing landscape and, much like NASPE itself, serve in **Advancing the HR Profession** by providing professional development opportunities, facilitating communication and networking between HR staff at all levels, and promoting a sense of community and value in HR work.

2025 NASPE AWARDS

Advancing the HR Profession Award

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.

NOMINATION INFORMATION

Title of Nomination: Louisiana State Civil Service Hiring Framework

State: LA

Contact Person: Lindsay Ruiz de Chavez

Contact's Title: Public Information Director

Agency: State Civil Service

Mailing Address: 1201 N. 3rd Street Ste. 3-280 Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Telephone: 225-342-8274

E-mail: lindsay.ruiz@la.gov

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nominator: Byron P. Decoteau, Jr.

Title: Director of State Civil Service

State: LA

Agency: State Civil Service

Telephone: (225)342-8272

E-mail: byron.decoteau@la.gov

ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST:

- Meet all eligibility requirements • Meet deadline requirements
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2025 NASPE AWARDS

Advancing the HR Profession Award

DETAILS

Feel free to include links to websites as part of your nomination. Link: [Louisiana Department of State Civil Service](#)

1. Please provide a brief description of this program.

The Louisiana [State Civil Service \(SCS\) Hiring Framework](#) is a modern, skills-first approach designed to streamline talent acquisition and enhance workforce quality by emphasizing an individual's competencies and capabilities over traditional credentials alone. By clearly defining and prioritizing relevant skills, this framework empowers HR professionals and hiring managers to accurately assess candidate potential, simplifies the application process for job seekers—including those skilled through nontraditional and alternative routes.

[How to Use the SCS Hiring Framework Generator – Quick Reference Guide](#)

SCS Hiring Framework

- What**
The SCS Hiring Framework is a suite of competency-based recruiting and hiring tools designed to help agencies target and certify that candidates have the right skills to be successful in any state position.
- Who**
The SCS Hiring Framework will be available for all Louisiana state agencies.
- When**
Beginning on **January 1, 2024**, the SCS Hiring Framework steps 1 – 3 will be required for all positions notated on the SCS job information and test finder.
- Where**
The resources for the SCS Hiring Framework can be located on the State Civil Service website by selecting the HR Professionals section and then the SCS Hiring Framework tab.
- Why**
The goal of the SCS Hiring Framework is to provide efficient recruiting and hiring tools that will help agencies modernize their hiring practices by aligning candidate skills with agency needs.

STATECIVILSERVICE

RECIPIENT

ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST:

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2025 NASPE AWARDS

Advancing the HR Profession Award

SCS Hiring Framework

6 steps to Modernize State Hiring Practices

Define the Job and the Roles

1 Develop a Competency Map

- Review the job description and the provided core competency map. Select the core and preferred competencies that best align with your position

Source and Attract Talent

2 Select Work Tasks

- Select examples of work from the job specification and/or the position description to showcase competencies

Screen Applicants

3 Select Supplemental Questions

- Select supplemental questions to assist in the screening of candidates

Systematically Assess Candidates

4 Select Interview Questions

- Select behavior-based interview questions from the SCS banks

5 Select Interview Activities

- Select interview activities from the SCS competency-based bank

Make Data-Driven Hiring Decisions

6 Download structured interview templates and candidate comparison chart

- Create structured interviews by choosing from a bank of interview templates
- Easily compare candidate scores to help inform the decision-making process



STATECIVILSERVICE

2. How long has this program or effort been operational?

The SCS Hiring Framework became a part of the hiring process on January 1, 2024.

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RECIPIENT

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3. Why was this program/effort created?

The Louisiana SCS Hiring Framework was created to address challenges with traditional hiring methods, specifically the over-reliance on pre-employment test scores that limited the applicant pool and overlooked qualified candidates. By removing barriers such as rigid educational requirements and standardized testing, the framework aims to:

- Expand talent pools by emphasizing skills and competencies needed for state jobs.
- Enhance diversity of applicants by recognizing competencies gained through alternative routes (paid or unpaid experiences).
- Simplify and improve hiring efficiency, making it easier for HR professionals to identify suitable candidates based on relevant capabilities.
- Empower applicants to clearly demonstrate their strengths, creating equitable access to employment opportunities across the state.

4. What are the costs of this program/effort?

All aspects of this program were developed internally by the SCS team, leveraging internal staffing to design the competency model, develop the SCS Hiring Framework, and create custom applications and the data interface hosted on the SCS website. Additionally, external technologies—including Articulate Rise, YouTube, and SuccessFactors LMS—were utilized to produce and distribute comprehensive training materials and program resources.

5. How is this program/effort funded?

The program is funded through intra-agency transfer fees paid to State Civil Service.

6. How do you measure the success of this program/effort?

Since this program is relatively new, SCS is focused on gathering substantial evidence to achieve statistical significance over time. Currently, success is being measured through several key metrics, including:

- Increase in the number of applicants
- Agency compliance with SCS hiring framework requirements
- Course completion rates
- Course feedback surveys
- Traffic to the SCS Hiring Framework website
- YouTube engagements
- Social media interactions
- HR community quantitative survey feedback
- Qualitative insights from HR community focus groups

By the end of 2025, additional measures will evaluate agency internalization of the framework, retention rates of employees hired through the SCS Hiring Framework, and the overall quality of hires.

7. How has the program/effort changed since its inception?

Based on user feedback, SCS has iteratively refined the competency model and structured interview templates and has developed an instructor-led training course specifically for HR professionals. Currently, the use of the SCS Hiring Framework is mandatory for 248 job titles, with plans to expand this approach in additional job titles in the near future. Additionally, there are also plans to increase recruiting and outreach via our Recruiting and Outreach Center to help individuals showcase transferable skills using the SCS competency model.

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NOMINATION INFORMATION

Title of Nomination: West Virginia Division of Personnel Local Health Database State: West Virginia

Contact Person: Sheryl Webb

Contact's Title: Director

Agency: West Virginia Division of Personnel

Mailing Address: 1900 Kanawha Blvd. E., Bldg. 3 Suite 500, Charleston, WV 25305

Telephone: 304-558-3950

E-mail: sheryl.r.webb@wv.gov

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nominator: Cal Calangelo Title: Human Resources Manager

State: West Virginia Agency: West Virginia Division of Personnel

Telephone: 304-558-3950

E-mail: cal.colangelo@wv.gov

DETAILS

ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST:

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2025 NASPE AWARDS

Advancing the HR Profession Award

Feel free to include links to websites as part of your nomination.

1. Please provide a brief description of this program.

The West Virginia Division of Personnel (DOP) Local Health Database (LHD) is a proprietary HRIS system housed within the Google Workspace. The LHD allows local health departments affiliated under the DOP merit system to maintain personnel records, oversee position control, access educational resources, and review billing information in a centralized location. The LHD operates by using a variety of datasets and scripts coded using JavaScript to generate notifications, update personnel information, create personnel records, and send email notifications.

2. How long has this program or effort been operational?

The LHD was developed by Cal Colangelo in 2021, and launched for use by affiliated departments in April of 2022.

3. Why was this program/effort created?

The program was launched to replace a legacy database that was failing as a result of being created with an older coding language that was no longer relevant. The agency conducted a search for a system to replace it, but everything was too pricey for the smaller scale of this program.

4. What are the costs of this program/effort?

All the programs and software needed to create the database are included as part of the department's current IT service fees, meaning there is no additional cost to the department to run the LHD.

5. How is this program/effort funded?

The program has no additional costs to the agency.

6. How do you measure the success of this program/effort?

Success of the program has been measured throughout the years with various user satisfaction surveys which regularly return an above average satisfaction rating.

7. How has the program/effort changed since its inception?

Since the original launch, the LHD has been expanded to include position control functions, billing overviews, and expanded educational resources. The LHD is currently being tested for a performance management component that would allow departments to track and complete performance evaluations in the LHD.

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2025 NASPE AWARDS

Advancing the HR Profession Award

WV DOP LHD VER 2.2

Home Health Department Directory Education & Resources Contact Information Bulletin Board DOP Admin Beckley-Raleigh Berkeley-Morgan Boone County More

Welcome to the WV DOP Local Health Department Database!

Transaction Request/Cover Sheet

Transaction Request/Cover Sheet

Complete this form to request a transaction for one of your employee's OR to request a transaction for a new hire.

Education & Resources

Education & Resources

This page contains a variety of educational resources including guides and sample documents.

Find your health department

Health Department Directory

Using this menu you can locate your local health department's page in the database.

Bulletin Board

Bulletin Board

Help!

DOP Contact Information

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OSCAR B. JACKSON, JR. AWARD

Each year since 2011, the NASPE President can select an individual or individual(s) to recognize for their commitment to the association and their work that went above and beyond for the betterment of the association.



Oscar B. Jackson, Jr. was appointed Administrator of the Oklahoma Office of Personnel Management by Gov. David Walters in 1991. Jackson served in this capacity and later also as Secretary of Human Resources and Administration until his retirement in 2011. Jackson was the ultimate ambassador to NASPE members, frequently reaching out to new appointees and to long-time members to welcome them and offer encouragement. He truly reflected the spirit of NASPE.

This year's **Oscar B. Jackson, Jr. President's Award** is presented to someone who has been consistent, thorough and hard-working and a long-time supporter and contributor to the association. From leading sessions, to serving as a co-chair of the corporate council, to coordinating survey efforts – representing four different employers as a NASPE corporate member. Glenn Davidson's mark on this association has been invaluable.

Glenn Davidson was also commissioned a **Kentucky Colonel** by Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear. The Kentucky Colonel is the highest title of honor bestowed by the US state of Kentucky. It is the most well-known colonelcy in the United States. Kentucky Colonels are ambassadors of good will and fellowship around the world.

Congratulations to **Glenn Davidson** as this year's President's Award winner and being awarded the Kentucky Colonel



**Glenn Davidson,
Human Capital
Transformation Executive,
Deloitte**

NEVILLE KENNING

CORPORATE PARTNER AWARD

The Neville Kenning Corporate Partner Award Winner, established in 2022, is chosen by a vote of the state members on the the NASPE corporate partner who has added the most value to the association and to state government human resource management throughout the year.



Neville Kenning was NASPE's first and longest-serving corporate member and was part of the organization for 25 years. Kenning was a renowned classification and compensation consultant who earned the respect and trust of his clients through a strong work ethic and taking time to get to know them and understand their needs. He was the ultimate corporate partner who understood that it was about "relationships, relationships, relationships" and not about selling - the business would come once relationships and trust were built.

This year's winner set the tone by not only having the corporate council co-chair but by serving as a thought leader by providing significant content to our members, particularly on AI.




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NASPE AWARDS COMMITTEE

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