

# 2018 NASPE AWARD

Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award Nomination

*Innovative State Human Resource Management Program*

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

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

Additionally, please attach a one-page summary of the program and prepare a narrative answer for the questions listed below. Do not send supporting documentation. Provide a narrative answer for each of the following questions.

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## PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Title: The Management & Leadership Learning Pyramid

State: TN

Contact Person: Rebecca Hunter, CPA, SPHR

Contact's Title: Commissioner

Agency: Department of Human Resources

Mailing Address: 505 Deaderick Street, Nashville, TN 37243

Telephone: 615-741-4126      Fax: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

E-mail: [rebecca.hunter@tn.gov](mailto:rebecca.hunter@tn.gov)

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## NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nominator: Dr. Trish Holliday, SPHR, SHRM-SCP      Title: Assistant Commissioner and State Chief Learning Officer

State: TN      Agency: Department of Human Resources

Telephone: 615-516-7026      Fax: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

E-mail: [trish.holliday@tn.gov](mailto:trish.holliday@tn.gov)

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## DETAILS

1. Please provide a brief description of this program.

The Management and Leadership Learning Pyramid (MLLP) was developed by the Strategic Learning Solutions (SLS) division of the Department of Human Resources (DOHR). It consists of 28 learning modules – more than 90 hours of supervisor learning content – organized as a four-level Management and Leadership Certificate program and delivered in both classroom and online learning environments. Provided at no cost to the agencies, the MLLP is the foundation upon which SLS delivers core management and leadership content to over 7,500 managers and supervisors across the state, laying the foundation for a successful enterprise-wide succession planning program for 43,000 employees, the largest workforce in the state.

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

The Management and Leadership Learning Pyramid (MLLP) was inspired by the State's Chief Operating Officer Greg Adams and Commissioner Rebecca Hunter who are both committed to driving performance excellence by developing leaders. The MLLP was developed under the leadership of Assistant Commissioner and State Chief Learning Officer Dr. Trish Holliday in collaboration with the Statewide Learning and Development Council in the summer of 2015. When it was launched, the MLLP was the first such state-wide supervisor development certification program for state government managers in the nation.

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

The effort began in 2014 to address the lack of concentrated supervisory development and leadership bench strength. Given consistent feedback of talent shortages and skill gaps, the SLS team committed themselves to the creation of a strategic approach to learning development across the enterprise. The result: the development and launch of the Management and Leadership Learning Pyramid in July 2015. This supervisor certificate program is comprised of fundamental and advanced management

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competencies and skills with the higher levels of the certificate program emphasizing fundamental and advanced leadership competencies and skills. Supervisors are given the opportunity to enhance their own skill sets through these learning modules. All modules are designed to provide supervisors with tools and immediate application for on the job success.

Currently, the data supporting the MLLP demonstrates a 93% relevancy rating for all participating supervisors. There are numerous qualitative evaluation data contributing to the success of the development effort. Supervisors are witnessing first hand a state government that values them as leaders and is committed to assisting them in becoming the most effective supervisor possible. Many managers have never had any formal management training.

The MLLP has become the primary vehicle for developing our state supervisors, creating a shared vocabulary and understanding of what competencies and skills are mission-critical for success. The commitment from the Governor's office and the Cabinet members has demonstrated the importance that continuing to develop oneself is not just an expectation, but an opportunity for supervisors to increase their own effectiveness and contribute to meeting the agency's strategic and operational goals.

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

Prior to rebranding the division now called Strategic Learning Solutions (SLS), training was a catalog-driven, generic “check-the-box” exercise not connected to the organization’s mission, vision, and strategic business needs for developing and retaining a high-performing workforce. Random trainings for supervisors and employees lacked alignment or connectivity to any organizational mission or enterprise strategy. The MLLP was an opportunity to provide a framework that offered a sequential learning platform for supervisors that equipped them with the right skill sets to be successful as a leader of people.

This approach was an innovative methodology to align all state agencies and supervisors with relevant cutting edge learning and skills that supported cross collaboration and cross agency development opportunities.

#### 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 startup costs were minimal and only included the printing of facilitator guide, participant guide, and the supporting PowerPoint of each individual workshop. The curriculum development was done by the division at no additional cost.

#### 6. What are the program’s operational costs?

All supervisor learning modules have been developed by the SLS team. Each module has a facilitator guide, participant guide, and supporting PowerPoint. There is no cost in providing the templates to any organization. SLS provides train the trainer workshops for any state agency for only the cost of travel and supporting training materials. The framework is a transferable platform that can be easily replicated in any agency.

#### 7. How is this program funded?

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The Department of Human Resources provides the workshop learning facilitators to agencies for face to face learning workshops and leads the Train the Trainer certification workshops for agency certified facilitators. The cost is minimal and is only associated with any travel participants might incur when attending the workshops.

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?

No

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

During the winter of 2017, we launched the online evaluation survey for our online workshops. To establish the baseline comparison we used this data to effectively establish comparative data. In 2017, there were 10,630 individuals who completed the SLS online evaluation for our face to face workshops. When asked about relevancy of the content to their current job, 81% of the respondents reported they Strongly Agreed (n = 5024) and/or Agreed (n =3828) that the pyramid content courses were relevant to their current work. To date, in March 2018, there are 6461 individuals who have completed the SLS online evaluation for our face to face workshops. When asked about relevancy to their current job 81% of the respondents reported they Strongly Agreed (n = 3091) and/or Agreed (n =2117) that the pyramid content courses were relevant to their current work. The data has yielded a result the past two years of 81%, thus allowing us to identify a baseline of 81% for this online learning workshop category.

Face to Face Learning Pyramid Workshop Results:

1. When asked about relevancy to their current job, 88% of the respondents reported they Strongly Agreed (n = 801) and/or Agreed (n =345) that the face to face pyramid content courses were relevant to their current work.

2. When asked about overall satisfaction with face to face pyramid course content, 97% of the respondents reported that they were Highly Satisfied (n=2126) and/or Satisfied (n=692).

To establish the baseline comparison we used existing data from previous years. This allows us to effectively establish comparative data. In 2017, there were 2351 individuals who completed the SLS online evaluation for our face to face workshops. When asked about relevancy of the content to their current job, 88% of the respondents reported they Strongly Agreed (n = 1419) and/or Agreed (n =650) that the pyramid content courses were relevant to their current work. As of March 2018, there are 2149 individuals who have completed the SLS online evaluation for our face to face workshops. When asked about relevancy to their current job, 88% of the respondents reported they Strongly Agreed (n = 1286) and/or Agreed (n =599) that the pyramid content courses were relevant to their current work. The data has yielded a result the past two years of 88%, thus allowing us to identify a baseline of 88% for this face to face learning workshop category.

Online Learning Workshops

1. When asked about relevancy to their current job, 82% of the respondents reported they Strongly Agreed (n = 5945) and/or Agreed (n =8115) that the pyramid content courses were relevant to their

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current work.

2. When asked about clarity provided, 81% of the respondents reported they Strongly Agreed (n = 4958) and/or Agreed (n = 8964) that the online pyramid content courses provided clarity around the related topic it was intended to cover.

3. When asked about overall satisfaction with online pyramid course content, 83% of the respondents reported that they were Highly Satisfied (n=4312) and/or Satisfied (n=9936).

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

Upon identifying the need to move away from a generic, tenure-driven culture to a performance-based learning organization, one of the first questions DOHR had to ask was, "Who should really drive learning in state government?" The turning point was changing the focus from 43,000 employees as end users of the training to the 41 key stakeholders. That is, the appointed authorities, the HR officers, and the talent management directors in the executive branch – the true drivers of learning – with DOHR as the subject matter experts leading the design and development of the best practices and relevant learning taught to the supervisors.

Another subtle, yet no less critical innovation was getting rid of the word "training" and replacing it with "learning and development". Along with introducing a standard vocabulary, it conveys the message that learning is a life-long process, not a "one-and-done" event.

The next transitional hurdle SLS had to overcome was how to empower the "forgotten population" in government: the middle managers. Research says the number one reason employees leave is their relationship with their supervisor. This meant that from a learning and development perspective, these 7,500 supervisors held the key for sending and supporting the message from the executive ranks just how vital it was to be innovative in state government through continuous learning and leadership development.

Through several cycles of learning, it became apparent that traditional classroom delivery methods were not the only approach to reaching supervisors. From customer surveys, focus groups, and user feedback, SLS created an innovative "How-to-Facilitate Certification" workshop. Developed in collaboration with Vanderbilt University, this rigorous two-day course teaches agency trainers the skills required to facilitate at a professional level using adult learning theory. Once all the State agency trainers receive their How-To-Facilitate Certification, they are then required to attend a "Train-the-Trainer" (T4T) session for each face-to-face MLLP workshop. Deliverables from each T4T include: a Participant's Guide, a Facilitator's Guide, a PowerPoint presentation, and when applicable, supplemental content.

Through our innovative train the trainer approach, SLS has certified over 600 facilitators within the agencies who are teaching the learning modules to their own supervisors. This approach has increased capacity for teaching the MLLP and driving a consistent learning strategy throughout the enterprise.

As to its external transferability, several state and local government entities have already made such inquiries about adapting the MLLP for their state. These include: Oregon, Texas, Massachusetts, Kentucky, West Virginia, Florida, California, Louisiana, Maine, Hawaii, and Illinois. This platform is highly transferrable as each learning module has a facilitator guide, participant guide, and power point.

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