



# Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

Monthly Employee Newsletter Published by the Department of Administration  
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## Employee of the Month

### Parsons' Knowledge Saves State Money and Time



**James Parsons**  
**September Employee**  
**of the Month**

James Parsons, a fleet analyst for the Fleet Management Division (FMD), has been selected as the Department of Administration's *Employee of the Month* for September.

A state employee for five years, his duties include addressing all issues related to maintenance approval for the state's fleet and communicating with each agency's fleet coordinator regarding recalls or any maintenance ques-

tions.

"Due to James' extensive knowledge of the mechanics of vehicles, he is a subject matter expert in this field. With this knowledge, he goes above and beyond normal expectations," said the co-worker who nominated him. "His efforts save the

state thousands of dollars in excess charges by overseeing any maintenance event that may have extraneous charges, and he does this in a timely fashion. He is always courteous and never shies away from an opportunity to help those around him in any way. His pleasant and can-do spirit make him a joy to work with.

Each year he analyzes and publishes the benchmarks for the fuel and maintenance expenses for each type of vehicle in the state's fleet," continued the co-worker. "This helps agencies monitor the cost of their vehicle's performance to keep their costs as low as possible."

When he's not working, Parsons enjoys working on cars, cooking outside, and spending time with his family, including helping his daughter with 4-H projects.

Parsons will be joined by friends and co-workers at a special ceremony presented by Cabinet Secretary Allan McVey on Thursday, September 5, 2019, at 3:00 p.m. at the FMD offices in Building 17.

## Public Defender Services to Receive Training and Technical Help from Bureau of Justice Assistance

The Bureau of Justice Assistance has selected the West Virginia Public Defender Services (PDS) as a grant recipient for its three-year Strategic Planning program. In 2017, 10 sites were selected for Strategic Planning, with five additional sites chosen in 2019. PDS applied for the Training and Technical Assistance (TTA)

from the Bureau of Justice Assistance Sixth Amendment Center in March 2019 and was selected in August 2019.

The Sixth Amendment Center explains that "the Strategic Planning TTA provides state and local governments and their agents deeper and broader ways of understanding Sixth Amendment



**Bureau of Justice Assistance**  
**U.S. Department of Justice**

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## SNEAK PEEK

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# Plan for Emergencies Before They Occur: Here's How

September is National Preparedness Month, and the Department of Administration would like to remind its employees of steps they can take to prepare for emergencies and/or disaster situations. Remember—the time to prepare for an emergency is now.

Here are some tips you can follow to help prepare for emergencies and disasters before they occur:

- Have a completed emergency plan ready. Visit ReadyWV online at [ready.wv.gov/kit](http://ready.wv.gov/kit) for a free template.
- Create an evacuation plan. This includes knowing alternate routes and transportation options, having a care plan for your pets, and knowing how you will communicate with your family/household.
- Periodically check that your insurance coverage is in good standing and will cover most emergency situations.
- Identify and safeguard your important documents and valuables.
- Consider the financial ramifications of a disaster or emergency. FEMA offers a free Emergency Financial First Aid Kit to help individuals plan for the unthinkable.
- Be prepared for emergencies at home by checking your smoke detectors regularly and knowing how to use a fire extinguisher.
- Complete a first aid or CPR class.
- Sign up for emergency alerts. Learn about the NIXLE services featured in last month's issue of *Quotes, Notes &*



**The time to prepare for emergencies is before they occur. September is National Preparedness Month and a good time to plan. From financial planning to evacuation and safety preparations, make sure you have a plan in place to respond effectively to any emergency or disaster.**

## *Anecdotes.*

While disasters or emergency situations are often unplanned and sudden, having a plan in place will alleviate some of the stress of these situations. Taking time to prepare in advance can also make a huge difference in an individual's overall safety response during emergencies and disasters. To learn more about National Preparedness Month and ways you can prepare now, visit [www.ready.wv.gov](http://www.ready.wv.gov).

## Properly Planned Safety Committees Assure Safe Work Environment for Agencies and Their Staff

According to the Board of Risk and Insurance Management (BRIM), safety committees can be very important to an employer's safety program. If a safety committee isn't properly organized and effective procedures put into place, problems may arise, causing their efforts to fail.

Forming a safety committee is one way to foster a safe workplace for employees and the public. Membership on a safety committee should be voluntary with a mix of departments and units and include both employees and management. This blend of employees will result in more recognition and ultimately more buy-in.

In honor of National Preparedness Month, BRIM would like to share these tips with Department employees on creating an effective safety committee for their organization.

Below are some examples of goals that a successful safety committee should strive to achieve:

- Involve employees in safety programs.
- Lower the number and severity of accidents and injuries.
- Maintain a safe environment for employees and visitors.

To achieve these goals, a safety committee may consider implementing the following steps:

- Develop a safety program that strives to train all employees
- Develop and conduct safety orientation training for new employees
- Serve as a safety review board for all incidents and recommend safety measures to prevent future occurrences
- Establish a procedure for reporting hazardous conditions or activities
- Conduct inspections that identify and correct unsafe conditions before incidents occur
- Coordinate and ensure that evacuation and shelter-in-place drills are conducted regularly
- Confirm that first aid kits and personal protective equipment needs are met
- Meet monthly at a set time with a set agenda prepared beforehand to discuss existing issues, concerns, and safety measures

Agencies are encouraged to organize their own safety committee to ensure a safe environment for all. If your organization already has a safety committee in place, make sure it meets regularly to discuss current and ongoing safety issues and solutions.

# Office of Technology Creates New Employee Council to Foster Effective Communication in the Workplace

West Virginia Office of Technology (WVOT) employees now have a new way to be heard and provide constructive feedback to managers and co-workers. WVOT recently created a council of employees referred to as the Office of Technology Employee Council (OTEC). The OTEC is made up of one employee representative from each section within WVOT that is not a team lead, supervisor or manager. The goal of OTEC is to improve communication between leadership and the WVOT workforce. Issues or projects potentially affecting the majority of WVOT personnel are to be brought to the attention of the OTEC to foster collaborative discussion and provide feedback to leadership from all sections.

The Chief Technology Officer (CTO) and his directors understand the importance of employee feedback. The OTEC is a good way to allow frontline workers the ability to provide input on issues and decisions being made within the agency. The OTEC meets monthly and provides recommendations and perspective directly to the CTO and works on special projects for the CTO and his directors.

Jennifer Ayers, a Systems Programmer II in WVOT's Mainframe section, was elected as the OTEC's first chairperson. An

employee of WVOT since 1997, Ayers has provided outstanding leadership over the past few months in helping organize the new council.

"The OTEC is an important first step in fostering communication among workers, managers, and WVOT leadership," shared Ayers.

All 20 members of the OTEC are volunteers and represent all areas of WVOT. In addition to Ayers, the committee has also elected a vice chair – Larry McDonnell, and two co-secretaries – Lisa Maurer and April Honaker.



## CPRB Director Named Regional Vice President for NASRA

The South Eastern Region of the National Association of State Retirement Administrators (NASRA) has selected Jeff Fleck as its new Vice President. Fleck serves as the Executive Director for the West Virginia Consolidated Public Retirement Board.

"I look forward to representing the state of West Virginia as a member of the NASRA Executive Committee and supporting the organization's goal of managing sustainable public employee retirement systems through research, education, and collaboration," said Fleck.

As the Regional Vice President, Fleck will serve as a voting member of the NASRA's Executive Committee, provide reports to the Executive Committee on activities in the region, and provide a report on suggestions and concerns of its regional members. Among his other duties, Fleck will also be responsible for welcoming new members from his region to NASRA and educating them on the organization's role and its importance. Fleck will remain in this role for two years.



**At a conference in August, CPRB Executive Director Jeff Fleck accepted an appointment as Vice President for the South Eastern Region of the National Association of State Retirement Administrators.**

## Fleet Management Division Vehicle Rental Program

The Fleet Management Division (FMD) would like to remind state employees of its vehicle rental program.

The daily rates offered by FMD include mileage and fuel costs that are incurred through the use of its ARI fuel cards. Rentals are available for daily and long-term use. FMD also offers E-ZPass transponders upon request.

Vehicles available for daily use:

- Chevrolet Impala (1 available) -- \$65.00
- Dodge Charger (1 available) -- \$55.00
- Ford Fusion (2 available) -- \$45.00
- Jeep Patriot (2 available) -- \$55.00
- Dodge Caravan (3 available) -- \$55.00
- Toyota Rav4 (2 available) -- \$65.00
- Ford Focus (1 available) -- \$20.00

Visit [fleet.wv.gov](http://fleet.wv.gov) and complete the Daily Use Vehicle Reservation Request Form to reserve a vehicle today. Questions? Call Toll Free at 1.855.817.1910.



# Summer Interns Help Public Defender Services Implement New Processes Following Legislative Changes

Earlier this summer, Senate Bill 103 went into effect, greatly changing the day-to-day operations of Public Defender Services (PDS). The new law requires PDS to approve the payment of court-appointed counsel. As PDS staff worked to transition to the new tasks brought on by the legislative changes, two summer interns assisted: Alexa and Katherine Halkias.

“Alexa and Katherine were the glue that held this agency together this summer,” shared PDS Executive Director Dana Eddy. “They were ‘interns’ in name only. In actuality, they were key personnel who performed essential tasks that otherwise would not have been done or would have slowed the transition to a crawl.”

During the summer months, these twin sisters served as the agency’s receptionists and were tasked with the initial preparation work for processing court-appointed counsel’s vouchers. As the volume of mail increased and attorneys sought to get payments approved under the old system, the Halkias twins confidently stamped the vouchers and shaded the seals, sorted the vouchers by identification numbers, and enabled already busy personnel to do more substantial work. Some days, the number of vouchers exceeded two hundred.

Once the vouchers were ready to be submitted for payment, the interns scanned the documents into the correct folders so



**Interns Alexa (left) and Katherine Halkias (right) assisted Public Defender Services this summer as the agency worked to implement changes from Senate Bill 103.**

that wvOASIS could retrieve the documents.

Because of the interns’ ability to quickly and effectively process a large volume of requests, PDS staff was able to complete other critical work and focus on the transition to their new processes. In addition to their quality of work, Eddy also praised the interns for the positive attitude they brought each day to the office.

## West Virginia Ethics Commission Conducts Trainings Statewide

Staff members of the West Virginia Ethics Commission have traveled around the state this spring and summer to educate city and county officials and employees on the Ethics and Open Meetings Acts. The Ethics Act applies to all public servants, including public employees and elected and appointed public officials and provides a code of conduct regarding use of office for private gain, gifts, financial disclosure, voting and other topics.

The Open Meetings Act is applicable to all administrative and legislative units of state, county, and municipal governments but is not enforceable by the Ethics Commission. The Open Meetings Act requires public notice of any public meeting in advance and defines the three types of meetings: regular, special and emergency. Minutes of all open meetings are required to be made available to the public within a reasonable time.

Trainings have been held in thirteen cities so far this year, including Parkersburg, Charles Town, Beckley,

and Clarksburg. Additional trainings are scheduled in Elkins, Petersburg, Weirton, Martinsburg, and Lewisburg this fall.

These trainings were initiated by the Ethics Commission as part of its outreach efforts. “The Ethics Commission strives to educate all public officials and employees on their duties under the Ethics Act and the Open Meetings Act. While Commission staff members are always available via telephone and email to respond to questions, presenting ‘live’ training sessions by Commission attorneys provides another way to educate public officials,” explained Rebecca Stepto, executive director of the Ethics Commission.

Commission staff members also provide trainings when specifically requested to do so.

Information regarding the Ethics Act, the Open Meetings Act, and the Ethics Commission may be obtained from the Commission’s website at [www.ethics.wv.gov](http://www.ethics.wv.gov).

## PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES Continued from Page 1

protections within systems by conducting a thorough needs assessment and developing conversations toward strategies, ideas, research, and delivery systems to meet the designated need.”

As part of its application, PDS began discussions regarding its resources, limitations, ideas for development, and suggestions for improvement. Recipients of the Strategic Planning TTA ideally have jurisdictions that are diverse in size, region, funding, defense delivery systems, and data capacity.

Over the next three years, PDS will use the assistance provided by the Center for Court Innovation to develop a system for coordinating the collection of data on the criminal justice system at all points on the continuum.

“Data driven analysis informs criminal justice decisions beginning with law enforcement and continuing through the judicial process and a defendant’s reentry into the community,” states Stephanie C. Thornton, PDS’ Criminal Justice Specialist.

Congratulations to PDS on receiving this highly sought after training!

# Peal Appointed as Department's Deputy General Counsel



**Misty Peal was appointed as the Department of Administration's Deputy General Counsel, effective June 8, 2019.**

Department of Administration Cabinet Secretary Allen McVey is pleased to announce the addition of Misty Peal to the Office of the Cabinet Secretary. Peal was appointed as the Department's Deputy General Counsel on June 8, 2019. As deputy general counsel and legislative liaison, she will provide support to the Cabinet Secretary's Office, oversee the Department's legislative program, and work closely with agencies.

Peal came to the Department from the State Tax Department, where she worked as a staff attorney and federal government liaison. In this position, she also served as the privacy officer for all agencies under the Department of Revenue. Peal began her legal career in 2001 as the staff attorney overseeing statewide programs and services for the Family Court Division of the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals. Subsequently, she managed the

government relations division for a statewide professional association from 2006 to 2015.

A native of Princeton, West Virginia, Peal earned a Juris Doctor degree from the West Virginia University College of Law and a bachelor's degree in business administration and accounting from Concord College.

Peal says she is excited to join the Department of Administration.

"As a native West Virginian, I am blessed with the opportunity to continue employment with the state and begin working at the Department of Administration," she said. "I am thrilled to become part of the team that performs such imperative functions for West Virginia's citizens and governmental agencies, and I look forward to helping the Cabinet Secretary's Office and Department of Administration's agencies achieve their goals."

## DOP Increases Salary Grades

The West Virginia Division of Personnel (DOP) has announced the approval of proposed changes to its Schedule of Salary Grades for the first time since 2009.

The changes bring the schedule into compliance with mandatory minimum wage laws and will help state-covered agencies in their recruitment for vacant but critical positions, said DOP Director Sheryl Webb.

Salary adjustments will only be made for current employees whose salaries fall below the minimum rate of the new compensation range.

At a public hearing held July 25, 2019, no objections to the schedule were made. The State Personnel Board then voted to pass the proposed amendments, which became effective August 31, 2019.

To view the Schedule of Salary Grades, visit <https://personnel.wv.gov/SiteCollectionDocuments/Miscellaneous%20Documents/Schedule%20of%20Salary%20Grades%20-%20effective%208-31-19.pdf>.

## Up Above, Work on Dome Continues



*Photos courtesy of Perry Bennett, Legislative Photographer*

**As work on the Capitol dome continues, workers (above) can be seen removing one of the limestone cornice stones. The stones, which weigh approximately 2,300 pounds each, are removed and lowered to the ground using a special pulley system (to the right), where they will be cleaned and repaired.**





## Department Employees Share Their High School Mascot

In the August issue of *Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes*, employees were asked to share their high school mascot. Here are some of the responses that Department of Administration employees gave:

- Indigenous person
- Wildcats
- Panthers
- Mountain Lions
- Red Raiders
- Pioneers
- Patriots
- Yellowjackets
- Tigers
- Pirates
- Huskies
- Cardinals
- Trojans
- Spartans
- Mustangs
- Bulldogs
- Dots
- Vikings
- Dragons
- Cougars
- Highlanders
- Greyhounds
- Bobcats
- Bruins

For our next *Employee Question of the Month*, we want to know: What is your favorite fall time activity? To answer this month's question, visit [www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZT-M73QL](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZT-M73QL).



**Welcome!** ... The Department of Administration is pleased to welcome **Luke Mitchell** (BRIM); **John Anderson** (General Services); **Ricardo Figueroa** (Personnel); **Michael Blevins** and **Lea Melton** (Public Defender Services); and **Terry Brock** (Real Estate).

**Best Wishes** ... to **Jamie Bowles** (General Services) and **Hillary Balding** and **Jason Warner** (Technology), who recently resigned from our department.

**Happy Retirement!** ... After years of hard work and dedication, we would like to wish **Vicky Charley** (Grievance) the very best during her retirement.

**Got News?** ... We want you to share YOUR good news with your department co-workers! Send your information to Communication Director Samantha Knapp at [Samantha.S.Knapp@wv.gov](mailto:Samantha.S.Knapp@wv.gov).

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY ... in September

Below is a list of Department of Administration employees celebrating their birthdays during the month of September:

Dustin Anthony.....Aviation	Donna King.....PEIA
Erica Howell.....BRIM	Lisa Lively.....PEIA
Luke Mitchell.....BRIM	Cindy Baker.....Personnel
James Wilson.....BRIM	Susan Keener.....Personnel
Lionel Adams.....CPRB	Joshua Kirwan.....Personnel
Leslie Bruce.....CPRB	Joshua Lanham.....Personnel
Christine Fernandes.....CPRB	Krista Scott.....Personnel
Stachia Fields.....CPRB	Robin Turturice.....Personnel
Geoffrey Christian.....CPRB	Teresa Asbury.....Pub.Def.Srvs
Kevin Kerns.....CPRB	LeeAnn Doyle.....Pub.Def.Srvs
Gary Kessell.....CPRB	Dana Eddy.....Pub.Def.Srvs
Virginia May.....CPRB	Stephanne Thornton.....Pub.Def.Srvs
Dan Morris.....CPRB	Lu Anne Cottrill.....Purchasing
Donald Murray.....CPRB	James Farmer.....Purchasing
Jennifer Priddy.....CPRB	Sherry Fewell.....Purchasing
Gary Pullin.....CPRB	Gail Delmaar-Mines.....Real Estate
Paige Strickland.....CPRB	John Hildreth.....Real Estate
Tammy White.....CPRB	Sarah Long.....Sec. of Admin
Melissa Williams.....CPRB	Thomas Allen.....Technology
Ellen Briggs.....Ethics	Randall Arbogast.....Technology
Daniel Guida.....Ethics	Franklin Buskirk.....Technology
Derek Knopp.....Ethics	Kenneth Casto.....Technology
Lawrence Tweel.....Ethics	Derrick Day.....Technology
Joan Chapman.....Finance	James Dixon.....Technology
Diane Corker.....Finance	Patty Ebert.....Technology
Ada Kennedy.....Finance	Samuel Ellis.....Technology
Lena Pannell.....Finance	Madeline Fitzwater.....Technology
Timothy Sylvester.....Fleet	John Foster.....Technology
Kenny Yoakum.....Fleet	Adena Mays.....Technology
John Anderson.....Gen.Srvs.	Wesley Moats.....Technology
John Cummings.....Gen.Srvs.	Henry Moore.....Technology
Gary Morris.....Gen.Srvs.	Michael Moore.....Technology
Terry Parsons.....Gen.Srvs.	Jason Nichols.....Technology
Scotty Pauley.....Gen.Srvs.	Daniel Pauley.....Technology
Brandon Perdue.....Gen.Srvs.	Deidre Rainwater.....Technology
Joseph Pratt.....Gen.Srvs.	Terri Sheets.....Technology
Edward Waldron.....Gen.Srvs.	Mark Smith.....Technology
Cody Wines.....Gen.Srvs.	Larry Sutters.....Technology
Joshua Fraenkel.....Grievance	Anet Vance.....Technology
Jessica Blankenship.....PEIA	Stephen Windon.....Technology
Amber Harper.....PEIA	

# Administrative Notes

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