

Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

Monthly Employee Newsletter Published by the Department of Administration
May 2024 - Volume 31, Issue 5

Employee of the Month

Youngblood's Loyalty Shapes Personnel Division



Mary Youngblood
May Employee
of the Month

Mary Youngblood, a Human Resources Specialist 3 for the Division of Personnel (DOP), has been selected as the Department of Administration's *Employee of the Month* for May.

A state employee for 20 years, Youngblood reviews personnel transactions for hires, promotions, demotions, reallocations, leaves of absence, county health transactions, and tenure corrections. If everything is correct, she answers questions from agencies, employees, and applicants about transactions or how to become a state employee, and processes auto-screen applications for register placement so a candidate may be referred for possible employment.

"Mary is a longtime employee of the Personnel Transaction Review Unit and an outstanding mentor and trainer of incoming employees,"

said the co-worker who nominated her. "She has trained almost every current specialist in the unit at one time or another and is a consistently patient mentor to new employees.

"Not all employees are doing big things, but some spend years doing 'small' things very well for the department, division, supervisors, and co-workers, and they are the backbone of our units and agencies in this way," the co-worker continued.

When she's not working, Youngblood enjoys reading, watching movies, tending to her flower beds and container garden, and family genealogy.

Youngblood will be joined by friends and co-workers at a ceremony presented by Cabinet Secretary Mark D. Scott on Friday, May 3, 2024, at 11 a.m., in the DOP offices in Building 3.

Department Managers Attend Leadership Conference

More than 170 Department of Administration managers have more tools for building a great culture, leading with optimism, developing a connected and committed team, and achieving results.

The managers attended a two-day leadership conference April 16-17, 2024, with the first day featuring life coach Barbie Dallman, who spoke about the importance of gratitude, and communication specialist Brittany Fowler, who spoke about the top eight strategies for conscious communication.

Please see **LEADERSHIP**, page 5



Cabinet Secretary Mark D. Scott (center) invited motivational speakers Amy P. Kelly (left) and Andrea Sealey (right) to speak at the Department's leadership conference.

SNEAK PEEK

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2024 West Virginia Legislature Passes Several Bills Affecting the Department of Administration

During the 2024 session of the West Virginia Legislature, lawmakers passed 279 bills (123 originated in the House and 156 in the Senate). Gov. Jim Justice vetoed eight of these bills, and the remainder were enacted into law. Here is a rundown of some bills impacting the Department of Administration:

- [House Bill 5690](#) creates an artificial intelligence (AI) task force to establish policy related to the use of AI in state government and the public sector. The Secretary of the Department of Administration and the Chief Information Officer (CIO) of the West Virginia Office of Technology (WVOT) or their designees will serve as members of the task force.
- [House Bill 5432](#) repeals old code sections that refer to the Information Services and Communications Divi-

sion (IS&C) and moves the essential functions of that agency to WVOT. The agencies already function as one entity but are separated in statute and *wvOASIS*. The bill also requires WVOT's CIO to ensure each agency establishes a written electronic document retention and destruction policy posted on the agency's website.

- [Senate Bill 217](#) gives agencies soliciting government construction contracts the ability to negotiate with the lowest responsive and responsible bidder when all bids exceed the maximum budgeted amount. Stipulations in the bill require that the negotiated award, which must be based on price or scope, be made within 30 calendar days following the original bid opening date and is not allowed in road, bridge, or highway construc-

tion agreements. The code is only effective until Dec. 31, 2029.

- [Senate Bill 544](#) raises the threshold for bid requirements of municipal public works projects from \$25,000 to \$50,000, including any municipal public utility projects and public service district projects; establishes the threshold at \$50,000 for bids for projects under the Regional Water and Wastewater and Stormwater Authority Act; and exempts emergency repairs from bidding requirements. This bill takes effect May 27, 2024.
- [House Bill 5594](#) exempts agencies from competitive bidding if entering into agreements with West Virginia University, Marshall University, and the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine.

Reminder: PEIA Open Enrollment Deadline May 15

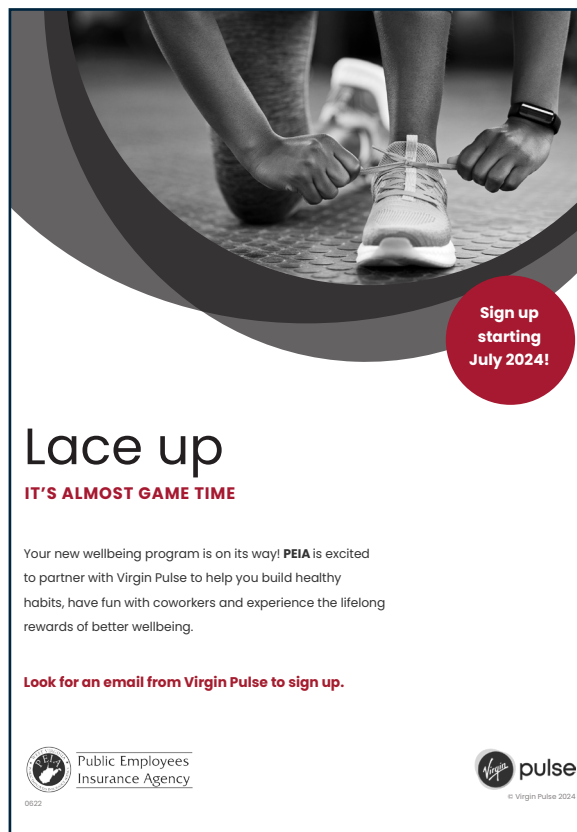
Department of Administration employees are reminded that the open enrollment period for health benefits for Plan Year 2025 ends on May 15, 2024. During open enrollment, you can change your health plan; add, drop, or change coverage for yourself and your dependents without a qualifying event; and make changes to your Mountaineer Flexible Benefits, if applicable.

To make changes to your benefits online, go to peia.wv.gov and click the green "Manage My Benefits" button. Online changes must be finalized no later than 11 p.m. on May 15, 2024. Enrolled members may also request a transfer form, or ask any other questions, by calling 1-877-676-5573.

The Plan Year 2025 Shopper's Guide is available online at <https://peia.wv.gov/Forms-Downloads/Pages/Shopper%27s-Guides.aspx>.

PEIA members should be aware of the following changes in the upcoming plan year:

- an increase in premiums for non-Medicare retirees (10%), active state employees (10.5%), and non-state employees (14%);
- an update to PEIA's Notice of Privacy Practices to comply with state and federal laws;
- the inclusion of Memorial Health System to PEIA's provider network;
- vaccines now covered through either Express Scripts or UMR;
- allowing PEIA members a third opportunity to participate in the PEIA Weight Management Program; and
- a new comprehensive wellness program for active members and non-Medicare retirees that will get underway later this year.




Sign up starting July 2024!


Lace up

IT'S ALMOST GAME TIME

Your new wellbeing program is on its way! PEIA is excited to partner with Virgin Pulse to help you build healthy habits, have fun with coworkers and experience the lifelong rewards of better wellbeing.

Look for an email from Virgin Pulse to sign up.

 Public Employees Insurance Agency

 virgin pulse
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Administration Employees Celebrate Their Graduates

This is the season to celebrate the academic achievements of the children and family members who are graduating. Below we honor the graduates sent in by our employees:

Mary Jane Ayooob (Personnel): Son, **Matthew Ayooob**, graduates from Stanford University with a bachelor's in computer science and a minor in music vocal performance. He will pursue a master's at Stanford in computer science with a focus on artificial intelligence.

Lori Bailey (BRIM): Niece, **Dr. Lyndsey Riffe**, graduates with a doctorate from Marshall University's School of Pharmacy and will be giving the commencement address. Dr. Riffe plans to complete residency at Marshall Health's Ambulatory Care Clinics. Nephew, **Dr. Andrew Riffe**, graduates with a doctorate from Marshall University's School of Pharmacy and plans to complete residency at the Hershel

"Woody" Williams VA Medical Center.

Ellen Briggs (Ethics): Niece, **Samantha "Sammi" Briggs**, graduates from Auburn University with a bachelor's in exercise science and minor in dance. During college, she was a member of the Auburn equestrian team, which has won six straight SEC Championship titles. Sammi plans to attend Ohio State University in pursuit of her doctorate in occupational therapy.

Lee Carper (Public Defender Services): Daughter, **Lindsay Carper**, graduates from Riverside High School where she was a member of the archery team. In addition to being a Girl Scout Ambassador, she also achieved the rank of Staff Sergeant in the JROTC. Lindsay plans to study elementary education to become a pre-k or kindergarten teacher.

Emily Fleck (BRIM): Daughter, **Sarah**

Fleck, graduates from St. Albans High School with highest honors. She plans to attend Marshall University to study nursing.

Lori Harper (Fleet): Daughter, **Katie Coe**, graduates from Roane County High School. She plans to attend Marshall University's radiology technician program in the fall.

Laura Harvey (CPRB): Son, **Levi Coffman**, graduates from Sissonville High School and Ben Franklin Career Center. He plans to get a job working with animals.

Samantha Knapp (Purchasing): Daughter, **Stella Knapp**, graduates preschool from the YMCA Child Development Center. She plans to go to kindergarten.

Please see **GRADS**, page 5

Office of Equal Opportunity Unveils New Website

The West Virginia Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) has unveiled a new website that features a new design and new content.

The website, <https://administration.wv.gov/oeo>, offers valuable information for state employees and the public. Information includes training for state equal employment opportunity coordinators and counselors, a calendar of community presentations, contact information for various community groups, and more.

"With a name change came a new look for the West Virginia Office of Equal Opportunity website," said OEO Director Kim Nuckles. "After major design changes and new content, the new OEO website is now live for all to view."

In 2022, Senate Bill 522 combined the West Virginia State Americans with Disabilities Act Office and the West Virginia Equal Employment Opportunity Office and formed the Office of Equal Opportunity.

The screenshot shows the official website of the West Virginia Office of Equal Opportunity. The top navigation bar includes links to the WV.gov Agency Directory, Phone Directory, and Online Services, along with options for Normal/High Contrast and font size changes. The main header features the OEO logo and name, a search bar, and links to State Employees, State Residents, and FAQ. A large, scenic image of a waterfall serves as the background for the main content area. On the left, a 'Welcome' message from Director Kim Nuckles is displayed. On the right, there is a section for 'EEO Coordinators/Counselors' with links to New Investigator Training, EEO Counselor Training, and a list of Coordinators-Counselors. Below this is a 'Calendar' section for May 2023, highlighting the 'OEO Annual Training Conference Registration to Open' at 8:00 AM, with a note that online registration is only available. A 'See All Calendar' button is also present. At the bottom, there are several small, partially visible images of people.

Department of Administration Observes Annual Public Service Recognition Week May 6-10

The Department of Administration will observe Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW) during the week of May 6-12, 2024. This national campaign honors public employees who serve in federal, state, county, and municipal government. As part of PSRW, the Department is pleased to recognize its employees who have achieved 20 years or more of public service, in

increments of five.

Thank you to these employees for their hard work, dedication, and many years of service to the state of West Virginia, and thank you to all Department employees who continue to work tirelessly and devotedly to provide the needed services of state government.

20 YEARS OF SERVICE

Diane Corker, *Finance*
Patty Johns, *Finance*
Staci Clutters, *WVOT*
Scott Kebler, *WVOT*
Danny Stover, *WVOT*
William Dodson, *General Services*
Robert Hovatter, *General Services*
Lori Bailey, *BRIM*
Rosa McFarland, *Public Defender Services*
Mary Youngblood, *Personnel*
Beverly Hedrick, *PEIA*

25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Samantha Chance, *CPRB*
Larra Radford, *CPRB*
Bryant Reynolds, *WVOT*
Joann Sturgeon, *WVOT*
William Ward, *WVOT*
Ruby White, *WVOT*
John Fernatt, *BRIM*
Katherine Brammer, *Personnel*
Layna Valentine-Brown, *Personnel*
Felice Joseph, *PEIA*
Misty Corsaro, *Real Estate*

30 YEARS OF SERVICE

Paula Van Horn, *CPRB*
Cindi Cvechko, *WVOT*
Robin Roberts, *WVOT*
Thaddeus Robinson, *WVOT*
Mark Doyle, *Public Defender Services*

35 YEARS OF SERVICE

Lora Reese, *Finance*
Kelly Williams, *Finance*
Daniel Shriver, *WVOT*
Teresa Asbury, *Public Defender Services*

45 YEARS OF SERVICE

Ellen Briggs, *Ethics**

**The department's longest currently serving employee!*

Public Service Recognition Week Department Activities

Bingo Bash

Tuesday, May 7 • Noon

Paper Airplane Flying Contest

Friday, May 10 • Noon

Check with your agency's coordinator for your unique events each day of PSRW!

Purchasing Division Welcomes New Director

Cabinet Secretary Mark D. Scott appointed Samantha Willis as director of the West Virginia Purchasing Division last month. Willis will serve in a dual role as both the director and general counsel for the Division.

Prior to this appointment, Willis served as Deputy General Counsel and Senior Counsel for Policy and Legislation for the West Virginia Governor's Office from October 2021. She graduated from the West Virginia University College of Law in 2021, where she participated in the Land Use and Sustainable Development Clinic, finding a passion for collaborating with local and state governments to help West Virginia better serve West Virginians.

Willis holds a bachelor of arts degree in broadcast journalism from Marshall University,

with a minor in political science.

"In undergrad I was given the opportunity to serve as a journalism intern with the Legislature's Joint Committee; I worked every day in the basement of the capitol building learning about and tracking the legislative process during the 2016 session," Willis said. "I met so many incredible people and found that I really enjoy the process of government; after that I just kept coming back to Charleston and decided to focus my career toward serving my state as best I can.

"I have been blessed beyond measure with incredible opportunities and supportive friends, family, and role models to help me on my path," she continued. "I am so grateful for this opportunity and I am so excited to continue learning, growing, and serving West Virginia every day."



Sam Willis
Purchasing Director

Quotes, Notes and Anecdotes

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

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On the second day, two motivational speakers discussed the importance of leaders focusing on positive energy to overcome adversity and bring out the best in themselves and their teams. Attendees worked together in several small group exercises to recognize opportunities for celebrating successes in the workplace.

When surveyed following the event, several attendees shared ways they plan to implement change:

- “Everyone on my team will put a win on a post-it note every day.”
- “I loved several things and plan to implement them. What I started today and plan to continue is to alternate between asking folks to tell me something good or tell me about a success of the day.”
- “I’m committing to becoming an active listener instead of listening to respond.”
- “It was a great reminder to be grateful, build trust and show appreciation. I tell my team how great they are but I want to explore different ways to express it.”

Other attendees expressed appreciation for the time to start thinking about culture changes in their agencies:

- “Like last year, it gave me the space to think deeply about what is going on with our team and practical strategies that seem like they would help. It also feels like an investment in us as managers and in the work of the agencies.”



- “It was an opportunity to have real talk with my fellow team leaders. We had a very honest discussion without anyone holding back, and it felt like the first step toward something far beyond where we’ve been able to go before.”
- “As a new manager, I truly appreciated this conference. While I obviously took in extremely valuable lessons and ideas from the speakers and Secretary Scott, speaking with fellow managers and discussing strategies one-on-one with those who have been in management for years will have major benefits moving forward. It was a great experience.”

Scott expressed his appreciation for both those who attended and organized the event.

“We’ve seen the positive changes made after last year’s leadership conference, and I know our managers will continue to build on those successes to implement the best possible work culture for our employees,” he said. “I also want to thank the staff members in my office who spent countless hours planning and organizing this event. It was a huge success.”

GRADS

Continued from Page 1

Melanie Larch (Personnel): Nephew, **Willy Margolis**, graduates from George Washington High School. He plans to attend Miami University of Ohio and major in biomedical engineering.

Laura Mann (Personnel): Daughter, **Kate Olivia Mann**, graduates from Winfield High School as a member of the National Honor Society and National Society of High School Scholars. She plans to complete the sonography program at BridgeValley Community and Technical College. Olivia also served as a temporary employee for the Division of Personnel last summer.

Terasa Miller (CPRB): Daughter, **Teagan Miller**, graduates from George Washington High School. She plans to attend either West Virginia University or Marshall University.

Amy Newman (Technology): Daughter, **Alexis Newman**, graduated college in December 2023 from BridgeValley Community and Technical College with an associate of applied science in nursing. She plans to start the RN to BSN program at Marshall and ultimately become a nurse practitioner.

Melissa Pettrey (Purchasing): Daughter, **Manda Bickoff**, graduates with a master’s degree in elementary education from Liberty University. She plans to continue teaching at the elementary school level.

Valerie Poindexter (BRIM): Niece, **Dr. Shanan Ashton**, graduates with a doctor of medicine from West Virginia University’s School of Medicine. She will pursue her pediatric residency in Charlotte, N.C., this June.

Vicki Sutton (CPRB): Daughter, **Rebecca**

Sutton, graduates from West Virginia State University with a dual degree in the Spanish language and English literature.

The Department of Administration would also like to congratulate the following employees:

Solomon Phillips (BRIM) graduates with a Master of Public Administration from Marshall University.

Emily Stark (Technology) graduates from Potomac State College with a Regents Bachelor of Arts.

Jessica Wallace (PEIA) graduates from DeVry University with a bachelor’s in Business Administration-Health Services Management. She is already enrolled to obtain a Master of Public Administration.

Spring and Summer Preparations Underway for GSD

While April showers bring May flowers, springtime in West Virginia brings the General Services Division (GSD) additional responsibilities around the Capitol Campus.

Thanks to some proactive work by GSD, the extreme storms that hit the Charleston area in April did not cause as much damage as one might expect. In February 2024, GSD awarded a tree maintenance contract that saw the dead wooding and crown thinning of trees around the Capitol campus. Removal of this kind helps GSD monitor the health of plant life around the grounds in addition to keeping it looking nice.

GSD also started planting its summer annuals around the campus in late April. These will replace the tens of thousands of tulip bulbs that have been in bloom.

Thank you to the GSD employees who work hard year-round to maintain and improve the picturesque look visitors and employees have come to expect.



Welcome! ... The Department of Administration is pleased to welcome **Michael Griffith, Sean Kilpatrick, and Kimberly Bryant** (General Services); and **Samantha Willis** (Purchasing).

Best Wishes ... to **Andrew Herrick** (Ethics); **Leigh Jackson** (Fleet); **William Raines** (General Services); **Bethany Sharp** and **Amy Crook** (Personnel); and **Charles Hartman, Annette Vance, and Hannah Canady** (Technology), who recently resigned from our department.

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

Congratulations ... CPRB Director Jeff Fleck welcomed his first grandchild, Evelyn Cook, on April 20, 2024, at 4:04 a.m. She weighed 7 lbs. and 7 oz.

Got News? ... Share YOUR good news with all of your department co-workers! Email **Samantha.S.Knapp@wv.gov** with detailed information so we may include it in the next issue of the newsletter.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ... in MAY

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

Mark Lowdermilk.....	Aviation	Cal Colangelo.....	Personnel
Stephen Mcconihay.....	Aviation	Lisa Lorence.....	Personnel
Niki Miller-Casdorph.....	BRIM	Nicole Michaelis.....	Personnel
Donna White.....	BRIM	Christy Romeo.....	Personnel
Woodrow White.....	BRIM	Michelle Barnes.....	Purchasing
Caroline Brady.....	CPRB	Teresa Cutlip.....	Purchasing
Jessica Cain.....	CPRB	Tina Desmond.....	Purchasing
Christopher Champe.....	CPRB	David Pauline.....	Purchasing
James Ferris.....	CPRB	Mark Totten.....	Purchasing
Judith Jarrell.....	CPRB	Toby Welch.....	Purchasing
Sara Poe.....	CPRB	Brett Clutters.....	Real Estate
Hannah Potter.....	CPRB	Shelley Whitehill.....	Sec.Of.Admin
Melody Scott.....	CPRB	Frank Barone.....	WVOT
Robert Sheff.....	CPRB	Eric Cannetti.....	WVOT
Leslie Young.....	CPRB	Candace Colagrosso.....	WVOT
Betsy Chapman.....	Finance	Cindi Cvechko.....	WVOT
Trent Kirk.....	Finance	Grant Dickson.....	WVOT
Dave Mullins.....	Finance	Jerry Digman.....	WVOT
Kay Walden.....	Finance	Debora Drake.....	WVOT
Kelly Williams.....	Finance	Diane Fletcher.....	WVOT
Maria Yoakum.....	Finance	Jason Fox.....	WVOT
Michele Cunningham.....	Fleet	Ashley Huffman.....	WVOT
James Parsons.....	Fleet	Ryan Jett.....	WVOT
Troy Campbell.....	Gen.Srvs.	Jennelle Jones.....	WVOT
Robin Casto.....	Gen.Srvs.	Christina Lanham.....	WVOT
Eric Cutlip.....	Gen.Srvs.	Joshua Lerosé.....	WVOT
Shelly Lusk.....	Gen.Srvs.	Elias Majdalani.....	WVOT
Harold Mcvay.....	Gen.Srvs.	Douglas Martin.....	WVOT
Benjamin Myers.....	Gen.Srvs.	Brent Northcutt.....	WVOT
William Pate.....	Gen.Srvs.	Robin Roberts.....	WVOT
Franklin Stone.....	Gen.Srvs.	Edwin Trader.....	WVOT
Jeffery Swishe.....	Gen.Srvs.	Rachel Trahan.....	WVOT
Robin Duncan.....	PEIA	Jacob Welch.....	WVOT
Helen Gantt.....	PEIA	Andrew Zicafoose.....	WVOT

Administrative Notes

Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes is published by the West Virginia Department of Administration

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