

News & Views online

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The monthly employee newsletter of the WORKFORCE West Virginia Division ♦ Available online at www.wvbep.org/bep/

Moore Named UC Director

Michael Moore was named Director of Unemployment Compensation on May 16.



Michael is a graduate of West Virginia Tech with a degree in accounting and a minor in economics. He is a Vietnam-Era veteran, and has served in state government since 1972.

From 1979 - 1989, he supervised Field Audit

for the State Tax Department. He served from 1989 until 1998 as the Chief of Field Audit, and has served from 1998 until the present as Assistant Director of the Joint Audit Program for UC and Workers Compensation, and then in charge of the Field Audit and UC Compliance Unit.

He is a West Virginia native and currently lives in Teays Valley with his wife Joyce and dog Lai-cee. His son, Travis, is a financial consultant with Edward Jones, and his daughter-in-law, Melissa, is an interior designer. They live in Summerville, SC.

Michael's interests include sports (especially West Virginia University football and basketball) and Civil War history.

Michael is replacing long-time UC Director Dan Light, who retired late last year. We wish him well as he takes on the new challenges as the Unemployment Compensation Director.

Area Offices Hold Job Fairs

Charleston

WORKFORCE West Virginia office, in conjunction with the Region III Workforce Investment Board, conducted a one-day job fair on May 24 for the Kanawha Valley, particularly targeting Promise Scholarship graduates. Over 300 job seekers and 31 employers participated. Executive Director Ron Radcliff made opening remarks, and then participants visited various employers. Several One-Stop partners were on hand to help with employability skills, resume preparation, and assistance in completing employer's applications. Two TV stations and two radio stations were also there giving coverage to the job fair.

Huntington

On June 6, the Huntington WORKFORCE West Virginia office, along with the WORKFORCE Development Center of Lawrence County, Ohio, held their fourth annual Tri-State Job Fair. This fair was probably the most successful one yet, with 751 registered job seekers attending and 73 employers represented. Many of the job seekers were pleased at the quality of employers who participated in the fair. At this time, how many job seekers found employment is not known, but many of them informed staff that job interviews had been scheduled. The Huntington office also received four new job orders from the employers who were there.

Take Your Sons and Daughters to Work



Twenty-two 8-12 year-olds participated in the agency's Take Your Sons And Daughters to Work on May 14. With the sudden illness to Judy Howard, Donna Cox and her crew of Rita Hunt and Dusty Smith compiled "goody bags" for all the children and distributed them to all participating offices. The children participating at 112 California Avenue were treated to a pizza party and a tour of the Capitol Building. Attendees pictured here are from Plaza East and are, from lower left, Samantha Vititoe, Jessica Vititoe, Jennifer Jones, Tyler Jones, and Zack Scruggs.

This section is dedicated to the dedicated—to those who make a difference in the lives of our customers—both internal and external.

Gold Star Page



On Saturday, May 20, 2006, Riverton Coal Production, Inc. held a job fair at the Workforce WV office in Beckley for our Pax Surface Mine. Several of your people came in on Saturday, which I assume is not normally a work day for them. Those that helped out were Lisa Lilly, Pam Wilson, and Jill Meadows. There was another individual who was there for most of the day, but her name unfortunately escapes me. I just wanted to drop you a line to tell you how impressed we were with them and also the outstanding facility in Beckley. We ran over 300 people through the fair and could not have done this without their help.

I have been involved with many job fairs in the past couple of years and this was by far the best one we have done. We will definitely be contacting your organization again for future job fairs. Your staff was extremely professional and very helpful throughout the day. We greatly appreciate their efforts.

Thank you,

Joe Armstrong
Manager Human Resources
Riverton Coal Production, Inc.

Bits and Pieces

According to Leif Hokanson, of Personal Best Consulting, you shouldn't waste your breath complaining about something to someone who can't help you solve whatever has got your goat. Hokanson, says it pays to be a pragmatic complainer. He says that complaining to someone about something he or she can't remedy is "akin to yelling at the rain." The pragmatic thing to do? Find the person in charge of the sprinkler system—and ask him or her to turn the thing off.

If you always feel harried and harassed to get every-thing done in your life, think about getting up an hour earlier every day. By getting up just one hour earlier every day for a year, you will add 15 entire days to your life to get things done, according to Leif Hokanson of Personal Best Consulting.

Do you consider yourself an educated person? We're not talking about where you went to school or how many Jeopardy answers you can come up with. We're not even talking about everything you've learned from your experiences in the world. What we're asking is are you educated? Do you know what you do and don't know? That is the true definition of an educated person. Being educated means this: First, you recognize and admit what you don't know and what you need to know. Once you have admitted to yourself and the world that you don't know something, the next piece of being educated is knowing where and how to get what you need. Once you've got everything you need, the real trick is knowing how to use what you've gone out and gathered up. William Feather seemed to have gotten this right when he defined education this way: "An education isn't how much you have committed to memory, or even how much you know. It's being able to differentiate between what you do know and what you need to know; and it's knowing how to use the information you get."

The cootie effect: Shoppers less likely to buy touched items

Research has shown in the past that consumers like to touch items before they buy them, but a new study shows that if shoppers think another person has already touched the item they are much less likely to purchase it.

Jennifer Argo, professor in the University of Alberta School of Business, and her colleagues found that shoppers were much less willing to buy a shirt if they thought others had previously touched it. Shoppers in the study also indicated they thought the item had been devalued when another person had touched it first. Researchers said the reason for this attitude was the "disgust factor". Disgust increased to the extent that the shoppers believed the item had been touched also increased. The results of the study were published in a recent issue of *The Journal of Marketing*.

The study included more than 200 participants who were led through scenarios that lead them to believe different facts about a T-shirt—that there was only one of these shirts left in the store and a customer was trying it on, that it was merely hanging on a rack, etc.

"The powers of the effects of touch surprised me, especially that it would carry over into how much people said they would spend to buy it. People devalued the shirt even when there was no actual contamination, just the perception that it had been touched," Argo said. "I think this research shows that shoppers display irrational behaviors," Argo added. "We come into contact with objects that other people have touched all the time, but I guess we never outgrow the simple notion of cooties"

New system can improve human vision 400 percent

A European research project has developed an infrared camera system that boosts drivers' vision up to 400 per-cent during tests that simulated poor visibility. Researchers also conducted the tests in real-life fog conditions and still found that human visual perception was improved fourfold. The device, which is a set of dual cameras with sensors for short and long wave infrared, was mounted on a car roof, says Pierre-Albert Breton of Thales Avionics, a partner in the SEE project, an attempt to use cutting edge technologies to produce enhanced visual systems to improve safety in automobiles and airplanes. An electronic system for piloting and recording was placed in the trunk. "It was really effective at detecting a person or animal on the side of the road," Breton says. BMW is looking into a low-cost way to develop the system. Now the cost is at about 5,000 euros per car, and more for an aviation system.

BLS Survey Shows Veterans' Overall Unemployment Rate Lower Than Nonveterans

(reprinted from *WORKFORCE ATM*)

The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) announced the results of the Biennial Employment Situation of Veterans survey as of August 2005, which showed the overall veterans' unemployment rate is lower than that of nonveterans. The veterans' survey is published once every two years as a supplement to BLS's monthly Current Population Survey.

"The report shows that, overall, the employment of America's veterans is strong," said Charles Ciccolella, assistant secretary of labor for Veterans Employment and Training. "In August 2005, the veterans' unemployment rate was 3.9 percent, 0.8 percent lower than that of nonveterans. On an annual basis, veterans' unemployment was 4 percent in 2005, which is 0.6 percent below that of nonveterans."

That said, there is one age group of veterans — 20-to-24-year-olds — where the unemployment rate is higher than that of nonveterans of the same age group. In August 2005, those veterans had an unemployment rate of 18.7 percent compared with their nonveteran counterparts. For all of 2005, the annual rate was 15.6 percent for 20-to-24-year-old veterans compared with 8.7 percent for nonveterans in that age group.

"The U.S. Department of Labor has undertaken several initiatives to address this situation," said Ciccolella. "In cooperation with the Department of Defense, the Department of Labor conducts transition assistance employment workshops for members of the military who are scheduled for discharge. We are also collaborating with the Department of Veterans Affairs on a survey of young veterans to gain a better understanding of the reasons for this higher rate."

"But I am encouraged that veterans overall, for at least the 20th year in a row, have a lower unemployment rate than nonveterans," he said. "This shows that America's employers realize the value veterans bring to the work force, which is also what we are telling them in our HireVetsFirst campaign."

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Deadline for *News&Views online* is the first day of the month.

Macular degeneration could reach epidemic proportions

The American Macular Degeneration Foundation says that macular degeneration is the leading cause of blindness, affecting more Americans than cataracts and glaucoma combined. Macular degeneration, according to the AMDF Web site, is an incurable eye disease that affects more than 10 million Americans. The disease is caused by the deterioration of the central portion of the retina, which is the inside back layer of the eye that records the images we see and sends them via the optic nerve from the eye to the brain. The retina's central portion, known as the macula, is responsible for focusing central vision in the eye, and it controls our ability to read, drive a car, recognize faces or colors and see objects in fine detail.

Aging means the chances of developing eye diseases go up dramatically. And with the population of aging baby boomers, the former director of the National Eye Institute, of the National Institutes of Health, Carl Kupfer, says that macular degeneration will take on aspects of an epidemic. Here are some facts from the Macular Degeneration Foundation's newsletter, *The Magnifier*:

- A new case of macular degeneration is diagnosed every three minutes.
- Macular degeneration strikes one in six Americans between the ages of 55 and 64, one in four between the ages of 64 and 74 and one in three over the age of 75.
- 1.2 million have moderate to severe blindness. Four thousand people a week go completely blind— that totals 200,000 per year.

Risk factors to be avoided:

- Smoking—increases the risk 2.5 fold.
- High fat, high cholesterol foods.
- Unprotected exposure to ultraviolet light (failure to wear sunglasses).
- Not eating enough dark green, leafy vegetables and foods rich in vitamins E and C.

Request for Submissions

We need your help! We are in dire need of help in putting together *News and Views*.

Any or all submissions of news-worthy events and photos would be greatly appreciated. With your assistance we can make *News and Views* a publication that all will enjoy.

You may submit information either by mail to: WORKFORCE West Virginia, c/o Richard Westfall, Policy and Communications, 112 California Avenue, Room 602, Charleston, WV 25305, or via email at: rwestfal@workforcewv.org

Any and all help will be greatly appreciated both by me and by our readers.

May Employees of the Month



Charlotte Gray

Charlotte Gray has held various classifications since she began her career with our agency, and she has excelled at them all. She leads by example on both the quantity and the quality of her work. She has developed a great working relationship with both internal and external customers over her 26 year career. She is very professional and presents herself and her work in a superior fashion, while being courteous and respectful.



Valerie Smith

Valerie Smith works with the Region IV WIB, One-Stop Partners to help employers grow through a larger, better-trained workforce. Valerie strives to keep a positive, creative environment wherever she works by working hard and keeping a smile on her face. She is a perfectionist who sees the slightest bump in the road as a challenge, not a roadblock. She treats everyone as if they are the most important person she knows. She brings professionalism and respect to all that she does.



Eva Hardman

Eva Hardman is responsible for all telecommunications for all of WORKFORCE West Virginia as well as Fleet Coordinator, Inventory Manager, maintains the "green sheet" log, and assists Procurement with P-card purchases. She has taken on many additional duties willingly and is pleasant and helpful. Not only does she answer questions in her area of expertise, but also follows up to make sure everything is complete. She is respectful and professional in dealing with customers, vendors, and other state agencies. She sees and acts on areas of improvement to help cut costs.

Don't make finances a contest in your home

Do you often feel you are in a contest with your spouse or partner when it comes to money? Have you ever spent a great deal of time and energy trying to convince someone else that you're right and they're wrong? Many people fall into the trap of trying to prove they are right when it comes to how to handle the finances. That can set up an "us vs. them" battle in the home— and that won't bring you the bottom line results and other resolutions you're seeking. Instead it's best to focus on goals. Are you always running out of money at the end of the month? Are you unable to save? What is your goal? To save \$5,000 over the course of the year. Whatever the goal is, once you clearly state it, then you will likely know what obstacles you are facing. Focusing on what you want, followed by why you're not able to accomplish it, will prove more productive than the usual money fights that occur in households. Try to keep the words of wisdom by psychologist Jonathan Rich (author of *The Couple's Guide to Love and Money*) in mind: "Trying to prove your spouse wrong is the wrong way to go."



Think Before You Order That Next Burger

Something to chew on: If you eat one quarter-pound hamburger a week over the next 10 years you will eat about 522 hamburgers. This increases the likelihood that you will suffer from cardiovascular disease.

June Employees of the Month



Cheryl Barker

Cheryl Barker is supervisor of the Imaging Unit, where she coaches and trains employees along with other supervisory duties. He is a shining example of dedication to the responsibilities and goals of WORKFORCE West Virginia. She also takes the initiative in her work and always has a "can do" attitude. She is always willing to interrupt her own work in order to answer questions or assist other employee in serving the employers of our state. She is approachable when problems arise and never fails to compliment her employees on a job well done.

Despite his considerable workload, **Homer Baker** makes time to design and revise forms needed and used by the Quality Control Unit, which makes their job easier. And, since he uses the forms himself, he knows exactly what is needed and works hard to make them user friendly.

Homer Baker



Homer stays on top of the cases assigned to him, while going the extra mile to help his coworkers. He has a great memory, and is a great resource of technical information to everyone in his unit. He also meets or exceeds all our federal time lapse guidelines.



Cheryl Rapp

As a dependable employee at the Summersville UC office, **Cheryl Rapp** is a public servant in the literal sense of the term. Even though it is not her particular duties as Claims Deputy, she never misses an opportunity to counsel, support or offer information to her customers. She is kind and empathetic to her co-workers. She is always quick to help any employee who has a question regarding fact-finding and decisions. She is very professional in her dealings with both employers and claimants.

The Story of the "Coolidge effect"

President Calvin Coolidge and his wife visited a government farm and were taken on separate tours.

When Mrs. Coolidge was taken by the chicken pen she asked one of the supervisors if the roosters copulated more than once a day.

"Why, yes, they do, ma'am," the supervisor answered. "Dozens of times."

"Tell that," Mrs. Coolidge said, "to the president."

A while later, when the president was passing by the chicken pens, the supervisor told him about the roosters and about his wife's comment.

The president thought for a moment and asked, "The same hen every time?"

"Oh, no," the supervisor said, "a different chicken every time."

"Tell that," the president said with a sly nod, "to Mrs. Coolidge."

And that is how researchers later came to refer to the practice of introducing new females to spike the interest of males in biological studies as the "Coolidge effect."

Iowa Workforce Development Completes Internal Investigation

(reprinted from *WORKFORCE ATM*)

Iowa Workforce Development, in cooperation with the Department of Administrative Services – Human Resources Enterprise has concluded its investigation of three employees, Tony Dietsch, Erv Fett and Laurie Rieck, for possible misconduct arising out of the Central Iowa Employment and Training Consortium salary matter. Iowa Workforce Development has, as of today, acted on the results of the investigation.

IWD has asked for and received the resignation of Erv Fett, former Division Administrator, Administrative Services Division. The resignation is effective immediately. The investigation determined that as a Division Administrator, Mr. Fett was charged with a number of significant responsibilities regarding the monitoring of sub-contractor which included the salaries at CIETC. Unfortunately, he failed to live up to the level of accountability for which he was charged.

Laurie Rieck will return to work at IWD effective Friday. Although Ms. Rieck's actions demonstrated poor judgment and timing the investigation revealed no facts whatsoever to conclude that her actions were of malicious intent or that she set out to engage in wrong doing. It is the agency's understanding that Ms. Rieck is not a person of interest in the ongoing federal criminal investigation of CIETC. If this changes, Iowa Workforce Development will reexamine what, if any, disciplinary actions it will take concluding that investigation.

Iowa Workforce Development has also returned Tony Dietsch to work as the Division Administrator, Workforce Center Administration effective Friday. The investigation formally concluded that Mr. Dietsch did not engage in any wrongdoing in this matter.

The State Auditor's Office recently completed its fiscal year 2005 financial review of Iowa Workforce Development, and uncovered no significant findings within the agency. Iowa Workforce Development will now move forward through a reorganization that will provide streamlined internal systems, heightened oversight of sub-contracts and a continued sense of dedication to providing critically needed services to all Iowans.

A thought about 'honor'

Lao Tzu once said, "Fail to honor people, they fail to honor you. But of a good leader, who talks little, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will all say, 'We did this ourselves.'"

But just how do you honor people? A good leader listens to the people who work for him or her. And good leaders take what the people are telling them seriously. If workers come up with good ideas, good leaders use their power to implement the suggestion—and then they give credit to the person whose idea it was. Good leaders take the blame themselves when mistakes are made, but they pass out praise and credit when something is achieved and give the credit to the people who work for them.

Follow this small bit of wisdom, and you'll likely find that you have loyal workers who truly honor you and will probably be willing to go to the ends of the Earth for you, because it's a sad fact that few leaders understand this important principle.

On Motivation

You can't be two people. Instead, you have to inspire the next guy down the line and get him to inspire his people.

—Lee Iacocca

Can't take the mess any-more—but where to begin?

Ok, you've always had a messy work area, but you've finally decided that you can't take it anymore, that it's a drain on you mentally and you want to clean it up. But it's pretty out of control, so where do you start? Organization expert David Allen in *Getting Things Done*, says you need to take a look around and decide what doesn't permanently belong in your work area. If it doesn't belong in your work area, then it belongs in your inbox, because you're going to have to apply some action to it to deal with it. Allen says a good way to go about making all these decisions is to decide what definitely does not go into the inbox. In other words, you don't have to do anything with them, you don't have to process them, but you need or want them in your workspace. Allen suggests categorizing each item into four areas, if it doesn't go into one of them, then it goes in the in box:

- **Supplies.** These are things you need on a regular basis. You know, pens, paper, paper clips, etc. You may also have personal supplies, Kleenex, dental floss, etc.
- **Reference material.** Anything you need to keep around to look up information from falls into this category. Manuals, menus, rolodexes.
- **Decoration.** Pictures, artwork, something meant for inspiration.
- **Equipment.** Phone, computer, wastebasket, etc.

If you need to update anything to make it the way it should be, that item also goes into your in box.

On purpose

I cannot believe that the purpose of life is to be happy. I think the purpose of life is to be useful, to be responsible, to be compassionate. It is, above all to matter, to count, to stand for something, to have made some difference that you lived at all.

—Leo Rosten

WORKFORCE West Virginia Holds State WIB Financial Summit



Mark Miller, Deputy Executive Director (left), kicks off the one-day financial summit. Participants (above) came from all seven Workforce Investment Boards.

Financial staff from all seven West Virginia Workforce Investment Boards (WIB) met for a financial summit held at 112 California Avenue, Charleston, on June 6. This was perhaps the first time that a meeting of this kind had been held specifically for these staff since the inactment of the Workforce Investment Act.

The administrative staff in Charleston conducted informational segments concerning reporting and the upcoming year's allocations. It also allowed for indepth and technical questions to be addressed while allowing local WIB staff to meet those who administer the statewide funds. All who attended appreciated the opportunity to meet with administrative staff and express specific concerns and have individual questions answered concerning their local WIB. Additional meetings are in the works for the upcoming year, which will include federal staff if they are available.

Jobs for Montana's Graduates Makes the Grade

(reprinted from Workforce ATM)

Jobs for America's Graduates today announced Job's for Montana Graduates achieves "5 for 5" status in performance outcomes. Jobs for Montana Graduates (JMG) began in 1990 as a solution to the dropout rates experienced in Montana's high schools. Today, JMG supports a network of 41 programs offering 794 students the potential for future career development by focusing on staying in school and finding a career path suited to their interests and abilities. Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), serving 28 states, established five performance outcomes for students enrolled in the program. Some of the standards include graduation rate, positive outcomes of transitioning to work, post secondary, or military, and full time job placements. "Students are selected for the program because they have barriers to successful completion of high school and job entry," said State Coordinator Drea Brown. "The program is aimed at meeting their academic, social and cultural needs." In school year 2004-2005, JMG hosted 579 students in 39 schools and had an overall graduation success rate of 96.14 percent. The remaining balance- 215 students - were enrolled in the Yellowstone Youth Academy and the Montana Youth Challenge. Native Americans enter the program with more than five barriers to success including: excessive absences, inadequate or no work experience, residing in economically disadvantaged conditions, low academic performance, and lacking marketable occupational skills. Twelve of the 41 programs offered are located on or border six of Montana's Indian reservations and serve 133 native youth. The graduation rate for Indian students surpassed the overall state, by bringing in a perfect score of 100 percent.

Criticism: Can you take it?

One of your direct reports openly criticizes you in front of a group of some of your other direct reports. And the truth is you'd just like to smack the young smart-mouth for embarrassing you. But here's something leaders have to learn: how to take criticism. It is absolutely essential for you to be able to tolerate criticism if you are going to be an effective leader, according to leadership communications consultant John Baldoni in an article titled "Learning how to accept criticism," in *Darwin* magazine.

But what exactly does this elusive phrase mean, "being able to accept criticism." One thing a leader has to understand is that he or she needs honest communication. And a lot of times, criticism can be just that. So, if for no other reason than self-preservation, you will want to encourage the kind of environment where someone in a subordinate position feels comfortable giving criticism.

Here are some of Baldoni's suggestions for how to take criticism well:

- **You've got to be able to roll with the punches.** The message this will send out is that you are allowing people to disagree with you. And even though you may not be aware of how much you need this—probably some day it will become very clear to you just how important this is. Listen to what your critics have to say and if you feel it's necessary you can defend yourself. But here's the key: Don't under any circumstance try to discredit your opponent.
- **Take a deep breath and thank the person who criticizes you.** (This

is to be a genuine thanking, by the way.) Why are you thanking the person who is criticizing you? It's helpful to think of it in this way—it took courage for that person to speak his mind to someone who is most likely more powerful than he or she is. Whatever you do, don't go on a defensive attack. Everyone in the office will remember it forever. What you're saying when you react negatively: No criticism allowed here. And, unlucky you, that will be the last time you are ever likely to hear the truth from the people who work for you. And that is a dangerous position in which to put yourself.

- **Reflect, then act.** Taking time to think over what your direct reports say to you, even if it's something you think you don't want to hear, demonstrates your maturity and true caring as a leader. If you want respect, this is a sure way to get it.

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