



## The Oklahoma Department of Human Services

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# DSD Sees Greater Use of Emerging Technologies

by Dustin Pyeatt

In the wake of Y2K the DHS Data Services Division has shifted its efforts from end of the world scenarios to planning for the future. DSD has developed a three-year strategic plan for technology that will reaffirm its role in the department's vision to narrow the digital divide, expand capabilities and provide better services to its clients.

"As DSD made preparations for life after Year 2000, it was evident that growing capabilities in information technology provide DSD an opportunity to change the way we do business," said Marq Youngblood, Data Services Division Administrator. "DSD has crafted a strategy to leverage existing and emerging technology for the benefit of the depart-

ment."

The first part of this strategy will be to move DHS business to the Web by enhancing the agency's use of web technology and increasing data storage capacity so users experience minimum delays.

The mobile aspect of web technology also helps DSD bring the worker to the client. By using Virtual Private Networking, workers can connect to the DHS network using the Internet. And Terminal Servers allow workers to execute applications from a remote location. Use of this technology is currently being tested in a pilot program with the Office of Client Advocacy's ombudsman program.

"There is a lot of work necessary to further improve the availability of the Department's automated system," said Charles Milistefr, DSD Deputy Division Administrator. "DSD will improve case worker and client access to the computer systems to 24-7."

The second part of DSD's plan involves achieving opera-

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## NORCE Names Employees of the Year



*The Northern Oklahoma Resource Center of Enid has named five Employee of the Year winners for 1999-2000. Winners are (from left) John Barton, speech-language pathologist, selected from Professional Services; William Milke, direct care specialist, selected from Unit II; Myrtle Madison, direct care specialist, Unit I; Patti Pearce, human resources management specialist, Support Services; and Shirleen Emick, secretary, Unit II. NORCE has approximately 470 employees.*

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# County Director Class III Making a Difference

by George Earl Johnson, Jr.

The fruits of their labor will pay big dividends in the months to come. The DHS County Directors Academy III competed a 20-minute video as one of their class projects to help improve the Department's image through increased partnerships.

The video titled, "Community Partnerships: Strengthening Oklahoma Families," debuted Sept. 8 during the classes' graduation ceremony at the

DHS-OU Center For Professional Development in Norman. Its first public airings were at the DHS County Directors annual meeting in Oklahoma City Sept. 14-15.

Kingfisher County Director and class member Ross Maupin said, "We wanted to develop a presentation that would capture the past achievements of DHS, yet portray an energized Agency with a new sense of mission committed to creating partnerships in our communities.

"Our project taught us we had to form partnerships with hundreds of individuals and organizations to make this happen. We are especially indebted to our producer, Barbara Wallace, and our SATTRN project coordinator, Kathy Vajarov.

"We believe every DHS employee will be proud to share this story with civic clubs, professional groups, churches, schools, etc. Our sincerest thanks to all of you who show the video in your community. You are in fact our most important partner."

Shade Faboro, Academy Coordinator said, "The quality of this project exemplifies the leadership, courage, team work, and commitment existing among the County Director Academy III professionals."

Members of Class III included: Ross Maupin, Kingfisher County; Mel Smith, Garvin County; Shirley Roberts, Osage County; Gerald Davis and Shirley Crum, Muskogee County; Jerry Davidson, Grady County; Shirley Lodes, Office of Field Operations State Office; Joanie Webster, Pottawatomie County; Phyllis Brister, Atoka and Coal counties; Hal Epperley, Seminole County; Russell Holderby, Delaware County; and Jeff Zachary, Cotton County.

Copies of the video are available through the DHS Office of Communications (405) 521-3027 or email: [communications@okdhs.org](mailto:communications@okdhs.org).



Academy class members, from left, Hal Epperley, Seminole County Director; Gerald Davis, Muskogee County Child Welfare County Director; and Shirley Roberts, Osage County Director, discuss leadership strategies during one of the academy sessions at the DHS Center for Professional Development in Norman.

## Sister Authors New Novel

The sister of Tina Tate, a human resources management specialist in HRMD, had a new book released in August. The historical romance, "Tempest", set in Oklahoma Territory at the time of the Land Run of 1889 by Beth Dunman Daigre.

The story brings together a former outlaw, running from

the law, and a woman and her younger brother, running from an abusive uncle.

Diagre lives with her husband in Louisiana, and she and Tina grew up in Fox, in Carter County, where their mother, Billie Ruth Dunman, still lives.

Daigre's novel, her tenth, may be purchased at [www.newconceptspublishing.com](http://www.newconceptspublishing.com).

# DSD looks to Future with Strategic Planning

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tional excellence. With a sharper focus on reliability and speed, DSD is using new technology and training to provide



photo by Jim Gumm

**Marq Youngblood**

workers with fast and accurate information at any time and any location. Though changing technology and a post Y2K reduction in staff have posed challenges, DSD is committed to delivering without exception.

"Although DSD will operate with approximately 18 people less than our authorized FTE count for the remainder of fiscal year 2001, we will continue to increase availability and reliability in all critical systems and processes. DSD is committed to achieving more with fewer staff," said Youngblood.

And finally, DSD is working to build alliances to find more effective and efficient ways of reaching goals and serving clients. Data Services is moving from providing support, to becoming a partner with other divisions.

"DSD will more closely partner with other divisions to accomplish Department initia-

tives," said Youngblood. "These partnerships will speed system planning and implementation, tighten DSD's connections with our many customers and position system users to be more self-sufficient in accomplishing computer-aided responses."

A positive effect of DSD partnering can be found in the new Division of Child Care zip code search engine that will be available on the DCC website in the coming months. This new feature will allow parents to find the best childcare facility for their families by simply typing in their zip code.

Another example of DSD part-

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**“Today users travel to a work place. . . in the future, the work place will be where the worker is located.”**

**Marq Youngblood**

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nership is the online Medicaid application, E-Med. By years end, clients will be able not only to apply for Medicaid benefits online, but to receive approval as well.

DSD is also looking at how emerging technology will change DHS in the future.



photo by Jim Gumm

**Charles Milistefr**

"DHS systems will be accessible anytime, from anywhere," said Youngblood. "Today users travel to a work place, in the future, the work place will be where the worker is located. DHS systems will be accessible via voice, allowing the workers to enter and update data. It will even allow clients the ability to apply for benefits and services and update personal data."

Milistefr said, "Workers in the field will be more mobile in dealing with clients through the increased access capabilities of the Internet, Virtual Private Networks and wireless technologies."

*In the coming months Inside DHS will feature stories that detail new projects from Data Services and a glimpse into the future of DHS.*

# Norma Newton Speaks on National Web Cast

Family Support Services Division's Norma Newton took first chair recently during a national Web Cast to lead off a conference on Serving



Norma Newton

Native Americans with Barriers to Self-Sufficiency. The Web Cast was hosted from Dallas by the Federal Region VI office of the Administration on Children and Families.

With the conference focusing on Domestic Violence and Substance Abuse, Newton highlighted the history and cultures of Oklahoma's Native American tribes and the tools and methodologies used to work with them.

"The results of domestic violence and substance abuse on the individual are generally the same whether you are Native American or not," Newton

said. "Bringing a Native American back to a level of self-sufficiency becomes the challenge as you deal with the differences between the tribes and their cultural heritages.

"Many professionals have found that helping an American Indian find strength in his or her tribal traditions has proven to be a great benefit to the person and the family in the long term. Knowing the person's tribal history and culture is often a key to success when dealing with domestic violence and substance abuse." -gj

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## ERC Has Recognition Pins

by Joe Kirk  
HRMD Employee Services

The DHS Employee Recognition Committee has new employee recognition pins for those outstanding Department employees awarded the DHS Certificate of Commendation, the DHS Director's Award or the DHS Excellence Award.

The Certificate of Commendation, the Department's highest award, is given to an employee for exceptional and meritorious service, such as lifesaving. The Director's Award is awarded for special employee performance substantially above normal expectations. The Excellence Award is a new award recently created by the DHS ERC to provide a third-tier award.

Presentation of the Certificate of Commendation and the Director's Award is made at the beginning of a monthly Human Services Commission meeting. The employee being honored also receives a framed recognition certificate. The DHS Excellence Award may be presented at meetings of the Commission, the DHS ERC or at other functions.

The DHS ERC also has Employee of the Month and Employee of the Quarter pins which are available at no cost to local administrators and are intended to encourage local recognition programs. Local administrators may request the pins by email to Joe Kirk, Chair, DHS ERC.

### In Memoriam Marvin K. Hambrick



*Marvin K. Hambrick was a member of the Oklahoma Commission for Human Services for eight years and served as Chairman from December 1997 until March 2000 when he resigned from the commission for health reasons. He was the guiding force in establishing the Oklahoma Human Services Foundation. He died August 14, 2000, at the age of 77.*

# Steen Named To Jackson County Post

Rick Steen, a 16-year veteran of DHS, has been named Director of the office in Jackson County.

"Rick is a great person who dedicates much of his time to helping those in his community," said Joyce Wilson, Area II Director. "His concern for the community and its people is a great asset and I know he will serve the citizens of Jackson County well."

Steen has served as a child welfare worker and child welfare supervisor for Jackson, Greer and Harmon counties.

"My goal is to continue to improve upon the good relationship that the Jackson County DHS has with the community," said Steen. "I hope to work with the staff to improve the level of service and to let the community know that they can count on DHS to provide services in the most efficient and cost effective manner possible."

Steen earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Southwestern Oklahoma State University, Weatherford.

He serves on the Altus City Council, the Jackson County and Greer County Child Protection Teams. Steen's wife of 24 years, Carol, teaches English at Altus Junior High. They have two daughters. -dp

# Caught Working



When Tulsa County secretary Jodi White, a 22-year DHS veteran, looked up from her computer during the Human Services July 25 tour of the new Tulsa County 72-G office in east Tulsa, she flashed a big smile to the man stepping through the door as he said, "Hi. I'm Howard Hendrick. It looks like we caught you working." Human Services Chairman Steve Bailey followed Director Hendrick into White's office to round out her day of high-level Department visitors.

# Homeless Conference A Success

Several agencies joined the Department of Human Services to sponsor the 11th Annual Oklahoma Homeless Conference Oct. 12-13 in Oklahoma City.



Janelle Arden

DHS Policy Management and Analysis Programs Administrator Janelle Arden said, "The conference provided an excellent training and networking opportunity for the 300 plus service professionals that attended. It helped by focus-

ing our energy on tools for daily task and long-range planning. This is important as groups across the state work with Oklahoma's more than 45,000 homeless citizens."

Arden is currently chairperson of the Governor's Advisory Committee on the Homeless.

Other agencies and organizations co-sponsoring the conference included: Local Oklahoma Bank, Youth Services of Oklahoma County, Oklahoma Department of Commerce, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Oklahoma State Department of Health, Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency, State Department of Education, City of Tulsa, and the Region 6 Office of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Department.

## Commissioner Stephens Re-appointed

Commissioner L. Michelle Stephens, Weatherford, was re-appointed to the Oklahoma Commission for Human Services by Gov. Frank Keating in August for a full nine-year term to expire in August 2009.

She was first named to the Commission by Gov. Keating in January 1998 to fill an unexpired term.

Ms. Stephens is Rural Development and Public Policy Director for the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture, a non-profit agricultural foundation.

She received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Oklahoma Christian University and Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Oklahoma College of Law.

Ms. Stephens has served as an assistant attorney general under Oklahoma Attorneys General Susan Loving and Drew Edmondson, acting as legal counsel for various state boards and commissions including the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture.



L. Michelle Stephens

## Hartpence Scholarships Approved



photo by DHS Communications

Sharing smiles are, from left, DCFS Permanency Planning Supervisor Amy White, Tulsa County Health Department social worker Oti-Lisa Brown and DHS General Counsel Charles Waters following the Commission for Human Services approving the Lou Hartpence Scholarships for academic year 2000-2001. Brown, a former foster child, told the Commission how the Hartpence scholarships helped her through college. The Commission approved scholarships for 29 students for a total of \$49,000 for the current academic year.

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## Group Home Residents Honored

Two residents of the Deborah Roth Group Home were recently honored for their work with Oklahoma Goodwill Industries. JaDonna, 17, and Crystal, 17, both seniors in high school, spent their summer working for the Goodwill Industries janitorial services.

JaDonna has worked at a DHS office since May and Crystal has worked at a facility for the blind since June. Both girls are learning independence and earning money at the same time.

"At Oklahoma Goodwill Industries we believe everyone deserves a chance," said Portia Finley, Intake Administrator at Goodwill. "These girls have done so well

that our supervisors are asking for more workers from the group homes. We would like to hire all of these girls."

"We appreciate community partnerships," said Claudia Hunter, State Independent Living Coordinator for DHS. "Partnerships like this help us all reach the goal of making these young people more independent."

Both girls were representatives at the National Teen Conference in Washington D.C. in September. Crystal saved her money for the trip, and JaDonna is saving for a car to help her get to class when she begins studying computer graphics at Metro Tech this fall. -dp

## CSED Payment Information

### Now Available on Internet

The Child Support Enforcement Division now is providing customers the capability to access their payment information at their convenience - at any hour, any day. CSED, along with Data Services Division, has initiated an internet Payment Inquiry site at [www.okdhs.org/childsupport](http://www.okdhs.org/childsupport).

The site consists of these pages: Payment Access; Payment View; Payment View

Definitions; and CSED email addresses.

At the Payment Inquiry page, customers enter their Family Group Number and their personal identification number. Customers may then view payments for the past 12 months or all payments.

Direct links to local offices are provided through email addresses, and physical addresses and phone numbers are also listed.

#### Sample of Payment View page:

Payment Records from October, 1999 through September, 2000				
Your FGN: 000001 Your CSE Office: LAWTON (For example)				
Month/Year	Payment Amount Due	Payments Credited	Principal Balance	Interest
09/00	\$ 185.90	\$ 0.00	\$2,492.38	\$
08/00	\$ 185.90	\$ 0.00	\$ 2,306.48	\$ 19.22
07/00	\$ 185.90	\$ 260.64	\$ 2,120.58	\$ 17.67
06/00	\$ 185.90	\$ 1,448.14	\$ 2,195.32	\$ 18.29

### Adult Abuse Conference Set for October 15-17

Last year, the Oklahoma Department of Human Services' Adult Protective Services division investigated nearly 11,400 referrals. Of those, nearly 7,500 were substantiated as having abuse, neglect or exploitation -- an average of 20 new cases every day.

The abuse and neglect of these citizens were some of the issues discussed at the 12th Annual Oklahoma Adult Abuse Conference held Oct. 15-17 in Oklahoma City.

"With more than 300 in atten-

dance, we feel we achieved the conference goal of promoting a safe and healthy environment for the elderly and disabled today and into the future," said Barbara Kidder, Programs Supervisor, DHS Aging Services Division.

The Divisions of Aging Services and Field Operations, the Oklahoma Association of Area Agencies on Aging, Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council and the University of Oklahoma College of Continuing Education SATTRN Project were sponsors.

## Flipping for a Cause



DHS Director Howard H. Hendrick, right, shares pancake flipping duties with Burns Hargis, former chairman of the Commission for Human Services, during the United Way of Oklahoma City 2000-2001 Campaign kickoff breakfast Sept. 8 at the Southwestern Bell Bricktown Ballpark. Director Hendrick is Executive Chairman of the State Campaign and a member of the United Way Board of Directors.

### Retirees Lunch and Laugh

Laughter, reminiscing and retirement experiences were the order of the day for nearly 60 Tulsa County DHS retirees who gathered for lunch at a Tulsa restaurant in August.

Talva Lacey said five DHS retirees got together with old lists of names and new lists of names and made calls inviting fellow retirees to the luncheon which is the first of what is to be quarterly get-togethers.

She said retirees who would like to be included can contact her at 918-749-6094 or Yvonne Dulaney at 918-663-3678.

## Fair Booths Explain Services

The smell of corndogs and the music of a carousel mean state fair time in Oklahoma, and DHS is taking advantage of these events to raise public awareness about its programs and services.

For the second year, the Oklahoma County child welfare unit sponsored a foster care recruitment exhibit at the Oklahoma State Fair, which ended a 17-day run Oct. 1. The DHS exhibitors handed out information to more than 620 prospective foster parents at last year's fair.

"The fair is a great way to get out the message that we need quality foster homes," said Don Ludlow, child welfare specialist.

DHS offices in Tulsa, Muskogee and Mays counties have partnered with the Oklahoma Health Care Authority for an exhibit at the Tulsa State Fair, which runs from Sept. 28 to Oct. 8.

Representatives from SoonerCare, family support and developmental disabilities services will be available to answer questions about all DHS services.

"We are really excited about this opportunity to help educate the public," said Sue Huls, social services specialist. "The Oklahoma Health Care Authority has been a great partner and made sure everything fell into place." -dp

## Rogers County Office Open House . . .



*The Children's Castle play area, at left, just off the reception area, at right, are part of the new 13,694 sq. ft. DHS Rogers County Office at 2020 Holly Road, Claremore. DHS workers moved into the building in July, and an Open House will be held from 2 to 4 pm Oct. 19. An additional 1,400 sq. ft. within the building is occupied by Office of Juvenile Affairs.*

## Mission Possible Team on the Job

For a while one recent day, the offices at Oklahoma County 55C appeared to be hosting a super spy reunion. There were trench coats, fedoras and dark glasses everywhere.

Those people so attired were not trading top-secret



*Having chosen to accept the mission, these operatives were secretly photographed at Oklahoma County 55C as they read their instructions for Mission Possible. These operatives were not identified, but are known to be working for improved food stamp accuracy and timeliness. Reports that Tom Cruise was seen in the building have not been confirmed.*

information, but were kicking off project Mission Possible, an all-out effort to improve food stamp accuracy and timeliness.

More than 85 workers are taking part in the three-month project and vying for prizes. Each week through November, the worker providing the Tip of the Week for improving accuracy and timeliness will be awarded a prize.

Those individuals who show improvements in their cases will have their names entered in the drawing at the end of the project.

Judy Baker, social services supervisor, said enthusiasm was high and results were being seen within a week of the project start.



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