

Government should be a resource, not a substitute, for families.

## Commissioner's Corner: A New Year, A New Way of Looking at Things



By now you know DHR's moral imperative: "Government should be a resource, not a substitute, for families."

The moral imperative asks us to *do the right work* — to find ways to support people and families so that they can be strong and independent. It asks that we work to make today's TANF families self-supporting; that we serve older Georgians so that they can stay in their own homes and communities; that we help people with mental illness take charge of their own recovery; that we assist people with developmental disabilities to determine their own future; and that we keep children living in safe, family settings.

To provide the support that Georgia's families need, we must work smarter and practice continuous improvement. "Business as usual" is not good enough! This edition of the Human Side shows the value of innovation — not only doing the right work, but doing it the *right way*.

Sometimes it is hard to change though. We truly need to look at things in a new way.

There is a famous painting that contains an optical illusion. When you first look at it, you see an elderly woman's face. She has gray hair and she is frowning. But if you look hard you can see another image — the full figure of a young woman in a gown. The amazing thing is: Once you see the young woman, it's hard to go back and see what you saw at first.

Many of us still see government as an entity that does things for people — that gives them things that we think are good for them. If you look for dependence, that's what you'll find.

One of the articles in this edition offers a good example. It tells how the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases is transforming its service system to focus on recovery and consumer self-determination. This involves a new way of looking at consumers and a new way of looking at our work. The old way of doing things focused on symptoms and weakness. This promoted dependency and a "learned helplessness."

Our new way is to look at MHDDAD consumers and see their strengths and build on those strengths by giving consumers the skills and opportunities they need to manage their own illness and to work toward their own recovery.

We have to let consumers make more of the decisions and look at consumers, themselves, as resources — as we do with peer support. But it all starts with what we see when a consumer walks in our door. Do we see illness and weakness or do we see strengths and opportunities?

In this new year, I challenge you to see things in a new way — a way that respects the worth and value of each person and each family we serve.

I want to share a quote from Dr. Martin Luther King that Laurence Nelson, a DHR employee in Clayton County, shared with me. "There is nothing more dangerous than to build a society with a large segment of people who feel that they have no stake in it: who feel that they have nothing to lose. People who have a stake in their society protect that society, but when they don't have it they unconsciously want to destroy it."

### Look and Learn

Seven important new "e-learning" courses are now available online to all DHR employees, offered by the Office of Human Resource Management and Development's Organizational Learning section. They cover some of the department's key policies and philosophies, plus skills that can help you improve your job performance. For the titles and links go to:

<http://www2.state.ga.us/departments/dhr/ohrmd/Training/OnlineCourses.html>

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## Working Towards Becoming the Nation's Best

Thomas Wilson

The Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases (MHDDAD), is looking forward to a new year that continues the system-wide reforms begun in 2005. The end result will be a mental health system that is fairer, more efficient, and more effective for the people who rely on it.

Following state audits of Georgia's behavioral health care delivery system in FY05, Governor Sonny Perdue challenged the state to radically change its way of doing business and to build the nation's best system. Progress towards that goal began last year with the introduction of a new competitive marketplace for core mental health services that promises to increase access to services and provide the best care at the best cost. For the first time in MHDDAD history, consumers in the public mental health system have a choice of providers.

Last year, MHDDAD began developing a single system of care for children and adolescents (C&A) to replace the patchwork and uncoordinated systems of the past. Commissioner Walker invested unprecedented resources in C&A behavioral health care services in Savannah's Chatham County area, including opening the state's first crisis stabilization program for children, to serve as a model for improving services throughout the state. MHDDAD is working with a diverse spectrum of Chatham County leadership — including DFCS, the Department of Juvenile Justice, and others — to coordinate their resources and offer children one-stop-shopping for behavioral health services. 2006 will be the year that this new project grows and develops, offering us valuable insights into what works and what doesn't, and demonstrating what we can accomplish for children when we all work together.

Perhaps most ambitious will be a rewrite of Georgia's 15-year-old Medicaid waiver for persons with developmental disabilities, currently one of the most outdated waivers in the nation. Undertaken by the Office of Developmental Disabilities, the reform will result in consumers having unprecedented ability to determine with whom and how they wish to spend their resources and how they choose to live.

One area in which Georgia is already a national leader is its active consumer community, particularly in the area of peer-supported recovery. In 2006, Georgia will continue leading the way as MHDDAD Director Gwen Skinner works to ensure that policy, practice, and funding are tied to the recovery and self-determination of Georgia consumers.

## Keeping Track of Our Kids

Ari Young

Georgia has taken several giant steps toward developing the long-awaited Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS). This system will enable the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) to keep better track of children on their caseload, especially when families cross county lines. Once the federal government approved proposals for the system last fall, the state was free to search for a vendor that could work closely with DFCS and the Georgia Technology Authority to bring SACWIS to life. That vendor has now been identified and the system is expected to be ready for a test run this year.

During the early planning for SACWIS, Commissioner B.J. Walker stressed the importance of testing this new child welfare tracking system on a local and limited basis in an "authentic environment." This means that caseworkers in one county will use SACWIS during their regular work routine, but under the watchful eye of program developers so any problems can be identified and corrected before the system goes statewide.

Douglas County was chosen as the test site for the SACWIS project because it is part of metro Atlanta, has a diverse population, and isn't too large. The county secured a new facility to house county DFCS and SACWIS officials and hired additional caseworkers to reduce caseloads so staff would have time to

*Please see Kids, page 8*

## Honor Outstanding DHR Employees

Nominations for the 2006 Employee Recognition Awards are due March 10.

Each year DHR and the Georgia Merit System honor employees who have made outstanding contributions in the areas of customer service, community service, innovations and suggestions, safety, heroism, humanitarian activities, and leadership, during Public Employee Recognition Week in May.

For the nomination form and instructions go to [www.gms.state.ga.us](http://www.gms.state.ga.us). Complete the form on page five (don't forget to check the award category) and send it to Binta Lewis at [bolewis@dhr.state.ga.us](mailto:bolewis@dhr.state.ga.us).



# Public Health Summit: Foundation for Change

Mike Mullet

In one of the largest and most ambitious efforts to transform public health in Georgia, more than 800 stakeholders from across the state came together in Atlanta in November for the Summit for a Healthy Georgia. Sponsored by the Division of Public Health (PH), the Summit sought to lay the foundation for positive and fundamental change in Georgia's public health system.

"Clearly, public health faces several challenges in Georgia," said **PH Director Stuart Brown, M.D.** "The health status of our residents, access to care, and the need to expand our partnerships are all issues that we need to address."

The Summit was designed with input from PH and other stakeholders and in partnership with the Center for Health Policy at Georgia State University. Delegations from each PH district — including providers, business people, insurers, local leaders, boards of health, educators, faith-based groups, and the general public — were invited to participate in the two-day gathering.

The first day of the Summit featured presentations about Georgia's health status and community health. The news was challenging: Georgia's health status ranking dropped from 41st to 45th in 2004, the lowest in 15 years. However, 65 percent of the counties have good health status, compared to 19 percent with poor status. Other concerns included lack of health insurance (14 percent of the state's population) and disparities, such as the fact that the infant mortality rate among African Americans is more than twice that of whites.

The encouraging news was that about half of the factors influencing health status are lifestyle choices and therefore preventable: Smoking, obesity, stress, nutrition, blood pressure, and alcohol and drug use. Some success stories were shared, such as Habersham County's reduction of the rates of high blood pressure, high blood sugar, overweight, and teenage repeat pregnancy among its population.

Next, the participants drafted an "*Agenda to Improve Health.*" Each table of 10 people wrote their top health priorities and posted them. That evening, Summit organizers reviewed the posted information and "distilled" it into 10 broad priorities.



Live Healthy Georgia now has a web site, [www.livehealthygeorgia.org](http://www.livehealthygeorgia.org). Visit the site for information and tips on how to Be Active, Be Smoke Free, Eat Healthy, Get Checked, and Be Positive. Find out how to contact the Georgia Tobacco Quit Line, and learn facts about monthly health observances. The site is also available in Spanish at [www.vivasaludablegeorgia.com](http://www.vivasaludablegeorgia.com).

The top priorities were:

- Create community partnerships to increase access to basic health care for all Georgians;
- Increase the number of Georgians who read and understand in the third grade, and complete high school;
- Decrease risky behaviors related to sex, alcohol and drug use and seat belt usage;
- Increase understanding of and access to preventive services for all Georgians;
- Increase the number of Georgians who undertake physical activity five days per week;
- Reduce the number of Georgians who use any tobacco products;
- Insure community involvement in developing safe and healthy neighborhoods;
- Decrease the number of uninsured Georgians;
- Decrease health disparities;
- Improve food choice for all children in Georgia.

Day two was highly interactive, focusing on action planning and agenda setting at the state, district, and community levels. Attendees discussed the 10 priorities until they reached consensus on a final version.

"Overall the Summit was a tremendous success," said Brown, "both in the number of people who participated and the broad cross-section of Georgia's communities and institutions that they represented. We feel very positive about what we were able to accomplish, and we'll continue to work to improve the health of Georgia based on this input."



## Division of Aging Services: Helping to Make National Policy

Edna Jackson

Division of Aging Services (DAS) Director **Maria Greene**; State Long-Term Care Ombudsman **Becky Kurtz**; DHR Board Member **Monica Walters**, Executive Director of the Southwest Georgia Council on Aging **Kay Hind**; Executive Director of Legacy Link (Gainesville) **Pat Viles Freeman**; and Policy Advisor on Health, Office of the Governor **Abel Ortiz**, were among Georgia's delegates to the White House Conference on Aging (WHCoA) held in December 2005 in Washington, D.C. to develop recommendations for the future of aging policy in the United States. **Doris Clanton**, legal services officer for DHR/DAS and **Melanie McNeil**, Georgia Council on Aging executive director, attended as volunteers.

This was the fifth WHCoA and the first of the 21st century. They have taken place every decade since the 1960's. Titled "The Booming Dynamics of Aging: From Awareness to Action," the conference focused on the interests and needs of current seniors as well as the baby boomers who will begin to turn 60 in 2006. The final report from the 2005 WHCoA will be completed and presented to the President and Congress by June 2006.

"We were honored to be representing Georgia as delegates to the WHCoA conference in Washington," said Greene. "Among our top priorities were transportation options for seniors and improvements in the service delivery system. We were thrilled at being a part of helping to shape aging policy for Georgia and the nation for the next decade."

Kurtz said, "We explored ways to better respond to elder abuse and neglect, to prepare for increasing health and long-term care needs, and for people of all ages to have longer, more productive lives. We delegates hope that the results of our hard work will be seriously considered by policymakers in Washington, as well as here in Georgia."

Approximately 1,200 delegates from across the United States were selected by governors, members of Congress, the National Congress of American Indians and the WHCoA Policy Committee to vote on up to 50 resolutions for current and future generations of seniors and to develop implementation strategies.

The delegates also voted on the top 10 resolutions among the 50. They are:

- reauthorize the Older Americans Act within the first six months following the 2005 WHCOA;

- develop a coordinated, comprehensive long-term care strategy by supporting public and private sector initiatives that address financing, choice, quality, service delivery, and the paid and unpaid workforce;
- ensure that older Americans have transportation options to retain their mobility and independence;
- strengthen and improve the Medicaid program for seniors;
- strengthen and improve the Medicare program;
- support geriatric education and training for all healthcare professionals, paraprofessionals, health profession students, and direct care workers;
- promote innovative models of non-institutional long-term care;
- improve recognition, assessment, and treatment of mental illness and depression among older Americans;
- attain adequate numbers of healthcare personnel in all professions who are skilled, culturally competent, and specialized in geriatrics; and
- improve state- and local-based integrated delivery systems to meet 21st century needs of seniors.

Outcomes from previous conferences include enacting Medicare and Medicaid in 1965 and the Older Americans Act, which established the Federal Administration on Aging. For more information about the WHCoA, see [www.whcoa.gov](http://www.whcoa.gov).

### ORS Now Takes Complaints Online

Consumers can now file complaints online about any facility licensed by the **Office of Regulatory Services (ORS)** at <http://ors.dhr.georgia.gov>. These facilities may include:

- long-term care facilities such as nursing homes, personal care homes, and community living arrangements;
- residential child care facilities such as group homes for children, therapeutic camps, and private adoption agencies;
- health care programs, including hospitals, clinical laboratories, home health agencies, kidney dialysis clinics, drug abuse programs, outpatient surgery centers, and private home care providers.



## Child Support: Meeting New Challenges

Barbara Joye

The Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) is continuing its drive to improve customer service while responding to a major change in the way Georgia laws will soon guide judges in issuing child support awards.

"Our agency has learned to meet challenges creatively, and we will continue to do so," says OCSE Director **Robert Riddle**. "We have been a leader among the states in technological innovation, services to low-income fathers, and new concepts in customer service. We serve just under a quarter of the state's children and we help many families stay self-sufficient. That's a big job, but it's also a powerful inspiration."

OCSE already made dramatic improvements in customer service during the past year by providing an interactive portal that lets any parent keep track of and provide information about their child support case online, whether they pay or receive the support. Additional technological innovations are planned to offer parents the opportunity to receive information about their case through automatic phone messages and text messaging. Another new program will enlist the Department of Community Health as a partner in increasing the number of children receiving child support who are covered by private health insurance, through automation that reduces paperwork.

A centralized "virtual call center" now serves over 150,000 families in six areas of the state. About half of these families were served through a contract with a private vendor until just a few months ago. OCSE not only took on the increased caseload but also reorganized its offices in the six areas to pilot an innovative new way of providing services. Through the call center, teams of specialists who are connected by the Internet now make sure that each case management function is handled efficiently, while the local offices in the six areas work with local courts on case establishment and enforcement actions.

Legislation passed last year by the General Assembly requiring judges to take both parents' income into account when calculating child support awards has focused attention on the importance of seeing parents as partners, not adversaries, in child support. With the encouragement of Governor Sonny Perdue, OCSE plans to develop new ways to bring parents together so as to minimize the problems that often arise when one parent does not live with the children and reduce the

Please see **Child Support**, page 11

## Volunteer at Camp Earthling

Gillian McWhorter



Foster children enjoy art class at Camp Earthling.

For one fun-filled week each summer, volunteers from state and local DFCS offices run a seaside camp for foster children. Camp Earthling gives the foster children an opportunity to enjoy good times with DFCS staff and each other, while providing foster parents a much-needed week of respite. The aquatic-themed camp is held each year at Epworth by the Sea on St. Simons Island. **Valaree Dubberly**, Telfair County DFCS director, coordinated Camp Earthling 2005 in June, serving 60 children from 12 counties.

A typical day at Camp Earthling includes something special such as a trip to Fort King George or the beach, as well as meals, swimming, music, art, pool time, and sometimes a movie. This year campers spent a whole day at Summer Waves Water Park on Jekyll Island, hosted a talent show, and took a boat trip to see dolphins. "We couldn't tell who was more excited, the children or the dolphins!" said Dubberly. "The camp was lots of fun and lots of work. The week was a huge success."

On the last day the children attended an awards ceremony where they received certificates, memory books that they had made during the week, and their choice of photographs of the week's activities.

Volunteers are needed for Camp Earthling 2006. For more information contact Valaree Dubberly at 229-868-3030.



## Make the Team Georgia Connection

Barbara Joye

Last year Governor Perdue gave all state employees a gift: Team Georgia Connection, our first statewide employee intranet. This will make our jobs easier in many ways, save state agencies and taxpayers money by reducing paperwork, and even give us a few laughs. Many features are already available at <http://team.georgia.gov> and others will roll out during the months ahead.

Hooking up to this interactive Internet site is easy: Enter your name, email address and agency name. A password will arrive quickly by email. Once you have your password, you're part of Team Georgia.

You can look up information on a statewide employee directory and update your own address and phone numbers in the directory as needed. You may ask the Governor a question (without giving your name) and read the answers to other employees' questions. You can look up your own

salary, benefits, and leave balances. You can read about outstanding state employees—maybe you're one—and nominate your own co-workers for a monthly "spotlight." By the time you read this, new features will probably have appeared. They will be announced in a "what's new" section on the home page.

The features and information offered by Team Georgia Connection were selected based on requests from state agencies, and the planning team is looking for more ideas. "The Governor really wants to know what employees want to see on the site," says Gina Tiedemann of the Georgia Technology Authority, who is Team Georgia's program director. She urges that everyone fill out the feedback survey posted on the site.

The idea for the employee intranet first came from the Governor's Commission for a New Georgia. Governor Sonny Perdue has pursued it enthusiastically ever since, adding personal touches. "The Governor wanted some

humor so we're posting the 'Dilbert' cartoon every day" says Tiedemann. "We'll also have an inspirational message."

Future features planned for Team Georgia Connection will include ways to save time and reduce paperwork by making forms uniform and automated. For example, there will be travel forms any state agency can use so they can approve and generate reimbursement checks to employees electronically. An information feature that could save you time in the future will consist of a directory of all state worksites, complete with maps and driving directions.

Register now to explore the Team Georgia Connection for yourself.



Team Georgia Connection staff toured workplaces in the Atlanta area to introduce the site to state employees. (l-r) At Two Peachtree, **Judy Garman-Ylla** encourages **Sherry Jordan-Demmons** to register.



## Streamlined Hiring for DHR Jobs

Barbara Joye

It's easier than ever to apply for jobs with DHR and hiring decisions can be made quickly, thanks to a new streamlined process put in place this fall by the Office of Human Resource Management and Development (OHRMD).



Rosa Waymon

OHRMD realized the department needed a new approach after Governor Sonny Perdue persuaded the 2005 General Assembly to fund 500 new child welfare caseworker slots. To fill this unusually large number of positions as quickly as possible the office piloted streamlined hiring in the Atlanta Metro area. They eliminated unnecessary paperwork, began screening at a central location, and established a central pool of selected applicants. Hiring time was reduced from months to a week or two.

"We were able to fill all the new DFCS positions within 10 months with high quality people, most of whom have social work degrees," says OHRMD Director Rosa Waymon. "Based on that success, we began last fall to extend streamlined hiring to every DHR agency. Previously, the burden was on local managers to attract and screen applicants. Now, through a centralized team effort we can recruit for applicants and staff positions much more efficiently, and the application process is easier for job-seekers."

Applicants for positions with any DHR agency can now start by sending in their resumes online without having to fill out the state application form. OHRMD staff will review the resumes and refer qualified applicants to program managers who will screen them by phone. The managers will then invite the top candidates to submit the state form and be interviewed face-to-face.

Applicants for positions as child welfare caseworkers in the 13-county Metro Atlanta will be interviewed by a panel in Atlanta. If hired, they will begin training, including on-the-job experience. After they complete the training they will be offered the next available position at one of their preferred work locations.

Anyone interested in employment with DHR can find listings and apply at [www.dhrjobs.com](http://www.dhrjobs.com). For jobs open only to current employees, click on "opportunities for DHR employees."

## Office of Audits Expands its Role

Barbara Joye

Since Robert Dorr became director of the Office of Audits (OA) in September he has been looking for new ways his office can help DHR achieve its mission of delivering compassionate, innovative and accountable services to individuals, families and communities.

"It's mostly in the area of accountability that the office can make significant contributions," says Dorr. "In recent years we've primarily performed the tasks mandated by law. Now, in addition to those duties, such as auditing county Department of Family and Children Services offices and reviewing the audits that outside CPA firms conduct on our contractors, OA will be providing some services more typical of those performed by internal auditors."

After identifying and prioritizing factors which could interfere with the successful completion of the department's mission, OA will expand its oversight of provider compliance with contract financial requirements, and perform additional reviews of the controls established within the department to safeguard assets and ensure the reliability of financial reporting, compliance with laws and regulations and the effectiveness and efficiency of operations. Additionally OA will provide other services as requested to improve accountability.

"If I had to sum up our recent activities in one phrase, I'd say that we've been identifying efficiencies that will allow us to redirect resources to add value within the department," Dorr explained. "We're still exploring the possibilities, but we've already begun several important projects that I'm excited about. I look forward to seeing results in the coming year."



The purpose of The Human Side is to provide interesting and important information related to DHR employees and their jobs.

Published by the DHR Office of Communications  
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or Internet: [brjoye@dhr.state.ga.us](mailto:brjoye@dhr.state.ga.us).



## On the Move: DHR's Transportation System

Rich Devine

DHR's Coordinated Transportation System will soon be increasing its efficiency and saving money through innovative use of technology. The system helps DHR clients in all regions of the state—elderly, developmentally disabled and Temporary Assistance to Needy Family recipients—to travel to the services they need in their communities. The system provided almost three million trips to over 20,000 clients in FY2005.

DHR transportation is now going high-tech with pilot projects in three areas of the state. Two public transit systems in Rome and Hall County are partnering with DHR to test the use of Smart Cards. Another Smart Card initiative is planned in the Coastal region, in partnership with the Georgia Department of Transportation.

Smart Cards are similar in size to a credit card. They contain a small computer chip that can be preloaded with client information and read by a card reading device on a bus. The data is downloaded to a computer, also on the bus, and integrated with other pertinent information. The cards will greatly increase the accuracy and accountability of the system's records. They will also eliminate much of the paperwork required to track and account for client trips, allowing a more efficient use of staff time and resources.

Another innovation being developed for the system is the Transportation Request Information Processing System (TRIP\$). This Web-based trip ordering system is designed to serve all human service providers who order trips for clients, as well as transportation providers and system managers.

Currently, client trip information is faxed from office to office and manually entered into logs — a very archaic system. TRIP\$ will totally eliminate manual entry on paper forms and allow all authorized users to process trip requests and validate services electronically, which should save time and increase accuracy. Users will be able to log on and register clients, order trips, check on trip status, develop a daily manifest and produce many ad hoc reports. The system will be implemented in selected regions of the state starting this summer. Later, invoicing and accounting functions will be added.

### Did you know?

- Georgia is one of only 11 states to meet federal targets for work participation by people who receive Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). Georgia has a participation rate of 62 percent compared to the required standard of 50 percent and the national average of 30 percent.
- Child welfare staff have diverted nearly 18,000 families from child protection to social services since December 2004. Only eight percent have needed child protection follow-up.
- Georgia was rated as being prepared in seven areas of emergency preparedness by Trust for America—only eight states had scores of seven or eight.
- DHR conducted campaigns that helped Georgians reduce the rate of smoking to 20.1 percent. Georgia for the first time is below the national rate.
- Eighty-five percent of Georgia's children are fully immunized. Georgia ranks fourth in the nation in immunizations.
- Ninety-eight percent of newborns were screened for hearing and for metabolic disorders in FY 2005.
- One in four children in Georgia—over 500,000 children—receives child support with the assistance of the Office of Child Support Enforcement.

### Keeping Track of Kids continued from page 2

learn the new system. In September, the Douglas County staff was briefed on the changes they can expect once SACWIS is in place.

In November, Governor Perdue announced that the State of Georgia had chosen a vendor, Accenture. This decision was unconditionally supported by the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. The SACWIS project is proceeding on schedule. Work has begun on the authentic environment in Douglas County, paving the way for a statewide roll-out starting in 2007.





## WHO'S NEWS

Georgia Trend magazine named Commissioner **B. J. Walker** among the 100 "most influential Georgians" in its December 2005 issue. She is one of only nine women and 17 African Americans on the list, which includes distinguished leaders in the fields of business, government, politics, public policy, education, and the judiciary. The magazine's profile of Walker highlights her success in turning around DHR's child protective services and her concept of government as a resource, not a substitute, for families. See <http://www.georgiatrend.com/site/page7787.html>.



In November **Cindy Moss** was named deputy director of the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE). Moss has worked for OCSE since 1987, and served as director of state operations since 2003. She won a 2005 National Child Support Enforcement Association Leadership award and

DHR's 2004 Leadership award for spearheading several projects, including a new computer system for OCSE; an award winning procurement for a central registry that receives and distributes all child support payments in Georgia; a plan for improving medical insurance coverage for children receiving child support; and the "Where's My Child's Check?" Internet feature, which she later developed into one of the first interactive customer service portals in the country. She is working with the courts in Georgia to pioneer electronic filing of child support case documents, and has led the reshaping of workflow and productivity in OCSE's offices.

"Cindy Moss has been an innovative leader and agent for change in Georgia and nationally," says OCSE Director **Robert Riddle**. "I know she will bring an exciting edge and the same spirit of innovation to the OCSE management team."

**Rosa Waymon**, director of the Office of Human Resources Management and Development, is the author of "Knowledge Management: Key to Georgia's Succession

Planning Efforts," in the September 2005 issue of *Policy Practice Magazine*, published by the American Public Human Services Association, a national organization of human services agency administrators. The article highlights a key aspect of the way DHR is preparing managers to lead the department after current leaders retire or change careers. The article can be read at <http://www.aphsa.org/Publications/Doc/PP/0509ART3.pdf>.



Georgia Public Health Association (GPHA) Executive Director **Margaret Park** and GPHA President **Bill Fields** presented the annual Jules S. Terry Memorial Award to **Ecleamus L. Ricks**, MPH, Macon-Bibb County Health Department administrator (center), at the GPHA's conference in December. Ricks was recognized for his leadership in starting Bibb County's Family Connection and for creating a partnership between the Medical College of Georgia and a local hospital to strengthen service delivery for patients whose treatment required long trips for care and whose treatment compliance was compromised. He has led many local efforts in the Macon-Bibb County area focusing on male involvement and family cohesiveness. The Jules Terry Award recognizes an individual whose work has increased public health service delivery.



The Georgia Public Health Association (GPHA) again honored several Division of Public Health employees at its annual conference, which was held in December this year:

Jules S. Terry Memorial Award: **Ecleamus L. Ricks, M.P.H.**, Macon-Bibb County Health Department administrator (see photo).

Al Dohany Award for Community Service: **Joy Maltese, R.N.**, chronic disease coordinator, District Four Health Services (LaGrange).

Maggie Kline Nursing Section Award: **Patrice MdKissick-Finney, R.N., B.S.N.**, adult health nursing supervisor, Bibb County Health Department.

Georgia Dental Public Health Award of Merit: **Charles Roszel, D.D.S.**, district dental director, Northwest Georgia Health District (Rome).

Primary Health Care Leadership Award: **Shayni Grant, R.N., B.S.N.**, clinic manager, Medical Access Clinic, Dalton.

Maternal and Child Health Community Service Award: **Mickey Tasker, R.N.** and **Maria Floyd, R.N.**, public health nurse specialists, Bartow County Health Department.

Kathy Miner Health Education and Promotion Award: **Land Use Team**, Northwest Georgia Health District (Rome).

Office Personnel Outstanding Service Award: **April Harkins**, operations support coordinator, Gordon County Health Department.

Rosemarie Newman Nutrition Extra Mile Award: **Blanche DeLoach**, nutrition services director, District Four Health Services (LaGrange).

Environmentalist of the Year Award: **James R. Drinnon**, environmental health director, Coastal Health District (Savannah).

*The following awards were presented by GPHA earlier in the year:*

Barfield Papers, Nursing Section Award: **Marie Floyd, R.N.**, public health nurse specialist, Bartow County Health Department.

Lillian D. Wald Public Health Nursing Leadership

Award: **Olivia Erbele, MS., R.N., F.N.P.**, assistant chief nurse, Division of Public Health.

Ruth B. Freeman Public Health Nursing Award for Population Health Practice: **Anne Murphy, R.N.**, nursing coordinator, Bartow County Health Department.

The GlaxoSmithKline Child Health Recognition Awards were also presented to these Public Health employees and departments at the GPHA conference: **Barbara McCommons, R.N.**, Paulding County; Gordon County Health Department, VENT Program; Charlton County Health Department School Health Program; **Patti Curington, R.N.**, **Sandee Simmons, R.N.**, and **Alan Alvarado, M.D.**, Lowndes County Board of Health; and **Margaret Bean, B.S.N., M.S., M.N.**, Northwest Georgia Health District (Rome).



Division of Aging Services (DAS) staff received awards at the AARP Georgia "Power of One" statewide volunteer recognition luncheon that was held in January in Macon. **Leslie McKee**, a DAS program coordinator for the statewide kinship care initiative, was honored for her work with AARP's Georgia Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Summit. She acted as an advisor to both the Albany Minority Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Summit and the Albany Summit Planning Committee. Other members of this planning committee also received awards.

GeorgiaCares Director **Jennie D. Deese**, GeorgiaCares Consultant **Kristen Barge**, and the State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) Coordinator **Vicki Mikels** received an award on behalf of GeorgiaCares for their leadership and dedication to providing information to consumers in the Medicare Rx education campaign and for their collaborative efforts with AARP in three training sessions, including AARP's legislative briefing on Medicare Part D last November. They also traveled throughout the state recruiting volunteers to provide education to consumers on Medicare Part D.



## WHAT'S NEWS

Breastfeeding mothers who work at or have official business at DHR's Two Peachtree Street offices in Atlanta can now use a special "lactation room" on the 11th floor to express breast milk. In addition to providing a pleasant private space, the room also offers electric breast pumps, plus videos and reading material about breastfeeding. The facility is part of DHR's "Health Matters" employee wellness program, a component of Live Healthy Georgia.

"Breastfeeding is good for both babies and mothers," says **Beth Holloway**, state breastfeeding coordinator for the Division of Public Health. "It increases the baby's resistance to illness and infections, it promotes bonding between mothers and their babies, and it reduces the time mothers need to take off from work to take care of sick babies." Anyone wanting to use the lactation room can contact the Division of Public Health's Nutrition Section at 404-657-2884 to schedule an orientation.



On January 31st, Heating Energy Assistance Team (HEAT) spokesperson **Janet Joseph** (left) and HEAT Chairman **Ira Shucker** presented a check for \$1 million to DHR Commissioner **B.J. Walker** (right), representing contributions through the HEAT initiative. HEAT is a nonprofit organization that provides energy assistance statewide to Georgians in need. HEAT funds are distributed by DHR through local community action agencies.



If you work in one of DHR's state offices at Two Peachtree Street in Atlanta or visit there for a meeting or training you can enjoy this brand new cafeteria that opened on the second floor February 8th.

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need for enforcement actions.

In addition, OCSE is providing technical support to the legislature's Child Support Guidelines Commission, in particular by developing an online child support "calculator" for use once the General Assembly acts on the Commission's recommendations for implementing the new law as of July 1, 2006. The calculator will provide parents a quick, easy way to figure out what their child support obligation is likely to be by entering their incomes and their expenses for child care, health insurance and other factors specified by the new guidelines. Judges will use the calculator in the same way to help them determine child support awards. The judges will still be able to make adjustments depending on the circumstances of each family.

Other new initiatives in several communities will seek new resources for the Fatherhood Program that helps low-income parents owing child support to increase their earning power. Classes on how to establish and maintain a healthy marriage will be offered to people in another group of communities through a federally-funded pilot program.

