



# THE BRIDGE:

## *Connecting State Civil Service and You*

**February 2013**  
**Volume 4 Issue 1**

### **The SCS Mission:**

To provide human resource services and programs that enable state government to attract, develop and retain a productive and diverse workforce that excels in delivering quality services to the citizens of Louisiana.

### **We Want Your Feedback!**

This publication is intended to provide for increased communication between the Department of State Civil Service and all stakeholders within our system. E-mail your questions, comments, or suggestions to us, and we'll do our best to respond promptly. Your feedback may even be chosen for publication as part of this feature! Participants will remain anonymous if requested. Please note that not all feedback will be published and that only fact-based questions will receive a response.

[Click HERE](#)  
[to submit your feedback!](#)

### **STAYING CONNECTED:**

*From the Desk of Shannon S. Templet, SCS Director*



The second half of 2012 proved to be very busy for Louisiana State Civil Service: we began the FY 2012-2013 performance year for the Performance Evaluation System, conducted pretesting for the new PLE and COAST exams, and unveiled our new website. State employees played a critical role in each of these endeavors, and I would like to thank everyone who participated.

In this issue of *The Bridge*, we give you the details on the implementation of the Professional Level Exam (PLE), which will replace the Professional Entry Test (PET) in March. We've also taken the opportunity to feature state employees who help maintain our "Sportsman's Paradise." On page 4, we highlight the exciting new projects going on in our Training Division. Also, many congratulations to the outstanding state employees who received the 2012 Charles E. Dunbar, Jr. Career Civil Service Award, and those who received Honorable Mentions.

### ***LASERS Disability Retirement Changes***

According to LASERS Liaison Memorandum 12-26, rank-and-file state employees with at least 20 years of service will no longer be eligible for disability retirement beginning January 1, 2013. Instead, those employees will be directed to the 20 years at any age actuarially reduced retirement option.

The disability provisions specifically state that members who are eligible for regular retirement are not eligible for disability retirement. In recent years, particularly with the change in how health insurance premiums are calculated for members who take early retirement, it has become apparent that the actuarially reduced retirement with 20 years of service is a "regular retirement." Modifications will be made to the LASERS Membership Handbook to reflect this change in procedure.

## State Civil Service Replaces Professional Entry Test (PET)

By Max Reichert  
Staffing Division Assistant Administrator

State Civil Service has developed a new test to replace the Professional Entry Test (PET) that is currently used to select persons applying for professional level jobs in the classified service. The new test is called the Professional Level Exam (PLE).

Applicants may begin taking the new PLE on March 1, 2013. However, they will not receive grade notices and the grades will not become active until May 1, 2013. This delay is necessary to build up the new eligible lists. February 28, 2013, is the last date for applicants to take the old PET to be eligible for vacancies during the transition period of March and April. During this March and April transition period, agencies will still be able to post and fill vacancies, but eligible lists will be based on the old PET exam. Beginning May 1, 2013, agencies will post vacancies using eligible lists based on the new PLE.

All PET grades will expire on April 30, 2013, and will no longer be available to be used for probational or job appointments. There will be a limited transition exception period for using the PET scores for PROMOTION ONLY of permanent state employees until May 1, 2015. The Staffing Division will add this exception to its exemptions from testing policy and will include this option in our agency-wide question that addresses testing exemptions in LA Careers. As

with all testing exemptions, it is at the discretion of the individual appointing authority as to the use of it. The new PLE grades will expire two years from the date they become effective. Refer to [General Circular 2013-001](#) for more details regarding the implementation of the PLE.

State Civil Service also plans to implement a new test to replace the COAST (Clerical, Office, and Administrative Support Test). However, this will not occur until later in the year. More details will be provided as we get closer to the implementation date.

State Civil Service would like to thank all the state agencies and state employees who participated in the job analysis and validation studies necessary to develop these new tests. Hundreds of employees filled out job inventory questionnaires and took pre-tests, and dozens of supervisors completed rating forms on their employees who took the pre-tests. Agency Human Resources offices had to coordinate all this during times that were very busy. We know this took a lot of time and effort on the part of state employees and agencies. Without their participation, we could not have developed and validated the new tests.

For questions regarding the implementation of the new tests, please contact Max Reichert, Staffing Division Assistant Administrator at [Max.Reichert@la.gov](mailto:Max.Reichert@la.gov).

## Performance Evaluation System Updates

By Carisa Perry  
Program Assistance Division Supervisor

Are you a supervisor or second level evaluator responsible for performing Performance Evaluation System (PES) duties? If so, you were probably aware of the need to complete the online PES Supervisory Training in LEO by December 31, 2012. However, you may not have taken the proper steps to ensure course program credit was received. In working with OIS, it was discovered that many who completed the required courses were not aware of the need to go to the PES Course Program screen and pass credit to themselves for the course program. If credit for the Course Program is not reflected on your training record in LEO, please contact your CPTP Training Coordinator. Should you need additional assistance, contact CPTP at (225) 342-8539 or [cptlso.coordinator@la.gov](mailto:cptlso.coordinator@la.gov).

### Important PES Dates

12/31/12	Deadline for Supervisor/Second Level Evaluator online training
7/1/13 thru 8/31/13	PES Evaluation period for FY 12-13 performance year
9/15/13	PES request for Agency Review Deadline to HR for FY 12-13 performance evaluation
7/1/13 thru 9/30/13	PES Planning period for FY 13-14 performance year
10/15/13	Agency reviewer deadline to render decision
10 days from agency decision	PES request for SCS Director Review deadline
30 days after PES file receipt	SCS Director deadline to render decision

## State Employees Help to Maintain Sportsman's Paradise

By Janelle Haynsworth  
Compensation Division Supervisor

With warmer temperatures around the corner, Louisiana wildlife will be more active in the coming months. Louisiana, also known as "Sportsman's Paradise," has a wide variety of wildlife that at times, can become a little unruly. When trouble strikes, the good people at the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries can connect you with an experienced nuisance animal trapper to help in your time of need.

The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is responsible for managing and protecting all wildlife species. This is accomplished in part through the activities of the staff that work with the nuisance animal programs within the agency. Although the Department does not provide trapping services directly, they accomplish their mission by permitting individuals to provide trapping services to citizens that are having issues with nuisance wildlife. The trappers, known as "Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators," are permitted to handle most species except for deer, bears, migratory birds and alligators. NWCOs must first pass a written test, background check and pay the applicable fee before they are listed on the Department's [website](#) to serve the public. John Leslie, Biologist, provides statewide coordination of the NWCO program as well as other wildlife permitting programs for the Department. He explains that nuisance wildlife is that which causes a threat to public safety, health or property and that a landowner must first grant permission for a NWCO to provide trapping services on private property.

If you are familiar with The History Channel's reality show, "[Swamp People](#)," then you may be aware that there is a hunting season for alligators, but you may not know about the trappers that handle [nuisance alligators](#) during the off-season. Similar to NWCOs, permitted alligator trappers also have to pass a background check in order to serve the public. Unlike NWCOs, alligator trappers are not listed on the Department's website. This is because any report of a nuisance alligator must be called in to the agency so they can record the information before dispatching a trapper. Connie Dunn, an Administrative Program Specialist that works with the Nuisance Alligator Program, explained that although the Department receives over 2,200 calls each year regarding nuisance



From left: Connie Dunn, John Leslie, Carrie Salyers of WLF.

alligators, there has been no record of a human fatality related to an alligator attack.

Other big game species that cause an issue for landowners require the assistance of wildlife biologists at the Department. Carrie Salyers, Biologist, specializes in public outreach and educational programs pertaining to endangered species and the Louisiana black bear. To help minimize wildlife conflicts, she advises to stay away from animals acting abnormally for their species, such as being too lethargic, disoriented or aggressive.

Although we live in "Sportsman's Paradise," the wildlife in our own backyard can occasionally make for some interesting encounters. When in doubt about an animal or your ability to handle it, the best course of action is to leave it alone or call a professional at the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. They can provide the guidance you need with the goal of managing, conserving and promoting wise utilization of Louisiana's wildlife resources.



**Louisiana Department of  
Wildlife and Fisheries**  
2000 Quail Drive  
Baton Rouge, LA 70898  
1-800-256-2749  
[www.wlf.louisiana.gov](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov)

## Charles E. Dunbar, Jr. Career Service Awards 2012

By Lindsay Ruiz de Chavez  
Public Information Officer

The [Louisiana Civil Service League](#) honored 18 of the state's finest classified employees at the 54th Annual Dunbar Awards Luncheon on January 18, 2013. Twelve employees received the Charles E. Dunbar, Jr. Career Service Award, and six received Honorable Mentions.

Recipients of the Dunbar Award were:

- Trudy A. Berthelot, Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana
- Carolyn G. Broussard, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, College of Education
- Paul B. Fossier, Jr., Dept. of Transportation and Development
- Gustave Freche, Jr., Louisiana War Veterans' Home
- Larry W. Grow, Dept. of Corrections
- Geraldine Jones, Interim LSU Public Hospital
- Noel Kinler, Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries
- Eugenie C. Powers, Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections
- Gary Shotwell, Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections
- Anthony H. Speier, Ph.D., Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Behavioral Health
- Rainette Stephens, Louisiana State Civil Service
- Riis P. Suire, Department of Public Safety and Corrections

Recipients of Honorable Mentions were:

- Donald K. Barr, Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections, Louisiana State Penitentiary



*Paul B. Fossier, Jr. (DOTD) accepting his 2012 Charles E. Dunbar, Jr. Career Service Award.*

- Deborah Bourgeois, Jefferson Parish Risk Management
- Belinda Champton, LSU Ag Center, Ascension Parish Extension Service
- Kalford K. Miazza, Mandeville Police Department
- Susie C. Roy, University of Louisiana at Lafayette
- Ursula H. Shaw, LSU Agriculture Center

The winners were chosen by the Judging Committee from 400 official agencies, and more than 90,000 state workers. The Judging Committee, chaired by Kay Hoffpauir (DCFS), included Kirt A. Clement (DOTD); Cheryl Dees (Public Safety and Corrections); Colleen Lemoine (Interim LSU Public Hospital); Jama L. Scivicque (Treasury); and Jean S. Wall (Public Safety and Corrections).

## Exciting New Projects in CPTP

By Gwen Parker  
Director of Training

The Comprehensive Public Training Program (CPTP) has several new projects taking place for state employees. The new HR Curriculum training program, [State Civil Service Foundations for HR Professionals](#), was launched on February 1, 2013. This program combines online learning with live instruction to provide HR staff with a strong foundation in HR functions in the state environment. Another exciting project on the

horizon is the statewide needs assessment conducted by CPTP staff. The data in this report contains feedback and information straight from supervisors across the state on exciting new training initiatives that CPTP plans to put in place. Employees can expect to see this report mid-year 2013. We are excited to launch these new projects and we will keep you updated on any changes or initiatives happening in CPTP.

### ***CPTP Offers Agency-Specific Training Solutions***

Many state leaders have attended public classroom training sponsored by CPTP, but did you know that CPTP also offers our classes to agencies too? That's right; any course currently offered by CPTP can be booked and held at an agency by request. CPTP works with agency CPTP training coordinators to arrange locations and class dates that work for your agency. These courses work best for agencies looking to train large groups of people on one or two CPTP training topics. CPTP reserves a limited number of special request class dates each year. Contact your agency's CPTP training coordinator for more information.