



THE BRIDGE:

Connecting State Civil Service and You

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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. Email 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



With the heat of the summer season upon us, I encourage you to read our featured article on the many activities and parks our great state has to offer. Also in this issue of *The Bridge*, we highlight the new Job Seeker portal on our website. This portal was created to assist applicants in applying for State classified jobs.

As a reminder, the deadline for the 2012 Minimum Training Requirements will be here before we know it. Those supervisors who do not finish by June 30, will be subject to the 2015 MTR's. Also, I would like to congratulate those agencies who received Outstanding Human Resources Evaluations.

Please remember to nominate your fellow employees for the 2015 Dunbar Awards. This is a great way to pay tribute to hardworking state employees.

This issue also has great information on the new MINT initiative from LASERS, aimed at millennials; and the Master's Degree Program for Working Adults offered by LSU.

Charles E. Dunbar Jr. Career Civil Service Award Nominations

The Louisiana Civil Service League is accepting nominations for the 2015 Charles E. Dunbar Jr. Career Civil Service Awards. In the 57th year of the annual program, more than 800 classified public employees have received the award.

Submission forms, deadlines, Frequently Asked Questions and other information on nominating a fellow employee can be found [here](#).

The award is named in honor of Charles E. Dunbar Jr., who was responsible for spearheading the effort to establish a classified workforce that would be governed through merit system principles and founding the Louisiana Civil Service League.

LASERS Launches New Initiative for Millennials

The month of May marks the launch of LASERS new initiative, Millennials Investing Now for Tomorrow or MINT, targeted to state employees in the early stages of their careers. MINT is designed to educate early-career LASERS members on the basics of the System and guide them in the direction of securing their financial future.



If you are a LASERS member between the ages of 20-35, the two-part question you should ask yourself is, *“Do I understand my retirement system and am I saving enough for my retirement now?”*

LASERS is a defined benefit plan, which means that your contributions to LASERS (automatically deducted from each paycheck) help to fund a benefit that is guaranteed to you monthly for life once you retire. Although the LASERS defined benefit plan offers a guaranteed retirement benefit, the average rank-and-file retiree’s benefits is modest at \$24,204 annually. LASERS encourages

you to be aware of ways you can supplement your LASERS retirement benefit and understand what options are available for you to take advantage of now, so you can reap the benefits at retirement age.

Do you know which LASERS retirement plan you are in? Do you know how a LASERS benefit is calculated? Do you contribute to the Deferred Compensation Plan? Do you know the benefits of preserving your annual and sick leave balances? Do you know the benefits of purchasing or transferring service credit early in your career? These are all questions that MINT is designed to answer, along with many more topics.

The MINT campaign will be a series of infographics based on specific topics that are beneficial to our MINT audience. Each infographic will be released via the LASERS Member Connection email service, the LASERS website, and our social media accounts. To keep up with the topics, check out the [MINT web page](#) on the LASERS website, subscribe to the [email list](#), and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

If you have specific questions about MINT or would like to share your ideas for topics, please email us at lasersmint@lasersonline.org.

2012 Minimum Training Requirements Deadline Quickly Approaching

By John DiCarlo
Training/CPTP Program Manager – Business Development

On January 1, 2015, the new 2015 Supervisory Mandatory Training Requirements (MTRs) went into effect. State employees who were already in a supervisory group and whose group did not change on or after January 1, 2015, were granted a six-month window by CPTP to complete their 2012 MTRs with a deadline of June 30, 2015. This six-month window was granted by CPTP in the spirit of fairness to those state supervisors who were already in the process of completing their training requirements. Supervisors who complete all of their required courses under the 2012 MTRs by June 30, 2015 are considered as having satisfied their training requirements for that supervisory group under the 2012 policy. In order to help state supervisors as much as possible, CPTP analyzed the data regarding how many additional courses would be needed statewide to meet the need and scheduled them accordingly. As the deadline approaches, CPTP continues to analyze the data to



determine whether or not even more additional courses are needed and adds them as warranted. Supervisors who do not finish by June 30, 2015 will be placed under the provisions of the 2015 MTRs.

CPTP encourages all state supervisors to continue to take courses even after their mandatory training requirements have been met. CPTP has added some wonderful new web-based courses to assist state employees in their professional development.

If you have any questions regarding the Mandatory Training Requirements, please contact the CPTP office, at (225) 342-8539 or by email at CPTPLSO.Coordinator@la.gov.

LSU Offers Master's Degree Program for Working Adults

The Master of Arts in the Liberal Arts (MALA) program at Louisiana State University is an innovative, flexible Master's program that offers students the opportunity to create their own individualized course of study by choosing classes that best suit their intellectual interests, professional development, and career advancement. Once admitted to the MALA program, students have the freedom to tailor their own curriculum by choosing from LSU's rich and diverse course offerings, including courses in Political Science, Marketing, Mass Communications, History, Education, English, Sociology, and other departments.

Applications for the MALA program are accepted on a rolling basis, and students can begin the program in the fall, spring, or summer semesters. Most students take classes part-time and in the evenings, although MALA does accept students on a full-time basis as well. If you're interested becoming part of this exciting and growing program, visit the [MALA website](#) or contact MALA Director Brannon Costello at bcostell@lsu.edu.

Louisiana's State Parks & Historic Sites

Information brought to you by the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism – Office of State Parks

Louisiana's 22 State Parks, 17 Historic Sites, and Lone Preservation Area offer you and your family a uniquely rewarding experience of our state's natural beauty and historical riches.

Visitors to State Parks can hike, fish, bike and enjoy birding and nature trails. Most State Parks feature a waterfront location, campsites and picnic areas. Several have fully outfitted cabins and/or group camps, which, like other buildings in the parks, were designed to reflect each park's cultural environment and ambiance.

Each one of the State Historic Sites was selected for



In addition to our Historic Sites, the Louisiana State Arboretum in Ville Platte, a State Preservation Area, offers visitors a living botanical museum with natural growth and plantings grown for scientific or educational purposes. Trees, shrubs and flowers are labeled for observation along an extensive network of trails.

For more information, call the Office of State Parks at (888) 677-1400; write to P.O. Box 44426, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-4426; or visit our website at www.LaStateParks.com or follow us on Facebook (www.Facebook.com/LA.State.Parks) and Twitter (www.Twitter.com/LAStateParks). For reservations, call (877) CAMP-N-LA (877-226-7652) or visit www.ReserveLaStateParks.com. You can also find out more in our [Web Exclusive!](#)



The boardwalk at the Forts Randolph and Buhlow State Historic Sites in Pineville.

its historical, cultural or archaeological significance. Museums, artifacts, outdoor displays and interpretive programs are some of the ways each area tells its remarkable story. From exquisitely maintained plantation homes and historic forts to fascinating family graveyards, river locks and a wealth of outdoor activities and scenic beauty, the State Parks and Historic Sites display the beauty of Louisiana.



Sam Houston Jones State Park, in Lake Charles, offers an 18-basket disc golf course.

New State Civil Service Job Seeker's Page

By Aeli Poydras
Staffing Division Supervisor

On March 16, State Civil Service (SCS) launched its updated job seeker's page at www.jobs.la.gov. This new portal from the main SCS website was created in order to greater assist applicants with finding pertinent information involving State Civil Service testing and current job opportunities with state agencies, as well as provide information for Veterans interested in state employment. The goal of the new portal is to give job seekers interested in employment with the state of Louisiana their own specific webpage, organized with all the information that they would need to have a positive state job searching experience.

The new job seeker's page uses more efficient and eye-catching graphics to quickly guide applicants to the appropriate information they are searching for and relays information which previously may have been in a text heavy format. The new portal also provides job aids such as a first-time user guide and FAQs categorized by topic to readily provide applicants the information they need.

Designing the page was a collaborative effort of almost all the divisions of State Civil Service.



In creating the new page, SCS used the observations received during focus group meetings with state agency appointing authorities and human resources directors as well as recommendations garnered from applicants

through the use of a feedback survey posted on our website and current job opportunities pages.

Since going live, the new job seeker's page has been popular receiving over 89,000 hits, including 19,000 plus from mobile devices, with an average daily site visit of over 4,200 persons.

Those interested in viewing the new job seeker's webpage, or in employment with the state of Louisiana should go to www.jobs.la.gov or by selecting the large "Find A Job" icon in the center of the main SCS webpage.

Outstanding Human Resources Program Evaluations

By Melinda Robert
Accountability Division Administrator

State Civil Service would like to announce two outstanding Human Resources Program Evaluations recently conducted by their Accountability Division. Northwest Louisiana War Veterans Home and Houma Terrebonne Housing Authority received outstanding evaluations with 100% compliance in all categories audited. The State Civil Service Accountability Division is responsible for providing an objective evaluation of the human resource practices used by state agencies to manage the classified work force. It assesses the effectiveness of those practices and the overall adherence to merit principles and compliance with State Civil Service Rules.

Other excellent evaluations conducted this fiscal year, having minimal deficiencies were:

- Acadiana Area Human Services District
- Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism

- David Wade Correctional Center
- Louisiana Real Estate Commission
- Louisiana Tech University
- Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System
- Louisiana School Employees' Retirement System
- Louisiana State University Agricultural Center
- LSU Health Sciences Center—New Orleans
- Pinecrest Supports and Services Center
- Department of Corrections—Prison Enterprises

The evaluation reports received by these agencies show the value and importance of excellence they place on human resources management in state government. It is rarely an easy task to receive this type of report as agencies face the many complex challenges in human resources.