



# THE BRIDGE: Connecting Civil Service and You

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## The DSCS 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.

### Seeking Answers?

Have a question about Civil Service? Let us know! 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 to us, and we'll do our best to respond promptly. Some questions will be chosen for publication as part of this feature! Participants will remain anonymous if requested. Please note that not all questions will be published and that only fact-based questions will receive a response.

[Ask your question](#)

## STAYING CONNECTED

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



As I look back over the last year, I can readily say it was an extraordinary year by any measure, and forecasts indicate more of the same is on the horizon. As state government grapples with unprecedented budgetary shortfalls, one thing remains constant: the dedication of the State Civil Service Commission and the Department of State Civil Service 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.

Employees are the greatest assets of our state agencies. Thousands upon thousands of dedicated state employees give unselfishly of themselves every day to provide services to those in need. Many difficult decisions lay ahead for state agencies. The Civil Service Commission and the Department will ensure those decisions affecting state employees are consistent with merit system principles created by the Constitution.

Inside this issue of *the Bridge*, we have highlighted a special classified employee, Ms. Rose Toy, from the Louisiana War Veterans Home in honor of Veterans Day. She is one of the many state employees that provide the dedicated services that our citizens depend upon. We have also included information about recent changes to the Comprehensive Public Training Program as well as the upcoming election for the classified employee-member of the Civil Service Commission. The employee-member represents the interests of classified employees and the election provides the opportunity for classified employees to select the candidate that will most effectively perform this important function. I encourage you to vote when you receive the ballot for this election.

Mr. James A. Smith, chairman of the State Civil Service Commission, will not be seeking reappointment on the Commission. Mr. Smith has served the State of Louisiana and its citizens well. The Department sincerely thanks Mr. Smith for his 36 years of dedicated service and wishes him all the best.

*The Bridge* is produced quarterly by a committee of [Civil Service staff members](#).

## Upcoming Election of the Classified Employee-Member of the State Civil Service Commission

By Paul St. Dizier  
Chief Referee

An event of great importance to classified state employees takes place early next year. On January 3, 2011, DSCS Director Shannon S. Templet will issue the call for the election of the classified employee-member of the State Civil Service Commission.

Created by the Louisiana Constitution, the Commission is a seven-member board that regulates and administers the state civil service system. The Commission adopts rules governing classified employment and conducts public investigations of alleged violations of those rules. It also provides an avenue for classified state employees to appeal disciplinary actions, removals, rule violations, and discrimination claims.

The governor appoints six of the Commission members from lists of nominees submitted by the presidents of six Louisiana private institutions of higher education. The seventh Commission member is a classified state employee elected by the state classified workforce. Commission members serve overlapping six-year terms.

The classified employee-member of the Commission must be a full-time, permanent employee in the classified state service for a period of at least one year prior to the date he/she qualifies as a candidate. Additionally, at least one hundred permanent classified employees must sign a petition nominating him/her. The candidate receiving the greatest number of votes cast in the election is elected, as long as he/she receives at least thirty-five

percent of the votes. If no one wins in the first election, a runoff election between the two top candidates is held, and the candidate receiving the greatest number of votes in the runoff election is elected. If the runoff election results in a tie, the Secretary of State determines the winner by lot.

Classified state employees with permanent status at the close of business on December 4, 2010, are eligible to vote in the election. Ballots and election brochures will be mailed directly to eligible employees at the mailing addresses reported to DSCS by their agencies. Classified state employees should therefore ensure that their current mailing addresses are on file with their agency Human Resources offices.

The work of the Commission has a profound effect on the livelihood of classified state employees, so this is your opportunity to make a difference!



*Burl Cain, current Employee-Member of the Civil Service Commission.*

## DSCS Congratulates Chairman James A. Smith

By Janelle Haynsworth  
Compensation Consultant

Mr. James A. Smith has dutifully served the state of Louisiana as a member of its State Civil Service Commission since 1974 and as Commission Chairman since 1988. Within his 36 years of service, he has observed the birth and growth of the merit system for the classified service and has played a critical role in the betterment of the state's classified workforce.

Mr. Smith's last term as Chairman will come to an end this December. Before Mr. Smith retires from the Civil Service Commission, we wanted to give *Bridge* readers an insight into his professional career, family life, and his service with the Civil Service Commission. DSCS celebrates Mr. Smith and the dedicated service he has provided to the State of Louisiana over the years.



*DSCS Commission Chairman, James A. Smith*

**Q: How do you think the establishment and use of the merit system has been beneficial to the classified workforce?**

A: Going from a “spoils” system to a merit system was a fundamental change in the classified workforce. Before, state employees were hired and fired at the whim of politicians, and often had to pay monetary contributions towards a political campaign to get and keep their jobs. Today, the classified workforce is hired based on their qualifications, retained for their performance, and can only be fired for cause.

**Q: In these troubled economic times, how can employees be assured that the Commission will continue to maintain a balance between employee needs and agency needs without being swayed by economic arguments?**

A: These are possibly the toughest times that the state has ever seen and we should work together to have a successful outcome. As a Commission, we cannot force money where there is no money. Agencies should try to take all cost saving measures possible and leave personnel changes as the option of last resort. By adversely affecting personnel, families are adversely affected causing detrimental results to the very fabric of our society.

Read more from Chairman Smith and see his biography on our [Web Exclusives](#) page.

## DSCS Spotlight: Ms. Rose Toy, employee of the LA War Veterans Home

By Amber Gorham  
Compensation Consultant

In commemoration of Veterans Day on November 11th, we would like to recognize Ms. Rose Toy, a Nursing Assistant 2 at the Louisiana War Veterans Home in Jackson, La. This flagship facility in Jackson houses 161 veterans from various branches of the military. The Director of Nursing and other hospital administrators state that Rose is the most outstanding employee at their agency and is an exemplary example to the other employees at the facility because she goes above and beyond the call of duty. For instance, Rose was unable to return home due to road conditions during the aftermath of Hurricane Gustav, so she chose to remain at the facility to help care for the veterans instead. The family members of the veterans have also frequently noted how well Rose cares for their loved ones. During her employment at the Jackson facility, Rose has been named employee of the month and employee of the year.

We had the pleasure of speaking with Rose to ask her a few questions about her career and dedication to providing care for the veterans.



*Ms. Rose Toy, a classified employee of the LA War Veterans Home in Jackson, La*

**Q: How long have you worked for the Louisiana War Veterans home in Jackson and how did you come to find yourself working here?**

A: My sister, who is also a Nursing Assistant, has worked here for several years. She told me of a job opening for a position like hers. I thought that I would like to take care of the veterans so I applied for the job. I have been working at this home for the past 10 years. The unit I work on is called the Acute Care Wing or “Wing 1.” The patients on this unit require a lot of nursing care. Most of these patients suffer from multiple medical conditions.

**Q: How do you feel about being nominated as an outstanding employee?**

A: I feel very excited about being nominated. I read the newsletter, so I feel honored to be in it. I love my job and always try and do the best that I can for the veterans.

**Q: What is your favorite part of your job?**

A: I like spending time with the veterans. Some of them do not have family or friends that visit, so they get very lonely. A lot of veterans consider the employees as their family or friends. I always stop and listen to them. Sometimes, they just want someone to listen to their stories. No matter how busy I am, I always try to stop and talk to them.

**Q: What is the most difficult part of your job?**

A: I think the most difficult part of my job is when a veteran passes away. Some veterans I have been taking care of since I started here 10 years ago, so it is very easy to get attached to them. I just try and stay positive and take care of the other veterans the best that I can. Some veterans can be very difficult to care for. However, I always try to reach out and show them that I care. Eventually they open up and become easier to talk to.

The State of Louisiana proudly supports our veterans! Please see the veterans web page for information on job opportunities, preferred hiring, and other programs that provide assistance at: <http://www.civilservice.la.gov/Info/VeteransInfo/VeteransMain.asp>

## Comprehensive Public Training Program Transfers to Civil Service

By John DiCarlo  
Training Consultant

The Comprehensive Public Training Program, hereinafter referred to as CPTP, was established by an act of the legislature in 1979 to upgrade professional, technical, and managerial skills of state employees. It was initially created and funded through the Governmental Services Institute of Louisiana State University. In 1986, an act of the legislature transferred CPTP from Louisiana State University to the Division of Administration. Under the Division of Administration, CPTP was funded by legislative appropriations and fees assessed to agencies having Civil Service employees. The amount of the agency fee is based on the agency's classified employee payroll.

House Bill 629, which became Act 825 of the 2010 Louisiana Legislative Session, officially transferred CPTP from the Division of Administration to the Department of State Civil Service, effective July 1, 2010. Even though CPTP has been transferred to some logistical matters will remain enrollment in CPTP classes and the louisiana.gov/cptp/cptp.htm) will not occurred, such as the location of the CPTP office has moved from the first Building in Baton Rouge and the main has changed to (225) 342-8539.

In order to inform and notify the changes, the Department of State Civil training coordinators from around the state regarding the future direction of the statewide training program. Some of the items discussed at the meetings include the learning management system currently being utilized, future course availability, access information of ISIS agencies and non-ISIS agencies for e-learning courses, course content and delivery methods of the various instructor-led training courses, the minimum supervisory training program, and the future of the CPTP Professional Certificate Programs. At each of these meetings, training coordinators were given the opportunity to express their opinions, concerns, and suggestions for the future direction of the statewide training program. Information on changes to the statewide training program will be disseminated as the changes are instituted.

The CPTP state training program has been nationally recognized for excellence and has received the honor of being named "Training Program of the Year" in 2008 by the National Association for Government Training and Development.



the Department of State Civil Service, the same. For instance, the process of CPTP website address (<http://www.doa.louisiana.gov/cptp/cptp.htm>) will not change. However, some changes have CPTP office and telephone number. The floor to the third floor of the Claiborne telephone number for the CPTP office

training community of upcoming Service conducted three meetings with