



Congratulations to the winners of the DAS Star Awards employee recognition program for the nomination period of Jan. 1 through March 31, 2017. Below are the winners along with some of the comments from their nominators.

Extra Mile Award: Recognizes an employee who went above and beyond his or her regular responsibilities.

★ **Spencer Wood, Office of Information Technology**

“Two years ago, Spencer Wood, the state’s chief operating officer, was asked to attend a meeting to review the first attempt at (the) Liquor Modernization Project (LMP). The first attempt was in trouble and DAS was asked to step in and right the ship. This grew into Spencer leading the effort to shore up the existing LMP operations to ensure liquor was flowing to the stores as well as plan for the overhaul of this large logistical supply chain management effort.

Spencer drove the technical side of this effort working every day through the phases of this complex project – from the requirements and design to the build and deployment of this new system – for these past two years. Managing a team of contractors and state staff, they planned the work and worked the plan providing weekly status updates on progress and driving the project to meet all deadlines. This entailed very long days and many weekends to ensure success. Spencer did this, all the while continuing his day-to-day responsibilities of running and operating the IT infrastructure for the state without a hitch.

Spencer’s dedication to DAS and the state required him to do double time for more than two years. Day in and day out Spencer was there to step up and address every issue and challenge for both LMP and the IT Operations effort. No small feat.

April 3 the new LMP will be up and running. It has been fully tested and the technical platform is sound. Service, Support and Solutions ... exemplified in Spencer’s, work, commitment and behavior.”

Innovation and Process Improvement: Recognizes someone who has either created and implemented an innovative solution or recognized inefficiencies and made improvements to a process.

★ **Elizabeth Robinson, Office of Information Technology**

“Elizabeth has been involved in improving the process when employees transfer from one agency to another. Recently a hardware failure caused downstream impacts to the transfer process. A number of agencies logged incidents because their new employees that had moved from another agency. Because Elizabeth had a good understanding of PeopleSoft and active directory she was able to piece together how seemingly unrelated incidents caused a larger process issue. After identifying the root cause and the associated impacts the solution was able to be corrected.

As mentioned previously, Elizabeth is working on the implementation of Identity Management services for the state which includes a new version of myOhio. To demonstrate those services, Elizabeth helped stand up a proof of concept that showed how the new Portal could interact with existing OAKS functions and leverage capabilities of other OIT services, such as ServiceNow.”

Outstanding Customer Service (2 award winners): Acknowledges a DAS employee who goes above and beyond in delivering top-notch customer service.

★ **Jon Gibson, Office of Information Technology**

“As a testimony to his worth, Jon recently took a vacation and his responsibilities had to be split between 17 different workers and program areas. He is always willing to help others troubleshoot issues beyond his scope of responsibility and train others to pass on his knowledge.”

★ **Laverna Styles, Human Resources Division**

“What Laverna does that is so unique is that when she is answering a question or providing guidance on something, she not only provides the basic answer I need but she also provides the history of the issue and any other relevant information. For example, it may be that another agency had the same issue years ago and if that’s the case, Laverna will provide documentation to me of how the agency handled it and what the resolution was. It is absolutely amazing how fast she can retrieve and provide historical information – it’s quite a gift she has! Or, perhaps there’s an Ohio Revised Code, Ohio Administrative Code and/or contractual component to the issue I am trying to resolve. If that’s the case, then Laverna provides all relevant documentation, links, citations, etc., in addition to the basic answer. The level of detail Laverna provides when responding to a colleague or customer is how she not only excels in going the extra mile, but it also results in so many other staff becoming better, more knowledgeable employees, including me. She is a not only a great employee but a great teacher and I am indebted to her for her efforts.”

Team Excellence Award: Recognizes a team or workgroup that successfully accomplished their objective(s), while furthering the mission of the Agency.

★ **OIT Customer Service Center Team**

Lori Bailey, Loretta Barrett, Johnny Booth, Linda Brown, Cheri Clark, Roderick Daniels, Joyce Davenport, D’Lana Donaldson, Sharon Gustafson, Jayme Hilbrand, Richard Holycross, Robert Ladin, Danny Lantz, Andrew Lavender, Ted Maurer, Glen Patterson, Monick Robinson, McArthur Ruggs, Prem Srivastava, Lamar Stevens, Jeremy Swartz, James Valentine, Ron Vance, Greg Vesco and Cassandra Yancey.

“Also, the team has recently incorporated new processes that include Quality Assurance, First Contact Resolutions, P1 Engagement (and) Customer Backlog Management that has driven escalations down while increasing response time for our customers. This was no easy task as the Customer Service Center had to build new habits and adjust to a maturing environment. The Customer Service Center has now become quite diverse and more efficient on how daily business is handled and as we grow, these traits will assist in the continuation of IT optimization.”

Nominees:

- ★ Joel Coughlin
- ★ Mike McKinley
- ★ Mukesh Thaker
- ★ Mihai Felderean
- ★ Bob Miller