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Governor's Award for Excellence presented to 23 employees

COLUMBUS (April 14, 2017) — Ohio Lt. Gov. Mary Taylor and Ohio Department of Administrative Services Director Robert Blair today honored 23 employees from four state agencies with the Governor's Award for Employee Excellence for extraordinary public service.

Of the 23 honorees, 12 were from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), nine from the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) and one each from the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) and the State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy. The awards were presented in the State Room of the Ohio Statehouse.

Lt. Gov. Taylor joined each of the agencies' respective directors -- Jerry Wray of ODOT, Gary Mohr of DRC, Sarah Morrison of BWC and Steven Schierholt of the Pharmacy Board -- in recognizing the Governor's Award winners. "We feel that all of the employees who serve their fellow Ohioans are special," Lt. Gov. Taylor said. "The Governor's Award for Employee Excellence is a distinct honor in recognition of those who have demonstrated excellence in their work. Each winner was nominated by their agency leaders who felt that they were worthy of this unique honor."

The Governor's Award winners were as follows:

Ohio Department of Transportation: Nancy C. Burton, Gary K. Fetherolf, Kevin R. Fiant, Timothy J. Keller, Nathan Lang, Thomas M. Lau, Jason Lucas, Shawn Rostorfer, Kraig Shrewsberry, Duane Soisson, Anthony Turowski and Jeffrey A. Vance

The ODOT nominees responded to an emergency repair situation after a truck loaded with ethanol exploded underneath the bridge connecting I-70 with I-270 near the downtown Columbus area. The accident resulted in the need to remove and replace a 60-foot section of the bridge. The noted individuals quickly procured an emergency contract to execute repairs and worked evenings, nights and weekends (which included the Fourth of July holiday) to ensure that the damaged portion of the freeway and bridge was opened to traffic within 20 days of the incident. The time frame in which corrective actions were planned, communicated and put into action had a significant impact on motorists in a highly traveled area of central Ohio.

Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction: Jennifer L. Black, Jennifer A. Boswell, Sherry A. Clouser, LaShann Eppinger, Dionne D. Eslick, John T. Gannon, Todd E. Ishee, Michelle M. Roche and Thomas J. Thompson

The nine DRC employees were recognized for their participation in the expansion of the HOPE (Helping Ohio Prisoners Excel) Channel, an inmate-produced television channel providing inmates with skills and training in writing, filming, editing and producing video content in a variety of settings via advanced computer applications. The nomination of the DRC team was accompanied by several testimonial letters from partner agencies in northeast Ohio, citing among positive aspects "their tireless efforts to accomplish the goal of reducing recidivism through resident-generated television." The HOPE Channel is funded solely through grants and donations without the use of state dollars. The broadcasts

are delivered seven days a week to all offenders throughout the northeast region's six prisons. Expansion plans are underway to include more institutions with a goal to reach all Ohio prisons.

Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation: Johnnie Hanna

The pharmacy director for BWC, Johnnie Hanna, is a key member of Gov. John Kasich's Opioid Action Team and has played a key role in the development of BWC's pharmacy benefits plan. Hanna was chosen for the Governor's Award for his contribution to his team's efforts to identify high-risk medications, develop rules for the prescribing and discontinuation of certain opioids, and initiating a retail pharmacy-based medication therapy management program to coordinate medications in high-risk claims.

State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy: Chad M. Garner

Chad Garner, the director of the Ohio Automated Rx Reporting System (OARRS), also has been deeply involved in the Kasich Administration's efforts to protect Ohioans from prescription drug abuse. Garner was honored for helping build and implement Ohio's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP). Because of the efforts of the OARRS staff, which Garner directs, prescribers and pharmacists now have the ability to instantly review a patient's controlled substance prescription history, helping them identify high-risk patients who would benefit from early interventions. Garner also was recognized for assisting the state in developing guidelines aimed at reducing the amount of prescription painkillers in Ohio.