



El Diario Sin Nombre

The Newsletter Without A Name

NM Human Services Department
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Human Resources Bureau Helps Everyone

HSD Human Resources (HR) knows when you're hired and it knows when you're retired—and just about everything else in between. HR, formerly known as “Personnel” is not to be confused with the State Personnel Office. Employees often get the two entities confused. The change from “Personnel” to “Human Resources” should help to eliminate that confusion, as well as update the image of the unit. The sixteen HR employees work either in human resource administration, loss control and employee insurance benefits, or employee relations, staff development and training. HR provides customer service to the department's 1500 employees in nearly 100 different personnel-related matters, ranging from recruitment to employee development.

The self-described “conductor” of this ensemble is Joanne Gonzales, who has headed the unit for the past four years. “I want our employees to feel they can call us to get information and assistance. I like to think that we can help people solve problems and provide support to our managers. I've done every job in the bureau, so you could say that I've played every instrument in the orchestra. Now I just conduct it,” said Gonzales, who grew up in the small town of Tucumcari. She is the fifth of twelve children, an unusually large family by today's standards.

According to Gonzales, a big challenge in HR management is to maintain consistency across divisions in the application of personnel policies. “Each office has a different culture, which is greatly influenced not only by the central office division management, but also by the local manager,” said Gonzales. She credits the PAD system for contributing to consistency among the divisions. “It gives managers a useful tool to uniformly document employee performance,” she said.

“The PAD appraisal system, which replaced the PDP evaluation in 1997, has been revised,” said Gonzales. The system now features five rating levels, instead of the four used since inception. Annual evaluations will no longer be tied to employee anniversary dates but given to all employees during the months of September and October. “This is called a ‘focal point’ evaluation. Those who were in their current positions with the department before July 1, 2002 will be evaluated by their supervisors,” said Gonzales. “This will present challenges, since some employees will be evaluated before they become competent in their jobs because the job has a long learning curve.”

Gonzales entered her career in human resources through the back door, so to speak. She began her government career with the State Library in Santa Fe before joining what was then the HSD Personnel Bureau. “I spent most of my youth inside Tucumcari's public library,” said Gonzales. “I must have read every book in that library. The public library system is the great equalizer in America because every man, woman, and child, whether rich or poor, has the same access to information. This gives individuals an opportunity to acquire information and knowledge that might not otherwise be available.”



HSD HR Bureau Chief Joanne Gonzales

Survey Report

In July, 2002, the Communications and Planning Offices of HSD collaborated to conduct a survey of all employees. The survey coincided with the kick-off of the FY 2004 strategic planning season, and the questions were designed to provide input into the plan. Executive staff have already seen the raw results, and a management summary is being drafted.

In this edition of *El Diario Sin Nombre*, we document the results of the survey. We are only able to reproduce a very small number of comments due to space limitations—more than 150 people wrote comments—but we have tried to provide a flavor of the overall response. Copies of the final report will be available from Carl Dickens, Director of Planning and Operations. A follow-on communications-related survey is in the works.

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HSD Hosts National Welfare Research Conference

The 42nd Annual Workshop of the National Association for Welfare Research and Statistics (NAWRS) will take place at the Albuquerque Hilton Hotel, from August 26 to 28. This year's conference theme is "Research, Reauthorization and Beyond."

According to Jeff Repichowski, NAWRS president and chief economist for the Income Support Division (ISD), "We have an excellent program planned, with more than 150 presentations by welfare research experts from across the country." Presentations will cover every major program administered by the department, including Child Support Enforcement, Food Stamps, TANF, and Medicaid. Other presentations will discuss homelessness, food insecurity, work barriers, the role of social workers, marriage and welfare, and survey and administrative data analysis techniques.

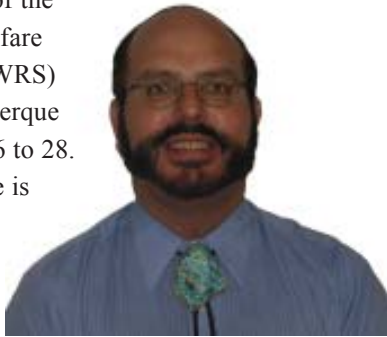
Deputy Secretary Barry Bitzer will provide opening remarks on August 26. Additional HSD participation in the conference will include presentations by Repichowski and Mary Beth Maestas, also an economist for ISD, about welfare reform research efforts in New Mexico and the results of the ISD workload analysis study. Cathy Sisneros, of ISD's Management Information Bureau, will demonstrate the Windows©-based State System Applicant Links to Services for Assistance (SSALSA), scheduled to be rolled out here in December.

NATIONAL EXPERTS PRESENT

There will also be presentations by nationally known experts in the human services sector. These include talks by Mr. Don Winstead, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Mr. Andy Bush, Director of the Office of Family Assistance at DHHS. Dr. Eddie Brown and Dr. Stephen Cornell, both experts in the area of tribal TANF and rural economic development are also speaking at this conference.

"It is an honor for the Department to host the NAWRS conference this year," said Repichowski. "By coming to Albuquerque, NAWRS recognizes the hard work our field staff do serving the vulnerable citizens of the state, and the good work we have done in welfare reform research."

For more information about the conference, visit the NAWRS website at <http://www.nawrs.org> or HSD's website at <http://www.state.nm.us/hsd/nawrs.html>.✱



NAWRS President and ISD Chief Economist Jeff Repichowski

Commodities Summer Food Program Helps Most Needy

Commodities staff visited Anthony, NM last month, to attend the Stars and Stripes Summer Food Fiesta. The fiesta was held at a park in one of the six *colonias* in southern New Mexico served by the food program. "It was a celebration of the great job that the Gadsden School District is doing to reach out to children in remote areas to provide free lunches," said Judith Bailey, Commodities Bureau Chief.

About 125 children came to the fiesta at the makeshift picnic area on a dirt field with a small concrete slab identified on the map as a park. "Fortunately, the Gadsden food service staff converted this dirt area into a picnic area by bringing in portable picnic tables, umbrellas and folding chairs," said Bailey.

The children were treated to a hot lunch of chicken chunks, biscuits, corn on the cob, milk and apples. Red, white and blue balloons as well as hats and pencils for each child made the event festive.

HSD and the Children, Youth, and Families Department administer the summer food program, which last year provided 2.6 million breakfasts and lunches to an average of 55,000 children per day, from 747 different locations. Typical sites are community centers, schools, Boys and Girls Clubs, churches, and city or county parks and recreation areas. New Mexico serves the fourth highest number of meals in the nation under this program.✱

What's a Colonia?

There are about 137 *colonias* in New Mexico, communities so designated by county governments. They range in size from small subdivisions to incorporated entities, but all are within 150 miles of the U.S. Mexico border—and they all share a lack of basic infrastructure and unsafe, substandard housing. Being designated a *colonia* qualifies a community for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) set-aside funding for infrastructure improvement projects as well as economic development services from regional economic development alliances and business incubator programs.



A home in one of the *colonias* located a few miles north of the Anthony ISD field office.

July 2002 Survey Results

There were a total of 324 responses to the recent survey, or about 22 percent of HSD's employees and almost double the general response rate of 10 percent for surveys. This is consistent with the response rate in the previous two years and indicates a real interest in employees expressing their concerns and this is further demonstrated by the over 150 written comments.

Director of Planning and Operations Carl Dickens had this message for employees: "Employees listed salary, staffing/turnover and consistency in policies as the top three issues impacting their own work as well as the department. Certainly many salary issues are beyond the control of the department, but we plan to look into possible ways to address the other concerns."

I want to assure all employees that the information gathered from the survey will be used for planning and organizational management purposes. Please look forward to future communications telling you of our progress and thanks to all employees who participated in the survey."

Who took the survey:

1. I provide services to

clients	168	51.9%
other HSD staff and state agencies	81	25.0%
the public/taxpayers of New Mexico	75	23.1%
Total	324	100.0%

2. I am a

line staff person	230	71.0%
manager	59	18.2%
supervisor	35	10.8%
Total	324	100.0%

3. My program [division] is

Income Support Program	185	57.1%
Child Support Enforcement Program	83	25.6%
Medical Assistance Program	28	8.6%
Program Support	28	8.6%

4. I have been with HSD

over 10 years	94	29.0%
1 to 3 years	90	27.8%
4 to 10 years	87	26.9%
less than 1 year	53	16.4%

Comments

As it stands, we are severely overworked, underpaid, and under-appreciated. Please train or hire upper mgmt that is educated and familiar with staff management. The turnover rate is ridiculous, and obviously there is a reason for it ... I wish that management would make some kind of allowances for clerks that are satisfied in their job, continue to train new employees and are depended upon for advice ... After 23 yrs with the department, I feel the lady who is now the head of our department is the best I have ever had the privilege of working under. She shows concern for both clients and employees. She is encouraging and makes the goals seem attainable ... All employees should be treated the same. In my office there are people who brown nose and get better treatment than those who just try to do their work to the best of their ability ... Although I have been with CSED in New Mexico for a little less than three years. I do have approximately twenty five years in this field. I have worked in Arizona, and Texas. I find that New Mexico is more concerned about the people we serve ... Better communications from senior management ... Regarding policy/procedures, they should be rewritten for clarity. The policy directives are unduly lengthy and hard to follow. I suggest that a team of FAA's, in conjunction with central office, review ... Could not select only 3 items in questions 26 and 25. All are badly needed ...

Celebrating the United States of America



Child Support Region V (Santa Fe) staff at this year's Secretary's picnic, held July 3rd for the over 400 HSD employees working in Santa Fe. This year's picnic had a patriotic theme—people were asked to display American flags of all sizes. Front row left to right: Brandi Salas, Venessa CdeBaca, Roman Gurule. Back row left to right: Kara Martin, Lupita Capelli, Minnie Chavez, Merlinda Neville, Nena Morton, Joe Anaya, Melinda Pineda (and baby).

What's important to HSD employees:

26. On the following list, check the **three** issues that have the greatest impact on your ability to do your job

Salary increases/better benefits/better career paths	173	17.1%
Increase staff/reduce turnover	148	14.6%
Consistency of policies and procedures	129	12.7%
Respect and fair treatment from supervisors/support	113	11.2%
Better systems and software	94	9.3%
Appropriate hiring	82	8.1%
More training	78	7.7%
Less paperwork/decreased workloads	71	7.0%
More employee input into changes	70	6.9%
Empowerment to make decisions	54	5.3%
Total	1012	100.0%

How HSD employees feel:

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
5	My direct supervisor readily listens to suggestions for improvement and takes them seriously	28 8.6%	42 13.0%	53 16.4%	124 38.3%	77 23.8%	324 100.0%
6	HSD senior management readily listens to suggestions for improvement and takes them seriously	56 17.3%	76 23.5%	93 28.7%	81 25.0%	18 5.6%	324 100.0%
7	Overall, HSD's performance in meeting constituents' needs is excellent	15 4.6%	64 19.8%	99 30.6%	127 39.2%	19 5.9%	324 100.0%
8	Overall, my program's performance in meeting constituents' needs is excellent	12 3.7%	41 12.7%	73 22.5%	160 49.4%	38 11.7%	324 100.0%
9	I am able to serve my constituency very well in terms of overall service	5 1.5%	35 10.8%	45 13.9%	196 60.5%	43 13.3%	324 100.0%
10	I am able to serve my constituency very well in terms of my ability to solve problems	3 0.9%	18 5.6%	23 7.1%	202 62.3%	78 24.1%	324 100.0%
11	I am able to serve my constituency very well in terms of my ability to respond in a timely manner	9 2.8%	26 8.0%	37 11.4%	170 52.5%	82 25.3%	324 100.0%
12	I understand the mission of my bureau/office	4 1.2%	10 3.1%	28 8.6%	160 49.4%	122 37.7%	324 100.0%
13	I understand how the work that I do contributes toward achieving the mission of my bureau/office	2 0.6%	9 2.8%	25 7.7%	167 51.5%	121 37.3%	324 100.0%
14	I understand the mission of my bureau/office	3 0.9%	11 3.4%	36 11.1%	164 50.6%	110 34.0%	324 100.0%
15	I understand how the work that I do contributes toward achieving the mission of my bureau/office	3 0.9%	10 3.1%	23 7.1%	170 52.5%	118 36.4%	324 100.0%
16	I understand the mission of my program [division]	3 0.9%	9 2.8%	29 9.0%	176 54.3%	107 33.0%	324 100.0%
17	I understand how the work that I do contributes toward achieving the mission of my program [division]	1 0.3%	7 2.2%	25 7.7%	184 56.8%	107 33.0%	324 100.0%
18	I understand the mission of HSD	0 0.0%	8 2.5%	38 11.8%	189 58.5%	88 27.2%	323 100.0%
19	I understand how the work that I do contributes toward achieving the mission of HSD	3 0.9%	7 2.2%	30 9.3%	193 59.8%	90 27.9%	323 100.0%
20	I have the knowledge and skills to do my job	2 0.6%	7 2.2%	17 5.3%	150 46.4%	147 45.5%	323 100.0%
21	My supervisor has the knowledge and skills to do his/her job	17 5.3%	35 10.8%	42 13.0%	118 36.5%	111 34.4%	323 100.0%
22	Senior management has the knowledge and skills to do their job	22 6.8%	43 13.3%	92 28.5%	114 35.3%	52 16.1%	323 100.0%
23	In planning, this department needs to concentrate on improving HOW things get done	5 1.5%	7 2.2%	47 14.6%	137 42.4%	127 39.3%	323 100.0%
24	In planning, this department needs to concentrate on improving WHAT things get done	8 2.5%	16 5.0%	48 14.9%	151 46.7%	100 31.0%	323 100.0%

Comments continued from page 3

HSD is a great department to work for, but budget is a big issue. Office supplies, and state vehicles are a shortage. Someone should look at the satellite offices, and their needs. State owned buildings need better care ... HSD should have a 20 year retirement plan. The stress and difficulty of the job at HSD takes a greater toll on its employees than at other state agencies ... I am new with HSD and I can truthfully say that I love the work that I am doing, but the workload that is put on the caseworker can sometimes be overwhelming. If there was more teamwork, I know that it would make the workload so much easier ... I don't think we help the elderly near enough, they are on a limited budget, cannot afford medicines, or health insurance but yet you hardly hear them complain ... Just that I truly love working in the Human Services Department. I truly believe that it is a good and truly needed department. I truly believe in its purpose but does have some glitches that need improvement for happier employees and better production ... Policies and procedures for jobs should be available for new employees so they may refer back to as references. Difficult to be assigned a task and have no direction ... The results of this survey should show an overall increased positive feedback from the last survey taken by HSD staff. Since then, many systems, procedures and policies have been established ...

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