



2012 Missouri State Employees of the Month

January 2012 State Employee of the Month

Kristina Larsson – Department of Mental Health



Above Governor Nixon awards Kristina Larsson as the January State Employee of the Month. Also pictured back row left, is Director of the Dept. of Mental Health Dr. Keith Schafer, family and co-workers. Below Director Schafer and Governor Nixon give remarks on Ms. Larsson's accomplishment.



Ms. Kristina Larsson is employed with the Department of Mental Health as a Service Coordinator II for their St. Louis Regional Office (SLRO) within the Developmental Disabilities – Jefferson County site. On a daily basis Ms. Larsson provides professional services for all the clients within her care, and is a tremendous advocate for her clients. Ms. Larsson regularly receives compliments from the parents of the juveniles she serves who are very appreciative of her assistance and was recently involved in successfully advocating for community placement funds for a 16 year old consumer who has challenging behaviors.

Ms. Larsson worked with the client's adoptive mother, adoption subsidy worker and Children's Division Personnel to ensure necessary supports were in place, worked on some home modifications and diligently worked with the Business Office as SLRO became payee of his social Security benefits. Kristina coordinated a unique financial agreement, involving a portion of the Adoption subsidy funding used to support this placement covering everything in an organized and easy to understand manner. It was through Ms. Larsson efforts that the placement was complete and this individual is now doing very well in his new home.

Her dedication to excellence is seen in many ways including her Individual Support Plans (ISPs) which have been used as team examples. Ms. Larsson was also selected as the Tri-County Representative to discuss a possible template for ISPs. Her plans are very detailed and give the reader a great snapshot of the client and also provide superb justification of funding requests. Ms. Kristina Larsson is a valuable asset to the Department, clients she serves, and Missouri citizens.

February 2012 State Employee of the Month

Angela Cullifer – Department of Health and Senior Services



Above Governor Nixon awards Angela Cullifer as the February State Employee of the Month. Also pictured back row left, is Deputy Director for the Dept. of Health and Senior Services, Gail Vasterling [behind Governor Nixon to right], family and co-workers.

Angela Cullifer is employed with the Dept. of Health and Senior Services as an Adult Protective Community Worker in Macon County, Region 5. Her daily duties include intake, screening, processing reports, investigating reports of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation, and all steps needed to assure the safety of her clients.

Ms. Cullifer's dedication and commitment to her clients was recently shown in her diligence when advocating for a client who had been raped. Angela met the client at the emergency department of a local hospital and when the client became scared and upset, the emergency room doctor refused to perform the examination. Angela requested the emergency department nurse contact the client's primary care physician who came to the hospital and performed the necessary exam.

Angela worked to obtain an emergency guardianship for the client and assisted the client in obtaining the public administrator, as a guardian/conservator, so the client could be placed in a protected living environment. She had to strongly advocate, again, for the client because the new guardian did not want to pursue criminal

charges thinking the process would be too stressful for the client. Angela was able to help the guardian see the need for the alleged perpetrator to be charged. In addition to her strong support of her client through the medical process, Ms. Cullifer also had to work actively to get the police to keep this case open because the police officer did not believe a rape had occurred. When the DNA test results came back as positive, then the officer agreed a rape had occurred and sent the criminal case to the prosecutor. Without the persistence shown by Ms. Cullifer the client would have been pushed aside and the incident written off as untrue. Ms. Angela Cullifer exemplifies the meaning of the word advocate, and is without question a valuable asset to her clients, the Department of Health and Senior Services and Missouri citizens.

March 2012 State Employee of the Month

Kathie Metzinger – Department of Mental Health



Above Governor Nixon awards Kathie Metzinger as the March State Employee of the Month. Also pictured is Director for the Dept. of Mental Health – Dr. Keith Schafer [far left], family and co-workers.

Below Dr. Schafer and Governor Nixon give remarks on Ms. Metzinger's accomplishment.



As an Employee Health Nurse/Infection Preventionist for the Department of Mental Health's Northwest Missouri Psychiatric Rehabilitation Center, Kathie Metzinger handles all infection control issues, including monitoring infections, infection control training, reporting, developing policies, inspecting areas, and insuring proper hand-washing. Additionally, she also serves as Employee Health Nurse and tracks and provides annual TB testing, verifies health records of students and interns, assists employees with FMLA applications, and tracks FMLA usage. However she recently took action far above her daily duties that resulted in the life saving of a fellow employee and her husband.

Last fall, a fellow employee who works in the nursing department attempted to reach her supervisor to report she would not be at work due to family illness. As the supervisor was not available, the employee spoke with Kathie. This employee explained that she had taken her husband to the emergency room the evening before, but was still in need of care; the employee also reported that she was experiencing similar symptoms and was having difficulty staying awake and walking and was going to lie down.

Upon hearing this Kathie immediately asked if this couple had gas heat in their home and the employee responded affirmatively. Ms. Metzinger explained that the couple may be experiencing carbon monoxide poisoning and told the employee to call 911 and raise windows in the home. At first the employee was reluctant, but after persistence from Kathie this fellow employee did as Kathie requested. By the time first responders arrived on the scene the employee had drug her unresponsive husband outside; and when officials tested the home and it was found to have potentially lethal levels of carbon monoxide. The couple was taken to the hospital where they were both treated and later released. Without Kathie Metzinger's insight into the serious nature of the situation and her quick and persistent instruction to the caller a tragedy may have occurred.

April 2012 State Employee of the Month

Brian Allen – Department of Natural Resources



Above Governor Nixon awards Brian Allen as the April State Employee of the Month. Also pictured is Director for the Dept. of Natural Resources, Sara Parker Pauley Schafer [far left], family and co-workers. Right: Director Pauley and Governor Nixon give remarks on Mr. Allen's accomplishment.



Mr. Brian Allen, Acting Environmental Services Program Director for the Department of Natural Resources [DNR], recently was a key asset in providing leadership in the response and recovery of the devastating 2011 Joplin tornado.

Within hours of the incident, Brian led the DNR's efforts at the State Emergency Operation Center [SEOC] and established operations for Emergency Support Functions [ESF]. He arranged for staff to make an immediate response to support search and recovery efforts, began planning for 24/7 coverage for the SEOC operations, initiated on-site staff rotation/scheduling, worked to establish a base of operations for field staff to work from home, provided frequent management briefings/updates and queried multiple GIS layers and databases to identify regulated facilities and sensitive areas in the tornados footprint.

Working with the Missouri Army National Guard Command Center he accomplished a direct line of communication with key department staff to address many complex issues. Additionally Brian coordinated support from the EPA to craft mission-assignments for air monitoring and management of multiple debris waste streams, and confirmed waivers for lifting landfill bands and permits for open burning. He engaged with the Dept. of Public Safety to help identify equipment staging locations to support the response and law enforcement available to security, maintained a daily presence in the debris task force meetings, facilitated discussions regarding solid waste management locations, and established an e-mail group to streamline the permitting issues occurring between regional and central office staff.

Mr. Brian Allen leads by example and not only did Mr. Allen showcase his enormous talent during this tragic event but he also gave the Joplin community a glimpse of the pride and talent that the Department of Natural Resources' staff possesses. Mr. Brian Allen is a shining example for all Missourians to emulate

May 2012 State Employee of the Month

Brian Miller – Department of Natural Resources

Right, Governor Nixon [center] awards Brian Miller as the May State Employee of the Month. Also pictured is Bill Bryan, Director for the Division of State Parks, [far right].

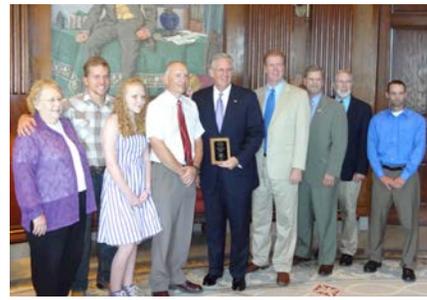


Mr. Brian Miller, Natural Resource Steward for Prairie State Park, is charged with planning, directing, and coordinating assigned components of the natural resources management program involving such things as ecosystem restoration, and scientific research. However, during the months of August through November of 2011 Mr. Miller took on the challenge of a very special project to build and supervise a crew of State Parks Youth Corps [SPYC] workers.

The devastating tornado that struck Joplin destroyed much of the city, including its city parks. The challenge of putting together a qualified team, and managing them from 40 miles away, was not easy but Brian willingly took on this charge. Realizing he would not be able to supervise the Youth Corps on a daily basis, Brian interviewed all the SPYC workers personally, and identified a seasonal employee to serve as the lead worker.

In addition to overseeing the crew Brian was also responsible for securing transportation, food, and water, personal protection equipment, tools and logistics coordination. Brian spent time training the SPYC in work ethic and skills and was instrumental in keeping the morale up and the workers dedicated even when muscles and backs were extremely sore. The crew was expected to work in the dead heat of summer, through a cold wet fall into early winter, and manage ways to continue working even with the many people who stopped by to see what the team was accomplishing.

Throughout this entire process Brian continued all his regular duties at Prairie State Park, which during this timeframe included organizing bison and elk round-up and



Above Brian Miller is pictured with Governor Nixon, Bill Bryan, Director for the Division of State Parks, family and co-workers

vaccinations, managing and holding the annual bison auction, eradicating exotic invasive species, conducting prescribed fires on portions of the Prairie's 4,000 acres and managing his full-time staff to continue to serve the public at Prairie State Park. And yet Brian was not done; in an effort to thank this special crew Brian arranged for them to visit Prairie State Park as a field trip and provided them with lunch and an opportunity to see bison and elk in their native habitat. Brian showed initiative in developing solutions every time a challenge came his way and is a valuable resource not only to the Department but to Missouri citizens.

June 2012 State Employee of the Month

Katy Morgan – Department of Health and Senior Services



Above, Governor Nixon [right] awards Katy Morgan as the June State Employee of the Month. Also pictured is Margaret Donnelly, Director for the Dept. of Health and Senior Services, [center]. Below Katy Morgan is pictured with Governor Nixon, Director Donnelly, family and co-workers.

Katy Morgan is employed with the Department of Health and Senior Services as a Public Health Laboratory Scientist in the Microbiology Unit at the Missouri State Public Health Laboratory [MSPHL]. Katy utilizes analytical techniques in microbiology to molecularly subtype bacteria strains by pulsed field gel electrophoresis or PFGE. This laboratory technique is critical in food borne outbreaks to identify bacteria and then link it specifically by DNA fingerprinting to other bacteria from human and food sources to that scope of outbreaks and potentially the causative source can be identified.

In October-November 2011, the Dept. of Health and Senior Services, along with other local, state, and federal entities; worked together to provide a comprehensive response to a nationwide E. coli O157:H7 outbreak that predominantly existed in the St. Louis area. While many MSPHL scientists and support staff provided invaluable time and effort to support this event, Katy Morgan displayed exceptional dedication and effort to perform laboratory responsibilities during this public health crisis. Katy worked in the laboratory for 20 consecutive days, which included weekends, a state holiday, and many hours after the normal work day, to ensure that her expertise could provide the necessary laboratory information to all response entities involved. During this E. coli O157:H7 outbreak, the MSPHL Microbiology Unit analyzed 147 clinical samples for E. coli over a one month period. This

compares to the previous three year median of 32 enteric samples for that similar time period.

Katy's exceptional effort and dedication ensured consistent and dependable microbiological testing so that local, state, and federal stakeholders were provided vital information to help make key public health decisions in the investigation and control of the St. Louis E. coli O157:H7 outbreak. Katy Morgan's performance symbolizes the motivation, professionalism, and extra efforts that state employees continue to provide to protect the health and well-being of Missourians.



July 2012 State Employee of the Month

Paul Vitzthum – Department of Natural Resources



Above, Governor Nixon [center] awards Paul Vitzthum as the July State Employee of the Month.

As an Environmental Specialist IV for the Dept. of Natural Resources' Southwest Regional Office [SWRO], Paul Vitzthum plans, directs, coordinates, and reports activities of programs, and exercises independence and judgment for administrative direction. In the spring of 2003, when multiple tornados destroyed large portions of the Southwest Missouri communities of Pierce City, Stockton, and Battlefield, Paul quietly assumed the role of the Southwest Regional Office's disaster coordinator.

Paul worked to form teams of SWRO staff to canvass the areas of destruction, looking for areas which warranted further and closer evaluation for removal of hazardous materials. As the days progressed it became evident that a primary focus of regional staff would be the patrolling of outlying areas to look for evidence of illegal disposal of the debris as business and home owners began the process of cleaning their lots in the most timely and economical ways possible. Under Paul's guidance, multiple illegal dumping and open burning sites were located and quickly addressed.

Paul's staff worked with the city of Joplin's Building Department to coordinate proper and legal management of the demolition/renovation of the estimated 8,000 structures impacted by the tornado. As summer turned to fall and the work in Joplin faded from front page news stories, Paul focused his efforts on working with the city of Joplin to demolish six of the city's public schools. Coordination meetings turned into daily visits to Joplin to have boots on the ground in the demolition zones to ensure that contractors were following proper guidance and FEMA reimbursement would not be placed at risk.

Mother Nature struck again on February 29, 2012; Paul again revved up his staff, gathered his debris management plans, and dispatched teams to Branson, Buffalo, and Kimberling City to aide and assist local governments in their efforts to recover and rebuild. Noting a need in the Dallas County area for assistance, Paul contacted the Solid Waste Management Program staff and suggested use of settlement funding to arrange the placement of large dumpsters in the rural areas to allow for homeowners to legally and cheaply dispose of their debris. This effort resulted in 360 cubic yards of debris being disposed of at no cost to those affected homeowners. Paul directed and advised numerous private individuals, business owners, private contractors, local government officials, state officials, and federal officials from Missouri to Washington, D.C. Paul's work goes on as he quietly comes in early and stays late, offering guidance and direction when and where needed. Paul Vitzthum is an invaluable asset to Missourians.

August 2012 State Employee of the Month

Sharilyn Hilliard – Department of Mental Health



Above, Governor Nixon [center] awards Sharilyn Hilliard as the August State Employee of the Month. Also pictured is Margaret Donnelly, Director of the Dept. of Health and Senior Services [right of Governor], family, friends and co-workers.

Sharilyn Hilliard, a Child Care Facility Specialist with the Department of Health and Senior Services' Section for Child Care Regulation [SCCR], inspects and investigates child care facilities in Central Missouri. Sharilyn's main responsibilities are to protect the health and safety of children in child care.

In addition to her normal duties, Sharilyn volunteered to become a trainer to educate child care providers about emergency preparedness, how to write and implement an emergency plan, draft such a plan to meet each providers individual needs, and has conducted several training sessions throughout Central District. Most were held in the evenings or on Saturdays to accommodate provider's schedules and also continues to provide technical assistance to licensed child care providers when preparing their disaster and emergency preparedness plans.

On May 25, 2011, a tornado touched ground in Sedalia, MO during the primary hours of child care. Sharilyn contacted facilities in Pettis County to assure the safety of the providers as well as the children in their care. One provider in the Sedalia area suffered extensive amount of damage to her home. Due to the power failures and

telephone lines down, the provider was unable to be contacted. Sharilyn's sincere concern for the provider's safety led her to make a personal visit to the provider's residence to assess the damage and assure the health and safety of the child care facility was addressed. The provider and the children all followed the necessary precautions during this hazardous situation. The provider and all the children in her care during the tornado remained unharmed but due to the amount of damage had to temporarily close. Sharilyn worked quickly with other health and safety child care inspectors and the provider to get this facility back in operation and caring for those children that did not have other daycare arrangements.

Sharilyn' ability to listen patiently, and promptly and effectively address the concerns of some of the districts most recalcitrant providers, has resulted in strong working relationships with the clients she serves. Sharilyn often works long past her quitting time and willingly meets with parents and providers after hours to accommodate their work schedule. Ms. Sharilyn Hilliard is a shining example of dedication and commitment to Missourians and is someone to emulate.

September 2012 State Employee of the Month

Angela Pemberton – Department of Natural Resources



Governor Nixon [center left] awards Angela Pemberton as the September State Employee of the Month. Also pictured [far left] is Sara Parker Pauley, Director of the Dept. Natural Resources. Also pictured are family, friends and co-workers.

As a Procurement Officer I for the Department of Natural Resource's Environmental Services Program [ESP], Angela Pemberton frequently goes beyond the normal scope of her day-to-day responsibilities.

Recent months however, have been particularly challenging due to Angela's supervisor being away on special assignment. In addition to her normal duties Angela oversaw the installation of a new roof on the laboratory building and replacement of the HVAC system; which required daily interaction with the contractors. Beyond this Angela also tracks key expenditures by month and fiscal year and is phenomenally accurate in forecasting the amount needed per month and her personal efforts keep ESP's spending on track. She also is in charge of surplus equipment, puts bids for items on govdeals.com, oversees the bidding process and pickup of items, is charged as Fleet

Manager of the ESP vehicles [approximately 20] plus trailers and boats, coordinates vehicle repairs with the Office of Administration Garage and ESP staff, and recently was in charge of the installation of new phones throughout the building; this was complicated due to special phone needs for several units.

Angela works diligently daily and in a couple of hours alone will respond to maintenance problems, vehicle issues, purchase requests/issues, phone calls, email and much more. She takes the initiative to help people with their problems and puts in extra effort to complete her own projects. Angela's and efficient persona ensure that the emergency response trucks are repaired, chemists have laboratory supplies, air monitoring staff are supplied with necessary equipment, and water monitoring staff have boating and other supplies. Ms. Angela Pemberton helps ensure the success of the ESP program and a valuable asset to the Department.

October 2012 State Employee of the Month

Kim McKane – Department of Social Services



Governor Nixon [center] awards Kim McKane as the October State Employee of the Month. Also pictured are family, friends and co-workers.

As a Research Analyst III for the Department of Social Services, Kim McKane provides routine and special reports for the Children's Division. When Children's Division changed their data system Kim worked tirelessly to learn the new system and determined how to extract data from it so the Children's Division didn't experience an extended period without management reports. One of Kim's most recent accomplishments was creating reports that the Children's Division uses for PERforM for staff. PERforM required many weeks of complex computer coding, testing, and refinement in response to the customers' needs and made it possible for Children's Division to have worker level performance outcomes for staff in time for the 2012 PERforM.

Another example of Ms. McKane's commitment to excellence was demonstrated by her work with the Children's Service group housed within the Research and Evaluation Unit. The past few years have been demanding with an extremely challenging conversion of all Children's Division data to an entirely new, federally compliant database system. Kim's expertise assisted in modifying Alternative Care, Child Abuse and Neglect, Family Centered Services, and Intensive In-Home Services computer programs to produce monthly, quarterly, and annual reports used staff within the Department. Ms. McKane worked with the FACES/ITSD staff during conversion by completing a portion of the Federal Report contained in the Legacy database and provided assistance to staff to obtain data elements to submit the mandated Federal Report in a timely fashion preventing possible sanctions to the Department. One very valuable program created and maintained by Ms. McKane produces data on a monthly basis that not only saves time for unit programmers, but reduces CPU time for ad hoc requests received for Children's Division data. Kim provided training to her co-workers on how to capture data and store it to enhance programming time, thereby reducing CPU costs. The workers and managers in the field rely on the information provided by Ms. McKane to be able to manage their caseloads, to keep track of children in their care, and to provide data to enable them to constantly evaluate how best to meet children's needs.

Ms. Kim McKane is a real asset to the Department and Missourians; her problem solving skills and fortitude to get a job completed to the customer's satisfaction sets an example of excellence in the work place for her coworkers. Many staff seeks her out for help with technical aspects of the job and she also serves as a good role model for interacting respectfully with customers. Kim's commitment to her job assists management staff in meeting one of the guiding principles of the Children's Division – "to partner with families, communities, and government to protect children from abuse and neglect and assure safety, permanency, and well-being for Missouri's children."

November 2012 State Employee of the Month Rachel Roberts – Department of Mental Health



Governor Nixon [center right] awards Rachel Roberts as the November State Employee of the Month. [far right] is Dr. Keith Schafer, Director of the Dept. of Mental Health; also pictured are friends, family and co-workers.

As a Custodial Worker for the Department of Mental Health's Higginsville Habilitation Center, Ms. Rachel Roberts consistently works to assure the Facility is kept clean and well maintained. However, Rachel recently stepped outside of her normal duties to provide assistance in a serious situation.

While driving her personal car home from work Rachel assisted in a situation involving a client and staff from one of the Individualized Supported Living [ISL] programs [offered through the Habilitation Center] which provide residential services to persons with developmental disabilities. Ms. Roberts observed a staff member and client on the side of the road and stopped to ask if they needed help; she quickly learned the client was having a "behavioral episode". As the staff member was alone Rachel realized her

assistance was needed; she stayed with the staff and calmed the client until additional assistance arrived and both staff and client were safe.

Although Rachel's work assignment is not providing direct care to persons with developmental disabilities, she utilized her staff training to recognize and understand the situation she encountered and then took the extra initiative to become involved and provide the help that was needed.

Rachel Roberts is a very motivated and is an outstanding role model for all employees with her positive attitude and is a valuable asset to the Department and Missouri citizens.

December 2012 State Employee of the Month Mark Parkhurst – Department of Corrections



Governor Nixon [center] awards Mark Parkhurst as the December State Employee of the Month. [far right] is George Lombardi, Director of the Dept. of Corrections; also pictured are friends, family and co-workers.

In his position as a Functional Unit Manager for the Department of Corrections' Crossroads Correctional Center [CRCC] in Cameron, MO, Mark Parkhurst manages multi-disciplinary staff; implements group treatment programs and services for offenders; reviews offender assessments that include institutional risk reduction and external and internal classifications; and often goes above and beyond his normal working duties.

An example of this was shown in April of 2012 when he received a phone call from a man requesting that an offender at CRCC cease all contact with his fiancée. During the phone conversation Mr. Parkhurst also spoke with the lady in question [living in Virginia] and asked if was being manipulated by the caller; from her responses Mr. Parkhurst became concerned with her well being. Mark followed up with the offender at CRCC and learned that the woman was actually his fiancée and the caller was an ex-offender. After doing some additional research, Mr. Parkhurst discovered the caller was assigned to the St. Louis Community Release Center [SLCRC] and there was a warrant for his arrest due to absconding. Mark retrieved the woman's address and phone number from the inmate at CRCC and provided this information to staff at SLCRC who advised they would contact the United States Marshall's office. Concerned for the woman's safety, Mr. Parkhurst contacted the Staunton, Virginia Police Department who conducted a well check at this request. With the information provided by Mr. Parkhurst the caller was arrested at that location due to an active warrant for being an absconder from the Missouri Department of Corrections.

Without the extra effort and concern shown by Mr. Parkhurst, the offender may still be an absconder and the woman, or others in the public may have been harmed.

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