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Teamwork pays off!

Each year ORS and Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) work together to coordinate health insurance benefits for our public school retirees enrolled in Medicare Advantage. Verifying whether a retiree is carrying other hospital, medical, and prescription drug benefits is not an easy undertaking, but thanks to proactive planning between CSC, BPD, and BCBS, this year's verification of coverage (VOC) process was a success.

The VOC team—**Cindy Mooney, Aimee Ross, Taylor Stiles,** and lead **Kathy Tober**—began meeting with BCBS last spring to set goals and plan a process that would continue to provide excellent service to our retirees at the lowest possible cost. BCBS worked closely with the VOC team as they analyzed and cross-referenced the data with various sources. After BCBS finalized the data, forms were mailed to 127,000 retirees. Once the forms were returned and processed by BCBS, **Julie Soliz** and **Mike Gallihugh** from AST assisted by running automated programs that added notes to more than 500 member accounts in Clarety.



"The cross-process planning and the partnering maximized efficiencies across the board as well as improved customer service," said Cindy. "Everyone's hard work up front and clear communications really paid off."

Some efficiencies seen this year:

- 99.7 percent of the 127,000 VOC forms were returned!
- The number of cancellations due to non-response dropped by 60 percent.
- The number of retirees calling to inquire about VOC dropped by over 6 percent in the month of August.
- The calls-answered ratio improved by 10 percent from last year due to improved, clearer customer notifications.

The diligent oversight of the annual VOC process minimizes both costs to the retirement system as well as cost increases to our retirees.

Calendar

September	
Central Perk Cleaning	26
October	
ORS Chili Cook-off	1
SPRS Board Meeting	15
Space Walk	15
Central Perk Cleaning	28
SERS Board Meeting	29
Halloween	31

On the Horizon

ORS shares its skills

- All Staff Meeting - November 3

Quick Links

- [ORS Member Website](#)
- [ORS Employer Website](#)
- [Knowledge Library](#)

Commonly Used Acronyms

AST	Application Support Team
BLA	Business Leadership Assembly (<i>EPC, BPOs, and BPLs</i>)
BPD	Benefit Plan Design
BPL	Business Process Leader
BPO	Business Process Owner
CE	Customer Education
CSC	Customer Service Center
DB	Defined Benefit
DC	Defined Contribution
DIT	Department of Information Technology
DMB	Department of Management and Budget
EPC	Executive Process Council (<i>Phil, Laurie, Tim, and Anthony</i>)
EPO	Executive Process Owner
ER	Employer Reporting
FLB	Forms, Letters, and Barcode
ORS	Office of Retirement Services
PRIM	Preretirement Information Meeting (<i>public school employees</i>)
PRO	Preretirement Orientation (<i>state employees</i>)
PS	Process Support
SME	Subject Matter Expert
T&T	Tools and

Focus on Process has been an ongoing DMB initiative for the past few years, with the goal of promoting process improvement/reengineering activities in DMB and creating a shared understanding and methodology for doing so. This year, ORS called upon **Lila Christiansen** and **Andy Kolp** to participate. Their experience with ORS process improvement and reengineering initiatives allowed them to effectively help a cross-department team analyze the process DMB uses to implement information technology (IT) initiatives.

The team proposed a process that aims to improve communication between DMB and DIT, as well as provide notification of potential IT changes earlier so DMB can be more proactive in planning. ORS and DIT are currently looking for opportunities to implement the new process.

The team also delivered an assessment of the risks associated with converting from GroupWise to Microsoft Outlook. While DIT has already converted to Outlook, there are a few outstanding concerns to address before DMB will be ready to do so. At this time no decision has been made regarding if or when DMB will convert.

Team members were successful in improving the IT implementation process and assessing risks with an upcoming IT project. They were also successful in forming working relationships across DMB, placing themselves in a better position to assist their agencies with future process improvement and reengineering opportunities.



Using Workforce Manager

Workforce Manager (WFM) is a call center technology solution for matching staff resources to customer needs daily.

WFM creates schedules for our staff who handle interactions (calls, correspondence, and message board) with our active and retired members. It analyzes historical data to set the optimal amount of staff on phones, and suggests the best times for lunches, breaks, team meetings, message board, and workflow processing. Team members who handle calls regarding insurance concerns will have WFM rolled out to them in September.

When CSC team members are asked to participate in projects, meetings, or other activities that are not already scheduled in WFM, the request should be coordinated through the WFM team. When you need to schedule a meeting with a CSC team member, please contact the WFM team at [ORS-CSC Scheduler](#) with your request or if you would like more information on WFM.

SECC making a difference!

Pledging to SECC is as easy as ever. You can make contributions online, by calling the MI HR Center, or by simply completing the pledge form.

Pledging online is easy through payroll deduction

Set up a biweekly payroll deduction through the MI HR Self-Service account. Simply choose a specific amount to be deducted each pay period or



Technology
UAT User Acceptance Testing

choose to become a continuous giver. If you're currently contributing to SECC, you have the ability to alter your contributions at anytime prior to the end of the campaign. Visit the SECC Online Tutorial for step by step instructions on how you can pledge online.



To help promote pledging online, ORS will conduct three \$10 gas card prize drawings. Two prizes will be awarded to first time payroll deduction contributors and one prize for returning payroll deduction contributors. Winners will be announced the week of October 19.

Upcoming SECC Events

- **The ORS Chili Cook-Off** - Get your choice of Chili and crackers or bread for just \$5 or donate chili and your name will be entered into a drawing for a \$10 gift card to Meijer. The cook-off takes place on Thursday, October 1, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
- **The Guessing Game** - Guess the amount of money in the jar and win the contents. The Guessing Game runs from October 5 through October 9.
- **The SECC Penny War** - It's back by popular demand and will wrap up the SECC events during the week of October 12 through October 16.

Details on these events will be coming soon from our SECC representatives, **Jennifer Carter** at carterj@michigan.gov or **Kaitlin Patrick** at patrickk2@michigan.gov. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact them.



Sounding Out is a way for ORS staff to share ideas, viewpoints, gripes, praises, and concerns. Email your opinion (300 words or less, if possible!) to ORS-LookOut@michigan.gov.

Here **Richard Miles**, who is a participant in DMB's leadership development program, shares his passion for finding new opportunities in the workplace.



Richard Miles

Sea of Opportunity

Hello friends, I want to tell you a story today. I hope it comes off not as a story to entertain, but more of a story to inspire. When I decided to write this piece, I was sitting in one of my many Leadership Development required courses listening to Ron Gillum, a retired state worker, speak on leadership. Ron didn't say anything different from what I have read in classes or studied in college, but the difference between his message and the messages written in books was his passion for what he's done for the majority of his life.

A mentor of Ron's once told him to set goals and realize that his future was in his hands and his life is truly what he made of it. I took this as a message or sign, if any of you believe in that sort of stuff, because in the last two weeks I have been bombarded with different people saying the same thing. I do believe that I have my future in my hands, but I have been going about it in a passive aggressive way. Instead of seeking out opportunity, I have been waiting until it comes my way, and then pouncing on it. So I decided to think differently. Instead of being plain ole Richard, I wake up in the morning and I say in loud military styled cadence, "My name is **Richard**. My last name is **Miles**. My initials are **R.P.M.**, and I believe I was born to **drive**, and I will drive my own success."

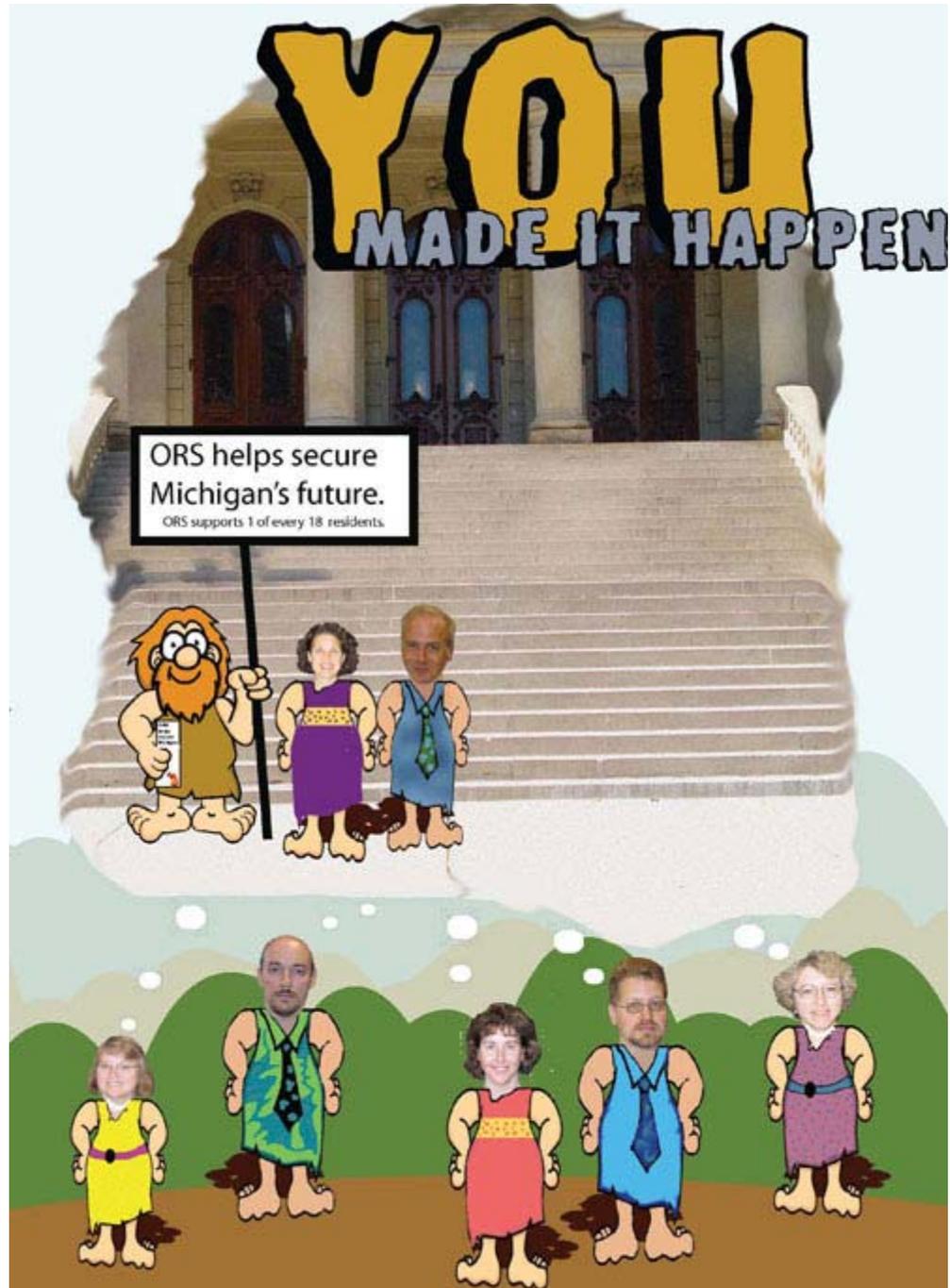
DMB is unlike any other place I have worked. If you are a person who doesn't think

of opportunity as something you will be privileged to, think again because there is opportunity everywhere. The state of Michigan has opportunity seeping from the walls of its buildings. Every where you turn there is a class being offered, a webinar to listen to, or some project to head up. If anyone knows me, they could tell you that I am always thinking of faster, more efficient ways to do things. My ideas aren't always welcomed with open arms, but it creates a dialog that leads to more opportunity. The same science behind success giving rise to more success, works for opportunity the same way.

As fiscal year 2009 draws to a close, look back and reflect over the year and think about all of the great opportunities that were missed and make a conscious decision not to let the opportunity that DMB, as well as the state, has to offer float by. Look for unconventional opportunities: take the opportunity to brighten a person's day, change your outlook on life, shape your career, read or write a book, or something as simple as getting to know someone in your department. No matter how big or small the opportunity, find the one that suits you and take it. There is opportunity everywhere.

For the people already swimming, if you have a buddy who is still standing on shore, take the opportunity to encourage them to dive in, the water is fine. Since the temperature is quickly changing and outdoor swimming is going to be on the outs, why not swim in a sea of opportunity. I did a modest backstroke last year; this year I am going for an aggressive freestyle.

Strategic Planning: You Made It Happen



To achieve the goal of Proactive Policy Development and Legislative Strategy, the Strategic Planning Team of Andy Oser, Dan Norberg, Judy McLean, Michelle Childs and Rosemary Baker said we need to educate elected officials about the value and purpose of ORS.

Kerrie Vanden Bosch and Phil Stoddard have taken our message to capitol hill! Because of the Strategic Planning Team's vision, Congress members now have a better understanding of ORS' retirement systems and the economic impact they have on the Michigan economy.

Flu shots at the GOB

Flu season is around the corner. Be proactive to protect your family's health. A flu shot vaccination clinic is coming to the GOB from 12:30 to 4:15 p.m. November 9.

Your family members who are at least 9 years old are welcome to participate in the clinic. And you can't beat the price! Most state health insurance carriers are covering the cost of the vaccination.



To get your flu shot, you need to:

- Make an appointment with the worksite coordinator at your preferred location.
- Bring a photocopy of your state of Michigan health insurance card.
- Bring a signed [consent form](#).
- Wear clothing that gives nurses easy access to your upper arm.

Schedule your appointment with [Nancy Lampman](#) soon.

If that date or location doesn't work for you, you can find more offerings on the [Employee Connect site](#).



Travel Vouchers

The end of fiscal year 2009 is here. All travel vouchers must be submitted to DMB Financial Services by October 9. Do not combine September and October travel expenses on the same voucher.

DROP brochure

The Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) brochure for state police has been recently revised. The new version is [published online](#) and hard copies are available by request through CE. The most significant change is the DROP application window which is now the same as the retirement application: members are asked to apply 30 to 90 days before their retirement effective date.

Retiree insurance rates

The 2009-2010 retiree insurance rates for judges, state police, and state employees takes effect October 4. You can scope out the new rates on the [Civil Service Commission website](#).

CSC phones scheduled to temporarily shut off Wednesday

CSC will be turning off phone lines beginning at noon on Wednesday, September 30, to move their work areas as part of the recent CSC transformation plan. Customers are encouraged to use the miAccount message board during the temporary shut down.



Anusha Maheth and **Druvitha Kolluri**, from HTC Global Services, joined AST on September 14.

Anusha studied information technology at Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University in Hyderabad, India, and Northern Illinois University. She enjoys listening to music and spending time with her brother.

Druvitha previously worked for LandAmerica Financial Group. She enjoys reading books and spending time and traveling with her brother, sister, and cousins.



Anusha Maheth



Druvitha Kolluri

Autumn Alden's last day was September 11; she was a temporary employee in PS.

Chris Hudson's last day in CSC was September 17. Chris accepted a position in DMB's Surplus Division.

Staff on the move

Doug Murray, Travis Peake, Julie Schafer, and Joe Yang have accepted positions in the CSC. They all joined ORS as students, Doug and Joe are from the CSC, Travis from PS, and Julie from CE. They will begin their training in CSC in early October.

Get to know your ORS students

It's back to school time, and this month we're focusing on our value of Growth. It seems a good time to highlight the tremendous achievements of our ORS student staff.

 <p>Kristina Braxton (Process Support)</p>	<p>Childhood dream job: "Cosmetologist or a nurse."</p> <p>About Kristina: Kristina is in the nursing program at Davenport University and she dreams of working in a labor/delivery unit. She would like to obtain her bachelors degree with a 3.5 GPA, and later obtain her masters degree.</p>
 <p>Jennifer Carter (Process Support)</p>	<p>Childhood dream job: "Teacher, because I loved to hear myself talk."</p> <p>About Jennifer: Jennifer claims to have already had her dream job when she worked for Willow Wood Golf course as the beverage cart driver. She said, "I think that was the most fun at work I've ever had." She is currently studying business administration at Lansing Community College, and also plans to pursue a masters degree.</p>
	<p>Childhood dream job: "I can't remember."</p> <p>About Jennifer: Jennifer says her transition from a doctor's office to AST was very smooth. She felt it was a good change because of her passion for information technology. She is working on her computer programming degree at Lansing Community College and hopes to build websites some day.</p>

	
<p>Jennifer Cook (Application Support Team)</p>	<p>Childhood dream job: "I wanted to be a singer." About Clarissa: Clarissa is attending Lansing Community College (LCC) with plans to transfer to Central Michigan University (CMU) where she will obtain her bachelors degree in dietetics. After that, she hopes to attend Blue Heron Academy of Grand Rapids to become a certified acupressure massage therapist.</p>
	
<p>Clarissa Cram (Application Support Team)</p>	<p>Childhood dream job: "Airplane pilot." About Annie: Annie's dream job is to travel the world and explore different places and cultures ... while getting paid for it. Annie is attending Michigan State University, studying political science, pre-law, and communications (public relations). Annie balances her work and school life by alternating her schedule. She works on certain days and attends class on others. Annie said, "ORS is very accommodating when it comes to my class schedule so it makes life much easier."</p>
	
<p>Annie Earls (Customer Education)</p>	<p>Childhood dream job: "Professional athlete." About Drew: Previously, Drew worked on the grounds crew at a golf course. He is currently studying business at Grand Valley State University. Drew's educational goals are to maintain a solid grade point average and graduate in four years.</p>
	
<p>Drew Gilliland (Process Support)</p>	<p>Childhood dream job: "Veterinarian." About Olivia: Olivia's dream job is to own a landscaping/greenhouse business. She is currently studying landscape architecture and horticulture at Lansing Community College.</p>
	
<p>Olivia Johnson (Customer Service Center)</p>	<p>Childhood dream job: "Creative director of the magazine"</p>



Chelsea Lancaster
(Process Support)

Nylon.”

About Chelsea: Chelsea is finishing her senior year at Dewitt High School. She will be applying for college at the University of Michigan, Michigan State University, and Ferris State University. Chelsea’s preferred field of study is marketing communications and art history.



Matt McCool
(Director’s Office)

Childhood dream job: “Car designer.”

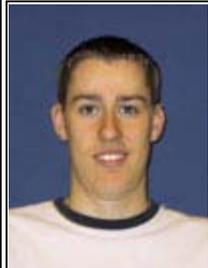
About Matt: Matt said that his transition from McDonalds to ORS was huge because of how well ORS works around his class schedule and the less hectic environment. Matt is studying Mechanical Engineering at Lansing Community College, and hopes to transfer to Lawrence Technological University soon. His goal is to obtain a bachelor and masters degree in engineering.



Richard Miles
(Employer Reporting)

Childhood dream job: “I wanted to be a paleontologist. Yes, I wanted to dig up dinosaur bones for a living.”

About Richard: Richard attends Northwood University and Lansing Community College. His educational goals are studying screen writing at LCC, film production and accounting at Grand Valley State University, and tax law at Cooley Law. We asked Richard how he balances school and work, and he said, “I established goals, applied a timeline, then loaded everything onto my palm pilot in a weekly format. I usually don’t take on anything that is not on my schedule.”



Doug Murray
(Customer Service Center)

Childhood dream job: “King of England or professional gambler so I can wear a hat and sunglasses at all times and not look out of place.”

About Doug: Doug is studying computer information technology at Lansing Community College. Doug’s educational goals are to finish school within the next 20 years. When asked how he balances work and school, Doug said, “I don’t stress out over the small things, and just take things as they come. And if that fails, there’s always happy hour.”



Kaitlin Patrick
(Customer Service)

Childhood dream job: “At first I wanted to be an architect, and then I wanted to be an ophthalmologist.”

About Kaitlin: Kaitlin’s dream job is to play with animals all day and get paid lots of money. Currently she is studying psychology at Lansing Community College. Kaitlin’s strategy for balancing school and work is to take classes later in the day so she can work in the morning and complete her homework in the evening.

Childhood dream job: “I wanted to be all sorts of things ... a sports broadcaster, a professional wrestler, even a police officer.”

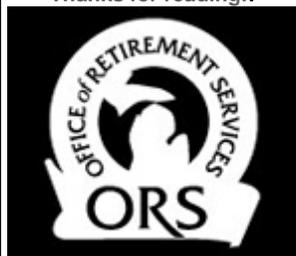
DMB Mission:
Partners in achieving excellence

ORS Purpose:
We are an innovative retirement organization driven to empower our customers for a successful today and a secure tomorrow.

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Director:
Phil Stoddard
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Thanks for reading!!





Travis Peake
(Process Support)

About Travis: Travis’s transition from his previous position as a stocker at a grocery store wasn’t bad. “The big change was that I don’t work weekends any longer and it gives me more time for homework.” Travis began his college education at Lansing Community College; he then transferred to Northwood University for a bachelors degree in business management. Currently, he is attending Lansing Community College for a certification in information technology.



Julie Schafer
(Customer Education)

Childhood dream job: “I wanted to be a semi truck driver like my dad. When I realized I couldn’t back up a trailer to save my life, I decided business was a better fit.”

About Julie: Julie graduated from Baker College with an associates degree in business administration and a bachelors degree in human resources. She is currently studying writing at Lansing Community College.



Chelsea Sherman
(Customer Service Center)

Childhood dream job: “I wanted to be a veterinarian.”

About Chelsea: Chelsea worked at Sundance Riding Stables and on her family’s ranch where she ran a kids camp. She says working at ORS was a huge change for her; she went from working with horses and being outside to being inside and working on the computer nonstop. She misses the constant activity of her old job, but enjoys learning so much at ORS that she’ll be able to apply in her future. Chelsea is studying health care administration at Lansing Community College and will attend Ferris State University next fall.



Joseph Yang
(Customer Service Center)

Childhood dream job: “Doctor.”

About Joe: Joe is studying school counseling at Spring Arbor University. “I would like to be called Dr. Yang someday, so my goal is to get a doctorate in educational administration or a related field to help improve schools.” When Joe was asked how he balances work and school, Joe shared this: “Less sleep and more coffee. It really takes self discipline and dedication. I keep some hobbies and make sure I stay with them to decrease the stress, and I always remember the phrase, ‘You work to live, not live to work.’”

Note: Because some of the links in this newsletter point to network resources, some of the links may not work if you are reading this outside of the organization.