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Email the LookOut Staff



LookOut Archives

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Message from the Director

DMB leadership is strong

The March *iDMB* featured a guest column from Deputy Director Rose Wilson which focused on the success of our state during trying times, Director Lisa Webb Sharpe's role, and how each DMB employee has a part in Michigan's success.

Statewide government organizations have made tough choices and spent many hours planning and executing programs that save time and money while serving the people of Michigan. During these challenging times, it's important to recognize the leadership that directs our organization and call attention to the teamwork and excellence that our leadership drives.

Despite the occasional criticism, I feel that our leadership remains strong and we will continue to make tough decisions. I encourage each of you to read up on what's going on in DMB and to check out the monthly Director's message on the [DMB intranet](#).



Phil Stoddard,
Director

Teamwork deploys speedy response

In less than one hour, staff teamed up and completed more than 400 responses to retirees having trouble with the cut and paste function with their temporary password to sign up for miAccount.

"Retirees received notice in *Connections* this week about our new service miAccount," said **Kathy Tober**. "Even though we had to assist some of them with their login, we still had success introducing all of these folks to our online services - YEAH!"

With the release of *Connections*, the number of retirees using the website is growing every day. According to **Laurie Mitchell**, we started the week with just over 1,400 users and will finish it with well over 4,000 users.

Thank you to the following folks from across the office for jumping in to reply to Message Board questions: **Christina Bishai, Michele Childs, Melissa Flores, Pam Gilchrist, Andy Kolp, Lois Musbach, Dick Pennington, Jon Seeger, Tim Simpson, Michele Thompson, Linda Turner, and Tom Zack**. Also, thank you **Kim LaClear** and **Laurie Mitchell** for overall training and assistance.

Our AST partners jumped in as well. Thanks to **Udiyan Korganji** for pulling a query

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On the Horizon

- ORS Tiger's Game Day - June 25

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 Benefits
DC	Defined Contributions
DIT	Department of Information Technology
DMB	Department of Management and Budget
EPC	Executive Process Council (<i>Phil, Laurie, Tim, Anthony, and Kathy</i>)
EPO	Executive Process Owner
ER	Employer Reporting
ORS	Office of Retirement Services
PRIM	Preretirement Information Meeting (<i>public school employees</i>)
PRO	Preretirement

of the email addresses of everyone who wrote to us so we could send a message everyone right away while we gathered our team to answer the messages individually. We were able to get information about using the temporary password on the site with the help of STG's **Chakkavarathy Lakshmikanthan**, **Sriram Rao**, and our own **Thasin Sardar**. By taking the effort to do this during the day, we hoped to reduce the number of contacts coming in over the next week.

In addition to the collaboration between ORS staff, we gained support creating a "how to cut and paste" Camtasia tutorial from our Organization Development partner and former employee, **Lori Edwards**. The online tutorial will be available by early next week by clicking on the Help link located on the miAccount web page.

Way to go team!

Public school retirees dependent data completely uploaded

When ORS made the transition from the old Common Pension Payroll (CPP) system to Clarety it was discovered that information for some retirees who had dependents on their insurance policy was missing. This was causing delays in processing transactions.

Now, thanks to a concentrated effort across ORS and our insurance vendors, Blue Cross Blue Shield and Delta Dental, all public school retirees records have been updated with complete and accurate dependent information. No longer will CSC staff need to review the old file documents or even contact the retiree to locate dependent information before certain transactions can be processed! This results in great efficiencies in processing and saves money by:

- Assuring retirees are paying the correct premium.
- Elimination of dual coverage.
- Eliminating coverage for non-qualified dependents.
- Removing deceased retirees from coverage.

The next step in this project is already underway - the team is reviewing and updating state retiree records. This project should be completed by the end of April.

Congratulations and thank you to all the innovative people who worked so hard to make this project a success, enabling our customers to have a successful today and a secure tomorrow.



Security Awareness Committee

In January you received an email from the Security Awareness Committee (SAC) addressing the importance of keeping confidential information secure here at ORS. Continuing along that vein we are publishing the following article about maintaining your privacy while using social networking sites.

Using social networking sites responsibly Tips for you and the teens you know

The rise of social networking sites (SNSs) like Facebook, MySpace, or Hi5 has created online communities with members from every part of the globe. Content on these sites is not created by the companies that run them. Instead, it is created by the users themselves, sharing everything from photos, video, and music to detailed diaries with stories about their day-to-day experiences. While teenagers seem to be the majority of users, adults are getting in on the action too.

	Orientation (<i>state employees</i>)
PS	Process Support
SME	Subject Matter Expert
STG	Systems Technology Group (<i>Web self-service contract vendor</i>)
T&T	Tools and Technology
UAT	User Acceptance Testing

Here are some tips to keep in mind if you or teenagers you know post information on these types of sites:

The number one rule. If you would not put it on a resume or college application, or if you wouldn't share it with your parents, don't post it. If you wouldn't put it on a poster and hang it on your locker or your dorm room door, don't post it. Generally, don't accept "friends" you do not know in the real world.

Online privacy is important. When you build profiles, communicate, and interact online, you give out personal information. Privacy is the right or opportunity to decide who has access to your personal information and how that information should be used. Think carefully about the information you share online and understand how the sites work to use SNSs responsibly and safely.

Remember, you can't get something for nothing. Be aware that site operators, advertisers, colleges, potential employers, friends and parents may access and use the information you share online. Even sexual predators and pedophiles may gain access to online information. Be cautious about the personal details you disclose

Be sparing with the personally identifiable information you put online. Use privacy settings to control who has access to the various parts of your profile page, your photos, and your online journals. Don't share your last name, your phone numbers, home address, date of birth, school or team name, travel plans, social security number, passwords, family financial information, bank or credit card numbers.

It isn't all about common sense. Awareness of technological facts, like caching, promotes better decision making. Once you put information or photographs out there they can be forwarded, archived, and stored in browsers and search engines, making it difficult if not impossible to take them back.

Think about tomorrow when you are acting today. Online conduct has consequences. Think before you post. Some employers are now conducting internet searches for information about potential employees before interviews.

Consider the privacy of others. Don't identify others on your page in a way they would not identify themselves or post photos they would not post.

Read privacy policies. Look for notice, choice, access, and security provisions and learn how your personal information will be used by the site.

For more information, go to www.privacyassociation.com. SAC members include **John Donovan, Mike Gallihugh, Dan Norberg, and Aimee Ross.**

People on Demand

After their first week as a pilot group, CSC's five-member POD (People on Demand) team proved to be very productive and effective. The POD Team is a rotating weekly group of five contact center staff who are completing specific assigned duties each day.

POD teams are a new approach to offer a proactive solution to an old problem. They are a group of cross-trained individuals ready to help in application processing, insurance processing, services, and death processing. If additional help is needed with walk-ins, supervisors can go directly to the POD Team for assistance. If a supervisor needs assistance, they can refer to a POD member. And if something needs to be processed immediately, supervisors can go to the POD Team and have one of the individuals complete the assignment. The POD Team also supports the phone center during busy times.

"Staff enjoyed the opportunity and the challenges," said **Joyce Weber**. "The POD Team will remain a pilot program for the next couple months and if it continues with

success, we will implement the concept permanently.”

POD team members for the first week were **Angie Bryan, Betty Jones, Shannon Meyer, Amy Miller, and Taylor Stiles.**

"It was an incredible experience to be in the first group," said Taylor. "Even if I wasn't able to make the goal that day, I had an incredible feeling of accomplishment because of the various completed workflows."

Comings & Goings

Lisa Kalchik will leave ORS on March 31 to work full time at the two wholesale stores she and her husband own. Lisa has been a long-time state employee and truly enjoyed working at ORS. "This has been a really good place to work, the best of any state agencies I've worked for," said Lisa. "I've met a lot of great friends here."

CSC will bid farewell to **Amy Miller** on her last day, April 4. Amy has accepted a position with MI HR. Amy's talents will be missed.

CE says goodbye and wishes the best to **Arlena Tucker-Hampton**. Arlena's assistance has been appreciated. Her last day is March 28.



All Staff questions for EPC wanted

The All Staff Planning Team would like your questions for the EPC to be addressed during the April 29 meeting. You can provide your ideas in the cans located around the office, or [offer them online](#). Please submit your questions by close of business, Friday, April 11.

Innovation Lab—Moving From Issue to Innovation

If you have an idea on how to improve work but wish you could test out the concept before sharing it with others, bring your idea to the [Innovation Lab](#). This free workshop will help you identify areas for improvement, refine your ideas, and package them in a way that your boss and others will work with you to make your innovative idea a reality.

Supervisory change in CSC

CSC is making the following supervisory changes effective March 31:

- Contact Center – Nancy Ott
- Insurance – Cindy Mooney
- Resources – Raini Majeske
- Application Processing – Joyce Weber
- Services – Pam Kibby

Phone system upgraded to accept member IDs

The IVR (interactive voice response system that delivers messages and prompts to customers who call our office) was recently upgraded in preparation for members to be able to enter their member ID instead of their social security number. Since customers have not yet received their member ID, the prompts have not yet been changed, but the system is prepared to recognize member IDs when they are rolled out. The prompts will be changed just before customers begin receiving their member IDs.

2008 ORS Excellence Award Nominees

ORS employees received 14 nominations for the Employee Excellence Awards. Each nominee was honored with a cake reception hosted by EPC. The Excellence Awards Selection Committee has started review of the nominations and will select a winner for each category. The five winners will be announced at the All Staff Meeting on April 29. The winners will then be submitted for the DMB Excellence Awards Program in the fall.

Below are just a few of the glowing comments our nominees received from their peers.

 <p>Rosemary Baker Customer Education Nominated for: Every Day Hero</p> <p>Rosemary has spent the past several months analyzing and redesigning forms as part of the FLB project. Even though forms aren't the most glamorous or exciting tasks in ORS, Rosemary understands their importance. She never, ever compromises on her high standards. She'll do whatever it takes to create a customer-friendly, processor-friendly professional form. Rosemary has been part of the CE team longer than anyone in the unit. She is their steady, solid, reliable rock. She rarely gets flustered; instead she puts her nose to the grindstone and stays with the project until it's done.</p>	 <p>Rosemary Baker Customer Education Nominated for: Every Day Hero</p> <p>Rosemary is an Every Day Hero because the new documents she has created make daily life easier for every one who uses them. She has collaborated with staff to make certain that a document meets their needs and helps them to do their job faster/better. Staff has responded with enthusiasm and energy and the end result is that ORS is a more efficient organization.</p>
 <p>Kay Johnston Employer Reporting Nominated for: Customer Service</p> <p>Kay Johnston regularly proves that she is a customer's best friend. She is always willing to go the extra mile and accomplish the task. She not only provides exceptional customer service, but she delivers as promised. She has been known to dig into archives to uncover the payments that were reported but not posted for some reason to find the true picture and then correct the situation. Kay is definitely as asset to the Office of Retirement Services.</p>	 <p>Andy Kolp Benefit Plan Design Nominated for: Every Day Hero</p> <p>Andy does an excellent job with whatever projects he is assigned. He is diligent and completes his work on time every time with minimal direction. He communicates well regarding the status of projects and any challenges he is facing. He is a great problem solver and always has potential solutions to suggest. He has a great attitude and is willing to lend a hand to others whenever he is needed.</p>
 <p>Kim LaClear Customer Education</p>	 <p>Charles Leik Customer Service</p>

Nominated for:
Every Day Hero

Kim has been a hero every day since she joined the effort to deliver quality online services to ORS's 500,000 potential users. Kim looks ahead—she sees what needs to be done and with little to no direction, she simply takes care of them, and she does it right the first time. She pays attention to detail, puts the customer first in her decision making, prioritizes her work appropriately and asks for help when she needs it.

Center
Nominated for:
Innovator

Charles has demonstrated innovation and leadership in building a database for the Accounts Receivable project. His efforts have saved the organization hundreds of manual hours, contributing to the collection of hundreds of thousands of dollars in overpaid pensions. He developed multiple queries with AST that result in very little data entry to generate automated subpoena requests to the Department of Treasury, which replaced a manual process. The manual hours that will be saved as time goes on is substantial.



Josey McCloud
Customer Education
Nominated for:
Every Day Hero

Josey has been nominated for the Every Day Hero award because she is such a humble

person who quietly does her job with no thought of personal recognition. Josey faces her challenges and achieves her accomplishments simply as a part of a good day's work. As part of the strategic planning team, she quickly identified needs, set expectations and proceeded to develop a course of action to take the existing communication plan and expand it to meet the needs of the group.



Kris Morris
Process Support
Nominated for:
Living the Values

Kris has developed and piloted a student co-op program. She worked closely with the students and

quickly identified their skill levels that would best match up with tasks from other processes. Kris will challenge the team to meet a goal in order to meet a business need. She provides growth opportunities to her staff to become more involved with various efforts.



Lois Musbach
Customer Service
Center
Nominated for:
Every Day Hero

Lois has been nominated for the Every Day Hero award because she

is dependable, she takes initiative, is diligent and above all a team player. She is always willing to go above and beyond what is expected of her. People look to her for not only her experience, knowledge and expertise but also for her willingness to look into areas that



Lois Musbach
Customer Service
Center
Nominated for:
Every Day Hero

Lois personifies the meaning of the word Dependable. If there is a crisis, Lois will be

there to not only find the best way, but the right way to manage it. She repeatedly is sought by all processes of the office for her vast retirement knowledge and can provide any information without hesitation. If there's an instance where she doesn't know

are not in her expertise but where she can offer a different, well-thought-out perspective. Because of her previous experience and interactions with staff she has brought credibility with her that has helped her as she has stepped into the BPL role.

the answer off the top of her head, she knows where to find it. She has a positive attitude and is amazingly patient for the many interruptions that she gets. At the same time, she still accomplishes the many tasks that she faces and produces with outstanding results all within the allotted timeframe.



Lois Musbach
Customer Service
Center
Nominated for:
Living the Values

Lois has set herself apart in many ways during her tenure here at ORS.

Perhaps the most obvious way in which she has distinguished herself is her vast amount of knowledge and experience in many different areas of retirement. More importantly is her willingness to share this expertise with others. In this way, she has helped others to make decisions. This has contributed to the overall success of the organization, in how everyone strives to make the right decision and recognize the impact these decisions have on the members.



Jim Rademacher
Tools and
Technology
Nominated for:
Innovator

Jim has applied some old techniques to a new problem and simplified the test

reporting system for the last phase of the Vision ORS project. He dusted off an old database, and then revamped it to fill the need. Within two weeks, Jim had a functioning database that allowed the testing team to document and track the status on every attribute. He is creative in looking at problems and in finding new ways to attack them. Jim's fresh approach to new problems inspires the entire team to greater creativity in their activities.



Annette Ruiz
Employer Reporting
Nominated for:
Every Day Hero

Annette possesses the traits described in the Every Day Hero award description (dependability,

diligence, initiative, and teamwork). Annette is relied on due to her expertise and high quality standard she has set for herself when completing her work assignments. She requires very little supervision but always informs her supervisor, BPL and/or BPO of activities outside of the normal day-to-day tasks. Annette's initiative is obvious as in many cases she has solved an issue prior to the reporting unit knowing an issue existed. ER is fortunate to have Annette as part of their team.



Angela Schrauben
Customer Education
Nominated for:
Leadership

As a leader, Angie has demonstrated the values of teamwork and integrity. She is an

integral part of the test team, providing both support and direction for her fellow testers. She helped develop the Test Case database (MS Access) to make certain that every attribute was tested and recorded. Unless every single attribute is passed, the test case is failed. Her dedication to complete and accurate testing is admirable and has contributed to very clean deployments.



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 **Fred Doll** shares his perspective on participating in a PRIM.

Is My PRIM Proper?

Your heart rate is elevated. Your mouth is dry. One hundred or more people are all staring at you. You are standing in the front of a large room you have never been in before. In the distance, a cell phone rings. This is just a sample of what you may experience if you have the opportunity to present a Preretirement Information Meeting (PRIM) for public school employees. And speaking from personal experience, what a rush!



Fred Doll

PRIMs are scheduled from October through May and are designed to provide participants close to retirement with an informative overview of what public school employees need to know as they prepare to retire. Participants are provided with the opportunity to ask questions of ORS staff and to benefit from the questions of others. They also provide ORS employees with an opportunity to test their retirement knowledge and presentation skills.

This fiscal year, **Joy Bartell, Ray Fleming, Pam Garver, Josey McCloud, and Chuck Simpson** are tasked with assuring the approximately 100 PRIMs and state employee PROs are covered with a presenter. Not only are they assigned specific presentations, but they also need to be ready to fill in should the scheduled presenter not be available, whether it's a PRIM or PRO. And of course, they have to keep up with their other responsibilities.

When I was given the opportunity to learn what it takes to be a presenter, I had mixed feelings. There was excitement of taking on a new responsibility and having the opportunity to learn from quality presenters. There was also the thought that I'll never learn enough to do this as well as those currently presenting. I had limited experience presenting PRIMs years ago. I know it is not as easy as our presenters make it look.

Even though I had the opportunity to review needed information, observe other presenters, ask questions and prepare small parts to co-present, my presentations are far from where they need to be if I'm ever going to do this independently. Fortunately for me, those assigned the presentations are willing and able to provide helpful and needed feedback to help me improve.

Here's some of what have I learned after having the opportunity to co-present:

The people attending PRIMs are very forgiving of mistakes. They are glad ORS provides this service. Chances are, they don't even catch most of the mistakes.

You don't have to know everything there is to know about retirement. You just need to know a little more than those in the audience.

It's OK to say, "I don't know the answer to that question." (And this is far better than risking passing out incorrect information.)

If one presentation doesn't go so well, you need to get back out there and give it another try.

Presenting is a mental and physical challenge, but also invigorating.

I have a supportive family. (Actually, I knew that before, but wanted to throw that in.)

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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Thanks for reading!!

ORS has very talented, knowledgeable and helpful presenters.



ORS presenters have some pretty funny stories from their presentation experience.

If you have not observed a public school PRIM or a state employee PRO, speak to your supervisor to see if this might be something for your IDP. You'll find it worth your time. You can find the locations of [PRIMs](#) on the public school website. [PROs](#) are listed on the Civil Service website.

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.