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Email the LookOut Staff

LookOut Archives

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miAccount partnership garners award

On June 4 the Midwest Technology Leaders group recognized one outstanding information technology collaboration project ... miAccount! The MCA08 Collaboration award was bestowed on the state's Department of Information Technology, Department of Management and Budget, Office of Retirement Services, and Systems Technology Group (STG) for our cooperative work in developing miAccount.



The Midwest Collaboration Award honors a Michigan-based partnership engaged in mutual cooperation with responsibility for achieving a specific technology-focused goal that involves and benefits companies, organizations, individuals, local governments, academic institutions (elementary to university) and non-profit organizations.

Calendar

June

Vision ORS Celebration	12
Public School Employees Board Meeting	12
DMB Excellence Awards Deadline	13
Flag Day	14
Father's Day	15
9th Annual Tiger Baseball Outing	25
State Employees Board Meeting	26

July

Independence Day Office Closed	4
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"The miAccount project is really a capstone, for us, of a much larger effort to reengineer all of our legacy processes and systems to better serve our citizenry and our employees," commented Doug Couto, DIT Information Officer for ORS. "It required a very high degree of cooperation among all the parties, and the collaboration was outstanding, in my opinion."

Anup Popat, president and CEO of STG said, "We feel especially proud of this project because it involved a complex implementation managed by a talented team; it leverages the very latest technologies; and most importantly, it touches 1 out of every 18 Michigan citizens." Couto agreed and succinctly stated, "Collaboration doesn't just happen. You have to make it happen, and, as a team, we did."



Above: **Anthony Estell**, Anup Popat and Doug Couto accepting the MCO Award on behalf of each miAccount partner.

State Police Board Meeting	17
National Hot Dog Day	21
Public School Employees Board Meeting	24

Laurie Mitchell, who served as project manager declared, "More than 40 people from ORS directly helped to develop miAccount, and while they were helping, others filled in the gaps in the business. This award is a credit to everyone at ORS for always looking for newer, better ways of doing business."

Congratulations to everyone who helped make miAccount a success. It's truly a demonstration of how we are an innovative retirement organization driven to empower our customers for a successful today and a secure tomorrow.

- On the Horizon**
- ORS Picnic - August 20
 - ORS Golf Outing - August 28

ORS supports DMB priorities

ORS leaders are playing a major role by sponsoring and/or providing project management support for nine of the nineteen 2008 DMB priority projects.

Here are updates on two priorities that are near and dear to ORS.

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

Web Self-Service

This project is complete and ORS was represented by **Phil Stoddard** and **Anthony Estell** for the launch of miAccount to retired and active members.

Employee Retirement Savings Initiative

ORS is represented by **Phil Stoddard**, **Laurie Hill**, **Kerrie Vanden Bosch**, and **Elaine Lewter**. The purpose of this project is to increase the amount of state employee retirement savings using the 401(k) Defined Contribution and Deferred Compensation plans.

Commonly Used Acronyms

AST	Application Support Team
BLA	Business Leadership Assembly (EPC, BPOs, and BPLs)
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 (Phil, Laurie, Tim, Anthony, and Kathy)
EPO	Executive Process Owner
ER	Employer Reporting
ORS	Office of Retirement Services

Already in place are the Roth 401(k) post-tax contribution option, and the new [Target Retirement Funds](#) investment options that provide a mix of stocks, bonds and cash accounts designed for employees of different ages. Rather than trying to select and manage a collection of different funds, participants may choose one Target Date Fund (based on their age and assumption they will retire at age 65) to ensure a well-diversified investment mix for years to come.

Staff is still working on plans to automatically enroll new employees with a 3 percent contribution rate into their 401(k) plan. In addition, staff will continue with plans to reduce the number of loans allowed per participant.

What's next?

The other seven priorities that ORS will sponsor are listed below.

- DMB Leadership Development
- DMB Measurements and Metrics
- Embracing A Culture of Diversity and Inclusion
- Focus on Process
- Leadership Team
- Office Systems Review
- Workforce Planning

Stay tuned for more updates on ORS efforts toward the DMB priorities in future issues of the LookOut.



In just 16 days, PS staff managed to assist 167 employees move their work locations!

PRIM	Preretirement Information Meeting (<i>public school employees</i>)
PRO	Preretirement 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

And, the day the air cooling system broke down, it just so happened that we had the least amount of bodies to move ... but the most stuff! Several PS staff members pitched in, despite the heat, to help move and clean up almost all of the mailroom, computer equipment, microfiche, boxes, and much more from Wing-B. Way to go team!

Please keep in mind that while renovation work in B-Wing is underway, the entire area will be restricted to construction workers only. We will continue to provide you with updates as milestones are reached.



New After You Retire book available

A new June 2008 version of *After You Retire: What Every Pension Recipient Should Know (R0614C)* is available for public school employees. Changes include, but are not limited to, mention of miAccount, IRS pension limits, and Public Act 617. Please recycle any old versions of the book.

New State Police forms available online

The *Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) Account Distribution Request (R0665H)* was recently revised to instruct customers to use the new *R0751H* form if they wish to transfer their DROP account funds to their State of Michigan 401(k) Defined Contribution account. Also, the *Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) Account Distribution Request to Transfer to CitiStreet (R0751H)*, has been created to designate a transfer method for DROP account funds to CitiStreet after their DROP period ends.

Nominate a deserving DMB colleague today!

Submit your 2008 nominations to Human Resources by June 13 at 5:00. DMB's 2008 Employee Excellence Awards materials on the [DMB intranet](#) include a program overview and guidelines, information about the committee evaluation and selection process, nomination forms, and sample completed nomination forms.

CitiStreet notice

On May 30 a notice entitled *Important Information Regarding Your Investments in the Plan* was mailed by CitiStreet to all 401(k) and 457 Plan participants. On June 16 a follow-up message will be sent to all active employees who have email. Investment changes are effective June 30, 2008. If participants have questions, they should contact CitiStreet at <http://stateofmi.csplans.com> or 800-748-6128.

16th Annual Oldsmobile Homecoming

The world's largest one-day Oldsmobile Car Show will take place in our very own GOB parking lot on Saturday, June 14. The 2008 Car Show & Swap Meet will be hosted by the R.E. Olds Chapter. More information can be found at www.reolds.org/homecoming.htm.

Meijer supports Mentor Michigan

Purchase a \$25 or more Meijer gift card from any Michigan Meijer from June 8 – 11 and Meijer will donate \$2 to [Mentor Michigan](#) for every \$25 spent. Mentor Michigan is working to ensure that all youth have ongoing, stable relationships with caring adults. For more information on Mentor Michigan, visit www.mentormichigan.org.

Carpooling saves more than gas

With gas prices sky rocketing and rising awareness of all



things “green,” now may be the best time for you to consider your carpooling options. Michigan Department of Transportation offers many alternatives to driving, including links to bus companies through their MiDrive website, www.michigan.gov/drive.



In addition to calculating how much money you will save, it provides statistics on how you will personally reduce the number of miles driven on Michigan roadways, the amount of volatile organic compounds emitted into the air, the amount of nitrous oxide emitted into the air, and the amount of carbon monoxide emitted into the air annually.

MDOT encourages the utilization of their [231 carpool parking lots](#) and the use of [MichiVan](#), their statewide vanpooling program. If you are interested in exploring ORS organized car or vanpooling options, please email Lisa Schmidt. If there is enough interest, Lisa will gather more information and discuss with those interested.

Comings & Goings

Karla Cotton joined our office on May 29; she will be assisting Tim McCormick and Anthony Estell. Karla took advantage of the last early out and retired from the Department of Labor and Economic Growth after 29 years, though she noted the department has been called many things since she started there. She enjoys quilting and traveling with her husband. They recently returned from a trip to northern Indiana for a bluegrass festival.



Karla Cotton

Cheryl Anthony, who had been assisting Tim, left our office on May 30.

Jessicca Cain is leaving ORS next Friday, June 13, to work in a permanent position with the Michigan Pharmacists Association. She noted, "I've really enjoyed my time here and am looking forward to new challenges and new friends to be made."

Rebecca Hosington left the CSC to explore new opportunities. Her last day with ORS was Friday, May 30, 2008

Father's Day

Sonora Smart Dodd—inspired by Anna Marie Jarvis who campaigned for and gained recognition of Mother's Day—thought fathers should be recognized as well.

Ms. Dodd was raised by William Jackson Smart, a Civil War veteran and single parent of six children. Although she initially suggested June 5, the anniversary of her father's death, she did not provide the organizers with enough time to make arrangements, and the celebration was deferred to the third Sunday of June. The first June Father's Day was celebrated on June 19, 1910, in Spokane, WA.

"It doesn't matter who my father was; it matters who I remember he was."
Anne Sexton

"If the new American father feels bewildered and even defeated, let him take comfort from the fact that whatever he does in any fathering situation has a fifty percent chance of being right."
Bill Cosby

Although informal support was widespread and immediate, formal recognition of Father's Day took time. A National Father's Day Committee was formed in New York in 1926. Recognition came from the United States Congress in 1956. Lyndon

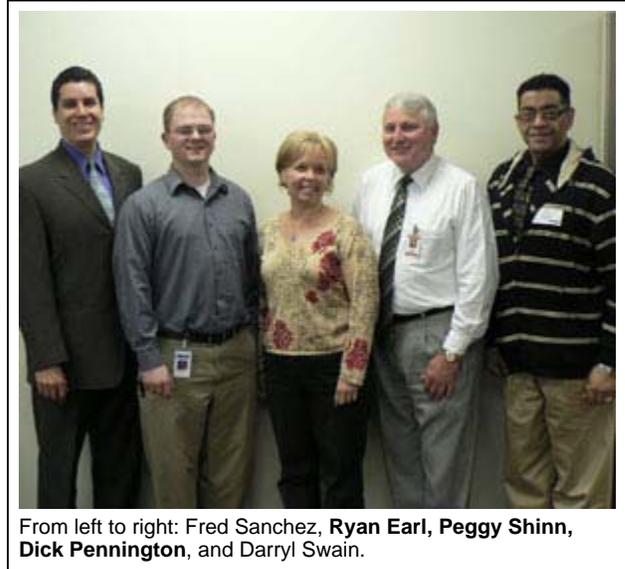
Johnson declared Father’s Day a national holiday in 1966. In 1972, Richard Nixon signed a law proclaiming Father’s Day to be always celebrated on the third Sunday in June.

In recent years, Father’s Day has become a “retailer’s” holiday. Today’s consumer honors Dad by buying him something: 60% buy cards, followed by apparel (41%), dinner (38%), sporting goods (22%), home improvement merchandise (18%), electronics (17%), and gardening tools (12%).

This year Father’s Day falls on Sunday, June 15.

Social Security enlightens staff on complex agreement

Section 218 Agreements, administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA) and participating states, allow state and local governments coverage under Social Security and Medicare. The governing statute of these agreements is extremely complex and training was needed. Because Michigan has an irrevocable Section 218 Agreement and is not able to travel out of state for conferences or other training, the SSA experts came to us to make sure we have a better understanding of the program we’re responsible for administering for state and local government participants in Michigan.



From left to right: Fred Sanchez, **Ryan Earl**, **Peggy Shinn**, **Dick Pennington**, and Darryl Swain.

On May 15, Darryl Swain and Fred Sanchez (representatives from the Chicago offices of SSA) spent the day with **Dick Pennington** (CSC), **Ryan Earl**, and **Peggy Shinn** (both BPD) to provide a Section 218 overview.

The Social Security Act of 1935 excluded government employees from social security coverage because of legal questions regarding the federal government’s authority to tax state and local governments. Because of this, state and local governments must obtain Social Security coverage through a Section 218 Agreement.

In Michigan, the agreement took effect on January 1, 1951, and only allowed Social Security coverage for state employees not covered under a public retirement system. Effective January 1, 1955, the agreement was modified to allow those under the pension plan to be covered.

In addition, federal social security regulations provide a legal obligation for Michigan to administer the Section 218 program to all who participate throughout the state. Governor Granholm, like other governors before her, has delegated the administration of Section 218 to the Executive Secretary of the State Employees Retirement System, Phil Stoddard. Dick Pennington is the Social Security Coordinator handling the day-to-day issues related to Section 218.

“I was surprised to find out that Michigan is one of only a few states that allow political subdivisions, such as cities and townships, to decide the specifics of their coverage,” said Ryan Earl. “Most states don’t allow such freedom. Luckily, Michigan has freedom to choose who is and isn’t covered.”

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!!



Additional information regarding Section 218 of the Social Security Act can be found at www.ssa.gov/OP_Home/ssact/title02/0218.htm or www.ssa.gov.

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.