



INTERAGENCY CONNECTION

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Chair's Corner



Greetings, fellow FEB members! I am honored to be elected as Chairperson for our Federal Executive Board this fiscal year and hope to carry on the fine tradition of our organization and the work of the Chairs that have served before me.

Our Executive Policy Council will have a Strategic Planning meeting early in the fiscal year to identify possible topics for meetings, events and training. If you have particular topics or speakers you would like to see through your Federal Executive Board, please call the FEB Office at 405-231-4167 and let LeAnn know, so it can be added for consideration.

We are considering bringing back the Leadership Series, enabling agencies to purchase a training package of several training days which can be easily transferred from one employee to another. If you have specific topics you would like to see included, please be sure to let us know.

The topics identified through your input and our planning meeting will be coordinated and confirmed so that the informational material can be distributed to the FEB members and posted on our website in the

late January timeframe. During that same timeframe we will be distributing:

- The annual "Employee of the Year" award nomination package,
- FEB interagency training opportunities, and
- The Leadership FEB program for the FY 2009 class.

Be sure to review the information and how you can take advantage of resources provided by our Federal Executive Board.

Later this month, FEB members will receive their annual assessment of "cost avoidance" from participation in FEB activities, meetings, and trainings. This will provide you specific feedback on your agency's cost avoidance through utilizing FEB resources, compared to comparable training available on the market.

I am looking forward to another active and successful year and I hope to see you at our events!

Barry Dodson

Barry Dodson, Chairman

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- \$20 for adults

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Adults: \$120

Minors: \$95

For additional passport information see: <http://travel.state.gov/passport>



Spotlighting Information in Public Service Did You Know...

The Basics: The Hatch Act

By Alyssa Rosenberg arosenberg@govexec.com

The Hatch Act is the 1939 law that regulates the political activities of federal employees and some state and local government workers. The legislation originally prohibited nearly all partisan activity by federal employees, banning them from endorsing candidates, distributing campaign literature, organizing political activities and holding posts in partisan organizations.

Those restrictions were loosened in the early 1990s after a battle that dated back to the 1984 presidential campaign, when a federal mediation board found that three union leaders violated the Hatch Act by expressing support for Democratic candidate Walter Mondale. A federal court overturned that opinion, but the incident sparked a campaign to change the law. Advocates for amending the act, including the AFL-CIO and the American Civil Liberties Union, said the original language violated federal employees' constitutional rights. Opponents such as the nonpartisan advocacy organization Common Cause said changing the rules would politicize the civil service. President George H.W. Bush agreed with the opponents, vetoing changes to the Hatch Act in 1990. But President Bill Clinton supported the modifications, and they became law in 1993.

Today, most career federal employees can run for nonpartisan offices, make financial contributions to political organizations, get involved in political groups, and campaign for candidates by making speeches, distributing literature and signing nominating positions. The remaining restrictions on federal employees' activities are tailored more narrowly to their jobs: they still are banned from using their authority to exert influence over an election; encouraging or discouraging political activity by anyone with business before their agency; doing political work while on duty, in uniform, in the office or in a government vehicle; running for partisan office; and wearing political buttons while on duty.

More information is provided on the FEB website at www.oklahoma.feb.gov

EEOC issues guide for hiring, promoting disabled employees

By Brittany R. Ballenstedt

bballenstedt@govexec.com August 27, 2008

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission published a guide to help agencies identify opportunities to hire and promote individuals with disabilities on August 26th.

The online guide responds to frequently asked questions about hiring flexibilities and legal requirements.

"The EEOC is doing everything it can to provide agencies with useful guidance on how to be the nation's model employer, providing equal opportunity to all Americans, including those with disabilities," said Naomi Earp, the commission's chairwoman.

The publication highlights special regulations that allow federal agencies to hire qualified individuals with severe disabilities without going through the usual competitive process.

The guide also outlines requirements for providing disabled job applicants and employees reasonable accommodations, and discusses how to handle accommodation issues when entering into relationships with other agencies or contractors.

In addition, the publication details the types of questions agencies can ask about an applicant's or employee's disability. And federal agencies can use it to determine how their obligations under the 1973 Rehabilitation Act relate to responsibilities under other federal laws.

The percentage of federal employees with targeted disabilities, which are severe physical or mental disabilities that historically have resulted in barriers to employment, has declined each year since reaching a peak of 1.24% in fiscal years 1993 and 1994. In fiscal 2007 it dropped to a 20-year low of 0.92 percent.

EEOC Commissioner Christine Griffin is leading an initiative to raise the portion of federal employees with disabilities to 2% by 2010.

"Even though the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 has long required federal agencies to engage in affirmative action to hire and advance individuals with disabilities, the federal government has failed to meet this challenge," Griffin said. "This question-and-answer guide will help agencies make concrete progress."



Oklahoma & Hurricane Gustav evacuees

The final report from the Office of Emergency Management for the shelter provided to evacuees of Hurricane Gustav. Crews from the electric cooperatives, OG&E and PSO are still in Louisiana to restore electric power. This update was provided by the Joint Information Center at the OKC Evacuees Support Shelter.

The Oklahoma City Evacuees Support Shelter Update September 5, 2008
SITUATION UPDATE 5

The City of Oklahoma City and 129 agencies provided a temporary shelter and critical services for 1,701 people and 30 pets who evacuated from the New Orleans and the surrounding area.

The shelter, which was located at the former Lucent Technology Plant, 7725 W Reno, was open from Sunday, August 31 to Friday, September 5, 2008. Most of the evacuees arrived on Monday, September 1.

Preparations were made through the Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management to coordinate transportation of evacuees back home. All passengers received care packages, which included sodas, crackers, cookies, two meals, and two bottles of water and safety and social security information to read on their ride home. The YMCA donated toys to occupy children on the road.

Departures began on Thursday and ended on Friday. Evacuees were sent home based on damage in the evacuee's parish. Louisiana was responsible for releasing evacuees.

Volunteers and workforce: More than 1,000 people both volunteered and were paid to work at the shelter since Sunday, August 31. The American Red Cross of Central Oklahoma, Catholic Charities, Salvation Army, United Methodist Volunteers in Mission and Baptist Disaster Relief led volunteer efforts.

Meals: Guests were provided three

hot meals daily - about 20,050 meals were served over the 5-day period. The Salvation Army provided breakfast, 57,980 snacks and 75,789 drinks. Southern Baptist Disaster Relief prepared lunch and dinner. Volunteers with the American Red Cross are serving and coordinating the meals.

Beds: The Tulsa and Central Oklahoma chapters of the American Red Cross and the State Department of Emergency Management had more than 4,000 cots and blankets available to evacuees. Pillows were also distributed.

Hygiene: Fifty-eight portable showers housed in six trailers, 164 port-a-potties and 30 handicap accessible toilets were provided. Guests took more than 2,000 showers. Hand sanitizer was widely available and guests were encouraged to take advantage of the sanitizer for everyone's wellness. The Regional Food Bank provided comfort kits with toothpaste, body gel/shampoo and razors. Laundry service was also provided.

Oklahoma City-County Health Department staff made sure food service areas met health code standards. The health department also monitored shower facilities and other public areas to ensure the health of the guests. Nurses and epidemiologists monitoring the overall health of the guests and if a problems were detected the EMSA medical staff onsite was notified.

Clothing was provided on a basis of need by the Salvation Army.

Medical: The Medical Emergency Clinic operated from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday through Tuesday and from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday.

The Oklahoma State Department of Health operated the clinic, which was supported by EMSA, American Red Cross of Central Oklahoma, Oklahoma City-County Health Department,



Oklahoma City Fire Department, OU College of Pharmacy, Integris Health and Oklahoma Medical Reserve Corps staffed the medical clinic.

The Oklahoma Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) provided 102 volunteers.

The Oklahoma State Department of Health also collaborated in supporting 30 patients evacuated from Louisiana hospitals through the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS). Trained staff and volunteers with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services attended to those with special needs, such as wheelchairs and sign language services, as well as providing mental health services.

United Way also provided taxis to and from local hospitals and pharmacies, on a needs basis.

Child Services: Baptist Disaster Relief provided a children's activity center, caring for children ranging from infants to seven-year-olds. The Salvation Army provided eight basketball goals and board games for families. Inflatable toys and movies (shown on a big screen) were provided for the older kids. Volunteers trained to assist children in traumatic situations were also available.

Other Activities provided: Alcoholics Anonymous offered meetings. Salvation Army handed out more than 900 decks of cards.

Pastor George E. Young, Sr. with Holy Temple Baptist Church led spiritual music on Wednesday night.

Department of Veterans Affairs manned an on-site information desk.

Safety and Security: A background check was run on all evacuees upon check in. Sex offenders were not allowed in the facility. Those with warrants for their arrest were taken to the County Jail.

Police arrested 35 evacuees over the five-day period. Most of the arrests were for public drunkenness and trespassing. They were allowed to return to Louisiana on a bus.

The Oklahoma City Police Department had 15 officers stationed inside the facility to provide security to guests and volunteers. COLERT (Central Oklahoma Law Enforcement Response Team) had 10 additional law enforcement personnel outside of the facility.

The Edmond Police Department coordinated and supervised the outside security of the facility. All guests were allowed to come and go; however, they are asked to abide by a nightly curfew. Gates closed nightly at 9 p.m. and reopened at 7 a.m. Guests were not allowed to enter the shelter during this time.

Pets: Members of the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry and the City of Oklahoma City Animal Shelter cared for 30 guests' pets at the onsite pet shelter. Pet owners had access to their pets throughout their stay at the shelter. Animal Shelter staff walked dogs daily.

Self-Evacuees: Self-evacuees should call 2-1-1 for assistance. The Tzu Chi Foundation provided \$100 Visa debit cards to assist self-evacuees with expenses, particularly gas, needed to return to the Gulf Coast. The Tzu Chi foundation is a National and Oklahoma Voluntary Organization Active in Disasters (OKVOAD) partner who agreed to assist self-deployed evacuees with gasoline.

Contributions: Monetary donations are best. The shelter does not need any donations of clothing, toys or other items. Citizens are encouraged to make a donation to the relief agency of their choice. The American Red Cross has spent \$20 million in relief efforts for Hurricane Gustav across the southern states.

The United Way of Central Oklahoma and The Oklahoman provided newspapers to guests.

Public works set up 113 cones, 50 police gates, 5 light plants, 75 gallons of fuel, 25 barriers and 2,700 feet of snow fencing.



UPCOMING EVENTS October 2008

Oct 9, 2008
2:30 p.m.
American Indian Council
Allegiance Credit Union
4325 N. Meridian, OKC
POC: Katy Lantagne, 405-522-5409

Oct 13, 2008
Columbus Day



Oct 15, 2008
10:00 a.m.
Interagency Training Council
Mike Monroney Aeronautical Cntr
Civil Aerospace Medical Institute
6500 S. MacArthur, OKC
POC: Ellen Parrott, 405-419-4291

Oct 16, 2008
11:00 a.m.
Federal Employees Care Council
Allegiance Credit Union
4325 N. Meridian, OKC
POC: Tom Burton, 405-954-0625

Oct 16, 2008
National Boss Day

Oct 30, 2008
 **Halloween**

Oct 31, 2008
**Leadership FEB-US Courts and
US Marshals Service**
POC: LeAnn Jenkins, 405-231-4167

Oct 31, 2008
12:00 noon
Naturalization Ceremony
200 N.W. 4th St, OKC
POC: FEB Office, 405-231-4167

If you can connect with people and show them that their organization cares about them first as human beings, and everything else is second to that, then you have a chance of being a great organization.

—Paul O'Neill

Your Federal Executive Board

“Federal Executive Boards (FEBs) are generally responsible for improving coordination among federal activities and programs in...areas outside of Washington, D.C...FEBs support and promote national initiatives of the President and the administration and respond to the local needs of the federal agencies and the community.” (GAO-04-384)

We applaud the efforts of the Oklahoma FEB Executive Policy Council members who ensure information is provided to direct our activities and efforts:

- Jim Akagi, US Drug Enforcement Administration
- Larry Flener, Representative for the District Director, US Postal Service
- Patti Ford, Director of Staff, Tinker AFB
- Col. Jennifer Graham, 71st MSG, Vance AFB
- Sam Jarvis, Director, VA Regional Office, Muskogee
- Scott Morgan, Director, US Postal Service National Center for Employee Development, Norman
- Dottie Overall, Director, Small Business Administration
- Lindy Ritz, Director, FAA Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center
- David Wood, Director, VA Medical Center

This newsletter is published monthly as a cost-effective tool for communicating events and issues of importance to the federal community in Oklahoma. If you have news of interest, please fax to the FEB Office at (405) 231-4165 or email to LeAnnJenkins@gsa.gov no later than the 15th of each month.

Officers:

Chair: **Barry Dodson**, Director
USDA Risk Management Agency

Vice-Chair: **LCDR David Nikodym**
Commander, Military Entrance
Processing Station

Ex Officio: **Kevin McNeely**
US Department of Housing and
Urban Development
Mike Roach, U.S. Marshal
US Marshals Service
Western District of Oklahoma

Staff:

Director: LeAnn Jenkins
Assistant: Julie Murray



Get a Grip: Overcoming Stress and Thriving in the Workplace



Do you remember when you used to leave work at work and not worry about it until the next day? Now we are constantly linked to our job through our cell phones, laptops, and blackberries. The line between our workday and our personal life has disappeared. Productivity has increased, but at what expense to our health? People are stressed out more than ever, and many ignore the impact and toll it takes on their lives.

What is stress, and can we realistically do anything about it given today's frantic pace? A stressor is any event or situation that creates a response or change in our body and mind. Stress is our body and mind's reaction to that stressor, whether mental or physical. Not all stressors are negative—they can be a response or change in our body and mind. Stress is our body and mind's reaction to that stressor, whether mental or physical. Not all stressors are negative—they can be a response to a positive situation such as a promotion, building a new house, or a child's wedding. Not everyone reacts the same way to the same stressors; some may handle them better than others may.

If we experience a negative reaction to a negative stressor, it creates a mental response such as fear, anger, and anxiety. It also creates physiological responses such as increased adrenalin, blood pressure, heart rate, and breathing. Our body gets prepared to spring into action. It is useful (although not medically correct) to think of the analogy of a buildup of negative energy that needs to be decreased. If you ignore it, all the research clearly shows that it takes its toll on the mind and body. You increase your risk for anxiety, depression, burnout, high blood pressure, heart disease, and more.

We can get rid of that buildup of negative energy each and every day. However, it takes a commitment that requires about one-half hour a day. If it improves your health and productivity, it is certainly worth the time. If you cannot find one-half hour, then find three blocks of time that are 10 minutes each.

The two best antidotes to harmful stress are exercise and meditation. Exercise includes

stretching, strength training, and aerobics. One of the best forms of exercise is just plain old walking. A 30-minute leisurely stroll can greatly improve our ability to lessen stress, and increase our body's immunity to disease. Two of my other favorites are biking and swimming. If you have lived a fairly sedentary lifestyle, consult your physician before you begin. Begin slowly and do not over exert yourself the first week. Try keeping an exercise log—it is a great way to see your progress.

Meditation is not a religion and you do not have to change your beliefs, values, or lifestyle. Its whole purpose is to slow and quiet the mind. It helps you to think better and also gives you more energy. When you recharge the mind, you recharge the body. Many of us, because we have so much on our plates, cannot quiet our minds. It is constantly running, like a wild stallion that you cannot rein in. A cluttered mind prevents us from focusing or sleeping. With meditation, you train your mind to slow down by focusing on your breath, a word, prayer, image, or nature. Meditation is a perfect answer for those who do not have the physical ability to exercise.

One of the best ways to meditate is to sit in a comfortable chair in a quiet place, close your eyes, and take six to 10 deep breaths. Then focus on your breathing. Begin counting each breath as you exhale. Try it first for just a minute; then gradually add more minutes. It is normal for your mind to wander, but do not let that bother you. Just go back to counting the breaths. Eventually you will keep your mind focused on your breath. When you finish, you will often find that it is as if you took a power nap, and you will feel more energized and focused.

You now have a starting point for a long and wonderful journey back to more energy, less stress, and improved health. We all know that a journey begins with the first steps. Begin taking them now, and you will thank yourself each day for positively changing your life.

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SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	October 2008		1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9 2:30 AIC	10	11
12	13 Columbus Day	14	15 10:00 ITC	16 3:00 FECC Nat'l Boss Day	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30 10:00 Exec Policy Council	31 Leadership FEB Naturalization	

OKLAHOMA FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD
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