MISSOURI STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AGENDA ITEM: October 2019

RECOGNITION OF STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

STATUTORY AUTHORITY:

☐ Consent Item ☐ Action Item ☒ Report Item

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Efficiency and Effectiveness – Create an internal environment of continuous improvement, effective programming, and efficient business operations.

Employees of the Month:

The July Employee of the Month was Jo Anne Ralston, coordinator with early learning in the Office of Quality Schools. She has been with the Department almost 15 years. “I am completely humbled by this acknowledgement,” said Jo Anne. “I think of the work of early learning as a team effort. I prefer to give credit to the team,” she said. “Jo Anne is a passionate individual when it comes to education,” said her nominator, Jackie Wieberg. “She works hard to collaborate with the early learning staff and others within the Department around issues regarding quality early learning and parent education.” “Perhaps the biggest benefit of Jo Anne’s work is her collaboration with outside agencies and organizations,” said Lana Brooks, who also nominated Jo Anne. “She is able to represent the Department’s view regarding quality services for young children in a clear manner that honors a true partnership and reflects well on the Department.” Jo Anne said her position at DESE is both challenging and rewarding. “Working within this agency, with other state agencies, with local and regional leaders and teachers to consider the needs of children and families as we create policies and systems is the challenge,” said Jo Anne. “The reward is making a difference for these children and families.” Jo Anne and her husband, Andrew, live in Columbia with their German Shepard, Seneca. Their daughter, Cheyenne, is a healthcare consulting analyst in Chicago. When not serving the Department, Jo Anne says you can find her at many Mizzou athletic events.

The August Employee of the Month was Jocelyn Strand, coordinator with school improvement in the Office of Quality Schools. She celebrated 29 years with the Department on September 5. “In her current role as coordinator for school improvement, she has been instrumental in the development and implementation of the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) accountability systems,” said her nominator, Norma Anderson. “Both of these programs focus on the Department’s ultimate goal of making sure every student in Missouri graduates ready for success.” “I am honored to be named the DESE Employee of the Month,” said Jocelyn. “There are so many staff in the Department who are dedicated to the work of improving learning for Missouri’s children who are deserving of this honor.” “Jocelyn is the picture of who you want as an employee,” added Anderson. “She is hardworking, dedicated, knowledgeable, and always available to help others. Her responsibilities seem endless, but her excitement and enthusiasm remain unfaltering.” Jocelyn was born in Jefferson City and grew up in Boonville. Her husband, Leif, works as a special agent for SIGAR (Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction), and her daughter, Brennan, is an...
academic advisor at the University of Missouri – Columbia in the College of Education. When not serving the Department, Jocelyn enjoys playing strategy board games with her family. “Carcassonne, Azul, Santorini and Catan, to name a few,” she said. “I also love to read and am known for my Tsundoku habit.”

The September Employee of the Month was Brian Lamons, assistant director in Media Production Services. He has been with the department for 12 years. “I am thankful to be chosen as DESE Employee of the Month,” said Lamons. “I know there are a large number of dedicated professionals that work here who are deserving of the award.” Lamons is responsible for audio-visual support for most major DESE conferences, including most of the statewide student organizations – DECA, Family Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCCLA), FFA and SkillsUSA. He also serves as a studio and field videographer, producer, director and media editor for the Department. “Brian works hard without complaint, often starting early, staying late and working weekends,” said Brad Scroggs, his nominator. “He is literally ‘the man behind the curtain’ that brings conference sights and sounds to the audience and is well liked by all the clients that we serve.” “One of the reasons I enjoy my job is getting the chance to work with other departments and help them accomplish their goals,” said Lamons. “DESE employees are experienced professionals who care deeply about the public they serve, and I am proud to be one of them.” When not serving the Department, Brian spends most of his free time with his wife, Jennifer, and their 14-year-old son, Jarett. He also volunteers as a youth sport coach for his son’s baseball and basketball teams.

5 Years of Service – 43

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Office and Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kristen Aubuchon, Missouri School for the Blind</td>
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<td>Tiffany Austin, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – VR*</td>
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<td>Kelly Bray, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD*</td>
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<td>Chris Dzurick, Office of College and Career Readiness*</td>
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<td>Nadia Elmonis, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled</td>
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<td>Candace Evers, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD</td>
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<td>Lois Freeman, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled</td>
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<td>Nicholas Frese, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD</td>
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<td>Cynthia Garcia, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled</td>
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<td>Rhonda Green, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – VR</td>
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<td>Cara Jones, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD*</td>
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<td>Billie Keim, Commissioner’s Office*</td>
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<td>Kim Kemple, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD*</td>
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<td>Cathy Kocian, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – VR</td>
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<td>Cheryl Kosmatka, Office of Quality Schools*</td>
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<td>Jennifer Kreiensieck, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD</td>
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Ashley Lane, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – VR
Erin LePage, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD*
Anna Martinez, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
Susan Nichols, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
Megan O’Neal, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
Roberta Rynning, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – VR
Mellissa Smith, Missouri School for the Deaf
Opeoluwa Sotonwa, Missouri Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing*
Tammy Stains, Office of College and Career Readiness*
Ann Starlin-Horner, Office of College and Career Readiness
Helen Stewart, Office of Data System Management*
Kristy Summers, Missouri Assistive Technology
Beatrix Tennessen-Cusuman, Missouri School for the Blind
Allison Thorbergson, Missouri School for the Deaf
Teri Turner, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
Michael Uhrhan, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
Patricia Ward, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – VR
Keith White, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD*
Deanna Witte, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD

10 Years of Service – 18

Laura Baucom, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
Shaojun Chen, Missouri School for the Blind
Kathy Collins, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
Pamela Garthe, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
Sarah Hanner, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
Kristine Hartman, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
Mary Jackson, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
Bethany Kiel, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
Camille Lafollette, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
Joyce Lenzy, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
David Meyer, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
Marie Pille, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
Debra Riggs, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – VR*
Carol Seiler, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
Amanda Sims, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
Jennifer Stoecker, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
Suanne Turner, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
Rebecca West, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD

15 Years of Service – 12

Ann Baker, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – VR
Jamie Barber, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
Joycie Barnett, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
Leslie Cockrum, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – VR
Darren Dial, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
Elizabeth Dwyer, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
Gayle Edwards, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
Patrick Frazier, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
Richard Gaines, Missouri School for the Deaf
Stephanie Monahan, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – VR
Jo Anne Ralston, Office of Quality Schools*
James Reed, Office of Quality Schools*

**20 Years of Service - 11**

Charlene Allison, Missouri School for the Deaf
Michelle Crismas, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
Trisha DeBrodie, Missouri School for the Deaf
Suzanne Falk, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
Marti Hill, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD*
Donna Kessell, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
Debbie Montez, Missouri School for the Deaf
Becky Nehring, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
Janice Rehak, Office of College and Career Readiness*
Anna Schell, Missouri School for the Blind
Farrah Starks, Missouri School for the Blind

**25 Years of Service - 11**

Jill Bailey, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
Melanie Benitz, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – VR
Chokaio Benton, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
Christine Davidson, Missouri School for the Blind
Dee Ann Fuller, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – VR*
Bonnie Hudson, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
 Therese Johnston, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – VR
 Tracey Lawson, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD
 Robin Mills, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
 Steven Mitchell, Missouri School for the Deaf
 Christine Schofield, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – DD*

**30 Years of Service - 3**

Janice Kobzej, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – VR
Michael Rogers, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
Deb Linneman, Office of Financial & Administrative Services*

**35 Years of Service - 2**

Nancy Foster, Missouri School for the Deaf
Marsha Riney, Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
### 40 Years of Service - 1

Leonard Gillam, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services – VR*

* = Jefferson City Based Staff

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIVISION/OFFICE</th>
<th>TOTAL NUMBER OF AWARDS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Adult Learning &amp; Rehabilitation Services</td>
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<td>College &amp; Career Readiness</td>
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<td>Quality Schools</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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