



May 2015



Greg's Greetings

What shapes an organization and what characterizes an organization is its DNA. Just like a human being whose distinct, individual traits are due to his/her DNA, so too does an organization's DNA define it. So my thought is "what is GVRA's DNA?" When someone outside of GVRA comes in contact with any part of our organization, what is their impression of us? How do they see us, what do they think about us and what do they see as our distinct characteristics?

Now do me a favor...take a minute and just think about that question by yourself. What do you think people think of us? What would your colleagues say about what others think of us? What do you think others think our DNA is? Now once you have given that some thought, do you like what you thought? Are you satisfied with what you think our DNA is? If not, what would you like our DNA to be?

I think about it a lot. I also take it very personally. If someone doesn't like GVRA, I take it so personally that I try to think about what I can do to change that. Here's what I want our DNA to be: respectful, personable, creative, hard-working, unselfish, stewards, effective. Wouldn't you want to work for an organization like that...an organization whose DNA is so positive that everyone who comes in contact with it feels good about their experience? I certainly would.

So here's our challenge, and I do mean "our" challenge. One person in an organization cannot create the organization's DNA by himself. To create a DNA that all of us can be proud of will in fact take all of us. If you are disrespectful to others, difficult to get along with, stuck in your ways, lazy, care only about yourself and ineffective, then you really don't belong in GVRA, because your DNA doesn't match what we want. On the other hand, if your DNA matches what we want – THANK YOU so much! Keep doing it and keep doing more of it!

GVRA Honors Admin Assistants



GVRA offices and programs recently celebrated all admin assistants for Administrative Assistants Day. In addition, the GVRA External Affairs team (pictured) honored admin assistants Harriett Young and Megan Mounkes with some special treats. In addition, the team also celebrated Megan's upcoming wedding in Savannah.

For all the admin assistants across the agency and its divisions, thank you for all that you do, and continue the good work.

The ADA Legacy Tour Hits GA.



The ADA Legacy Tour is rolling across the country raising awareness and building excitement toward ADA25 - the 25th anniversary of the ADA in 2015! The Tour includes:

The "Road to Freedom" ADA Bus - which traveled to 48 states in 2007 to raise support for the ADA Amendments Act - courtesy of the Disability Rights Center and driven by veteran disability rights photographer, Tom Olin;

A four-panel display on the history of self-advocacy, courtesy of the Museum of disABILITY History;

Displays on The ADA Legacy Project and its effort to preserve of disability history; celebrate disability history milestones; and educate future generations of disability advocates;

The ADA quilt - add your signature to thousands of others who have participated in the Tour;
Displays on the history of the Road to Freedom Tour;

Information, swag, events, workshops, artifacts, and other programming provided by local hosts. Six, of the Tour stops will be housed at the Abilities Expo, one of our major Tour partners. These stops will include a workshop on the ADA, courtesy of the ADA National Network.

The tour includes several stops around Georgia. These include: May 8 in Gainesville, May 10 at the ADA Symposium in Atlanta, May 15-16 at the Mobility Expo in Atlanta, May 23 in Gainesville, May 27 at the Interfaith Summit in Atlanta, May 29 in Augusta, June 12 at the Shepherd Center in Atlanta and June 13 in Atlanta.

ADA **25** **1990-2015**
AMERICANS WITH
DISABILITIES ACT

The SRC Visits Cave Spring

Members of the Georgia State Rehabilitation Council recently visited the Cave Spring Center. While there, they watched teachers interact with students, toured the campus and learned about all the services the center provides. Here's some pictures from the day.



GVRA at Rep. Scott's Career Fair



Members of the GVRA Human Resources team along with external affairs staff members Joseph Weatherspoon and Robin Blount recently attended a career fair in Atlanta hosted by Congressman David Scott. By all accounts, it was a well-attended event with many prime applicants.

BEP Busy with Lotto Vending

Within the last few weeks, the Business Enterprise Program has been able to establish two new vending lottery machines for licensed blind vendors. The machines are located at the IRS campus located in Chamblee and in the Twin Towers Sloppy Floyd building. Customers in both locations are excited and as expected, food sales have increased due to the installation of the lottery machines.

The BEP has been busy conducting its research on its newest potential employment opportunity. Several staff recently attended the 2015 Annual CleanShow, a 4-day conference comprised of hundreds of businesses that cater to the laundry and dry cleaning industry. As the BEP prepares to potentially open a laundry mat, it was necessary to research the equipment needed to ensure a successful opening.



DAS Employee of the Month



This nomination was submitted by Denise Johnson.

"I would like to recognize Lynne Jones for her dedication and hard work as an important member of the accounting unit dream team. She has been a team member for roughly seven years. Her extra efforts, insights and opinions have been very valuable to the success of our team. The personal pride in her work is obvious as well as the quality of work she displays.

She has trained a number of accountant paraprofessionals as well as invoice authorizers, while continuing to maintain her work responsibilities. She exemplifies professionalism, teamwork and customer service to the unit and to the agency. Her responsibilities are numerous, consisting of verifying and processing payments for consultative examination reports for doctors and hospitals, medical records and travel for claimants.

Thank you Lynne for coming to work every day and being committed to the tasks assigned to you and reaching the goals of the unit and agency. It has not gone unnoticed."

Pictured above is DAS employee of the month Lynne Jones accepting her award from DAS Director Awilda Danko.

New Hires and Retirements

Please join me in welcoming new employees to GVRA.

They include: Carrie Henry (DAS Savannah), Dorothy Fletcher (GIB Griffin), Kendra Hines (GIB Brainbridge), Seth Leverette (GIB Bainbridge), Karen Martinez (GIB Griffin), Mary Mayer (GIB Corporate), Randall Nobles (GIB Griffin), Shirley White (GIB Bainbridge), Donielle Lindsay (GVRA Budget), Erin Walker (GVRA HR) and Vincent Slaughter (VR Business Coordinator).

There were no retirements last month.

Let's welcome all the new employees to the agency!

Employee Luncheon at RWS

Grounds Maintenance Manager Jesse O'Neal received the annual leadership award and Patrick Smith, a trades craftsman in the facility maintenance department, received the employee of the year award during the recent employee recognition luncheon at Roosevelt Warm Springs (RWS).

Selected from a field of four nominees, Jesse O'Neal was recognized for his tremendous work on the RWS campus over the last several years. Jesse and his staff have tackled numerous improvement projects on the campus, creating a beautiful and welcoming facility.

Patrick Smith received the employee of the year award for his friendly manner, his work to make the facility better and his excellent rapport with the students. The employee of the year is selected from the previous year's employee of the month recipients. The other nominees were: Tim Smith, Lakeitha Dixon, Cheryl Leidy, Linda Collins, Gena Ogletree, Don King, Clyde Copeland, Debra Whitten, Deion Wooten, Steve Hardnett and Lynne Patterson.

Robert Prater, the mayor of Warm Springs, delivered the keynote address at the luncheon. He reflected upon his fond memories of his past employment at RWS as a vocational evaluator during the early 1970's. He noted the significant impact the facility has made for those who received vocational services over the years. He also challenged the staff to keep reaching toward the future to make Roosevelt Warm Springs bigger, better and brighter. Mr. Prater continued with reading one of his favorite quotes from President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

"Because after all, Warm Springs—to be successful in the future—has got to make some progress every

year throughout the years."

Prater explained that this quote encourages him to continue to make a difference in the city of Warm Springs and the surrounding community.

In addition, RWS Director Bill Bulloch presented the annual employee service awards. This special recognition is given to employees for their years of service to Roosevelt Warm Springs. This award honors employees who have celebrated a landmark anniversary date. Lapel pins are presented to RWS employees based on years of service. The lapel pin is a replica from a pin presented to employees during the Georgia Warm Springs Foundation era. The lapel pin includes a scroll design at the bottom of the pin which reads *Roosevelt Warm Springs Legacy*. The lapel pin is engraved on the front with the number of years of service being honored. In addition, silver engraved gift boxes are given to employees beginning with 20 years of service to Roosevelt Warm Springs. The recipients are:

30 Years: Danney Yates; 20 Years: Cindy Armstrong, Debbie Casey, Eman Daniel and Ed Friend; 15 years: Chad Banks and Stella Ann Reid; 10 Years: Deborah Bellesfield, Denise Burson and Deion Wooten; 5 years: Connie Bonnette, Vera Beth Gibson, Kim Mitcham and Megon Steele.

The Employee Recognition Luncheon was made possible by the Roosevelt Warm Springs Rehabilitation Development Fund. Development Fund Chairman Ken Dobbs and Board Member Lee Norman were on hand to congratulate the honorees.

RWS Employees Continued



From left: RWS Employees Danney Yates of 30 years, Denise Burson of 10 years and Megan Steele of five years were recognized recently at an annual awards luncheon at the RWS campus. Congratulations to everyone who received an award or was recognized.



From left: Chad Banks and Stella Ann Reid, both of whom have 15 years at RWS, along with Ed Friend and Eman Daniel, both of whom have 20 years at RWS, were recently recognized for their longevity and were praised for their service to the campus and its students.



From left: Leader of the year recipient Jesse O'Neal thanks his staff for their dedication to keeping the RWS vocational campus beautiful. Former RWS employee and current Mayor of Warm Springs Robert Prater encouraged the RWS staff to keep making progress every day.