



**M**aximum  
**V**eteran  
**B**enefit

# Truman VA BULLETIN

JUNE 1, 2007

## WELCOME

**Kathryn Burks, RN** (PS)  
**Sharon Finley**, Food Service Worker (BUS)  
**Ashley Johnson**, Food Service Worker (BUS)  
**Desirae White, RN** (PS)  
**Jessica Young, RN** (PS)

## FAREWELL

**Cary Adkisson**, Medical Instrument Tech EKG (PS)  
**Rickey Christian**, Food Service Worker (BUS)  
**Emily Crow**, Physician Assistant (SC)  
**Kerri Hart, RN** (PS)  
**Jill Lehmen**, Student Nurse Tech (PS)  
**Diana Plain**, Medical Laboratory Aid (CS)  
**Candace Williams**, Medical Instrument Tech EKG (PS)  
**Jasmine Worsham**, Student Nurse Tech (PS)  
**Sofia Yahya, MD**, Staff Psychiatrist (BH)



## NEW DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS

**Paul F. Hopkins** was appointed recently as Director, Business Operations Service Line at Truman VA. Paul has been a member of the Truman VA staff since 1992, when he was hired as an accounting technician in Fiscal Service. Since then, Paul served in a variety of fiscal department positions including lead payroll technician, budget analyst and, for the past six years, chief accountant. A native of Columbia, he earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Columbia College and a master's degree in business administration from William Woods University in 2005. Paul is a member of the retired U.S. Army Reserves and served in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan from 2002 to 2003. He is married to Michelle and they have three children – Alexis, Braden and Addison. Congratulations, Paul!



## VA EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION NEWS

The new Employees Association board includes the following individuals:

**Erica Keeler**, Chair  
**Kris Gaddy**, Co-Chair  
**Barb Hatfield**, Secretary

**Machelle Dykstra**  
**Lula Johnson**  
**Paul Kurzejeski**  
**Jerry Loftus**  
**Jimmy Powell**  
**Amy Pulliam**  
**Stephen Roberts**  
**Teresa Smith**  
**Vanessa Thornhill**



Movie tickets and theme park tickets are available at discounted prices. Theme parks include Six Flags, Big Surf, Silver Dollar City, Celebration City and White Water. For theme park tickets, contact **Erica Keeler** at pager 5526. For movie tickets, contact **Jimmy Powell** at extension 56404.

The annual "Spring Fling" is slated for Friday, June 22 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Watch for more information.

Please remember to contact any board member if you have suggestions for events.

## DOUGLASS HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

On May 25, Frederick Douglass High School conducted its 2007 Graduation Ceremony at Columbia College. The following Douglass graduates have been part of the "industry based" Partnership In Education program at Truman VA during the 2006-07 school year: **Ashley Babcock**, Recreation (PS); **Maegan Fulkerson**, Sterile Processing (PS); **Jennifer Hulen**, Nurse Aid 3-East (PS); **Latoya Jackson**, Food Service – Meals On Wheels (BUS); and **Misty Smith**, Medical Records (BUS). In addition, Ashley was the recipient of the 2007 Columbia VA Employees Association \$500 scholarship that she will use to continue her post-high school education at Moberly Area Community College. Congratulations!



## 2007 FACILITY LEAD CLASS HONORED

On May 30, **Dr. Peter Almenoff**, VA Heartland Network Director, recognized the 2007 Facility LEAD class for completion of the nine-month program. The program is designed to help employees (1) identify strengths, career goals and ambitions in order to determine how they can find the best fit in VA for their unique talents; (2) build and sustain effective relationships with peers and with senior leaders; (3) understand VA medical center operations outside their own area of expertise and develop a one-VA perspective; (4) demonstrate their commitment to VA and their own leadership development, which will make them better equipped to compete for promotions in the organization; and (5) create opportunities to mentor others, both formally and informally, throughout the remainder of their career.

This year's class worked on two big projects – (1) developing a Nursing Admission Skin Assessment and (2) championing the 2007 All Employee Satisfaction Survey.

Congratulations to the following: **Shirley Blair, RN**, Patient Services; **Betty Carter**, Primary Care; **Sara Hake**, Director's Office; **Ty Jacobs**, Information Management; **Jan Neely**, Business Operations; **Kenneth Nobles**, Police and Security; **Stephen Roberts**, Pharmacy; and **Laura Sandahl**, Business Operations.

### LETTER OF APPRECIATION

Dear Director,

This is a letter of appreciation for the care I recently received as an inpatient at your hospital. There has been a tendency for the news to focus on a few small blemishes in the veterans' health care system and ignore all the great positives. My personal experience was very positive and I am grateful for the care I received.

It is not in my nature to be flattering or sycophantic, so it is with utmost sincerity that I say that everyone I encountered, whether medical staff or volunteer, was friendly, pleasant and eager to be helpful. I can only evaluate the level of care from a layman's perspective, but I found it to be of a high level of competence, skill and compassion.

No one enjoys suffering with illness, injury or disability, and it takes wonderful people to work with those populations while maintaining patience and understanding. However, that is what I saw displayed. It was comforting to witness those who have served so well being served so well in return. Thank you.

**JD**

### VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT REMINDER

This is a reminder to all employees that job vacancy announcements are posted on the Human Resources (HR) bulletin boards located on the first, second and third floors of the facility. In addition, they are sent via e-mail to a shared mail group titled CO-VACANCIES. To access shared mail, type in "AML" at the Mailman Menu option. At the Read Mail in Basket: IN prompt, type in CO-VACANCIES.

There is also a self-enroll mail group in which employees may self enroll and receive vacancy announcements automatically without the need to go to Shared Mail. The following instructions relate to enrolling in this mail group:

- Go to Mailman Menu Option
- Type P for Personal Preference
- Type E for Enroll in
- Type CO-COLUMBIA VACANCIES.

Please note that nursing vacancies for both RN and LPN positions are sent automatically to their established mail groups. Employees do not need to enroll in the new mail group to receive those vacancy announcements. Contact **Gail Capps** (HR) at extension 56403 for further information.

Article 22, Section 8, H, 3 of the Master Agreement states: *"Scheduled Employee Absence of three (3) Weeks or Less: Employees temporarily absent on approved leave, detail, at training courses, or on official business, for period not to exceed three (3) weeks may, upon their return, review position vacancies announced and closed during their absence, and make application for such vacancies in which they are interested. Such late applications must be submitted within three (3) workdays after return to duty and must be accompanied by a statement prepared and signed by the employee and also signed by their supervisor explaining the dates and reason(s) for the employee's absence. Employees filing delayed applications under this provision will be considered only for those vacancies for which a best-qualified list has not yet been prepared."*

### 2006 HEART AND HANDS AWARD ♥

Congratulations to **Nancy Dietz**, staff pharmacist, for being named the recipient of the 2006 Heart and Hands Award for Truman VA. **Dr. Peter Almenoff**, VA Heartland Network Director, presented the award to her on May 30 at the Network Town Hall meeting for all employees. She received the recognition based on outstanding professionalism in her service to veterans, especially in the home health care arena, as well as for her support of veterans enrolled in various research studies at Truman VA. Nancy's stellar performance has been acknowledged routinely by the veterans she serves and by her fellow staff members. She has been described as a very capable, knowledgeable, hard-working, enthusiastic pharmacist whose hope, empathy and direct hands-on caring for the veteran sets her apart.