

2013 Service Award Employee Biographies for Board of Commissioners

Chair Madrigal

Lisa White - 15 Years (start date: 6/19/1998)
Position: LIBRARY ADMINISTRATOR
Multnomah County Library
Division: Albina Branch
Don Allgeier, 503-988-6136 ext 86136

In a previous career, Lisa White taught language arts to eighth-graders. She loved helping students learn and assisting them in realizing their potential.

Lisa's belief in public service led her to respond to a newspaper ad for an open circulations clerk position at Central Library 15 years ago.

She soon realized that teaching and library work were similar: she enjoyed interacting with people, and the fact that she'd never get bored because she never knew what would happen on any given day. "In teaching, it was helping people really explore their potential, and that's what we do at the library," she says.

After five years working as a circulations clerk and library assistant, Lisa became a library administrator and joined the team at the Albina Library. It's easy to see why she calls that place home.

As some of you may know, the library branch is small with no meeting rooms. Programming – including everything from classes on making duct-tape wallets to storytime for children -- happens in the main room. Lisa calls it a big living room with no couches.

In this home, Lisa appreciates the long-term relationships she has developed. A couple of years ago, a group of middle-schoolers spent their evenings at Albina studying and hanging out. When they were getting ready to graduate, they excitedly told her where they were going to high school. "Hey Library Lady," they called her. It was their term of endearment, she says.

Even though she's a supervisor, Lisa still makes time to interact with patrons to do reference checks for the books they're seeking. That part of her job helps her stay fresh and provides insight into what her colleagues experience every day on the job.

Lisa has served on the library's Disability Accommodations Group, which evaluates and recommends ways to enhance library services for patrons with disabilities. She also sat on the Diversity Steering Committee, which fosters a work culture that values people and the differences they bring to the workforce.

Congratulations, Lisa. Thank you for making your home, our home.

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Commissioner Smith

Jeanne Ramsten - 30 Years (start date: 9/22/1983)

Position: LIBRARY ASSISTANT

Multnomah County Library

Division: Central

Shelly Jarman, 503-988-6328 ext 86328

Thirty years ago, Jeanne Ramsten came to Multnomah County as a library page in central stack services. As we all know, the library is a very different place than back in 1983, thanks to technology and the hard work of our staff.

Jeanne has been a huge part of that growth. She has worked as a library clerk and then library assistant at the Central Library; what's now the Hillsdale branch; and the Midland and Gresham branches. In those three decades of work, Jeanne has been nominated several times for Library recognition awards that honor her customer service, both internal and external.

As one Library patron put it after getting Jeanne's help to track down an item, "She took the time and effort to do so and made me feel like an important customer. I think you have a valuable employee in her."

We do indeed. Jeanne has been either a trustee or officer at AFSCME Local 88 for nearly 20 years. She was a founding member of the Library Results Committee, spent two years on the Summer Reading Committee, and is currently on the Employee Recognition Committee.

Jeanne's co-workers say she is a delight to work with. Her friendly calm make them feel good. And after 30 years on the job, her helpful and approachable demeanor make her one of the Library's most prized assets for patrons.

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Commissioner Smith

Sualua Faalevao - 15 Years (start date: 6/20/1998)

Position: Juvenile Custody Services Specialist

Department of Community Justice

Division: Juvenile Custody

Supervisor: Steve Walker or Izzy Lefebvre, 503-988-5891 ext 85891

Pronunciation: Soo-ah-loo-ah Fa-ah-lah-vo

Fifteen years ago, Sualua Faalevao began her career as an on-call juvenile custody services specialist in the Department of Community Justice.

Sualua is known for her contagious sense of humor and her laugh. Colleagues say she is mellow and at ease, even in chaotic scenarios. As one colleague says, "She can bring calm to situations very easily."

Sualua is now an overnight lead at the Donald E. Long Juvenile Detention Center providing direction for the facility overnight. Several years ago while she was earning her master's degree in public administration, she created an incident command manual to create a workflow that employees could follow during high-risk events when there were fewer people on duty.

She has also served on a committee that provide programming for juveniles in detention that celebrates cultural diversity, including guest speakers, entertainment and music.

For several years, Sualua has served as a custody services trainer, helping her peers to develop and maintain the necessary skills to provide quality care for youth in custody.

We applaud Sualua for her inspiring commitment to kids in her 15 years at the county.

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Commissioner Wendt

Barbara Broderick - 25 Years (start date: 8/12/1988)

Position: Office Assistant Sr.

Multnomah County Health Department

Division: Dental

Supervisor: Heather Simmons, 503-988-3905 ext 26342

In her 25 years of service at the county's Health Department, Barb Broderick has taken large leadership roles during what's been an ambitious expansion of our dental clinic program. Three dental clinics have opened during Barb's career and she has played a big part of many other projects.

Along the way, she has become known as a go-to person who knows an amazing number of county employees.

Barb started as an on-call dental assistant in the Grace Peck Medical/Dental Facility. She became a lead dental assistant in 1994, supporting the dental operations supervisor at 102nd Avenue Dental-- and was promoted to dental operations supervisor. Barb later transferred to Mid County Dental where she was a supervisor before moving into a different role at Southeast Health Center, supervising both medical and dental.

She has also supervised in other dental clinics, earning promotion to Operations Administrator to supervise multiple sites. And nearly five years ago, she moved into the School-based Health Clinics program as an Operations Supervisor.

Whew! That's an admirable record of accomplishments over 25 years. And it's a record of success.

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Jim Clayton - 20 Years (start date: 9/20/1993)
Position: County Surveyor
Department of Community Service
Division: LUT/County Surveyor

Jim Clayton has been the county surveyor since 2010 overseeing the work and activities of the Department of Community Services' survey office.

But his career here goes back much farther. Jim has spent that career improving his skills and striving for better ways to conduct business. He's found many ways to do that since joining the county in 1993 as an Engineering Technician Aide in the transportation survey department.

Early on, Jim wanted to advance his technical skills and took night and weekend classes to learn autocad and how to use survey instruments. He also wanted to "figure out a way" to read surveys more quickly. After just a year at the county, Jim told a supervisor he had more potential that wasn't being used. So he advocated for more technical training for himself and for the survey crew. We admire his proactive spirit.

Jim has an impressive set of goals for himself on the job: maintain a 21-day turnaround period for review of plats, make fewer than five corrections a year on reviews, and equip his work area to be as efficient as possible. It's that attention to detail that makes Jim successful at what he does.

Recently, Jim branched out once again and added to his skills set as the department's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator.

He is an inclusive and respectful manager who goes out of his way to communicate effectively and build strong bonds with his colleagues.

Congratulations, Jim on 20 years at Multnomah County.

Now I'm going to hand it back to Travis.