

Board announces Multnomah County Employee Award recipients - May 4, 2011

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On Wednesday May 4, 2011, Chair Cogen and the Board of County Commissioners will host the second annual Multnomah County Employee Awards Ceremony to honor individuals and teams for their commitment to public service.

After receiving 46 nominations, including over 500 employees in six categories, we are pleased to announce the winners of the 2011 Multnomah County Employee Awards.

Diversity and Cultural Competency Award - Health Equity Initiative / Business Services Workgroup

- Sonali Balajee (co-lead)
- Ben Duncan
- Molly Franks
- Rujuta Gaonkar
- Marc Harris
- Larry Howlett
- Tim Holbert
- Leah Isaac
- Rosa Klein
- Wendy Lear (co-lead)

- Kari Lyons
- Barb McClendon
- Ronnie Meyers
- Catherine Olsen-Dennis
- Kathryn Richer
- Consuelo Saragoza
- Robert Stoll
- Angie Thompson
- Les Walker
- Pam Zaragoza

The Health Equity Initiative/Business Services Workgroup was established as a partnership between the Health Equity Initiative Office and Health Department Business Services to pilot a new tool, known as the Equity and Empowerment Lens. This tool has been developed to help program managers identify and address the root causes of socioeconomic and racial issues that lead to health disparities.

This lens can be used by Program Managers and their teams to help evaluate the impact their program may have on the communities most affected by health inequities. The results of this evaluation can then be used to mitigate potential negative impacts while promoting more positive outcomes. The vision of the workgroup was to support budget and resource allocations targeted at desirable policy changes identified by use of the tool.

Workgroup participants found their work important and exciting. It brought together employees from all areas of the Health Department to discuss and learn about health disparities in our community and how small changes in how we do business can have a huge impact on the communities we serve.

Employee Innovation Award - Kenneth Scholes

Kenneth Scholes is a Senior Procurement Analyst working in the Purchasing Section of the Department of County Management. This past year Ken conducted the County's first formal solicitation utilizing the Best and Final Offer process (BAFO). BAFO incorporates an additional step at the end of the traditional RFP process where an evaluation team can request additional information from qualified vendors in order to clarify their response to the RFP and provide greater differentiation between competitive proposals. Ken demonstrated outstanding innovation in implementing these cutting edge techniques to improve the County's purchasing process while assuring that resources are spent wisely.

Outstanding Team Achievement Award - Alternative Community Service Team

- Donica Fields Addy
- Andres Avila
- Dugan Bates
- Kim Contreras
- Denise Hansen
- Jerry Hunter
- Jeff Johnson
- Jeff Jones
- Paul Kelly
- Thane King
- Dori Larson
- Mary Lewis
- David Main
- Alisha Morton
- Berthan Nyman
- Lorena Sandoval
- Gerard Welch
- Edward (Joe) Young

The Alternative Community Services (ACS) Team provides a cost effective alternative to incarceration for clients who have violated their conditions of parole or probation. In the last year, the Team has supervised as many as 700 clients, who otherwise would have served two to five days in jail.

The Team has provided over 60,000 hours of service to more than 40 non-profit public service agencies throughout Multnomah County, including the Oregon Food Bank, Multnomah County Animal Control, and the US Forest Service.

The ACS Team provides an excellent example of teamwork resulting not only in cost savings to the County through reduced incarceration rates, but also in providing valuable services to a variety of County and community agencies.

Superior Public Service to External Customers - Tammorra Barnes

Tammorra Barnes is a Program Development Specialist providing oversight of residential providers in the Developmental Disabilities Service System. Tammorra takes her monitoring role seriously and sees herself as an advocate for clients and a resource to agencies and providers who may need help in implementing changes to meet technical requirements.

Agency staff compliment Tammorra's respectful, professional approach to working with them to resolve issues. Tammorra is a natural leader and team player who brings a positive attitude to every situation presented to her and is an excellent representative of both her work unit and the County.

Superior Public Service to Internal Customers - Mark Gustafson

Mark Gustafson has served as a Multnomah County Property Manager for over 20 years. Currently Mark is the assigned Property Manager for multiple County buildings and is the Condominium Manager for the Justice Center, which is the County's largest asset. The Justice Center houses multiple tenants, including both County and non-County staff.

Mark applies his technical knowledge, interpersonal skills, initiative and good judgment in anticipating and planning the proper approach to managing this multifunctional, secured public building. Mark is always positive and willing to go the extra mile. He is a shining example of excellence in public service.

Sustainability Award - Multnomah County Sheriff's Office Sustainability Liaison Team

- Linda Buck
 - Rachel Getman
 - Shannon Goulter
 - Jon Matthews
 - Chris Payne
 - Zaida Pina
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- Matt Ingram
- Thomas Jacobs

- Steve Wright

Over the past two years, the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office Sustainability Liaison Team has helped identify changes that have resulted in a 13 percent reduction of paper usage by MCSO and has increased the County's overall recycling rate by 10 percent. It is a tribute to the team that they have achieved these results without compromising the Sheriff's Office overarching responsibilities of public safety and security.

Chair's Excellence Award - Sonia Manhas

Sonia Manhas, MSW, supervises Multnomah County's Community Wellness and Prevention Program.

Sonia lives in Northeast Portland with her husband John Hall and their two daughters, 7-year-old Sena and 18-month-old Leela. She and her family enjoy walking around their neighborhood, patronizing local businesses and spending time in Wilshire Park. A native of Canada, she claims to be "still acculturating" to life in the U.S.

She began at the county in 2000 as a program development specialist in the Health Department's child abuse prevention program. Soon after, she took a position coordinating community partnerships, including the department's community health advisory council and developed culturally-specific approaches in reaching out to traditionally underrepresented communities.

Since 2009, Sonia has played a key role in pursuing and implementing a \$7.5 million grant for obesity prevention from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That Communities Putting Prevention to Work grant is part of a national initiative providing funding for public health efforts to combat chronic disease and to promote healthy practices among Americans.

Sonia's work in securing that federal grant has resulted locally in the "It Starts Here" campaign, a set of evidence-and-practice-based interventions aimed at improving nutrition and encouraging physical activity for all Multnomah County residents.

Her commitment to creating a healthy community in Multnomah County became apparent when she interrupted her maternity leave to coordinate the application for the CDC grant. Working around the fickle schedule of a newborn, she put in countless hours at home and found time to attend meetings with county leaders, with then-one-month-old Leela in tow.

Since 2005, Sonia has led the county's obesity and tobacco prevention programs. She oversees the Health Department's public policy and advocacy efforts and leads policy coordination with other county departments. She facilitates an extensive network of partnerships and represents the Health Department on several local and regional committees and coalitions as well as with policy makers and government leaders at the county, city, regional, and state levels. She was a key player in Multnomah County's success developing a menu labeling policy to help customers in large chain restaurants make informed choices-a policy that's now become a statewide law.

Sonia's dedication to our community and the results she has demonstrated embody the values of Multnomah County and show how each of us can make a difference.

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