

**PA TIMES**

**PA SUCCESS STORIES**

**Addressing the Obesity Crisis through the Healthier Options for Public Schoolchildren (HOPS) Program** 3

*In the United States, obesity is a public administration and policy topic deserving much attention and immediate action. The statistics say it all: two-thirds of U.S. adults and one-third of U.S. children are obese...—Danielle Hollar, T. Lucas Hollar*

**Document Imaging Transforms Criminal Case Prosecution** 4

*It comes as no surprise that local governments are under considerable pressure to reduce fiscal deficits and to consolidate public budgets. One local official has taken the challenge of meeting constituent expectations of successful criminal case prosecution, coupled it with technology, and developed a nationally recognized best practice.—Robert J. Sobie*

**Good Management, Good Policy** 5

*Looking back on the last eight years, we are proud of the progress made by the United States Department of Labor. As stewards of the public trust, it is critical that we use the taxpayers' money wisely—and that our programs deliver value for America's workers.—Patrick Pizzella*

**Building Managerial Capacity for Nonprofits in the Border Region of Texas** 6

*With the exception of occasional media reporting, the civic sector (so-called nonprofit sector) of the six southernmost counties forming an important segment of the border region of Texas remains largely anonymous.—Peter Fuseini Haruna*

**Solutions for Public Managers** 7

**Insights on Perf. Mgmt.** 9

**CAP Corner** 11

**An Ethics Moment** 12

**Where Things Stand** 13

**ASPA TIMES**

**Career Fair Offers Valuable Look at Public Sector Jobs** 15

**Remarks on Minnowbrook III** 15

**PRESIDENT'S COLUMN: Guest Columnist ASPA Vice President Meredith Newman** 16

*Whatever political persuasion we may be, it would be hard not to get caught up in the national drama that is our presidential election. Waiting in line at dawn to cast my ballot, I became part of an historic event.—Meredith Newman*

**New Members** 18

**ASPA in Brief** 19

**National Council Election Candidate Statements** 20-21

**Career Center** 22-23

**Recruiter** 24-25

**Conferences Calendar** 28

*For more information on how to be published in PA TIMES, please contact Christine Jewett McCrehin at cjewett@aspanet.org.*

# PA TIMES

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## States Face New Imperative

### Turn to Global, Entrepreneurial and Innovation-based "New Economy" to Boost Competitiveness

Washington, DC—Five states—Massachusetts, Washington, Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey—are leading the United States' transformation into a global, entrepreneurial and knowledge- and innovation-based New Economy, according to The 2008 State New Economy Index, released by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation and the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation (ITIF).

Mississippi and West Virginia ranked lowest

among the states in making the transition to the New Economy. The other lowest-scoring states include, in reverse order, Arkansas, Alabama and Wyoming.

Regionally, the New Economy has taken the strongest hold in the Northeast, mid-Atlantic, Mountain West and Pacific regions; 14 of the top 20 states are in these four regions. In contrast, 16 of the 20 lowest-ranking states are in the Midwest, Great Plains and Southern regions.

The State New Economy Index measures states' economic structures. Rather than measuring state economic performance or state economic policies, the Index focuses more narrowly on a single question: To what degree does the structure of state economies match the ideal structure of the New Economy?

The Index builds on the 1999, 2002 and

See **NEW IMPERATIVE**, pg. 2

## "Pumpkin and Pecan" Pardoned



President George W. Bush stands between Paul Hill, left, of the National Turkey Federation, and his son, Nathan Hill during the pardoning of the Thanksgiving turkey Wednesday, Nov. 26, 2008, in the Rose Garden of the White House. This year marked the 61st anniversary of the National Thanksgiving Turkey Presentation and Pardoning. White House photo by Joyce N. Boghosian

### ASPA Election Polls Close January 5th!

Candidate Statements for District Reps, pages 20-21.

## Employers Preparing for Budget Cuts

### Reductions Possible if Tough Economic Conditions Continue

Alexandria, VA—The world's largest human resource organization released a nationwide poll today showing that 70 percent of HR professionals feel budget cuts across entire organizations are likely if current challenges to the U.S. economy continue. More than half (55 percent) of the respondents said hiring freezes are also likely under those same circumstances.

The poll, Changes Organizations Have Made in Light of 2008 Financial Challenges to the U.S. Economy, was conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). It is the second to be released in a series of new SHRM Polls being conducted in response to the downturn in the economy.

"Today's ever-changing and competitive business environment is placing unprecedented responsibilities on HR professionals," said Steve Williams, director of research for SHRM. "The 2008 hiring landscape has been weak, yet it's more important than ever for organizations to

## State Elections Websites Have Significant Room for Improvement

### Websites Cluttered, Voting Information Not Easy to Find

Washington, DC—State elections websites are often too difficult for voters to find and use to answer questions such as whether they are registered to vote, where to vote and what will be on the ballot, according to a new study by the Pew Center on the States. "Being Online is Not Enough: State Elections Websites," a 50-state analysis examining elections websites' usability, finds that when voters cannot easily locate information online, it diverts limited resources to operate help lines which can cost as much as \$100 per call in staffer time.

The report, produced by Make Voting Work, a joint initiative of the Pew Center on the States

and the JEHT Foundation, offers recommendations to improve state websites. "Voters are turning to the Web with basic questions about how to cast their ballot. And our study shows that state websites need to do a better job in meeting those needs. There are simple things outlined in this report that every state can do to improve services and make the democratic process easier," said Michael Caudell-Feagan, director of Make Voting Work.

Some of the study's key findings include:

- The average usability score for election websites in the 50 states and the District of

See **WEBSITES**, pg. 12

See **BUDGET CUTS**, pg. 2

## PA Success Stories

## SPECIAL SECTION

# A PA Success Story: Addressing the Obesity Crisis through the Healthier Options for Public Schoolchildren (HOPS) Program

## Nutrition and Healthy Lifestyle Interventions

The nutrition and healthy lifestyle educational arm of HOPS is two-fold:

- HOPS Foods of the Month (FoM) programming and
- The OrganWise Guys® (OWG).

HOPS FoM highlights nutrient-dense, healthy foods and food groups (such as whole grains, good fats, cruciferous vegetables) and includes monthly dissemination of FoM Parent Newsletters, Student Activity Packets, Cafeteria Cards and Posters, and other healthy handouts for parents, teachers, and staff.

School cafeterias menu FoM items as part of the regularly-served meals at least five times per month, thus modeling nutrition education taking place in the classrooms. The second component, OWG, was the cornerstone of the highly successful Healthy Options for People through Extension (HOPE) Tri-State (LA, AR, MS) Initiative, funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

OWG is a set of evaluated teaching tools that bring the body to life and facilitate the communication of important health issues in a manner understood by children. This innovative, stand-alone curricula is sustainable long-term since it requires little implementation assistance and is linked to core curricula standards, thus allowing healthy concepts to be incorporated into the academic day. Implementation of HOPS and OWG programming, through partnerships with child nutrition experts such as University Extension, has been shown to be very replicable.

*Danielle Hollar, T. Lucas Hollar*

### Problem: Obesity

In the United States, obesity is a public administration and policy topic deserving much attention and immediate action. The statistics say it all: two-thirds of U.S. adults and one-third of U.S. children are obese, and, as Ogden and colleagues indicate in 2006 and 2008 editions of the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), the increase in prevalence of obesity shows no signs of abatement.

In fact, if obesity trends continue, by 2030, 86.3 percent adults will be overweight or obese, and 51.1 percent will be obese. The increasing prevalence of childhood and adult obesity has many implications for the development of cardiovascular and other chronic diseases that affect not only our health, but also our economy. Wang and colleagues contend in a recent 2008 edition of Obesity that if current trends continue, obesity will account for more than \$860 billion of health care expenditures in the United States by 2030.

### A Multilevel, Multi-Agency Solution

Despite the gloomy situation described above, there is hope for public administration and policy solutions to this serious threat our health, and economy. Such an approach will require multilevel, multi-agency public administration collaboration to address the multiplicity of factors affecting weight management; focusing on individual behavior change alone, in isolation from broader social, cultural, physical, economic, and political contexts will not work.

Multilevel approaches address the interpersonal level (feeding styles, family demands, etc.), the community level (foods available in schools and other institutional cafeterias, presence of vending machines and fast food, lack of physical activity, etc.), and the governmental level (policies regarding food, education, urban design, marketing, etc.), as explained by Huang and Glass in a recent 2008 edition of JAMA.

In our experience, a multilevel, multi-agency approach to obesity prevention and treatment takes the form of an "obesity prevention laboratory," whereby synergies of combining proven-effective programs operated by multi-disciplinary collaborators are achieved. In so doing, we invite into our laboratory, elementary schools, University Extension, nonprofit foundations and organizations, memberships of professional associations (American Dietetic Association Foundation, School Nutrition Association), state agencies (Agriculture, Education, and Health), Organic Gardening, federal agencies (United States Department of Agriculture [USDA]), national foundations (W.K. Kellogg Foundation), community-based service organizations, and for-profit companies and foundations.

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These multilevel, multi-agency "laboratory" partners bring a strong set of skills (including nutrition education and outreach, program evaluation, dissemination of best practices/results) and the potential for leveraging of skills and resources in a way to impact policies and programs affecting the health of the diverse populations of children and families. Below, we describe our "laboratory" and its results with the hope that you will be able to replicate this success story to achieve similar, healthy results!

### Success Story: HOPS!

The Healthier Options for Public School Children (HOPS) Study and Program takes place in 80 public elementary schools and 28 afterschool sites in seven states (Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, and West Virginia), including approximately 39,000 elementary-aged children (2/3 of schools participate in research, 1/3 implement only the program). HOPS schools include large numbers of minority children and many who are qualified for Free or Reduced Priced Meals in the USDA National School Lunch Program.

HOPS began as a research study in six elementary schools (4 intervention and 2 controls) in central Florida in the fall of 2004. The aim of HOPS is to test the feasibility of a holistic nutrition and healthy lifestyle management program implemented in the elementary school setting that is modeled every day in each school cafeteria. Efficacy of interventions is evaluated using a quasi-experimental, intervention-control group design. Anthropomorphic (height, weight, waist and hip circumferences) and clinical (blood pressure/pulse) measure-

ments, and information about physical activity level, location of meal consumption, and standardized test data are collected for all children in research schools each fall and spring. HOPS dietary interventions are evaluated yearly via analyses of breakfast and lunch menus of intervention and control schools.

Multilevel, multi-sector collaboration among public and private organizations make it possible to implement a successful obesity prevention and treatment program in the elementary school setting. Public school personnel (superintendents, principals, school board members, school nurses, teachers, et al.), University Extension nutrition educators and master gardeners, local health care professionals, parents and PTOs/PTAs, and others are critical to achieving healthy HOPS results.

Together, with advice and help from state (Departments of Education, Agriculture, Health, etc.) and federal (USDA) agencies, HOPS schools meet federal wellness policy requirements, USDA HealthierUS Challenge awards, Coordinated School Health Program implementation, and other wellness goals. Collaborative partners assist with data collection, provide expertise during education activities, host food tastings, leverage draw-down of matching federal funds for nutrition education activities, and provide other valuable resources for sustainability of obesity prevention programming.

The most exciting aspect of the multilevel, multi-sector collaboration of the "laboratory" is the significant improvements in health and academic achievement of children. Specifically, data show statistically significant greater improvement in body mass index (BMI) percentiles when comparing intervention children versus controls (American Heart Association Scientific Sessions 2007; 2007 Annual Scientific Meeting of The Obesity Society; American Academy of Pediatrics 2007 Conference; American Public Health Association 135th Annual Meeting). HOPS programming improves systolic and diastolic blood pressure measures in HOPS children as compared to controls, in a statistically significant manner (2008 American College of Cardiology Annual Conference). Additionally, HOPS intervention children achieved statistically significantly higher Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) math scores as compared to controls. HOPS children achieved higher FCAT reading scores, and although the difference did not reach statistical significance, the data are trending in this direction (2008 Annual Scientific Meeting of The Obesity Society). Nutritional analyses of six weeks of HOPS and non-HOPS breakfast and lunch menus show nutritional benefits of HOPS menus as compared to controls. In 2005-6, HOPS dietary programming resulted in approximately 28 percent less total fat, 21 percent less saturated fat, and about two times more dietary fiber in intervention versus

## The JANUARY 2009 PA TIMES special section is titled:

*Transitions: New Administration,  
New Opportunities and New Challenges*

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## PA Success Stories

SPECIAL SECTION

## Document Imaging Transforms Criminal Case Prosecution

Robert J. Sobie

It comes as no surprise that local governments are under considerable pressure to reduce fiscal deficits and to consolidate public budgets. One local official has taken the challenge of meeting constituent expectations of successful criminal case prosecution, coupled it with technology, and developed a nationally recognized best practice.

Jeff Sauter, Eaton County Prosecuting Attorney (Michigan) serves a population of 110,000 citizens and has served as prosecutor since 1991. As the longest serving prosecuting attorney in county history, it's tempting to label him an "old dog," grounded in the traditions of the past. However, as an elected public leader Sauter has spent much of his legal career researching innovative approaches for meeting constituent demand for case prosecution and civil services in an era of diminishing financial resources and exemplifies the innovative use of technology today in case prosecution.

Public leaders, like Sauter, who view technology as an important tool for assisting in the transformation of government operations creates strong frameworks for improving operational efficiency and effectiveness. The status quo manner in which government has traditionally operated is no longer suitable for meeting the efficiency and effectiveness challenges of today or in the future. New methods that fully integrate technology into the organizational and operational structures of government are necessary to truly transform government processes and entire institutions.

The emergence of digital case files in criminal prosecution is an example of a new method founded on technology's

ability to revolutionize the historical partnership between paper files and the labor-intensive practice of file management, a practice that is well established in all branches and levels of government.

**The status quo manner in which government has traditionally operated is no longer suitable for meeting the efficiency and effectiveness challenges of today or in the future.**

Six Trends Transforming Government, a recent report from the IBM Center for The Business of Government ("Six Trends Report"), stated, "The current conduct of American government is a poor match for the problems it must solve." Current government conduct, it is suggested, does nothing to encourage new initiatives designed to replace traditional methods.

Authors of the Report believe revolutionizing past conduct of American government requires significant changes to the "...rules of the game of government. The rules of the game relate to the core administrative procedures governing civil service systems..."

In 2003 the first of a series of new rules were implemented by Sauter in his office resulting in broad changes to the organizational and operational structure of criminal case prosecution. The challenge to staff was to build an environment in which

technology is at the forefront of service delivery—in this setting, the successful prosecution of cases. For many years, Prosecutor Sauter was grounded in institutional practices based on paper-intensive case prosecution. But all that eventually changed in 2003 with a personal and professional pledge never to return to institutional complacency. His solution was to take a well-designed combination of changed attitudes, behaviors, procedures, and technologies, mix them together into a kind of "transformational stew" and serve liberal amounts to himself and staff.

But what does it really mean to be known as transformational? According to the authors of the Six Trends Report, transformational change can be distinguished from incremental change because transformational change is both "strategic and disruptive, aiming for significant, quantum improvements in effectiveness and significant cost savings." Conversely, "incremental change is more evolutionary, where more modest management improvements and efficiency gains are the goal." In Sauter's office, transformational change is described as an aggressive approach for meeting civil service demands compared with incremental change as a more passive approach.

Prosecutors execute their important responsibilities in historically paper-intensive offices whereby they have traditionally been dependent upon a physical file for criminal prosecution. Creating and monitoring the movement of case files is a significant administrative burden that often results in an estimated 40% of staff time committed to this labor-intensive process of case management.

Prosecutor Sauter implemented document imaging technology to capture case documents and store them in digital case

files. The imaging technology, coupled with an interface to the office's case management system and broad availability of wireless network access throughout a sprawling government campus, allows attorneys to view and manage all case assignments and supporting files online. Attorneys are mobile public servants, moving between buildings, local offices, courtrooms, and conference rooms on any given day. To truly eliminate physical case files required the assignment of laptop computers to all attorneys to access case files wherever they were.

An important requirement for the technology selected for deployment was the ability to capture, store, and organize a diverse collection of documents and supporting media that contribute to a case file. Photographs, digital video, audio recordings, and original digital documents created in common desktop software programs like word processing, are all stored in a common digital file.

Within a few months after implementation, there were considerable decreases in administrative staff time spent searching for case files and reductions in the use of consumable supplies such as paper, file folders, storage cabinets, and case labeling supplies. For the county's upcoming 2008/2009 fiscal year, the projected annual savings from the paperless file management system is \$95,000.

In addition to the internal cost reductions described, benefits are also evident outside Sauter's office. Constitutionally, prosecutors must share file information with defendants which involved photocopying case documents. Today, this requirement is satisfied by emailing electronic copies of case documents to appropriate parties. The

See IMAGING, pg. 10

## HOPS Continues to Expand Program

From HOPS, pg. 3

control school menus. Analyses of 2006-7 menus yielded similar results: HOPS menus contained approximately 29 percent less total fat, 21 percent less saturated fat and about one and a half times more dietary fiber than control menus (2006 & 2007 School Nutrition Association Annual Nutrition Conferences; 2006 & 2007 American Dietetic Association Annual Food & Nutrition Conferences).

Due to the successes of the pilot program, HOPS continues to expand as local "laboratories" are created and sustained by public administration-led partners. We, along with our study and program collaborators, continue to test new components in our laboratory with the aim to inform regulatory and programmatic change in nutrition education and feeding policies and programs that serve children in and out of school time, as well as their families. It will take all of us working together to combat the increasing prevalence of obesity in our country.

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## UN Accepting Submissions for 2009 Public Service Innovations Awards

Applications are now being accepted until **January 15, 2009**, the deadline for this competition. Candidates cannot apply directly. They must be nominated by an institution.

**Please submit your nomination on-line at: [www.unpan.org/applyunpsa2009](http://www.unpan.org/applyunpsa2009).**