



# EmployeeUPDATE

*Our Mission: To serve the people of North Carolina by enabling individuals, families and communities to be healthy and secure, and to achieve social and economic well-being.*

A monthly publication for employees of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

## Holiday Message from Secretary Cansler

Dear DHHS employees,

As 2010 draws to a close, I want to express my thanks and gratitude to all of you for your selfless contributions over the past year to the Department of Health and Human Services, and to the many people we serve. It is through your tireless efforts that we continue to meet the special needs of our state's citizens when they need us most. I count myself fortunate to have the privilege of working with so many people whose hearts are truly in their jobs.

As we look forward to 2011, our state government is facing a budget deficit that will surely require sacrifice from us all. I won't begin to predict how our Department or the people we serve will be impacted when a budget for the next biennium is shaped. Rest assured that until our economy improves we can expect that we will need to continue to do more with less. I am gratified to see that efforts in that direction are already under way in the Department, and I encourage all of you to continue to seek more cost-efficient ways to deliver our services and do our jobs.

With the holiday period coming up, we should all pause and reflect on our many blessings, and be mindful that there are many among us who have needs. Whether it is through angel trees, food pantries or donations to faith-based organizations or agencies that serve those in need, each of us can make a difference in the lives of our neighbors. Even with

our continued economic uncertainty, we all have a lot for which we are grateful and we should share as we can.

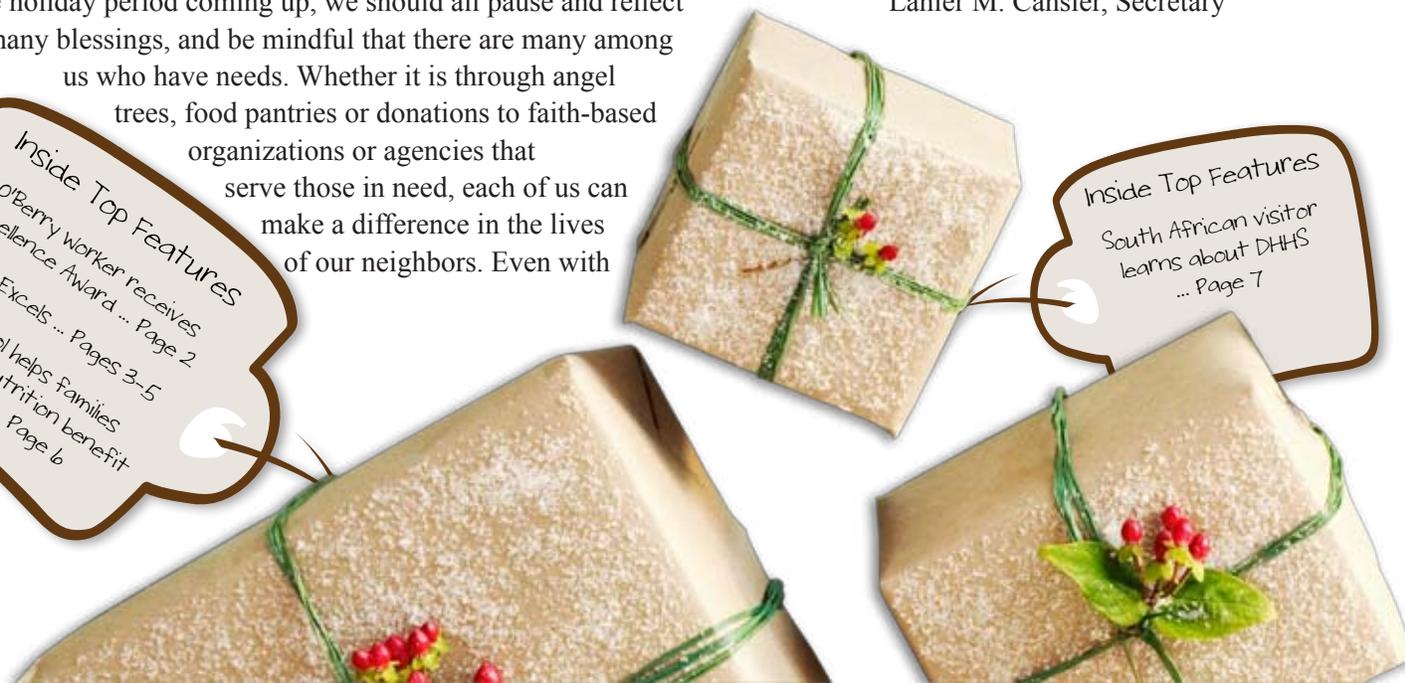
As you prepare for and enjoy your holiday celebrations and observances, please be safe on the highways and in your homes. My wife Barbara and I wish each of you, your families and loved ones the very best over the coming weeks and into the New Year. Happy Holidays!

Sincerely,

Lanier M. Cansler, Secretary

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## O'Berry worker receives Excellence Award from Gov. Perdue

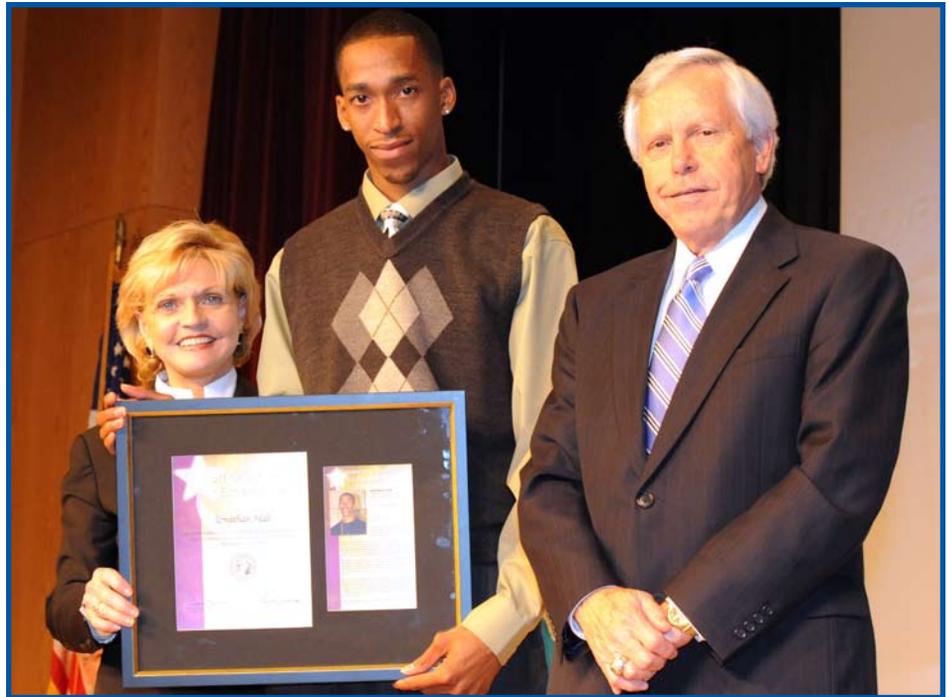
Jonathan Hall, a health care technician at O'Berry Neuro-Medical Treatment Center in Goldsboro, is a 2010 recipient of the Governor's Award for Excellence.

Hall was honored at a special ceremony hosted by Gov. Beverly Perdue on Nov. 30. The ceremony recognized state employees for outstanding achievements in human relations, innovations, outstanding government service, public service, and safety and heroism. It is the highest honor a state employee can receive.

Hall was recognized in the category of human relations.

A five-year employee at O'Berry, Hall was singled out by his supervisors and co-workers as a person who possesses extraordinary skill in working with and helping developmental disabled individuals lead more fulfilling lives.

He has volunteered to work with several men living in his group home at O'Berry. These men have a dual diagnosis of developmental disability as well as mental illness issues. According to his supervisor, Lynette Cox, "Jonathan has a unique ability



Gov. Bev Perdue presented the Award of Excellence to Jonathan Hall, center, with Luckey Welsh, DHHS director of State Operated Healthcare Facilities.

– Photo by Katy Warner, N.C. Department of Transportation

to speak the things that the individuals assigned under his care would want to say if they were able to speak for themselves. He does not impose his personal opinion or what he thinks is good the individuals, instead he strives to help others see and honor the individual's perspective."

In nominating Hall, Center Director Deborah Exum praised his empathy and understanding for residents with special needs saying that, "Jonathan's unique interpersonal skills with the individuals at our center build upon the high principles we strive to maintain here at O'Berry." ■

– Mark Van Sciver, DHHS Public Affairs



## Secretary's video conversation hits many concerns

On Nov. 10, Secretary Lanier Cansler held his third video conversation with DHHS employees. Through use of this technology, and the cooperation of North Carolina State University, the secretary is able to have more direct opportunities to communicate with staff across the state.

The first video conference focused on introducing the DHHS values; the second one was on being customer-focused, and Cansler recognized three DHHS employees who exemplify excellent customer service. November's conference focused on demonstrating transparency and being anticipatory.

Cansler opened the conference by addressing the recent election. He expects the upcoming session will be one of the most difficult legislative sessions in many years. DHHS needs to be prepared to deal with new senators and representatives who are coming from different parts of the state, different political parties, professions and backgrounds, and who have differ-

ent levels of knowledge about DHHS and how we serve the people of the state.

In anticipation of these challenges, and the fact that many legislators may not understand the DHHS complicated budget, the secretary has staff developing materials and information to share with them as soon as they arrive in Raleigh on Jan. 2. He shared the following budget information with viewers: The DHHS budget is currently \$17.4 billion, of which \$3.9 billion is state money, and most DHHS employees are paid with federal dollars. Ninety-three percent of the budget is used to operate state facilities and purchase services for the people we serve.

These budget realities, and the down economy which has generated greater need, make it extremely difficult to identify reductions. Cansler plans to be transparent about our numbers and make sure legislators understand the impact of our services on the people of North

## DHHS Excels plans next steps

Secretary Lanier Cansler and the 60 or so members of the DHHS Leadership Team will meet on Dec. 15 and 16 to plan next steps in creating the management and culture change initiative DHHS Excels.

Not only will day one be devoted to reviewing all the good work that has been accomplished – development of new Vision, Mission, Values and Goals statements along with a new budget structure to reflect our goals; improved communications through Outreach Sessions and the Secretary's video conferences; and the results of the recent employee survey – time will also be spent on what has been learned from these efforts and accomplishments.

Dec. 16 will be a half day for the Executive Leadership Team and the Steering Committee members to reflect on the discussion of day one and determine specific next steps to move DHHS Excels forward.

Check the February 2011 issue of DHHS Employee Update for a report on these meetings. ■

– Sandra K. Trivett,  
Special Projects Office

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**Secretary's video conversation cont. from page 3**

Carolina. He is anticipating a new level of accountability and that we will have to “prove that we are achieving the goals we’ve set” and that we will “focus on what really works.”

Viewers submitted a number of questions on topics ranging from efficient utilization of state office space, to developing a department-wide process for identifying innovations, to community mental health services for the deaf, to advice for employees on dealing with uncertainty, to the meaning of zero tolerance, and to long-range budgetary implications.

In addition to anticipating the kinds of impact budget constraints will place

on the department and deciding how to transparently deal with the challenges, Cansler invited Deputy Secretary Maria Spaulding to brief the audience on the outcome of recent outreach sessions. Spaulding said that the sessions were helpful and she enjoyed meeting so many DHHS employees. She believes the outreach sessions “have helped build a stronger foundation for DHHS and its employees” as we continue the DHHS Excels initiative.

**Videoconference  
Available on Web**

Those who tuned in at the beginning of the broadcast know there were

some technical difficulties for the first 10 minutes or so. NCSU informed DHHS that there were 498 live stream connections and that 170 connections were for the entire broadcast. Even though some offices watch the program as a group, participation may have been impacted by the technical difficulties.

For those of you who missed the broadcast or who did not stay on line for through the technical difficulties, the complete program is now available on the DHHS Excels web site at [www.ncdhhs.gov/excel](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/excel) and from the DHHS home page at [www.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.ncdhhs.gov). ■

– Sandra K. Trivett,  
Special Projects Office



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## **Outreach session feedback shows enthusiasm, candor**

Participants at the Outreach sessions provided valuable feedback on their evaluation sheets. As previously reported, most participants said they gained a greater understanding of DHHS Excels and the five values, enjoyed the opportunity to participate in small group discussions and would recommend that co-workers attend a similar training when possible.

There was helpful input about the process as well, such as: sticking to time limits and asking reporters

to not duplicate previous comments; ineffectiveness of some sound systems; starting and ending on time; and a preference that future meetings be held where there are vending services since refreshments are not provided.

One of the most frequent responses was appreciation for the time spent reaching out to employees around the state and for providing the opportunity for an open exchange of information and ideas. One person commented: “After 26 years...with my agency...

this is the first time I’ve been included in a DHHS initiative. It was nice to have the opportunity to be heard and to hear from the department.” Another commented that “...the collaboration began by being able to meet people from other agencies.”

While the majority of evaluations reflected an appreciation for the Outreach sessions and the “Secretary’s effort to make DHHS a more effective and efficient agency,” one person responded by saying, “this

**cont. on page 5**

**Outreach session feedback cont. from page 5**

2010 discussion should have occurred in 2000.”

The final evaluation question asked for “any other comments or suggestions about DHHS Excels,” and it yielded many comments. It is clear that there is a department-wide need for improved communication, and that it should be up and down the DHHS management levels as well as across and within individual agencies; this is particularly expressed by regional staff. It is also clear that employees are supportive of the DHHS Excels initiative. Some representative comments:

- “I’m afraid good things – ideas, concerns – will get “stuck” and never see the light of day, but I love the concept.”
- “I hope this is successful in helping us meet the very real challenges that lie ahead. A good attitude, creativity and respect all around will be needed.”

- “Don’t let the process drag out. There needs to be measurable output on the effort that the public is made aware of.”
- “I hope to see this initiative become a reality.”
- “It was said that changing things that have been in place for more than 20 years is hard, but IT IS POSSIBLE!! AND WORTH THE EFFORT.”
- “The goals are wonderful. Hope they develop and continue to grow. Hope the ball is not dropped on this.”

**So, what comes next?**

Another frequent comment was a request to know the results of the sessions. The information has been turned over to a member of the Outreach Committee who volunteered to develop a summary. As soon as that summary is available it will be shared via this newsletter and placed on the DHHS Excels web site.

Now that the initial outreach has been made to employees, Deputy Secretary Maria Spaulding, the Executive Sponsor of Outreach, is planning some sessions to share the DHHS Excels initiative with our many partners and stakeholders.

Finally, as several participants said about sharing the information about DHHS Excels, it is time to:

- Walk the talk
- Put it on the grapevine
- Practice the values in the work place
- Live what was heard
- Discuss in staff meetings
- Post information on bulletin boards
- Lead by example. ■

– Sandra K. Trivett,  
Special Projects Office

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## Cherry prepares for Christmas

The Special Services Department at Cherry Hospital is in full swing preparing for “Christmas at Cherry.” Through this annual campaign monetary and material donations are recruited so that each individual receiving treatment during the holidays will have a gift package to open on Christmas Day. It is heartwarming to see the patients wearing the coats, shoes, hats, and gloves given to them by caring community members.

Anyone interested in collecting items for “Christmas at Cherry” or making a monetary contribution can contact Tanya Rollins at 919-580-2936 or Tanya.Rollins@dhhs.nc.gov. It is requested that all material gifts be new, unwrapped, and received by Dec. 10.

If writing a check, it should be made payable to the Volunteer Services Fund at Cherry Hospital and mailed to:

Cherry Hospital  
Special Services Department  
201 Stevens Mill Road  
Goldsboro, NC 27530 ■

## Web tool helps families determine nutrition benefit eligibility

The core mission of our Food and Nutrition Services Program at the North Carolina Division of Social Services is to help our residents feed their families.

The Division of Social Services recently announced the second phase of an online screening tool that helps families in North Carolina determine if they may be eligible to receive Food and Nutrition Services benefits (formerly known as food stamps), as well as other benefits.

The Electronic Pre-Assessment Screening Service, or ePASS, is in keeping with Gov. Bev Perdue's initiative to set government straight and make it work more efficiently for the people of North Carolina. ePass ([www.epass.nc.gov](http://www.epass.nc.gov)) is a secure Internet-based tool accessible from any Internet-connected computer. The ePASS tool, which went online July 1, now has the ability to save the information input into the system and provide the user with a completed application once the questions are completed.

"ePASS is a great tool for families," said Sherry Bradsher, director of the Division of Social Services. "It allows them to use their time and resources more effectively and be better prepared when they come to local departments of social services to make applications for services.

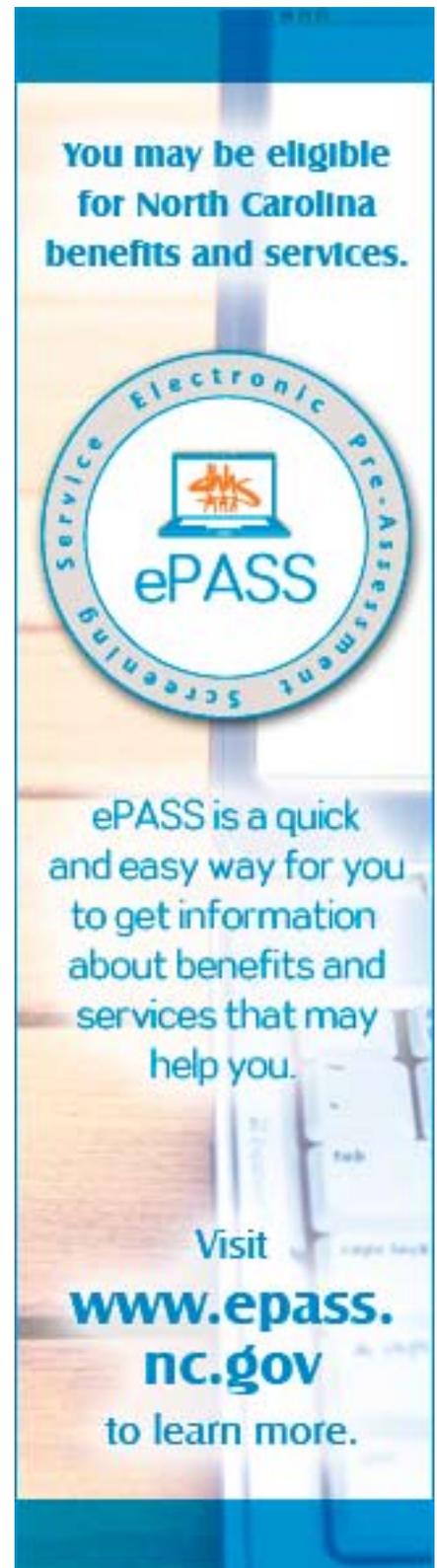
"We are anticipating that local departments of social services will also benefit by having shorter wait times for applicants."

As of October 2010, more than 1.5 million North Carolinians in nearly 687,000 households were receiving FNS benefits. From July - September this year local county departments of social services in North Carolina averaged more than 61,400 applications for services per month.

Bradsher continued, "The Food and Nutrition Services Program provides an immediate economic benefit to local communities as every \$5 in new benefits generates up to \$9.20 in community spending."

For more information about the Food and Nutrition Services Program go to [www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/foodstamp](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/foodstamp) or contact your local department of social services. ■

– Lori Walston, DHHS Public Affairs



The graphic is a vertical banner with a blue header and footer. The main background is light blue with a blurred image of a laptop. At the top, it says "You may be eligible for North Carolina benefits and services." Below this is a circular logo with "ePASS" in the center, surrounded by the text "Electronic Pre-Assessment Screening Service". At the bottom, it says "ePASS is a quick and easy way for you to get information about benefits and services that may help you." and "Visit www.epass.nc.gov to learn more."

# South African visitor learns about DHHS

The Department of Health and Human Services hosted Nokulunga Carol Thabethe, a member of the Legislative Fellows Program for Young South Africans sponsored by the U.S. Department of State.

Carol spent two weeks with DHHS where she gained an enormous amount of knowledge from her shadow experiences at the Division of Public Health, Office of Rural Health, Office of Economic Development, Division of Social Services and Office of Citizen Services as well as the Office of Public Affairs during her stay.

Back home, Carol serves as a senior public participation officer with the KwaZulu-Natal Parliament in South Africa. Her responsibilities there include facilitating public participation in the legislative process by organizing public hearings, campaigns and workshops. Prior to joining the legislature she worked as an HIV counseling manager at the Africa Center for Health and Population Studies.

During Carol's visit she attended the Division of Public Health's WIC Conference, the Office of Economic Opportunity Contractor's Training Conference, at the Division of Social Services she was fascinated by the

information regarding the role of social workers, and the Office of Rural Health took her on a road trip to Columbus County to see first-hand some of the successful programs in rural communities. Carol ended her visit at DHHS with the CARE-LINE information and referral team at Office of Citizen Services, gaining knowledge on best practices in responsiveness to citizen concerns.

Carol was most gracious and extremely appreciative of the time she spent with DHHS, the people she had the opportunity to meet, the meetings/conferences she attended and the foods she sampled. ■

– Renee McCoy, DHHS Public Affairs



Carol Thabethe receives CARE-LINE briefing from Erata K. McDougald.  
– Photos by Jim Jones, DHHS Public Affairs



Carol Thabethe receives Office of Citizen Services briefing from William A. Grossie.

## **Collaborative effort yields result**

# **Preparedness CD focuses on state's licensed care facilities**

A new CD is available to operators of licensed care facilities in North Carolina to help as they make plans for coping with large-scale emergencies such as floods, hurricanes, ice storms and other situations that may leave them without electricity, or needing to evacuate their residents.

This comprehensive, user-friendly solution is being offered by the Division of Health Service Regulation and the Division of Emergency Management – two state agencies that worked together to help operators of nursing homes, adult care homes/assisted living homes, family care homes and mental health group homes prepare for difficult times associated with storms and chemical spills.

“We just want to be sure that all the facilities that provide care to North Carolina’s more fragile and vulnerable populations have the tools they need to make their preparations in advance of a disaster,” said Drexel Pratt, director of DHHS. “And, we want them to be prepared so they can make smart decisions when an event is upon them.”

As a result of months of meetings and teamwork, compact discs containing “The North Carolina Licensed Care Provider Disaster Plan Template” are being distributed for free to facilities throughout the state.

“This CD not only provides a disaster plan template for the

operators of licensed care facilities; it provides a library of references, best practices, training presentations and more. It is a one-stop shop for disaster preparedness for these facilities,” said Mike Sprayberry, deputy director of the Division of Emergency Management.

The departments of Crime Control and Public Safety, and Health and Human Services collaborated on this project through the two divisions.

The goal: To improve disaster preparedness for all hazards within the long-term care industry. The bottom line is also aimed at smoother evacuations and ensuring that appropriate nutrition, medication and staffing is in place in the event a facility needs to shelter in place.

The many steps not only benefit each facility, they also assure that emergency responders will have critical information available to them as they provide assistance to a facility in the throes of danger.

“With just a small amount of information that is easily accessible at a critical time, we know that emergency responses can go a whole lot smoother,” said Regina Godette-Crawford, acting director of the Office of Emergency Medical Services, which resides within DHHS. “There’s no need to traumatize the residents of care facilities any more than is absolutely necessary. Some of them have

cognitive impairments, and sudden changes are difficult for them.”

“With good planning by each facility, our emergency management teams and responders can be more effective,” Sprayberry said, “and save more lives.”

Local emergency management offices are distributing the CD to the state’s licensed care providers. It includes valuable information about the different types of emergencies they may face – from tornadoes, hurricanes and ice storms to chemical spills, fires and floods, and even bioterrorism. It also includes a fill-in-the-blanks template for the facility to collect its own information to help administrators see areas that may need extra attention to prepare for potential emergencies.

The idea was born last year by a local emergency manager who wanted to help licensed care facilities in his area be better prepared for emergencies by providing to them a tool with which they could build their own comprehensive disaster plan. He presented the concept to the Division of Health Service Regulation, which agreed to partner in development of the project.

“This provides a consistency for the facilities, and also for the responders, and with that a lot of time can be saved during a very critical period,” Pratt said.

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**Preparedness CD cont. from page 8**

Licensed care facilities are required by law to have their own disaster plans. The new CD provides a template that can be used to quickly develop a complete plan that addresses the needs of any facility, regardless of

size and location. Facility directors can then send it to their local emergency manager, store in their agency files and update as needed.

For more information about the plan or to obtain a CD, contact Mike Sprayberry at 919-733-2931 or [msprayberry@ncem.org](mailto:msprayberry@ncem.org). ■

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## **Nomination deadline nears** **Larkins Award and MLK Day preparations under way**

Do you know a permanent state employee in your work section who best exemplifies the deeds of John R. Larkins in human and race relations in the workplace and community?

If so, there is a nominations committee waiting to hear from you.

Nominations are due Dec. 15 for the 2010 John R. Larkins Award, given annually during the State Employees' Martin Luther King Jr. Day observance.

The observance is scheduled for noon on Friday, Jan. 14, at First Baptist Church, 101 S. Wilmington St., Raleigh. Details about how to nominate a coworker for this prestigious award are at [www.mlk2011.nc.gov](http://www.mlk2011.nc.gov).

For the MLK observance, singers, hosts and hostesses also are needed. If you are interested, please contact Lloyd E. Inman Jr. ([Lloyd.Inman@ncdenr.gov](mailto:Lloyd.Inman@ncdenr.gov)) if you are interested in adding your voice to the State Employees Choir. The choir is open to all retirees and active state employees. Deadline for the choir is Dec. 17. Inman said rehearsals will be held from noon to 12:45 p.m. at the church in the weeks leading up to the event.

Mary Johnson ([Mary.Johnson@doc.nc.gov](mailto:Mary.Johnson@doc.nc.gov)) is coordinating volunteers who will serve as hosts and hostesses. Johnson needs names, departments and e-mail addresses of those interested no later than Dec. 31.

In a letter last month seeking nominations and promoting the

MLK observance, Gov. Bev Perdue also encouraged state employees to follow Dr. King's guidance. He said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?"

Her letter continued: Answer Dr. King's call to service by getting involved in our service project, a school supply drive for the areas affected by the recent flooding. Please donate school supplies such as paper, pens, pencils, art supplies, composition notebooks, etc. These supplies will be collected and donated to designated schools of need. ■

*– Jim Jones, DHHS Public Affairs*



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
20301 MAIL SERVICE CENTER • RALEIGH, NC 27699-0301

BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE  
GOVERNOR

November 2010

Dear State Employees:

The Annual State Employees' Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Observance Program and John R. Larkins Award presentation are scheduled at noon on Friday, January 14, 2011, at the First Baptist Church, 101 S. Wilmington Street in Raleigh.

We need singers, hosts and hostesses, and nominations for the John R. Larkins Award. If you are interested in singing in the State Employees Choir, please email Lloyd Inman at [lloyd.inman@ncdenr.gov](mailto:lloyd.inman@ncdenr.gov). If you are interested in being a host or hostess, please email Mary Johnson at [mary.johnson@doc.nc.gov](mailto:mary.johnson@doc.nc.gov).

The deadline for receiving nominations for the John R. Larkins award is Wednesday, December 15. This award is given annually during the State Employees' Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Observance Program. Please help us get the word out. For more information about this prestigious award, visit our website at [www.MLK2011.nc.gov](http://www.MLK2011.nc.gov).

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?" Answer Dr. King's call to service by getting involved in our service project, a school supply drive for the areas affected by the recent flooding. Please donate school supplies such as paper, pens, pencils, art supplies, composition notebooks, etc. These supplies will be collected and donated to designated schools of need.

Thank you for your assistance in helping to make this program a success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bev Perdue".

Bev Perdue

kcp

State Employees'  
**Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
Observance Program**  
& John R. Larkins Award Ceremony

*"Life's most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?" Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*

## Be a part

Noon  
Friday, Jan. 14, 2011  
First Baptist Church  
101 S. Wilmington Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601

Speaker: Bennett College for Women  
President Dr. Julianne Malveaux

## Nominate

[Click here](#) to nominate a special  
state employee for the prestigious  
2011 John R. Larkins award  
to be presented at observance ceremony

## Make a difference

Calling all State employees!  
Honor Dr. King through service  
[Click here](#) to learn more

Co-sponsored by Martin Luther King Jr. Commission



## King and Anderson recognized by the NCPHA Dental Health Section



Doranna Anderson, left, and Rebecca King hold awards  
– Photo by Tom Parks

The Division of Public Health's Rebecca King, DDS, MPH, and Doranna Anderson, BSEd., RHed., were honored in October at the NCPHA Dental Health Section Annual Meeting.

Dr. King, chief of the Oral Health Section (OHS), received the Dr. George G. Dudley Award for recognition of excellence in a dental public health program exemplifying both health education and prevention. King currently serves as president of the American Board of Dental Public Health, and is a

former president of the American Association of Public Health Dentistry, the Dental Foundation of N.C. and the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health Alumni Association.

Ms. Anderson, head of the Oral Health Education and Promotion Branch, received the Dr. Ernest A. Branch Award, named for the first director of North Carolina's Dental Health Division (now Oral Health Section). This award is given to a person in North Carolina who has made significant contributions toward maintaining the ideals of dental public health exemplified by Dr. Branch's work. She is a member in the N.C. Public Health Association, N.C. State Employees Association, N.C. Chapter of Society of Public Health Education, National Society for Public Health Education, N.C. Citizens for Public Health and the N.C. Immunization Coalition. ■

– Doranna Anderson,  
Division of Public Health

# Engel tells ABC Board of dangers of alcohol energy drinks

N.C. Public Health Director Jeff Engel spoke before the ABC Commission in November regarding federal efforts to remove high alcohol content energy drinks from store shelves.

Engel endorsed a proposal to ban the energy drinks, which he said are marketed to young people. He cautioned that the combination of a stimulant and alcohol gives the drinker a false impression that he or she is not as impaired as they really are, leading to dangerous behaviors.

“College students who consume alcohol mixed with energy drinks have a significantly higher prevalence of serious alcohol related consequences,” Engel said.



Jeff Engel, N.C. Public Health Director

“They are more likely to be taken advantage of sexually or take advantage of someone else sexually, ride with a drunken driver or be physically injured compared to students who consume alcohol without the energy beverage.”

A 2009 N.C. Public Health telephone survey showed that young adults from 18 to 24 years old are more likely to be heavy drinkers and are more likely to be binge drinkers.

Engel told the board that health effects from drinking alcohol energy drinks could range from heart palpitation to alcohol poisoning. The board voted to allow retailers to return alcohol energy drinks to beer wholesalers for credit, a move ABC Chair Jon Williams said “will make the rapid and orderly withdrawal of alcohol energy drinks from North Carolina shelves a reality.” ■

– Julie Henry,  
DHHS Public Affairs