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Employee Spotlight: Jim Terry

Hello, my name is Jim Terry. I work as an administrative specialist in the Department for Community Based Services Division of Staff Resource Development, Records Section. My work experience has been in public service, with 16 years in state government in Frankfort and over 11 years as a public school art teacher in the middle, junior high and high school grades.

How does your job allow you to impact the lives of your fellow Kentuckians? What's the best part of your job?

As an administrative worker, I work to provide confidential information to the appropriate people in the Cabinet, various agencies and individuals. I have worked with finalized adoption records from across the state to prepare them for archiving and as of this moment, support other staff in Records. We process Open Records requests for legal cases involving clients, Central Registry checks of individuals applying for employment, and CAN checks of people interested in becoming foster and/or adoptive parents. We take into consideration HIPAA policies and confidentiality. A new subsection has been created, LINK/NCIC, to provide for federal background checks of foster families with the new Adam Walsh Act. Later, the LINK staff will be busy with background checks of clients for the safety of DCBS social workers, as required by the Boni Bill.

The best part of my job has been to merge the closed and confidential records of adoptive families with the regional copies that are sent in to Quality Control for archiving purposes. It has been meaningful to experience children's stories in their records and see the evidence of families who have been blessed through adoption. We also work closely with staff in the Division of Protection and Permanency, among others.

On a volunteer basis, I enjoy serving on the Wellness Committee with Employee Wellness Coordinator Kris Hayslett, planning and promoting health and wellness activities and being a part of the walking community here in the CHR building.

Share your artistic background with readers.

Before state government I was a teacher. I graduated from Georgetown College with a bachelor's degree in art education, with a minor in speech and drama, and a master's degree in secondary education. I have always been drawn to expression in drawing, painting or wood sculpture, along with singing and theatre. Now it is more fun to be with other people in community choirs, church choir or theatre. As a hobby, I sing in a barbershop quartet called "Chords of Course" that has visited the CHR building. I have done some graphic design part-time. It was a rewarding experience to teach at Western Hills High School and other local schools in Frankfort. It's fun now to see former students I had in class working in the CHR Building and see them doing well and remember doing an art activity. I left to pursue other opportunities in state government and teach community education courses in watercolor painting and drawing at the Thorn Hill Learning Center.

How does art currently fit into your life?

I am involved - along with other volunteers - in completing a 20-foot long wellness mural in the basement hallway. With the feedback from the mural two years ago, things have worked out to expand the mural. The mural is called "Summer." It has brought together a number of wonderful people who have helped. Gayle Yocum from Protection and Permanency and I met to organize the design to help make the basement a more aesthetically pleasing area to walk for employees on their breaks. I did a rendering and had it approved by our contact in

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Facilities Management, Robert Wright. It is a huge project, but fun to work on with other people. It has been a relaxing experience to stay after work, turn on a radio and paint in the basement. After completing the mural, the other volunteers and I plan to celebrate by going out to dinner!

Students from Western Hills High School are drawing their design for the mural "Fall" on another section of hallway. Barbara Gooding is the primary artist responsible for this.

I wish to thank other volunteers who have participated on the project: Beth Morris; Brandon Sanderson, sophomore at Franklin County High School; Corey Sanderson, sixth grader at Frankfort Christian Academy; Robert G. Martin; Cathy Key; Beth Caudill; Denise Weider; Shannon Ramsey; Lanny Taulbee; Angela Baldrige; Willa Thomas; Gayle Yocum; and Maryam Kaykavoosi.

I am also active in community service with the Frankfort Arts Foundation and enjoy activities such as gardening and piano lessons. My backyard is small but filled with garden art and native plants. I was asked to begin a drama ministry for young people at my church. I recently designed an iron gate from an old design and had it fabricated at a factory. I helped to install it at home, along with 30-feet of old iron fence that I restored.

What suggestions would you have for readers who might have an interest in pursuing art?

I like the old Nike slogan, "Just do it!" Anyone can use the arts to enrich their lives and try a hobby or improve other areas of life like problem solving. Sometimes it might mean to use a different approach to a problem at home - such as hanging pictures or choosing a color of wall paint.

A number of courses may be offered at the community level - depending on where you live - in drawing, digital design or other areas of art. With more people retiring, there might be more motivation to consider participating in the arts. I recommend anyone in the CHR complex to take a health break and check out the new murals.

Employees Can Receive AT&T Discounts

AT&T was recently awarded the statewide Master Agreement (MA) for wireless services. Included in the MA is an employee discount program for personal wireless service through AT&T. The specifics of the discount program, as discussed at the last coordinator meeting with AT&T, are listed below:

Employee Discount Program

Employees need to go into an AT&T Company Store with their state ID and have the code "FAN#92712" applied to their existing and new accounts to receive the discount.

Commonwealth of Kentucky Employees can receive:

- 15 percent discount on monthly service plans over \$29.99 per month
- 15 percent discount on features over \$19.99 per month
- 15 percent discount on new equipment purchases (excludes the Apple iPhone)

AT&T is working to get a link on the Kentucky Connect Web site to connect to online promotions. Employees will be able to print specials and AT&T Company stores will honor the offer.

Living Well: Heart Month

By Kris Hayslett

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February is American Heart Month. Currently heart disease is the leading cause of death and major cause of disability in the United States. Approximately 770,000 Americans will suffer their first heart attack and about 430,000 will have a recurrent attack this year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. About every 26 seconds, someone in the U.S. will suffer a coronary event, and about one person every minute will die from one.

Knowing the signs and symptoms of a heart attack is important. Ultimately, it can be the difference between life and death. Here are some signs and symptoms of a heart attack:

- Chest discomfort - discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or pain that goes away and comes back. The discomfort can range from an uncomfortable pressure, to a squeezing or full feeling, to moderate or severe pain.
- Upper body discomfort - pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- Shortness of breath - this may occur with or without the chest discomfort.
- Other signs and symptoms: breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

The American Heart Association stresses the importance of immediate action if you suffer from any of these symptoms.

Prevention is necessary for optimum heart health. It can serve as your greatest defense. Nutritious foods and healthy lifestyles are at the forefront of combating heart disease. The American Heart Association recommends making these lifestyle choices:

- Select lean meats and poultry without the skin.
- Consume fat-free, 1 percent fat and low-fat dairy products.

- Reduce intake of foods containing partially hydrogenated vegetable oils to reduce the amount of trans fats in your diet.
- Reduce the amount of foods high in dietary cholesterol. Try to eat fewer than 300 milligrams (mg) of cholesterol each day.
- Reduce intake of beverages and foods with added sugars.
- Select and prepare foods with little or no salt. Eat fewer than 2,300 mg of sodium per day or fewer than 1,500 mg if you are in a higher risk group for high blood pressure.
- Drink alcoholic beverages in moderation - one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men.
- Follow guidelines for recommended foods when eating out and watch portion sizes (<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=531>).
- Maintain regular physical activity.

Maintaining healthy behaviors to prevent heart trouble is a great start. Also, take charge of your own health by participating in regular recommended health screenings and knowing your risk factors. Please visit the American Heart Association at www.americanheart.org for more information and interactive tools to help you make better lifestyle choices. Choose a healthy heart!

Blood Drive Scheduled this Week

You can now sign up to donate blood at this week's Central Kentucky Blood Center Blood Drive Thursday, Feb. 14, or Friday, Feb. 15. To sign up for Thursday, visit https://www.membersforlife.org/ckbc/bdc/bdc_global_schedule.php?did=14304; to sign up for Friday, visit

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March of Dimes Fundraisers Start Soon

The name has changed, but the goal remains the same. The March of Dimes has changed the name of its signature event from WalkAmerica to March for Babies. You can help raise money for the organization between now and April by creating a team for the event.

The 2008 Frankfort March of Dimes “March for Babies” for state employees will be April 18 on the Capitol Grounds at 11:30 a.m., with registration starting at 11. The kick-off event will be Feb. 28 at the Governor’s Mansion. First Lady Jane Beshear is the honorary chairwoman of the event.

The organization is still looking for an Ambassador Family - a family that has been touched by its mission, whether by a premature birth or birth defects. The family would serve as a “poster family” for the organization’s Frankfort events. The March of Dimes’ mission is to improve the health of all babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality.

For more information about creating a team and raising funds for the March of Dimes, contact Wellness Coordinator Kris Hayslett at kris.hayslett@ky.gov.

Social Services Staff Invited to Share Thoughts on Profession

By Anya Armes Weber

Social services staff is invited to send views on their profession to the Focus in recognition of Social Work Month next month.

Send us a short reply about one of the following topics:

- What inspired you to become involved in social services work?
- What resources have been most helpful to you in your work?
- How has assisting others through social services rewarded you personally or professionally?

Submit your replies to anya.weber@ky.gov by Monday, Feb. 25. Include your job title and work county. You may also send a digital photo for possible online publication. Submissions may be edited for length and style.

Thanks for your participation.

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

Flowers you receive this Valentine’s Day may be more than just a token of love. A recent Harvard study shows they can also improve your general well-being.

Nancy Etcoff, Ph.D., of Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital, authored “The Home Ecology of Flowers” in 2006. Her team surveyed 54 adults who lived for one week with a “home décor” item. For half it was fresh flowers; for the others, it was a “control” item. The participants self-reported their emotions and attitudes.

The study had three main findings.

Flowers nourish kindness. Study members who lived with flowers felt an increase in feelings of compassion.

Flowers ease your worry. Participants felt less negative after being around flowers. Most participants placed the flowers in a place where they would be the first thing they would see in the morning.

Flowers at home can make work life better. Participants who had flowers at home were more likely to have more energy and enthusiasm for their work.

Enjoy your Valentine's Day flowers and the positive impact they may have on your professional life!