



The Advocate



Ubuntu—I Am Because We Are

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Lisa Lee Williams, D.Min, MaOM
Executive Director,
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I know some of you ran to Google to look this word up and no — I am not referring to the software company that has adopted this name and philosophy for their product line. I am speaking of the Zulu philosophy of humanity. Ubuntu is a way of being that embraces the idea that “the common bonds within a group are more important than any individual argument or division within it.”¹ I realize this grinds against Western sensitivities emphasizing individualism; however, one thing I am learning as I see more rotations around the sun is that when our time is wrapping up on this earth, most of us long for and seek out community. We look for a place where we feel loved, appreciated, included, accepted, and affirmed just as we are. Granted, sometimes circumstances in our lives can be barriers to our experiencing the full expression of Ubuntu. However, my invitation to you is to be courageous and to embrace and build Ubuntu wherever you can find it: at home, at work, in your neighborhood, with friends, and even with strangers. Then, count the blessings that are the fruit of living Ubuntu –

I Am Because We Are!

¹ <https://www.ttbook.org/interview/i-am-because-we-are-african-philosophy-ubuntu>

Photo at right: Angel made of glass, guinea fowl feathers and metal.



Food for Thought—Ubuntu

Ubuntuism encompasses being generous, hospitable, friendly, caring and compassionate. It recognizes and respects the humanity in all of us. It emphasizes the “we” over the “me.” Consider how Ubuntuism intersects with our daily work and as we prepare for Christmas, Hanukkah or Kwanzaa this month.



Reminders:

Please get your flu and COVID vaccines!

Document submissions to The Advocate are due by the 24th of each month to:

carolyn.vose@ky.gov



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Employee Spotlight:

Randi Cummins

Randi Cummins is an Administrative Specialist III in the Complaint Review Branch, where she began her state government career in 2017 as an Office Support Assistant II.



Since then, Ms. Cummins has taken on numerous roles which led to her current position and duties of Personnel Liaison for the branch, Red Flag Coordinator, managing Corrective Action Plans, participating on interview panels, preparing monthly and yearly reports, and a multitude of other tasks.

Her manager describes her as a 'gem' and an invaluable asset who is expected to go far in her career. She is a go-getter and the go-to for the office when assistance is needed for personnel actions/questions. She not only ensures all branch actions are handled appropriately and timely but also works with administrative staff throughout the office on personnel actions and when needed, provides training.

Randi lives in Frankfort with her son, Branson, and in her downtime enjoys hiking, cooking—including trying new Gluten-free recipes, and spending time at the creek.

Division of Citizen Services and Policy Integrity: Sherry Carnahan, Branch Manager

The Complaint Review Branch (CRB) was previously known for primarily addressing citizen complaints and concerns related to Cabinet programs. However, when the COVID pandemic surfaced and citizens were unable to reach other areas they soon started contacting us, shifting the structure of the branch permanently. While our primary purpose is to continue acting as an impartial liaison between the constituent and the Cabinet and review cases for policy violations, we now also serve in a customer service role. Staff continue to provide exemplary service with their case reviews and are quick to help when callers are seeking other assistance on a wide range of issues: utility and rent help, questions related to COVID, the COVID vaccine, travel and family concerns.

With these additional responsibilities, the branch has continued to grow. In addition to our featured Personnel Liaison, the branch also consists of the CHFS Listens administrator, one executive assistant and 15 Citizen Assistance Specialists with expertise in Child Protective Services and Adult Protective Services, family support programs such as SNAP (previously known as Food Stamps), Medicaid, KTAP, and Child Support.

The Complaint Review Branch can be reached at 502-564-5497 or 800-372-2973. We can also be reached via email at CHFS.Listens@ky.gov.

