

worklife ELEVATED

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UTAH
LIFE ELEVATED

Meet the Director

Interview by: Jeri Lea Buckley, Brittani Mitchell



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Carlos Baceras, executive director for Utah Department of Transportation, recently completed his 30th year at UDOT. He is currently president of the Western Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (WASHTO)

What made you decide to work for the state?

I was getting ready to graduate with my second degree in Civil engineering at the University of Utah, and I saw a poster in the hallway, and I said, "Oh, that sounds interesting." I came here for what I thought was a summer job, and the biggest thing about this place is that nobody ever said, "No." I kept trying things, and everyone said, "Sure! Try it!" And, it was fun, and we made a difference. I didn't think the state would be a place I would go and work, but it quickly set the hook.

What experience do you bring with you to your position?

When I joined the state, I had two undergraduate degrees. I had worked as a wellsite geologist for a period of time, but fundamentally, I had put myself through both degrees while working at the same time. I think one of the most important things I brought to my job was a sense of knowing how to work. I was willing to put in the time to get the job done. So, I really think the most important thing that people bring to their job is the fundamentals that we learn from our parents of how we respect other people. Working and playing well in a sandbox is such an important skill to be successful at any job.

I don't think we should look past those types of skills in anyone. Once I came here, it was the people; I love the people that I work with. There are so many people trying to do the right thing. It's really a fun place to work.

What have you learned about working for the state of Utah?

I've learned that there are so many people that have such good intentions, that when the light isn't on them, they will always do the right thing. It's one of my greatest



(continues)

Meet the Director (continued)

frustrations that the public, and even our elected officials, don't truly appreciate the quality and the dedication of the state employee. They are amazing at what they do. Everyone needs to bring a paycheck home, but these are folks, by and large, that could go out and make more money in the private sector, but are rewarded because they do things that make people's lives better. I think that's the biggest thing I've learned is that these are really great people here in the state. I'm just proud to call myself a state employee.

What do you envision for your agency's future?

We always work and try to think about what we need to do to prepare. That is one of the fundamental responsibilities of a leader in any organization: to prepare the organization for the future. And, that really means to prepare the people, because, an organization is people. One of the things that we are emphasizing is education. This is meant in two ways:

One, it's meant to provide alignment with Governor Herbert's goals of education. But, it's also with the understanding that our employees need the opportunity to learn, continually learn, because we are going to have to be constantly transforming. I believe learning is a condition of employment. We will not be successful tomorrow if we're doing things the way we're doing them today.

We are truly at an inflection point in transportation that is as significant as when Henry Ford essentially merged the engine to the carriage, and created the real first mass available automobile. You look at what's happening, and I characterize those three paradigms, those changes in three paradigms; Automation, Electrification, and Mobility as a service. So, as a transportation agency, we're trying to help keep Utah moving. We need to be prepared for what the future of transportation looks like. We are going to see cars driving themselves. We are going to see people not owning vehicles.

What is your favorite, or most interesting experience as a director?

My favorite is when I get to put on a pair of jeans and an orange shirt and go out on a maintenance project or a construction job and visit with the employees out there. I really enjoy that. I sometimes worry that I'm causing more disruption than I should, because they get a little nervous, but it's really cool to go out and see what the folks are doing. I went out almost a year ago, and they put me in a bucket truck, and I went up way high and I changed out a camera near the airport on I-80.

I went out and I spray painted over graffiti with the crew. Somewhere in the orange coveralls, I'm out there bleeding orange! We have a saying at UDOT, and for years, if an employee was particularly dedicated and has been around for years, we say, "He bleeds orange, or she bleeds orange." Orange is our color -- it's the color of our employees. We recently added a splash of orange to our logo to recognize them. We even started a video series called, "Talking Orange" where we go and try to highlight employees. That's the passion of the UDOT employee, it's all about Bleeding Orange.

Any Advice or words of wisdom for State of Utah employees?

Sometimes it's hard as a state employee to feel if you're appreciated or not, especially when you look at the limited tools out there for rewarding excellence. But, I would just tell them that they are. Everything that they do, no matter what agency they're in, what they do every day makes a difference to people. Just know that we appreciate what you do!

The work we do is important, but it's also important to be happy with what you do. The attitude that we all have, it's important to know that we have a lot of control over our own attitudes. Despite our particular lots in life, you can choose to be happy. And, if you choose to be happy, the people around you will be happy, it will make your work experience much better, you'll do a better job, and your days will go faster. I think something we should be conscious about is that it's important to be happy, and it's okay to be happy in your job. That doesn't mean you're goofing off, so enjoy yourself. We can choose to be miserable, or we can choose to be happy. We can't depend on the actions of others; we shouldn't let the actions of others dictate which one we do. We should choose to be happy. We have one life, live it the best you can. Everyday do the most you can. I try to work hard and I try to play hard! 

Workout Warrior Winners

By: Lynda Blades, PEHP Wellness



PEHP Healthy Utah wants to thank everyone who participated in the Governor's Choose Health Challenge and May Workout Warrior Challenge. We had over 2,000 state employees participate from 41 different state agencies. The challenge provided weekly tips to motivate and encourage employees to be more active during the work day.

Congratulations to the top three agencies who had the highest participation rates. The first place winner of the challenge was The Department of Human Resource (51% participating),

second place was The Office of Economic Development (40% participating) and third place was The Department of Commerce (32% participating). Lt. Governor Cox presented agency leaders with a plaque at the annual PEHP Wellness Council Conference on June 23. We also want to congratulate Jeff Mulitalo and Shannon Casias, the two DHRM employees who each won a \$50 gift card to Big 5 Sporting Goods.

PEHP Workout Warrior is a monthly health challenge encouraging employees to be active. Each month, several lucky workout warriors are randomly selected to receive a \$10 Amazon gift card. If you would like to participate in the July challenge, [register here](#). Keep moving! 

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CLEAR THE AIR CHALLENGE
Drive Down Your Miles



LET'S KEEP THIS PERFECTLY CLEAR

THE CLEAR THE AIR CHALLENGE IS BACK WITH ALL NEW GOALS

The Clear the Air Challenge, issued by business, government and community leaders, is all about improving air quality, reducing traffic congestion and conserving energy in Utah by eliminating unnecessary vehicle trips. By simply eliminating a few vehicle trips throughout your week, you can make a big difference in your community while competing for weekly prizes, grand prizes and statewide recognition.



ENGAGE
10,000
PARTICIPANTS



ELIMINATE
300,000
VEHICLE TRIPS



SAVE
2 MILLION
MILES

TAKE THE CHALLENGE

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REGISTER TODAY

ClearTheAirChallenge.org



Join the conversation at
fb.com/ClearTheAirChallenge

CARPPOOL TO EVENTS | USE MASS TRANSIT | BIKE TO THE STORE | TELEWORK






PARTNER

Water Conservation

Joshua Palmer, DWR

The Utah Division of Water Resources (DWRe) recently launched a water conservation campaign called “H2Oath: Utah’s Water-Wise Pledge.” Its purpose is to encourage additional water conservation efforts by families, businesses, cities, government agencies and statewide organizations. It can be found at: water.utah.gov/H2Oath.

The H2Oath is designed to commit individuals and groups to conserve more water by following the division’s Weekly Lawn Watering Guide (found on slowtheflow.org, posted weekly via the division’s Facebook and Twitter accounts, and available via the guide’s Apple and Android apps) throughout the irrigation season. It also encourages committing to several other water conservation actions. Governor Herbert showed his support, officially declaring May 10, 2016 “H2Oath: Utah’s Water-Wise Pledge Day.”

Hundreds of people and organizations have taken the H2Oath. The division will work throughout the summer to partner with organizations and individuals to conserve water through adherence to its commitments. The division encourages people to go to water.utah.gov/H2Oath to take the pledge, and show support by asking friends and colleagues to do the same!

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FLSA Changes

By Benn Buys, DHRM

On May 18, the United States Department of Labor announced changes to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The changes updated the overtime regulations related to Executive, Administrative and Professional workers and the amount of salary that an employer must pay before it can classify an employee as FLSA exempt. These changes are effective December 1, 2016. As a result of these changes, as many as 1,300 state employees could be changed from FLSA exempt to FLSA non-exempt.

What changes were made to the FLSA?

Currently under the FLSA, employees working in a qualified Executive, Administrative or Professional job are considered exempt from the FLSA if they make at least \$11.38/hour (\$455 per week). This limit will change to \$22.83/hour (\$913 per week) on December 1, 2016. State employees working in jobs where the salary range minimum is less than \$22.83 on December 1 will be considered FLSA non-exempt. This includes jobs that have previously been classified by DHRM as FLSA exempt. Employees will receive notification from their agency or DHRM if their FLSA status will change.

What happens next?

Field office directors will be working with agency management to determine how the FLSA status for jobs with salary ranges currently below \$22.83 will be impacted. For some jobs it may be possible to move the salary range to keep the job FLSA exempt, especially if the range is sufficiently wide and employees are not paid below the new threshold. DHRM Enterprise will also be posting more information on the employee gateway and will directly contact affected employees later this year. [WE](#)



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<https://www.pehp.org/members/amwell>

Leveraging Technology with Success

Kristen Cox, Executive Director GOMB



In today's world, there is a computer application or automated process behind almost everything we do. The same holds true for state government operations. From applying for financial assistance to buying a fishing license and from renewing a driver's license to securing a business permit, information technology is an integral part of how the State of Utah conducts its business.

The Department of Technology Services (DTS) currently manages over 1,200 online services for Utah residents and 900 internal state agency applications—the majority of which were developed in-house. By applying the tools and principles of the SUCCESS Framework, DTS has been able to realize an initial 32% improvement in the volume and quality of development projects.

THE GOAL

The goal of the DTS application development system is to provide the best technology at a competitive rate to assist partner agencies in achieving their goals.



S U C C E S S
FRAMEWORK

The SUCCESS Framework is a set of management principles designed to boost the quality and efficiency of government services with the goal of creating more value for every tax dollar invested.

For more information about Operational Excellence and the SUCCESS Framework, please visit the Governor's Office of Management and Budget at: <http://gomb.utah.gov/operational-excellence/>

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THE STRATEGY

DTS has implemented four key strategies to improve the quality of development projects. They include:

1. Core-architecture Core Architecture Standards

- DTS is using core architecture standards, which creates a technology stack that is consistent and dependable
- The core standards allows DTS to work with several different agencies and adjust to differing business needs while still using similar technologies as the base
- They also allow DTS to operate as a developer pool where team members switch from project to project without relying completely on core business knowledge

2. Fewer-projects Fewer Projects in Progress

- Reducing the amount of active projects has helped to increase the rate of project completions
- Reducing the overall number of projects in development has allowed developers to focus their time and effort rather than constantly switching between projects

3. Use of Task Boards

- Task boards allow managers to better understand the amount of work developers have completed and how much work is in process
- Assists developers in achieving a single-tasking model so more work is accomplished than under a multi-tasking model
- Allows the management team and staff to focus on areas where developers are stuck—team members huddle together and work to get each other unstuck

4. New and Improved Software Development Standards

- Simpler and more direct software development standards allows DTS to understand and execute similar development projects across the state as a whole
- Documentation in core areas is standardized, with additional documentation included as needed

THE RESULTS

For DTS, operational improvement for application development is measured based on the number of projects completed (weighted by size) and overall customer satisfaction based on time, scope, and budget requirements. Initial results of this measure show a 32% improvement for the first five reporting months as compared to baseline data.

THE FUTURE

Next steps for DTS include implementing additional portfolio management practices, improving project status communications and gaining an even better up-front understanding of business needs before a project is executed. These efforts will help to continue to increase overall performance and as well as reduce the amount of missed expectations that are often connected with IT projects. **WE**

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