Public EYE

pshra®

PUBLIC SECTOR HR LOOKS AHEAD:
What's Top of Mind for 2026?

EXCEL IN YOUR CAREER WITH PSHRA CERTIFICATION!

Earning certification from PSHRA is the recognized standard of excellence for public sector HR professionals.

Start your journey by choosing the _new_ certification exam that's right for you:
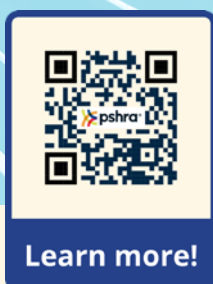
◖ **PSHRA-<u>CP</u> Exam is designed for:**

- Entry-level public sector HR professionals
- Mid-level public sector HR professionals
- Professionals new to public sector HR

◖ **PSHRA-<u>SCP</u> Exam is designed for**

- Experienced public sector HR professionals
- HR leaders
- HR executives

Learn more!
pshra.org/certification

Learn more!

The Public Sector Looks to Navigate an Uncertain 2026

The book is just about closed on 2025. So, as we do with the last edition of *Public Eye* each year, we look forward.

This issue's cover story continues the tradition, with *Public Eye* asking a handful of PSHRA members to share what they see as the biggest challenges waiting for them and their public sector HR peers in 2026.

2025 was a tumultuous year for the public sector workforce, at all levels of government. So, it probably shouldn't be a surprise that many of our cover story interviewees see managing through significant change as a continuing theme in 2026.

"In county government, there is a constant push to deliver more with fewer resources, all while maintaining exceptional service to our employees and departments," said Giani Cantu, director of human resources with Victoria County, Texas.

"At times, the expectation can feel contradictory. [HR is charged with] serving as the administrative backbone for personnel processes across all offices, yet [must also] remain within strict role boundaries."

Many long-standing practices endure simply because "that's how it's always been done," she continued.

"But times have changed. Technology has changed. Laws have changed. Our leaders and our workforce have changed. If we don't evolve with them, we risk bottlenecking processes, slowing service or facing compliance pitfalls that help no one."

To prepare, Cantu and her HR team of four are focused on communicating and engaging the County's workforce—approximately 640 regular employees and close to 150 retirees that remain on benefits—in the process of change.

"We're learning to communicate early, move forward steadily, and communicate again after decisions are made," she said, adding that the County is also investing in training and leadership development.

"This approach allows us to expand learning opportunities, strengthen relationships across departments and empower leaders at all levels to navigate and lead through change effectively."

Nicole Rogers, public relations officer with the Rancho Cucamonga Fire Protection District, is adjusting to some pretty big changes in her life.

In "Solving Childcare Challenges," Robert Neiuber, senior human resources director with the City of Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., describes how the City's RC Cares program helps team members like Rogers manage temporary childcare or eldercare needs without leaving City service or taking extended absences.

Rogers and her son Dalton take part in the City's Baby on Board initiative, a precursor to RC Cares that "continues to go strong," Neiuber writes.

Taking part in the program has allowed Rogers to bring Dalton to work with her a few days during the week in the last three months, which she said is invaluable as mother and son adjust to a new routine.

"Becoming a parent is one of life's biggest transformations. After spending months of learning to be a mama, the days leading up to returning to work can feel daunting," said Rogers, adding that the ability to spend extra time with Dalton while seeing him bond with her co-workers "is an experience I will never forget."

The City of Rancho Cucamonga's RC Cares program is an example of an initiative that has helped employees adapt to significant changes in their lives.

Jeanette Hamilton, director of human resources at North Valley Hospital, Okanogan County Public Hospital District #4, in Tonasket, Wash., was among the public sector HR leaders who spoke to *Public Eye* for this issue's cover feature.

Like many of her peers, she pointed to the pace and scope of change in the public sector as an ongoing concern for her and her HR team. In describing their plan to strive for "total transparency" with the North Valley Hospital workforce, she also offered up some good advice for helping public sector employees navigate some pretty uncertain times.

"Change is constant," Hamilton told *Public Eye*. "But when people feel informed, supported and capable, I do believe it can become something we navigate together rather than resist." ●

Mark McGraw
Editor

PUBLIC EYE

Member Programs For questions related to membership, professional development, certification or any other member program, please contact us at the corresponding email addresses of membership@pshra.org, meetings@pshra.org or certification@pshra.org.

Assessments & Learning For questions about our assessment services, test products or test orders, please contact assessment@pshra.org.

Publications For questions about our bimonthly *Public Eye* magazine or our weekly *Of Public Interest* e-newsletter, please contact publications@pshra.org.

Tech and Web Support For all questions regarding technical issues and our website, please contact web@pshra.org.

General For any other question or for general questions about the Association, please contact hello@pshra.org.

PSHRA Membership Information

Join PSHRA today and receive *Public Eye* for free as part of your membership. Sign up online at www.pshra.org or contact the Membership Department at membership@pshra.org or (703) 549-7100.

Advertising Information

Public Eye accepts display advertising. For complete advertising information, email publications@pshra.org.

PSHRA® is a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to providing resources and advocacy for public human resource professionals at all levels. Composed of four U.S. regions and more than 45 chapters, PSHRA® represents individuals and agencies in local, state and federal government worldwide. PSHRA® provides a focus and forum for the discussion and exchange of views and best practices among public sector human resource professionals throughout the United States and abroad.

Executive Council

Coming up in the January/February issue of PUBLIC EYE

Influencing Business Outcomes: Measuring Public Sector HR's Bottom-Line Impact

TABLE OF CONTENTS ●

FEATURES

DEPARTMENTS

What's Top of Mind for 2026?

By Mark McGraw, PSHRA®

It's been a uniquely eventful year in the public sector. Early in 2025, the Elon Musk-led Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) grabbed headlines—and courted controversy—with its aggressive approach to cutting federal government.

Since January, more than 20 states have followed the federal government's lead in creating task forces charged with cutting costs and improving efficiency in state and local government.

The passage of the Trump administration's One Big Beautiful Bill Act this summer has agencies at all levels of government bracing for its potential impact.

Well over 100,000 federal workers have lost their jobs or have been "bought out" since January. Many displaced federal workers have sought opportunities in state and local government, as HR leaders at these levels identify strategies to attract this talent in transition.

And, this year saw the federal government shut down at midnight on Oct. 1, remaining closed for more than 40 days.

The shockwaves caused by these events will continue to reverberate throughout all levels of government in 2026. And, public sector HR leaders will continue to juggle the usual challenges in the year ahead—budgetary concerns, compensation and benefits, employee engagement, recruitment and hiring, and much more.

As we prepare to turn the page on 2025, we asked a handful of public sector HR leaders and PSHRA® members to share what they're focusing on as they look ahead to 2026.

Managing Through Change

Hiba Khouri, HR generalist with the City of Allentown, Pa., puts maintaining employee engagement levels in the face of constant change near the top of her priorities list for 2026.

"In local government, we're balancing tradition with a modern workforce that values flexibility, transparency and purpose," Khouri told *Public Eye*. "We're meeting that challenge by modernizing

policies, expanding development opportunities and creating a culture of recognition and inclusion, so our employees don't just stay, but stay proud to serve."

Heading into 2026, employee engagement and change management are critical concerns for Giani Cantu and her HR team of four with Victoria County, Texas, as well.

"In county government, there is a constant push to deliver more with fewer resources, all while maintaining exceptional service to our employees and departments," said Cantu, who has served as the County's director of human resources since August 2024.

"At times, the expectation can feel contradictory. [HR is charged with] serving as the administrative backbone for personnel processes across all offices, yet [must also] remain within strict role boundaries."

Many long-standing practices endure simply because "that's how it's always been done," she continued.

"But times have changed. Technology has changed. Laws have changed. Our leaders and our workforce have changed. If we don't evolve with them, we risk bottlenecking processes, slowing service or facing compliance pitfalls that help no one."

To prepare, Cantu and her HR team are focused on communicating and engaging the County's workforce—approximately 640 regular employees and close to 150 retirees that remain on benefits—in the process of change.

"We're learning to communicate early, move forward steadily, and communicate again after decisions are made," she said, adding that the County is also investing in training and leadership development.

"This approach allows us to expand learning opportunities,

strengthen relationships across departments and empower leaders at all levels to navigate and lead through change effectively."

Improving Efficiency with AI

Public sector employees haven't always been completely comfortable with the changes that AI is bound to bring to the workplace.

Recent research, however, finds local government workers turning to AI for assistance in larger numbers.

Earlier this year, MissionSquare Research Institute surveyed 2,000 state and local government employees, "exploring how workers use artificial intelligence, what services they provide and their overall concerns about AI's impact on their future jobs," according to a MissionSquare statement.

That poll revealed that some government workers are still concerned that AI will ultimately make them expendable. While most respondents (63%) expressed minimal concern about AI replacing their job functions, one in five (20%) said they were very or extremely concerned.

Still, the majority of survey participants suggested that AI is making their work lives easier. For example, more than half of respondents said that AI has improved work quality and productivity. In addition, 42% of government employees surveyed said they feel they are more knowledgeable about their workplace use of AI than their co-workers are.

The Town of Bluffton, S.C. hopes to continue harnessing AI's potential in 2026, said Anni Evans, the Town's director of human resources.

"Our challenge with AI isn't about blocking its use," Evans explained. "It's about harnessing its powerful potential while mitigating public sector-specific risks around data integrity and transparency."

The Town's more than 140 employees are already adopting generative AI for basic functions, Evans said. "So, our focus is shifting the narrative from AI-as-replacement to AI-as-enhancement through two core pillars: mitigating fear by being transparent about AI's role and unlocking productivity gains by upskilling our staff."

Evans described this push for improving efficiency as "critical," as the cost of living in Bluffton's region "places us at a competitive disadvantage, particularly when recruiting for specialized roles such as IT, planning and police.

"Since we simply can't compete [with the private sector] dollar-for-dollar on salary," she continued, "our strategy must pivot to optimizing the entire employee value proposition from a culture of development to clear management expectations."

Maintaining Mental Health

The upheaval that government employees have endured this past year underscores the importance of addressing mental health challenges in the public sector workforce.

In February 2025, the Public Sector HR Association (PSHRA®) conducted a survey of 419 public sector HR professionals, with the goal of gauging the state of public sector employee mental well-being.

The survey reprised a 2021 study PSHRA conducted in an effort to identify patterns and trends with regard to public sector organizations' focus on employee well-being. The 2025 research sought to uncover new areas of interest in mental well-being throughout the public sector workforce.

Overall, the data in the most recent report, *The State of Employee Mental Health in the Public Sector*, suggests that public sector employers are still focusing on employee mental health, but many workers—including those working in HR—are still experiencing mental well-being issues.

For example, more than half of the HR professionals that PSHRA surveyed in 2025 (56%) said they have experienced workplace stress in the past two years.

In addition, a majority of the HR professionals taking part in the 2025 survey also reported that their well-being has been negatively impacted by their role in HR. Among these respondents, more than half (56%) said that mental health concerns have impacted their professional performance, with an even larger number (83%) indicating that their sleep has been inhibited.

At 78% and 75%, respectively, workload and burnout were the most commonly cited drivers of public sector HR's mental health

concerns in 2025. Politics (63%) and poor work-life balance (53%) are also having a negative impact on workers' mental well-being.

Helping employees navigate these types of mental well-being challenges is one of Shawn Aulgur's goals in 2026.

"It's a matter of figuring out how to assist and educate employees with the potential negative impact of decisions being made in and outside of work," said Aulgur, the human resources director with the City of Raymore, Mo. "There are so many outside influences affecting our employees that are outside of our control."

While acknowledging that "I don't have an answer for a path moving forward," Aulgur hopes to start by letting City employees know they have the support of the City's HR team.

"For now, I am giving some grace, and making sure I am available whenever needed."

Winning Budget Battles

Budget worries certainly don't do much to cut down on HR leaders' stress levels. For Steve Kilo, director of human resources with the City of Strongsville, Ohio, funding figures to be a concern for the foreseeable future.

"With all the funding restraints coming from cutbacks on the national, state and county levels," Kilo said, "[it becomes difficult to figure out where] we obtain the funding resources to maintain or, in some cases, increase staffing levels due to demands amid attrition and retirements."

Some of the roles the City needs to fill require highly specialized skills, licensing or certifications, Kilo said. The City of Strongsville is exploring possible solutions to these staffing conundrums, such as partnerships with community colleges, trade schools and vocational schools to build programs and platforms for the next generation of public service workers.

Jeanette Hamilton, director of human resources at North Valley Hospital, Okanogan County Public Hospital District #4, in Tonasket, Wash., counts dealing with budget shortfalls and increasing costs as top priorities for her HR team in 2026.

"We will enter into contract negotiations next spring or early summer, and will need to carefully and creatively navigate collective bargaining agreement wage/step increases, as well as negotiate employee contributions to insurance premiums," Hamilton told *Public Eye*, adding that "we currently have a very generous employee contribution of 88% for medical insurance premiums baked into our existing contract."

Noting concern about both state and federal budget reductions and shortfalls that impact critical access hospitals nationwide, "we are also motivated to add value by increasing services that our community would benefit from while balancing these financial challenges," she said.

Also citing succession planning and professional development as top-of-mind issues heading into 2026, Hamilton said she and her HR team will continue to strive for total transparency with the North Valley workforce as they encounter these and other hurdles in the year ahead.

"Change is constant," Hamilton said, "but when people feel informed, supported and capable, I do believe it can become something we navigate together rather than resist." ●

Mark McGraw is the editor of Public Eye *and* Of Public Interest. *He can be reached at* mmcgraw@pshra.org.

SAVE THE DATE!

PSHRA26 is happening Sept. 28 – 30 in Portland, Oregon!

PSHRA marks its 120th anniversary in 2026. Help us celebrate in the heart of the Pacific Northwest. Join us at PSHRA26, your opportunity to gather with fellow public sector HR professionals. Share ideas, spark connections and gain insights into the challenges facing you and your public sector HR peers today!

Stay up-to-date on info for next year's conference HERE.

CLEVELAND ROCKED!

PSHRA25 in Pictures

By Mark McGraw, PSHRA®

Over the course of three days (Sept. 29 – Oct. 1), more than 450 public sector leaders came together at the Hilton Cleveland Downtown for PSHRA25, for plenty of networking, preconference workshops, a packed concurrent session schedule, dynamic keynote speakers and much more. We're already gearing up for next year's annual national conference in Portland, Ore. But, in the meantime, let's take a look back at some snapshots from our time in The Forest City … ●
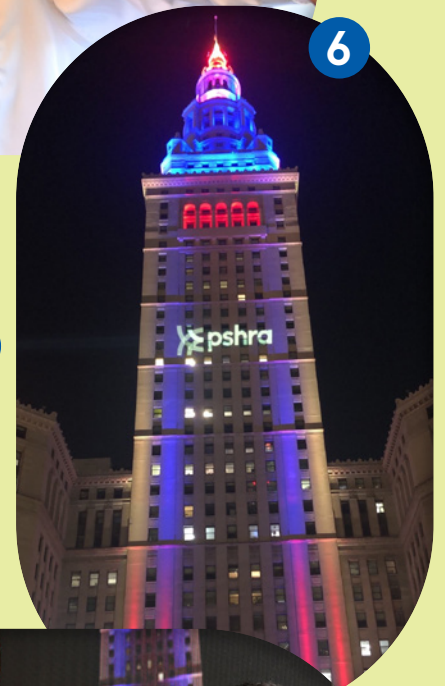
Photos courtesy of Wetzler Studios

1—Those who joined our preconference workshop for first-time PSHRA national conference attendees enjoyed an overview of the Association, a welcome from PSHRA CEO Cara Woodson Welch, plenty of interactive exercises and even a lively game of rock paper scissors!

2—Pete Blank, training and organizational development manager for the Personnel Board of Jefferson County, Ala., led a preconference workshop held just for first-time PSHRA annual conference attendees.

3—Day One keynote speaker David Allison officially kicked off PSHRA25 with an amazing presentation focused on the values that drive the decisions we make every day, in our personal and professional lives.

4—Matt Orley of Peninsula, Ohio-based Big Paper Strategy lent his talents to PSHRA25, providing awesome illustrations for a number of sessions in real time.

5—The PSHRA25 exhibit hall was home to more than 30 sponsors and exhibitors throughout two jam-packed days.

6—Attendees at our Day One Welcome Reception, sponsored by Oracle Human Capital Management, enjoyed this amazing view from the rooftop of the Huntington Convention Center of Cleveland.

7—PSHRA 2025 Executive Council President Andrea Cutler (center), pictured here with PSHRA 2025 Past President Mark Van Bruggen and PSHRA CEO Cara Woodson Welch, received the PSHRA 2025 President's Award.

8—Macy Dippert, human resources manager with the City of Roseville, Calif., accepted the City's PSHRA 2025 Small Agency Award, as part of this year's Awards Breakfast celebrating the 2025 winners.

9—Benita Ransom, human resources and merit system director at DeKalb County Government (Ga.), at left, accepted Dekalb's 2025 Medium Agency Award from Kimberly Meismer, assistant city manager with the City of Kerrville, Texas, and member of PSHRA's Executive Council.

10—Representing the Louisiana State Civil Service, Nicole Tucker, the organization's chief operating officer, received the 2025 Large Agency Award from Andrea Cutler, PSHRA 2025 Executive Council president, and Carol Rubino, personnel board manager with Prince George's County Government, Md., and PSHRA 2025 Executive Council treasurer.

11—In her PSHRA25 Day Two keynote focused on the power of curiosity, Molly Ketcham offered up strategies designed to foster more meaningful relationships and establish deeper connections.

12—PSHRA CEO Cara Woodson Welch and Gerald Young, senior researcher at MissionSquare Research Institute, shared findings from the 2025 State and Local Government Workforce Survey. Along with the National Association of State Personnel Executives (NASPE), PSHRA and MissionSquare have conducted the survey every year since 2009.

13—PSHRA25's third and final day wrapped up with our first-ever Big Idea Roundtables, designed to spark creative ideas and practical solutions to key challenges like workforce development, veterans and federal workforce recruitment and tech transformation.

14—With this year's conference officially in the books, the countdown is on to PSHRA26 in Portland, Ore.!

Mark McGraw is the editor of Public Eye *and* Of Public Interest. *He can be reached at* **mmcgraw@pshra.org***.*

Rancho Cucamonga Improves the Employee Experience with RC Cares

By Robert Neiuber

In 2018, the City of Rancho Cucamonga's Child Care Challenges committee was researching how dependent-care gaps were affecting our employees' ability to work.

Recognizing that sudden or short-term childcare or eldercare breakdowns were causing avoidable absences, the City sought to create a compassionate, flexible framework to keep employees supported and productive. The goal was to align with Rancho Cucamonga's values—family, service and innovation—by improving employee well-being while maintaining high-quality community service.

The end result was the RC Cares Program, a menu of short-range dependent-care supports designed to help employees manage temporary childcare or eldercare needs without leaving City service or taking extended absences.

Supporting Parents

RC Cares offers a menu of components, including our Care 2 Share Group, a peer-to-peer carpooling and scheduling network for parents.

Care 2 Share is a key component of RC Cares, and serves as a private online network where employees voluntarily share pickup/drop-off needs and availability. Participants list their schedule and location on a shared Excel sheet and, through HR, can connect with colleagues who have similar school-drop or pickup times. Once matched, employees coordinate directly with one another to alternate responsibilities—fostering collaboration and reducing commute stress.

There's also Camp Cucamonga, the City's long-running summer youth day camp serving children ages 5–12 from 7:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. Participants enjoy supervised activities promoting creativity, fitness, and community. Through RC Cares, employees may pre-register their children and use payroll deduction to repay the City over a year (26 pay periods) rather than one lump sum, making camp participation easier to budget.

The RC Cares program has enabled Nicole Rogers, public relations officer with the City of Rancho Cucamonga Fire Protection District, to spend additional time bonding with her son Dalton.

The City provides other forms of support for our employees with children, such as the RC Caregivers Network, which meets for quarterly lunch meetings and communicates via an online forum strictly for City workers with caregiving responsibilities. Through the RC Cares, Bring Your Kid to Work component, we allow employees to bring their children to work on a short-term basis, as long as the employee's supervisor approves and safety protocols are observed.

The City also supports multiple flexible arrangements designed to help employees address their childcare and/or eldercare needs. We allow adjustable work schedules. Since we work a 4/10 schedule Monday to Thursday, staggered shifts and/or Friday work hours, for instance, are available when operationally feasible. We offer

Nicole Rogers says she will "forever be grateful" for the extra time she's able to spend with her son Dalton through the RC Cares program.

flextime, with predictable variations in daily start and stop times, with supervisor approval.

And, employees in positions that can perform tasks off-site may telework as needed or regularly part of the week under individualized agreements. Employees must remain reachable, maintain service standards, and be able to return on short notice. These schedules are coordinated to ensure service continuity while giving employees flexibility and caregivers more control over family obligations.

Because these program components are available for all employees, we have provided flexibility to hundreds of employees since the inception of the RC Cares program. During the pandemic, for instance, the program became especially critical, as we substantially increased the number of remote employees.

Better Balance

Ultimately, RC Cares has improved the employee experience for City workers with young children, strengthening employee engagement, retention and morale, and demonstrating that the City genuinely values family and work-life balance.

Our employees with children report lower stress, greater flexibility during school breaks or emergencies, and a deeper connection to the City's culture of care. Supervisors benefit from fewer unscheduled absences and higher productivity. Overall, RC Cares reinforces Rancho Cucamonga's identity as a forward-thinking, people-centered and family-friendly employer—one that models how public service organizations can invest in the whole employee.

Since 2018, when we put these programs in place, participation in some of the programs has dwindled. In particular, the "Care 2 Share Group" and "RC Caregivers Network" programs. As part of HR's strategic plan, we plan to form a new cross-functional team of caregivers from across City departments and update the RC Cares program.

We have taken additional steps in the interim by negotiating the elimination of any waiting periods for the use of leaves in the MOUs, and for new employees to start with sick leave hours available for them to use. We want employees to focus on their health and know that we value that they take the time necessary to recover when they are sick.

Finally, our Baby on Board program, which was a precursor to the RC Cares program, continues to go strong. We have had several participants this year. This program allows parents to bring their baby with them to work until they are 8 months old or begin to crawl.

Nicole Rogers, public relations officer with the Rancho Cucamonga Fire Protection District and mother to son Dalton, is one of those participants. The program has enabled her to bring Dalton to work with her a few days during the week in the last three months, which she said is invaluable as mother and son adjust to a new routine.

"Becoming a parent is one of life's biggest transformations. After spending months of learning to be a mama, the days leading up to returning to work can feel daunting," said Rogers, adding that the ability to spend extra time with Dalton while seeing him bond with her co-workers "is an experience I will never forget.

"I am so thankful for the leadership of our City Council, Fire District and City for supporting parents," she continued. "This program gives us the opportunity to learn how to be a working parent. Rancho Cucamonga is truly a special place." ●

Robert Neiuber is the senior human resources director with the City of Rancho Cucamonga. He can be reached at robert.neiuber@cityofrc.us.

Navigating the Trends, Challenges and Opportunities Shaping Higher Ed HR

By Alisha Beal

Government HR leaders have seen their share of turmoil in the past 12 months, as the effects of mass layoffs and funding cuts at the federal level trickle down throughout state and local government.

HR leaders in another segment of the public sector—higher education—have their own challenges to contend with, such as maintaining competitive compensation levels, generational dynamics in the workforce, and incorporating AI and other emerging technologies. So, how do we overcome these hurdles?

Meeting Compensation Challenges

One of the most significant challenges facing higher ed institutions right now is maintaining competitive compensation while preserving fiscal responsibility. Colleges, universities and community colleges continue to offer attractive benefits packages that include retirement plans, strong health coverage and tuition assistance, for example.

However, base salaries often fall short of those available in private industry. According to the CUPA-HR *2025 Higher Education Employee Retention Survey*, nearly one in four higher education employees report being "likely or very likely" to look for another position within the next year, with compensation cited as the top factor influencing turnover intent.

This pay disparity is particularly pronounced in high-demand fields such as IT and finance, where competition from both the private sector and local government entities remains high.

Secondly, the mission-driven nature of higher education keeps student success and degree completion at the center of institutional priorities. Public colleges and universities, particularly state systems and community colleges, are structured around the belief that personal connection drives retention.

Research consistently affirms that student engagement and belonging are among the strongest predictors of student retention and graduation. Studies show that meaningful interaction with faculty and staff, collaborative learning and a supportive campus environment significantly improve persistence rates, or the percentage of students who continue their college education into a subsequent term.

Consequently, many institutions emphasize on-campus presence to sustain these high-impact practices. This commitment to in-person engagement often conflicts with the workforce's growing expectation for flexible, hybrid or remote work arrangements.

Lastly, the shifting generational dynamics within today's workforce further impact retention, especially among experienced and high-performing employees who hold critical institutional expertise.

Newer generations entering the workforce are motivated by continuous growth, skill development and meaningful advancement opportunities. It is now common for employees to move on within one to two years if career progression feels limited. This rapid turnover undermines institutional continuity, strains onboarding and training resources, and complicates succession planning.

Rethinking Retention

Sustaining workforce stability has required us to rethink many traditional retention strategies. Like many of my peers across public higher education, I've seen that competitive salaries are only one part of the equation. Employees today are looking for growth, purpose and flexibility, and our HR practices must evolve to meet those expectations.

In practice, we should be focusing heavily on career-pathing, mentorship and professional development as cornerstones of retention. These types of programs help employees gain the skills and experience needed to advance internally rather than seek opportunities elsewhere.

Similarly, training and development initiatives emphasize staff success through ongoing technical training, leadership development, and diversity and inclusion workshops. These investments support professional growth while reinforcing institutional values of lifelong learning and service.

These strategies collectively reinforce a broader truth I see across public higher education that employee engagement and student success are deeply connected. When employees feel valued, supported and aligned with the university's mission, that sense of purpose extends directly to the students we serve.

Addressing AI's Emergence

The emergence of artificial intelligence has introduced both opportunity and responsibility for HR professionals in higher education. We've begun to explore how AI can help us streamline administrative processes while preserving the integrity, confidentiality and human-centered nature of our work.

AI tools show real promise in improving efficiency in routine HR tasks, from drafting job postings to assisting with employee communications and onboarding checklists. These tools free up valuable time for HR staff to focus on higher-impact work such as meaningful employee engagement, strategic workforce planning, and supporting the human connections that define our campus culture.

It's important to take a deliberate and responsible approach when implementing new technologies like AI in higher education. Leveraging secure, purpose-built AI environments allows institutions to explore automation and information management safely, without compromising confidentiality or data integrity.

At the same time, we are deeply mindful that HR is, at its core, a people-centered function. While AI can help us work more efficiently, it cannot replace the empathy, judgment and trust that come from human interaction. We must be intentional about maintaining human touchpoints in every key process, whether it's onboarding, employee relations or performance management, to ensure that technology enhances rather than erodes personal connection.

Artificial intelligence is no longer a future trend. As state and local regulations expand, HR now plays a key role in ensuring that technology adoption aligns with ethical and legal standards.

As we move into 2026, HR leaders have an opportunity to shape how artificial intelligence transforms the workplace. The focus should be on developing clear governance frameworks to ensure technology supports fairness and accountability.

At the same time, HR can leverage AI to streamline operations through responsibly designed tools that assist with drafting materials, managing knowledge and improving employee access to information. By pairing innovation with ethical oversight, HR can lead the way in building a more agile, informed and equitable workforce for the future.

Supporting Organizational Resilience

As 2026 approaches, public-sector higher education—particularly across state and community colleges—faces a convergence of structural and emerging HR challenges.

Financial uncertainty continues to define the public higher education landscape. In March 2025, for instance, Moody's Investors Service downgraded the higher education sector's outlook to "negative," citing ongoing enrollment volatility and uneven state funding.

At the same time, state lawmakers partially restored proposed reductions for higher education, though some allocations were deferred until July 2026, leaving campuses to navigate unpredictable cash-flow cycles.

In response to ongoing financial and workforce unpredictability, many higher education HR teams are adopting contingency-based workforce models. This helps maintain essential services while ensuring compliance and student support remain intact. Regular vacancy audits and collaboration with finance and labor relations teams enable data-driven decisions about which roles to prioritize and how to remain competitive in high-demand areas.

Sustaining workload balance across academic and operational areas will remain a defining challenge. *The EDUCAUSE 2025 Workforce Study* found that nearly 67% of higher education professionals describe their workloads as "excessive," particularly in technology, student support and instructional services.

HR leaders can support organizational resilience by adopting data-informed approaches to workload and well-being. Developing workload assessment metrics that quantify service expectations across departments helps ensure staffing and budget decisions are grounded in measurable evidence.

Equally important is embedding well-being and role clarity into performance conversations, encouraging supervisors to discuss workload balance, development goals and overall capacity.

As automation and generative AI evolve, HR has an opportunity to reduce repetitive administrative tasks like report preparation or survey summarization, enabling employees to focus on more strategic, mission-driven work. And, finally, fostering a culture of civility, recognition and continuous learning through intentional dialogue and appreciation, as always, remains essential. ●

Alisha Beal is executive director of employee and relations in the human resources division at California State University, San Bernardino. She can be reached at alisha.beal@csusb.edu.

What's Driving Local Leaders Away and How to Keep Them

By Melissa Barker

On any given day, in all regions of the country—from Cathedral City, Calif., to Saline County, Kan., to Montpelier, Vt.— cities and counties are reeling from a large turnover of their chief executives.

While it is difficult to quantify the exact number, suffice it to say there are thousands of openings for city managers and closely related positions.

As is the case in corporate America and at nonprofit organizations, the departure of top leaders is creating turmoil for government agencies that have neither the time, the know-how or the resources to build robust leadership pipelines from which to promote employees into higher positions.

Research from Government Leadership Solutions revealed that 53% of government agencies surveyed in a pipeline study say budget constraints limit investment in critical leadership development and succession planning. So, how does your agency figure out how to find, develop and keep its next generation of leaders?

Should I Stay or Should I Go?

There are many reasons why top leaders of municipalities, large and small, are turning in their keys to City Hall. Among them are a mismatch of values or lack of recognition, the personal health of the manager and the financial health of the local government.

"Push" factors are also forcing managers out—workplace stress and burnout, poor economic performance and "time for a change" pressure from the public, for instance. "Pull" factors—from career advancement and professional growth opportunities in larger cities to favorable economic conditions elsewhere and retirement—are also luring managers away.

In my experience, this brain drain comes down to three factors:

1. **Retirement.** By some estimates, as many as 40% of current city managers are Baby Boomers, the youngest of whom are 61. Many have served for decades and are ready to do something else, or nothing at all.

2. **The domino effect.** A city manager vacancy in a large city triggers interest among leaders of mid-sized communities, which activates musical chairs among leaders in smaller towns. For many city managers, moving to a larger city with increased responsibilities is a traditional path for professional growth.

Examples in my home state reflect what's happening nationwide. Take the town council of Payson, a growing community in the center of Arizona. Payson recently appointed a new manager. This individual came from Page, a smaller town near the state's Utah border, which is conducting a search.

The city manager of Chandler, a large suburb east of Phoenix, resigned this year to take a position at the University of Arizona in Tucson. The town manager of Gilbert, Ariz., a neighbor of Chandler, is the new manager of Glendale, a city west of Phoenix.

3. **Burnout.** The fallout of the pandemic continues to be seen in all areas of our work life, but especially in local governments that have been hit hard by budget crises and departures of thousands of civil servants since 2020.

The Rockefeller Institute of Government noted that COVID-19 and its aftermath accelerated what has been a steady increase over the past 10 years, in terms of the quit rate of state and local government leaders.

4. **Differences in ideology.** In some cases, turnover occurs because of differences in ideology. The top municipal leader may not agree with the direction of a city council. Conversely, newly elected council members may be looking for a change because of mismatched expectations.

Selling the 'Sizzle'

Whatever the driving force behind this national turnover of town and city managers, it has many concerned about a lack of qualified candidates to take their places. Local governments are trying to survive the daily grind, never mind creating comprehensive leadership development programs in their spare time and with extra money.

A more strategic plan is required, according to POLCO, an online community-engagement polling platform that provides local governments and others with data for decision-making. POLCO reports that one of the biggest challenges facing local governments is strategic leadership in challenging times.

The will is there: Government employers want to create and offer advancement opportunities to their employees. The challenge is moving desire into action. Establishing strategic goals aimed at the ongoing improvement of operations and relationships is a good place to start.

Devising creative strategies for attracting talent is also a priority. At Duffy Group, we find the best practice is simply telling a city's compelling story. We interview city council members; high-level managers; search panels comprising citizens and business leaders; and other stakeholders to gain a clear picture.

Then we develop "the sizzle," which includes the city/town quality of life, points of differentiation, the state of the local economy, the quality of schools, cultural amenities and more.

City managers likely will continue to come and go. Developing a thoughtful plan to set municipalities apart among candidates is the best way to guide a community into the future. ●

Melissa Barker is vice president of practice development, with special expertise in recruiting for government and public-sector organizations, at Phoenix-based global recruitment firm the Duffy Group. She can be reached at mbarker@duffygroup.com.

Discovering Employees' Power Values

By Michael J. O'Brien

When public-sector organizations seek to connect with and motivate their workforce, the decision-making process is often guided by simple demographics rather than something far more powerful: what employees actually value.

"We're looking at these artificial ways of thinking about people that don't track back to what they actually care about," according to David Allison, founder of Valuegraphics Project, which has conducted research on thousands of public-sector employees to determine the values that matter most to them.

"We know from our billions of data points that that type of thinking is only about 10.5% accurate," Allison recently told *Public Eye*. "So, if you're using demographics to try and understand the people in your workplace, then you're getting it 90% wrong."

Meanwhile, family, morality, wealth, generosity, equality, courage, leisure and love are just a few of the 56 different identified "valuegraphics" that have influenced individuals to do something in the past and make them likely to do it again, he said.

The Valuegraphics research also uncovered the "power" that public sector employees place on relationships, financial security and social standing, which are "particularly useful for leaders in the public sector as tools to provide values alignment with these workers," said Allison, who delivered a conference-opening keynote address on public sector employee values at PSHRA's recent national conference in Cleveland.

"If you can align your programs, policies and procedures around these three power values," he continued, "then people are going to feel like 'This is where I fit.'"

Relationships

Regardless of how they define the term, the value of relationships is hugely important to public sector workers, Allison said.

"For them, it's about connecting and collaborating and being able to feel like they are part of something that is honored and respected."

To that end, organizations can take that values-based data and determine how to best use it internally, such as initiating a relationship-building program like interdepartmental coffee dates, said Allison.

"When's the last time someone from accounting or janitorial services sat down with someone from sales or the executive team and just talked about life?" he asked.

"It really leans into something that matters most to people who work inside this sector, and there's a billion other ways to leverage that fact and turn it into more of what matters most to people."

Financial Security

While the concept of financial security may look different to everyone, Allison said, "for public-sector workers, it's all about fairness and stability."

To that end, Allison advises public-sector leaders to do everything they can to ensure a fair and stable atmosphere around financial security, "which is going to be huge, especially at this moment in time."

Within the realm of possibility, it's even more important for leaders to be proactive and acknowledge whenever difficult financial circumstances may arise for workers, Allison continued.

He recommends a "Be Prepared" approach to the current climate of uncertainty, such as offering long-term financial planning and/or paid subscriptions for family-budgeting apps, and challenges leaders to think differently about their own training programs.

"What else can you put into your learning-and-development program that's about helping people avoid disaster when instability strikes?"

Social Standing

Social standing is a value that gets a bad rap, said Allison.

"People hear it and immediately think Rolexes and Mercedes, but that's not what this is."

It's about being recognized for the work employees have done as well as the work they're currently doing, he says.

"And it's not surprising," he said, "given all the negative talk in society right now around wastefulness in the public sector. People are feeling a little beat-up."

But it's also a deeply held value that predates the current push to cull the public workforce, "which makes the beatings hurt even more than for a group for whom this wasn't a big issue."

Allison advises leaders to make recognition of employees both visible and frequent.

"Say 'thanks' as publicly and as often as you can," he said, "and use those 'thank-you' moments as a way to educate others."

For example, praising an employee's accomplishment such as a work anniversary on the organization's social-media channels does more than simply uplift that employee, Allison said.

"It's showing everyone who sees it that the organization's got amazing people doing amazing things, which will help with both overall social standing and help people find that pride in their work that they're looking for."

Return on Values

Making a switch from demographics-based thinking in favor of a values-based approach will quickly add up to measurable change within an organization.

"We map these changes now on all our projects and call it ROV, or a Return on Values," he says.

When people feel their values are present in the workplace, Allison says, their engagement goes up an average of 40%, while trust and loyalty increase by an average of 20%.

"[Values-based thinking] will be far more effective than anything you've done before," he says, "because it gets to the heart of the people you lead." ●

Michael J. O'Brien is a writer from Glenside, Pa. He can be reached at mojobrien@gmail.com.

The Town of Yountville Offers Accommodations with Support Animal Policies

By Ashley Ray

A few years ago, the Town of Yountville, Calif., offered a position to someone who had a service animal. At the time, we didn't have a formal policy regarding support animals. That experience showed us how important it is to have clear guidance on service animals, so we can support our employees and respond appropriately and in a timely fashion when these situations come up.

With this in mind, we created our service support animal policy in 2019, which provides accommodations for employees who need them, and offers guidance for their colleagues on appropriate behavior around service animals in the workplace.

Establishing Protocols

The policy defines what is considered a support animal, and makes clear that the Town will make reasonable accommodations for service animals in all public facilities. The policy also outlines what Town employees cannot do when a person with a service animal enters a public facility.

For example, a staff member cannot ask the person about the nature or extent of his or her disability. Only two questions may be asked: Is the animal required because of a disability? What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

Service animals are defined as any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual or other mental disability. Miniature horses are considered service animals if they have been trained to work or perform tasks for people with disabilities.

Emotional support animals are used as part of a medical treatment plan as therapy animals, but they are not considered service animals under the ADA. These support animals provide companionship, relieve loneliness and sometimes help with depression, anxiety and certain phobias, but do not have special training to perform tasks that assist people with disabilities.

A support animal (sometimes called a "comfort animal") is one that provides emotional, cognitive or other similar support to a person with a disability, including, but not limited to, a traumatic brain injury, or a mental disability such as major depression.

In the policy, an individual with a disability is defined as a person who: (1) has a physical or mental impairment or medical condition that limits one or more major life activities; or (2) has a record of such an impairment or limitation; or (3) is regarded as or perceived as having an impairment or limitation in performing one or more major life activities. A handler is an individual with a disability who utilizes a service or support animal as an accommodation.

Reasonable accommodations are changes in rules, policies, practices or services that are necessary for a person with a disability to have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a public facility, public accommodation, residential dwelling or equal employment opportunity. Allowing individuals with disabilities to have their service animals accompany them into public facilities, workplaces and/or their homes is a reasonable accommodation.

Educating Employees

Our HR team was really at the center of creating the policy and determining what it should include. Open conversations with the

staff member who had the service animal helped us understand what it truly meant to accommodate a service animal in the workplace, and to get insights on the rights and protections involved.

From there, HR connected with other local agencies that already had policies in place, and we used their policies as a starting point for creating ours. We also used resources from the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) and worked closely with the town attorney to make sure everything lined up with all laws and regulations.

In terms of training, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) doesn't say exactly how often training must be conducted to help employees understand appropriate behavior around their colleagues' service animals in the workplace.

In our agency, we follow best practices that we've learned along the way to make sure everyone understands how to interact with the animal. This is a constant learning experience. Each service or support animal accommodation is not the same, but there are certain rules that need to be followed when around the animal, and they are called out when training occurs.

Staff do get refreshers every few years when policies are updated, as well as anytime someone with a service animal will be regularly visiting a Town facility, whether it is an employee, resident or vendor.

Providing Proper Training

Supervisors and managers also get additional training whenever there's a request for a service animal accommodation. The LCW Consortium offers free training, including accommodations in the workplace.

I try to get as many leads, supervisors and managers to attend those trainings as possible when they come up, even if they are not specific to service and support animals. If someone can't attend, I make sure all materials are shared so staff can review them on their own schedule.

During quarterly meetings, we revisit policies and highlight topics that need extra attention, including the service and support animal policy. Even though it is not included in our traditional Personnel Rules and Policies document and is a separate document, we reference the service and support animal policy when talking about accommodations.

Ultimately, having a clear policy has made a big difference. It creates consistency so everyone knows what's expected and how to handle situations that may come up involving the service or support animal.

We haven't had many employees who rely on service or support animals work for us, but the policy has made people aware that this is an option and has also opened the door for conversations with those who need accommodations.

While we haven't surveyed the staff about the impact this policy has had on employees or the organization, we have received little pushback, and overall, the policy has helped create a more supportive and understanding workplace culture. ●

Ashley Ray is a human resources analyst with the Town of Yountville, Calif. She can be reached at aray@yville.com.

Addressing Bullying and Harassment in the Public Sector

By Anthony Fasano

The public sector offers many rewarding careers and a variety of perks: compensation, benefits, paid time off and retirement, just to name a few.

In fact, there is a stigma that one who works in the public sector "has it made," and that all public employees are spoiled. Some may also assume that it's difficult to get a job in the public sector unless you know someone or have a political connection. Without doubt, the public sector may offer more perquisites and better compensation and benefits, but does it come at a hefty price? Challenges such as budget constraints, political scrutiny, critical responsibilities and related pressures may lead to a more toxic environment.

It is inevitable that working with a group of people will eventually cause conflict in the workplace. Many conflicts stem from gossip or the rumor mill. Other conflicts may originate from employees having different values, beliefs, ethics, morals or varied levels of emotional intelligence. Unfortunately, employee differences may lead to bullying and harassment.

Defining the Problem

Bullying may be verbal or social, with the sole purpose of undermining an employee's dignity, impacting their psychological safety. Harassment is similar to bullying, except that harassment

involves discrimination of protected characteristics—race, gender or religion, for instance.

Bullying and harassment can destroy the core of the employee as well as the organization. The employee may suffer physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually when faced with a steady dose of bullying or harassment. Even periodic or infrequent bullying and harassment may leave a permanent scar.

> **Bullying and harassment can destroy the core of the employee as well as the organization.**

Employees on the receiving end of this hostile treatment can experience burnout, anxiety, depression and a range of emotions. The end result is less productivity and avoidance of certain situations and co-workers.

Addressing the Issue

The ripple effect of bullying and harassment extends outside of the office into the community. Community engagement will be on the decline when public servants are mistreated in their respective departments, because this can lead to service delays, diminished work ethic and a complete disregard for accountability. Essentially, the public may lose trust and respect toward public institutions, and don't forget that community members might also share their negative experiences on social media or at community meetings.

To prevent and mitigate the undesirable impact of bullying and harassment, public sector entities must have the following strategies in place:

- Policies and procedures outlining employee expectations and behavior
- Reporting mechanisms without retribution
- Creating meaningful training and hosting workshops on reporting and awareness
- Leadership and modeling, leading by example and not tolerating unprofessional behavior
- Employee assistance programs to support affected employees
- Community involvement to improve positive interactions with public servants

What about HR?

The HR function is often charged with addressing bullying and harassment in the workplace. But, what happens when the HR department is the target of bullying and harassment?

HR plays a dynamic and difficult role in the public sector. Smaller HR departments can be inundated with multiple projects, tasks and transactional assignments. The HR department must advocate for all employees while defending and protecting the organization's best interest. These opposing forces may create the perfect storm for a conflict to be born.

HR practitioners often have to deliver bad news to employees and to organizational leaders. The outcome of the conflict will favor the employee or organization. Since news travels fast in the workplace, decisions made by the HR practitioner will impact employee behavior and perspectives. It just takes one unfavorable decision or mistake by the HR practitioner to be discredited by their peers. A steady diet of this behavior could eventually lead to outlandish attacks.

Unfortunately, HR practitioners may become a target of gossip, bullying and harassment in an organization where leadership tolerates that type of behavior. The best defense for HR practitioners is documentation, communication, clear expectations and meetings with the leadership team.

Whether leadership is aware or unaware of this toxic behavior, a new plan must be in place to extinguish this behavior. If this fails, the HR practitioner has two more options: secure an attorney or quit and find another opportunity elsewhere.

Bullying and harassment are both workplace and community issues in the public sector. Addressing these issues must be a joint effort that includes public servants and members of the community alike. The goal is to foster a respectful environment that creates positive relations between public servants and members of the community. This can be accomplished by closing the gap on bullying and harassment, by staying committed while making all parties accountable for their actions. ●

Anthony Fasano is human resources manager with the Village of Alsip, Ill. He can be reached at ajfasano@hotmail.com.

● MEET THE MEMBER

Angela Pushard: From Apprentice to Maine State Government Mainstay

By Mark McGraw

Angela Pushard's first job was in a Maine state government HR office.

The role helped Angela feed her interest in administrative functions and processes, and was the start of her longevity career in Maine state government. She recently sat down with *Public Eye* to talk about the variety of positions she's held, how she's applied lessons learned in HR to her current role as Office Specialist II Supervisor, and how her furry friends keep her busy when away from the office.

Public Eye: **You've been with the State of Maine for close to 30 years, serving the state in a number of capacities, including your current role as Office Specialist II Supervisor. What led you to the public sector, and what led you to first coming on board as an employee with the State of Maine in 1997?**

Pushard: I am rounding the corner of 24 years in state government. As far as what led me to the public sector, Maine had a high school apprenticeship program that I took the initiative to join. I felt being part of this program would help me overcome my shyness and give me the support I needed to successfully transition from school to the workforce. My first job was in a state government human resource office, as I was interested in administrative functions and processes. I was also part of the Future Business Leaders of America in high school.

Public Eye: **Your first job with the state was as a clerk typist. From there you moved into a payroll supervisor position, and then spent nearly 17 years as an HR specialist before settling into your current role in 2023. What sort of lessons learned from your time in HR (and other roles) have you been able to apply in this position?**

Pushard: I have learned many skills, programs, applications, statutes, cultures, behaviors and personalities in my career. Each work environment is different. Some environments are busier than others, and some managers are more supportive than others. I always strive to be the best manager I can for my team, and I am driven to succeed even further in my career by going back to school for an additional degree.

Public Eye: **As you pointed out, you're set to earn your bachelor's degree in HR management in May 2026. How is your academic experience working toward that degree impacting your approach to your work?**
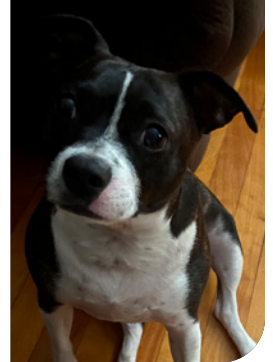
When she's not spending time volunteering at her local Humane Society, Angela Pushard spends time with her own pets, dog Luther and cat Diamond.

Pushard: I graduated in May 2024 with an associate's degree in business administration. I took a couple months off and then decided to go back to obtain my bachelor's degree. I have three classes left and am on schedule to graduate in May 2026. I have made the President's list several times and got an invitation to become a member of The National Society of Leadership and Success (www.nsls.org) from Southern New Hampshire University.

What hiring managers look for in recruitment has changed over the years. I originally decided to go to college because, at the time, education weighed more than experience.

Now the shift, at least currently, is experience weighs more, and even better if you have both. I have learned that, through my education and career choices, my passion within human resources encompasses recruitment, retention (talent acquisition), employee engagement and morale. My associate's degree has opened more interview opportunities, but no job offers yet (I am hopeful for 2026) where my bachelor's degree presents greater opportunities. The job market is a competitive one for sure.

In my current role, I have implemented fun activities throughout the organization, such as themed contests for those who want

to participate. I have documented processes and made efficient and effective changes to them, which I know have benefited the organization. I have enjoyed every position I have taken and learned a variety of things from all of them. I am who I am today because of these experiences and collaborations with many colleagues throughout my career.

Public Eye: What keeps you busy aside from work and school; what sort of hobbies and interests help you unplug from your work and your studies?

Pushard: When I do have some time outside of working and college, I enjoy spending time with my daughter, mother, and my fur babies. I also started volunteering again at our local Humane Society (Kennebec Valley Humane Society), supporting the care and well-being of other fur babies waiting for their forever homes. ●

Mark McGraw is the editor of Public Eye *and* Of Public Interest. *He can be reached at mmcgraw@pshra.org.*

● CERTIFICATION CORNER

Congratulations to these newly certified individuals!

Karlita Anderson, PSHRA–SCP
Assistant Commissioner for
Human Capital Management
Louisiana Board of Regents

Carla Arribillaga, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Manager
Truckee Meadows Fire Protection
District

Cherie Ashe, PSHRA–SCP
HR Manager
Heber City, Utah

Ylonda Banister, PSHRA–SCP
Executive Director
State of Tennessee, Department
of Human Resources

**Laurie Barr, PSHRA–SCP,
PSHRA–CP**
HR Director
Town of Eastham, Mass.

Al Bazzi, PSHRA–SCP
Principal Civil Engineer
City of Los Angeles

Angela Berumen, PSHRA–SCP
Assistant Director of Finance
City of Los Angeles, Office of
Finance

Alexis Blackwell, PSHRA–SCP
HR Director
Charles County Government, Md.

Pete Blank, PSHRA–SCP
Training and Organizational
Development Manager
Personnel Board of Jefferson
County, Ala.

**Stephanie Brown,
PSHRA–SCP**
HR Manager
City of Fernandina Beach, Fla.

Lou Bunch, PSHRA–SCP
Senior Municipal HR Consultant
North Carolina League of
Municipalities

Jacob Camello, PSHRA–SCP
Senior Management Analyst I
Port of Los Angeles Harbor
Department

Talia Carey, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Manager
City of Tucson, Ariz.

Roy Cervantes, PSHRA–SCP
Chief Management Analyst
Los Angeles Department of
Transportation

Shu Hua Chen, PSHRA–SCP
Departmental Chief
Accountant IV
City of Los Angeles

**Kelly Pearson Cormier,
PSHRA–SCP**
HR Business Partner
Louisiana Board of Regents

Vernita L. Cross, PSHRA–SCP
HR Analyst Compensation
and Leave
Oklahoma Tax Commission

LaTessa Davis, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Assistant
Director
City of Newport News, Va.

Sylvia Edgar, PSHRA–SCP
ELR Manager
City of Hillsboro, Ore.

Heidi Eyre, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Director
Beaver County, Utah

Maria Figueroa, PSHRA–SCP
Assistant HR Director
Palm Beach County HR

**Melissa Foster, PSHRA–SCP,
PSHRA–CP**
Senior HR Analyst
City of Knoxville, Tenn.

Felicia Franklin, PSHRA–SCP
HR Specialist
Louisiana Department of
Environmental Quality

Tim Fremaux, PSHRA–SCP
Principal Transportation Engineer
City of Los Angeles Department
of Transportation

Thomas Flagg, PSHRA–SCP
Director of Police Human
Resources
Baltimore County Government

Arselia Fuentes, PSHRA–SCP
Senior HR Business Partner
City of Grand Prairie, Texas

Jennifer Frye, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Director
Town of Mount Jackson, Va.

Roslyn Gervin, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Manager
City of Newport News, Va.

**Isabel Godina-Vergara,
PSHRA–SCP, PSHRA–CP**
Human Resources Business
Partner II
City of Nampa, Idaho

**Jennifer Goodman,
PSHRA–SCP**
Director of Human Resources
San Joaquin County, Calif.

Tonyia Griggs, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Chief
City of Baltimore, Md.

Lisette Grizzelle, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Interim
Director
City of Vernon, Calif.

**Robyn A. Harding, PSHRA–
SCP, PSHRA–CP**
Director of Human Resources and
Professional Development and
Training
Fairfax (Va.) County Government

Amy Haug, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources and Risk
Manager
City of Diamond Bar, Calif.

Arron Helm, PSHRA–SCP
Chief Human Capital Officer
U.S. General Services
Administration

**Genevieve Hughes,
PSHRA–CP, PSHRA–SCP**
Human Resources/Risk Analyst
City of Chino, Calif.

**Lesley L. Hughes,
PSHRA–SCP**
Employee Relations Manager
Oklahoma Department of
Transportation

Jaime Iceman, PSHRA–SCP
Director of Human Resources
City of Barberton, Ohio

**Mario Stanley Interiano,
PSHRA–SCP**
Chief Management Analyst
City of Los Angeles, Calif.

**Joan Jean–Baptiste,
PSHRA–SCP**
Deputy Commissioner, Human
Resources/Labor Relations
Government of US Virgin Islands

**Teresa Lynn Jenkins, PSHRA–
SCP, PSHRA–CP**
Senior HR Generalist
Town of Culpeper, Va.

Melissa Jolly, PSHRA–SCP
Director of HR Operations
Oklahoma Department of
Transportation

Bill Jones, PSHRA–SCP
Chief Management Analyst
City of Los Angeles

Darin Jones, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Director
City of Idaho Falls, Idaho

**Victoria Lynne Kammerude,
PSHRA–SCP, PSHRA–CP**
Chief, Human Resources Sheriff's
Office
Fairfax County Government, Va.

Andrew Kaplan, PSHRA–SCP
Revenue Manager
City of Los Angeles

Jessica S. Kurz, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Director
City of Schertz, Texas

Helen H. Lee, PSHRA–SCP
Utility Administrator
Los Angeles Department of Water
and Power

**Maria Raissa Legaspi,
PSHRA–SCP**
Police Administrator I
City of Los Angeles – Police

Charles Li, PSHRA–SCP
Senior Management Analyst II
Port of Los Angeles

Niesha Louis, PSHRA–SCP
Senior Management Analyst
City of Los Angeles

Nichole N. Love, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Director
Memphis-Shelby County Airport
Authority

Selwin Lovell, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Administrator
Hurricane City, Utah

Trisha Malahni, PSHRA–SCP
Senior Management Analyst II
Port of Los Angeles–Harbor
Department

**Kitty Hollingshead Mancil,
PSHRA–SCP**
State Talent Management
Director
Ohio Department of
Administrative Services

Lydia McEvoy, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Director
City of Sherwood, Ore.

**Jeanette Mendoza,
PSHRA–SCP**
Utility Administrator III
Los Angeles Department of Water
and Power

**Darian Milanowski,
PSHRA–SCP**
Organizational Development
Manager
City of Corpus Christi, Texas

Daniel Mitchell, PSHRA–SCP
Assistant General Manager
City of Los Angeles Department
of Transportation

**Wendy Barnes Moody,
PSHRA–SCP**
HR Director
Town of Fuquay-Varina, N.C.

Nelitza Montero, PSHRA–SCP
Compensation and Benefits
Manager
City of Miami Beach, Fla.

Edward Moreno, PSHRA–SCP
Chief Management Analyst
City of Los Angeles Department
of Transportation

**Hoa Nguyen, PSHRA–SCP,
PSHRA–CP**
Systems Manager
City of Los Angeles

**Sherarade Alexander Nichols,
PSHRA–SCP**
Bureau of Street Services General
Superintendent I
City of Los Angeles

**Neil Norris, PSHRA–SCP,
PSHRA–CP**
Director of Human Resources and
Risk Management
West Virginia Water Authority

**Manish (Mony) Patel,
PSHRA–SCP**
Director of Systems
City of Los Angeles Department
of Transportation

Laila Perry, PSHRA–SCP
Training and Development
Manager
Louisiana Department of
Environmental Quality

Sonya Ponds, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Specialist
United States Agency for Global
Media

**Michael Quinn, PSHRA–SCP,
PSHRA–CP**
Administrative Analyst
City of Long Beach, Calif.

Sunil Rajpal, PSHRA–SCP
Principal Civil Engineer
City of Los Angeles

**Veronica Ramirez,
PSHRA–SCP**
HR Director
City of Pharr, Texas

Sydia Reese, PSHRA–SCP
Senior Management Analyst II
City of Los Angeles Department
of Transportation

**Ayswarya Renjith,
PSHRA–SCP**
Regional Human Resource
Business Partner
Virginia Department of Health

Beth A. Rodgers, PSHRA–SCP
HR Director
City of Salem, Va.

Jesus Serrano, PSHRA–SCP
Principal Transportation Engineer
City of Los Angeles Department
of Transportation

Nadir Shah, PSHRA–SCP
Principal Civil Engineer
City of Los Angeles Department
of Public Works

Justin Shreve, PSHRA–SCP
Director, Office of Workforce
Engagement
Virginia Department of Human
Resources Management

Rebecca Smith, PSHRA–SCP
Senior Human Resources
Business Partner
Wake County, N.C.
267 339 7882

Keith Sorsdal, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Director
Oklahoma Department of
Transportation

**Jeffrey Allan Strafford,
PSHRA–SCP**
Interim Chief Financial Officer
City of Los Angeles –Port of LA

Angela Sylvester, PSHRA–SCP
HR Manager
City of Clinton, Tenn.

Courtney Taylor, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Director
City of Germantown, Tenn.

Ola O. Terrell, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Director
City of Americus, Ga.

Jill Tew, PSHRA–SCP
HR Business Partner
Davis County, Utah Human
Resources

April Thang, PSHRA–SCP
Utility Administrator

Paul Thang, PSHRA–SCP
Utility Administrator

Haley Thore, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Manager
Town of Hillsborough, N.C.

Aida Valencia, PSHRA–SCP
Street Services General
Superintendent
City of Los Angeles

Hilary VanOrsdel, PSHRA–SCP
Human Resources Director
City of Goose Creek, S.C.

**Sheeba Varughese, PSHRA–
SCP, PSHRA–CP**
Chief Information Officer
City of Los Angeles