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## Successful Spring Institute Program Enjoyed by All

*by Tony Betti*

The PA Chapter of IAPES *celebrated* its 60th Anniversary at the Spring Institute on April 18-19, 2002 at the Holiday Inn – West, Mechanicsburg, PA

The 40 attendees received the type of professional and personal development presentations that makes the PA Chapter an important learning source for its members.

Using the program title of “CELEBRATE!” Program Chair, Paula Bauer also used the Institute as an opportunity to *celebrate* the life of one of its Charter Members, Helen V. Nicholson.

Helen *celebrated* life at every opportunity, and shared her zest for life with any one who met her. Although Helen did not drive, nor like to fly, she was a regular attendee to the IAPES International Conferences, District Meetings and Chapter Institutes. Long after her retirement from Commonwealth service, Helen continued as an active member of the chapter. She last attended an International Convention in Rhode Island in 1999. In January 2002, Helen’s love of life was transformed. She was 99 years young when she passed away on New Year’s Day.

On display throughout the Institute, were pictures of Helen and her biography.

Paula shared an anecdote of a man who at the age of 50 realized that he hadn’t done much with his life, and put marbles in a jar to represent every Saturday remaining for the next 25 years. Then on each Saturday thereafter, he would take a marble out of the jar, and carry it with him through out the week as a reminder that when given an opportunity to do something with his life, he would do it. Whether it was to be honest, show integrity, to be generous, to be caring to a neighbor, friend or stranger. Everyone at the Institute was given a marble as a token of this story, and as a remembrance that Helen never passed up on an opportunity to do something with her life.

In a special business meeting at the Institute, the membership unanimously voted to rename the PA chapter scholarship fund to “The Helen V. Nicholson Memorial Scholarship Fund” as a tribute to her.

# Legislative Highlights

*by Bob Kerr & Bill Moulfair*

Here is the latest on federal legislative activity at press time for this newsletter. Please note, however, that abrupt changes in legislation at the federal level are continuing, and this update may not reflect the latest legislative news.

By now, everyone is aware of the TEUC extension of UC benefits. But there also is another extension of benefits. The President signed into law US House Bill 3986, which provides an additional 13 weeks of disaster unemployment compensation benefits for individuals who lost jobs as a result of the September 11 terrorist attacks. The new law extends disaster unemployment assistance (DUA) by 13 weeks for about 2,500 workers who lost their jobs as a direct result of the disaster but who do not qualify for regular UC.

A new national business partnership between the one-stop workforce development system and Home Depot was announced by US Department of Labor Assistant Secretary Emily DeRocco. More than 40 state workforce agency representatives, including representatives from Pennsylvania's Bureau of Employer and Career Services, participated in the conference call on which DeRocco made the announcement. The effort is directed by USDOL's new Business and Industry Outreach Office, part of whose mission is to aggressively pursue closer relationships between private corporations and the workforce development system.

Conference call participants also learned about two other business partnerships that will be materializing in the near future, involving Toys R Us and Saks.

The company that supports Employment Service, Workforce Investment Act and related federal reporting activities for many states, including Pennsylvania, has a new leader. Marc Lowe was appointed Director of America's Workforce Technology Solutions (AWTS). Lowe replaces Gary Adkins, who retired on March 16 after nearly 38 years of service. In addition to his work with AWTS, Adkins was a former IAPES International President.

Finally, U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao announced the appointment of 13 members to the

President's Council on the 21st Century Workforce. Members include representatives from labor, the CEO of Harley Davidson and other company presidents, the President of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and former legislators. The President's Council on the 21st Century Workforce will advise the President by collecting information on workforce issues through summits and other forums.

## Update from PA Chapter Services to People with Disabilities Chair

*by Barbara Petersen*

Greetings from the Chairman of the Service to People with Disabilities Committee, Barbara Petersen! While I'm fairly new to IAPES, I have been directly involved with individuals with disabilities and assistive technology for many years through employment with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation at the Hiram G. Andrews Center.

The Hiram G. Andrews Center (HGA) is a comprehensive rehabilitation center located in Johnstown PA. Some of you attended the IAPES Fall Institute in 2000 at HGA and had the opportunity to see first hand some of the wonderful things that are accomplished here. Individuals with disabilities who are interested in employment may choose to attend HGA to learn skills that will lead to employment. Over 33 associate degrees, degree and diploma programs are offered. HGA also houses my current assignment, PA's Assistive Technology Lending Library, a program that offers free loans of assistive technology to any individual in PA who has a disability.

In the next few issues of the Liberty Bell, you will see articles involving various aspects of disability awareness and assistive technology accommodation for individuals with disabilities. If you have a particular interest in a disability related topic, contact me at [bpetersen@state.pa.us](mailto:bpetersen@state.pa.us) and we'll work it into the schedule. I'll be looking forward to hearing from you!

# LSC Educational Opportunities

## Logan S. Chambers (LSC) Individual Scholarship

The LSC scholarship is designed to provide financial assistance to IAPES members who wish to increase their knowledge, skills and abilities through education.

**Eligibility** - The grant applicant must be an IAPES full member or a dependent of an IAPES full member. "Dependent" must meet all five dependency tests set forth in the Internal Revenue Code and IRS Publication 929.

**Scholarship Awards** - Scholarship awards are based on number of consecutive years of membership in IAPES, including the current year. Scholarships are awarded on a biennial (every other year) basis. The maximum grant award based on membership status is as follows:

- First year of membership \$150.00

- Second through fourth year of membership \$300.00
- Five or more year of membership \$500.00

The total grant award may be applied toward several courses up to the allowable maximum, as long as all courses are completed within the eligible calendar year.

Restrictions apply to reimbursement by employers.

- Grants **may not** exceed total instructional costs.
- Grants are available on a bi-annual basis.
- Grant requests **may not** be a duplication of employment, unemployment, training and related out-service training programs; covered in whole, by direct employer payment; covered, either in whole or part, by an IAPES chapter grant.

**Course Requirements** - The course must result in the completion of either:

- Credit hours
- CEU (continuing educational units) or
- Certificate of completion

Instruction must be provided by, either:

- An accredited institution (college, university, business school or high school), or
- A recognized professional or consulting organization

**For more information contact:** Audrey Bergstresser at [abergstres@state.pa.us](mailto:abergstres@state.pa.us), Vicki Bloes at [vbloes@state.pa.us](mailto:vbloes@state.pa.us), or Minta B. Johnson at [misha283@home.com](mailto:misha283@home.com).

## Why Join? Why Get Involved?

*by Dennis Burns, President-Elect*

Last week, one of the co-workers in my office asked me why I joined IAPES and why I then ran for elective office almost right away. This question made me think about my motives for joining and then running for President-Elect. My answer was fairly simple. Every professional occupation I can think of has a corresponding organization, which promotes and supports the professionalism of its membership. From my vantage point, this is exactly what IAPES does and does very well.

This year I was invited to attend my first ever IAPES Institute and it was an eye opening experience. I was impressed with the quality, timeliness and universal applicability of the topics covered in the program. It didn't matter if you were a clerk or a senior manager in Employment Security; there was something of interest for everyone.

Once I decided to join, then it was only natural for me to run for office when asked. I strongly believe in the old adage that "Halfway measures avail us nothing..."

I look forward to serving and contributing to the development and continued success of the Pennsylvania Chapter of IAPES.

## Membership Report

*By Minta B. Johnson, Membership Chair*

**Statistics as of April 5, 2002**

Membership Goal 2002	155
Members to date	97
Percent of Goal	62.6%
Percent Renewed	66.7%
No. Full Members (3 New)	79
No. Retirees	16
No. Life Members	2*
Total dues collected	\$3,475
Total dues transmitted to International	\$2,355

\* Life Member Helen Nicholson died 1/1/02

# Successful Institute Program Enjoyed by All

*Continued from Page 1*

At the business meeting, it was announced that there was a vacancy for Secretary. Although the position will not be voted upon to fill until the Fall Institute, Sue Wolfe, BUCBA, offered to serve as ‘interim-secretary’.

A Silent Auction was held throughout the Institute, with the proceeds to go to the Scholarship Fund. \$190.50 was collected through the 2002 Institute Silent Auction. Bringing the Scholarship fund balance to \$549.50.

The Thursday afternoon development session was opened with the *celebration* of the CareerLink 2.0 Operating System. The Institute greeted Karen Davis, Director of the Bureau of Business Application Development, and Dan Villanova, Design Team Member on the Team PA Career Link, who presented the revised screens, which the CareerLink partners would be using. These screens are tailored to be similar to all users, but are individualized for the needs of Job Seekers, Service Providers, Employers and CareerLink personnel.

A presentation from the Department of Aging, Family Care Giver Service was given by Joan Daugherty, a Specialist, in this field. Ms. Dougherty provided helpful information in the form of pamphlets and booklets, and explained the guidelines in receiving financial help as a Family Care Giver Provider.

Thursday’s afternoon session closed with a Legislative update by Bob Kerr, PA Chapter Legislative Chair. Bob explained how employers contribute to the Federal Unemployment Compensation Fund (FUTA) and how there are currently sufficient funds which can be returned to the states as Reed Act funds. Pennsylvania received approximately \$337M in these funds, which can be used to pay benefits or for UC or ES administrative purposes. By leaving the \$337M in the Fund, it is projected that employer and worker costs will be reduced by preventing additional employer and worker taxes from triggering on.

PA will use \$21M, which is equal to the interest accrued in one year, to be used as funding for one-time improvement projects such as the “Roadmap Project” – the reengineering of the UC computer systems currently used by the Department.

The opening day of the institute concluded with a hospitality gathering.

Friday morning’s program began with a detailed overview of the Commonwealth’s Imagine PA program by Karen Fausnacht, L&I Imagine PA Project Manager and Director of OIT/Bureau of Enterprise Services.

Imagine PA will replace all of the Common-wealth’s current procurement, budget, accounting and human resources systems. All Department staff will be getting information on this major change as L&I gets ready for staff training beginning in September in anticipation of cutover on January 1, 2003.

Friday morning’s keynote speaker, Dave Romeo asked the audience if we ever had to choose between the world and your personal values? Has it ever been a challenge for you to follow business responsibilities because of your personal views? What if you could achieve all of your goals without compromising your beliefs? Feel like your personal integrity is compromised by life’s challenges? Trying to balance your professional goals with your personal beliefs?

Dave demonstrated how we shouldn’t let the world win! **How to take control of your life.** How to stop letting life control *you*. He showed us how we’ve all been challenged by many of these situations, and to discover how to **win on our own terms**. Learn how to go from underdog to **winner** - with integrity!

In the “**Winning with Integrity**” seminar, we learned:

- Integrity is Not negotiable!
- How to **achieve your greatest desires**.
- Why **values** are *the essence of integrity*.
- Strategies that gain the support of your toughest detractors.
- To see obstacles and challenges as **opportunities** to grow personally and professionally.
- When you ignore the problem, **the customer goes away!**
- The secret of **embracing adversity**.

Dave Romeo is a national business speaker and coach. His inspirational storytelling and enthusiastic style won him rave reviews from the IAPES audience. Dave is also a partner in Primary Staffing Services in Lancaster and his newest book entitled, “**Nice Guys Finish First!: How to be a Winner Without Losing Your Integrity**” is available now.

## How to Submit Articles

The *Liberty Bell* is published by the PA Chapter of the International Association of Personnel in Employment Security (IAPES) on a bi-monthly basis. Letters to the editor can be sent to Karen Fausnacht at the Department of Labor & Industry, OIT/Enterprise Services, 3 Floor West, 7th & Forster Streets, Harrisburg, PA 17121 or [kfausnacht@state.pa.us](mailto:kfausnacht@state.pa.us). **The next due date for articles is July 1, 2002.**

# 2001 Awards Presented

The Pa. Chapter IAPES Spring Institute 2002, in addition to featuring a substantial agenda full of interesting timely educational topics, also was the setting for our Awards Luncheon which acknowledged the efforts of several groups of L & I colleagues selected as “group winners” of L & I PRIDE Awards. The following summarizes the accomplishments of each of our award winners, whom we were pleased to collectively honor at our event.

BETO’S Tax Accounting Administration (TAA) was chosen as winner of a Team Excellence Award-Multi Office/Multi Bureau. Seeking out ways to perform its maintenance of employer account information functions more effectively, the TAA Section undertook a multi-faceted effort to change many of its work processes so that employer customers would regard their dealings with TAA as positive experiences. This improvement of their work processes was made possible through the cooperative involvement of all staff and involved better staff recruitment, physical changes in the workplace, and increased use of new technology such as introduction of the “PA Open 4 Business” applications.

Selected as a winner of our “Process Improvement Single Office” Award was the State Workers’ Insurance Fund, Medical Bill Processing Unit. This Unit pursued several initiatives which resulted in SWIF now having a more effective means of reviewing, monitoring and controlling costs for which it is billed buy medical services vendors. The Unit’s efforts serve to keep vendors honest and assure that costs borne by SWIF in its provision of workers’ compensation benefits for workers injured on the job, are valid, necessary and well documented.

Another SWIF work group, the Medical Cost Containment Unit was the winner of our “Team Excellence-Single Office” Award. It sought to improve its functions in the area of monitoring the validity and cost effectiveness of medical treatments provided to SWIF’s worker’s compensation clients. Through the concerted efforts of all the Unit’s Medical Assistance Facility Record Examiners, it significantly improved its review of worker’s compensation client treatment records. This resulted in better cost control

and increased effectiveness of SWIF Operations generally.

The winner of the fourth group award, in the “Specialized Customer Services” Award Category, was a joint work group comprising staff from OVR’s Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services and Hiram G. Andrews Center. This inter-bureau group developed and implemented a new training course for blind/visually impaired clients served by OVR’s “Business Enterprises Program.” This course was designed to train selected clients in the operations of vending stand/vending route businesses. Through the cooperative and innovative efforts of those who undertook this project, the blind/visually impaired clients participating in the specialized training course received training which more fully met their needs and imparted the technical skills, confidence and spirit of self-sufficiency to succeed in their own business enterprises.

Aside from the presentation of the above mentioned L&I PRIDE Awards, our closing luncheon was also the setting for a “surprise” presentation of a Chapter President’s Award to Minta Johnson. Minta was chosen for this award by the chapter leadership in recognition of her extensive record of service to IAPES.

She has faithfully served our chapter over the years in various officer positions as well as in informal roles through which she has helped strengthen and sustain our professional association. Minta reflects the spirit of professionalism and dedication to public service which IAPES seeks to promote. The presentation of this award to her acknowledges that we are a better organized, more fiscally secure and productive chapter. Thanks to the many endeavors she has undertaken on our behalf. Thanks again to Minta and our congratulations on a well earned award.

## Fund Raiser Announced!

The PA Chapter is planning a cookbook as a Chapter fundraiser. If you have recipes, please e-mail them to Minta Johnson at [misha283@comcast.net](mailto:misha283@comcast.net) by Wednesday, June 26. Current plans call for the cookbook to be available for Christmas presents!

## What Do You Want to See in the Liberty Bell?

Thanks to everyone who provided input on the topics they would like to see in our Newsletter. What we need now are people to provide information for these articles. Even if you have never written an article before, we will be glad to do it for you if you provide the facts. Here is a partial list of topics requested:

- A “How To” section for computers
- CareerLink success stories
- Information on members – let us know if you have received an award, special recognition, volunteer, travel, etc.
- Book reviews – have you read any good books lately. Reviews can be on fiction, non-fiction, work related, non-work related. If you have a book that you found made an impact on you, share it with us.
- Partnering initiatives – has your office developed joint initiatives with a partner that resulted in improved customer services, let us know about it.
- Series on ways to improve the chapter – the

survey responses proved that **YOU** have some very good ideas. The Executive Board is looking for ways that we can improve the services that we provide to our members. Contact us!

- Motivational, self-improvement, inspirational columns – remember Jean Vaughn’s contribution to the newsletter? Boy, do we miss them!

- **Retirees!** – We would love to hear from you! What do you do with all that “free?” time? What is that?

If you want to contribute, contact Minta B. Johnson, Chapter Development Chair, to learn more. Minta can be reached by phone at 717-540-4313, by e-mail at [misha283@home.com](mailto:misha283@home.com), or via mail at 4996 Westchester Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17112-2188.

Requests for topics relative to Workforce incentives, funding, legislation and the Department’s customer service initiatives will be referred to those Bureau’s responsible for those areas along with a request for an article.

Again, **THANK YOU FOR YOUR INPUT!!**



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