FROM THE AVP —

As many of you know, I teach the APPA Supervisor’s Toolkit and have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with facilities management leadership and staff at universities all across North America. As most instructors will tell you, the teacher usually learns as much or more than the students. Being able to spend a week with facilities personnel from architects to custodial supervisors from over a hundred other universities has helped me immensely in my day job.

Leadership and motivation may be the two most studied topics that there are, and in the section on performance we talk about the research that has been done regarding what people want most at work.

Many will say “money,” and then we usually have a healthy discussion – but study after study tells us that what people really want most is recognition for a job well done and interesting work. For the most part, saying “THANK YOU” and providing a little recognition goes a long way, and so with that, we dedicate this year’s STRICKLAND’S AWARDS to those who suit and show up every day to get the job done. Employee recognition is the one thing that we can always do, the cost is nominal, and the rewards are immense. Recognition is how we can show our appreciation. We need to do more, and this is our contribution to the effort.

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Charles Strickland served as NMSU’s Physical Plant director for 45 years, from 1911 through 1956 (remember: statehood was granted in 1912). In honor of his long service to our organization, the Strickland Award was created in 1997 to recognize individuals who have rendered exceptional service to the organization that is now Facilities and Services.

In 2015, the great historian Ben Woods helped us track down Charles Strickland, Jr., the son of NMSU’s first Physical Plant director. We submitted his father’s name to the Naming Committee, and received approval to name the Central Utility Plant after him. The entire clan came to Las Cruces for the ceremony, and Charles Strickland, Jr. told tales of helping his father with the horse-drawn trash wagon on Saturdays.

This is the Facilities and Services annual award newsletter, and I am honored to announce the winners of the STRICKLAND AWARD.
Facilities and Services

ASHLEY BURKEHOLDER

Jose Loera wrote this for us:

Ashley Burkholder has been with NMSU for just over a year now. Ashley is a licensed Architect with the State of New Mexico and enjoys spending her free time quilting and with her two dogs. Over the past year, Ashley has proven to be a great asset to this organization by continually using and sharing her architectural skills and substantial project management knowledge in an extremely wide area of disciplines to help those around her. It is a pleasure having Ashley as a member of not only our department, but in the university community.

From my perspective, Ashley worked for us as a contractor and helped us with the 2017-2027 Master Plan. She always tells me what she thinks, which is something I appreciate. We ask the project managers to provide frequent updates to the customers, and it’s challenging with as many projects as we have. Ashley is one of the best we have about doing those updates, and it is much appreciated.

LUIS VELASCO

• 2009 DACC Graduate- Associates Degree Electrical Trades
• 6 years’ prior experience working with contractor 1997-2003
• 15 years’ experience in the Electric shop.
• Started as a Facilities Tech and promoted to Electrician
• Natural leader and mentor to current Facilities Techs attending DACC Electrical Trades program
• “First one in, last one out” mentality
• Always ready and willing to work on anything that needs to be done
• Mr. “Johnny on the Spot”
• Invaluable member of this organization.

Tim Dobson writes:

Luis Velasco began his electrician career working with a local contractor from 1997 to 2003. In 2003, he joined Facilities and Services as a temporary employee in the Electrical and Mechanical Shops until becoming a full time employee in 2005. As a Facilities Technician assigned to the Electric Shop, he registered in the DACC Electrical Apprenticeship program. He graduated from the
program in 2009 and has been gaining the work experience required to become a licensed NM Journeyman Electrician. He obtained his Journeyman card in 2017 and was promoted to Electrician.

Luis is a great example of working your way up the ladder.

Luis is always ready and willing to work on any task. His “First one in and last one out” work ethic makes him an invaluable member of the organization. He is a natural leader and enjoys mentoring the Facilities Technicians that are currently attending the DACC Electrical trades program. This stems from his appreciation of the help he received from Journeymen Electricians and is his way of giving back to the Electric Shop. These qualities make him a shining star for the Electric Shop as well as for Facilities and Services.

Hilda Nevarez
Patricia Hartell, Executive Director of Administration writes:

I would like to recommend our Facilities and Services Human Resource (HR) Representative, Hilda Nevarez, for the 2018 Strickland Award. Hilda has been in her role with the NMSU Facilities and Services HR Department since January of 2017. She is an essential part of our team.

Hilda is a quick learner and continually goes over and above to provide excellent customer service. We appreciate her for keeping our HR office running smoothly even when we are short-handed. She is always willing to help and employees feel comfortable asking her questions. She works tirelessly to get things done efficiently and in a timely manner.

Hilda’s Supervisor, Rebecca Nezzer, had this to say about Hilda:

“Hilda covered FSHR this summer while Priscilla Carabajal served as Interim Administrative Assistant for Glen. During this time, Hilda covered time review, which in and of itself is timely and challenging, and all other HR functions in a professional and timely manner. She also assisted with job postings and interviews when needed. This was during a time that I truly needed her expertise and assistance. I believe that her past experience as a small business owner has brought a level of service and knowledge that not only benefits us here at FS but will continue to benefit her in her future career endeavors. Thank you Hilda for all your hard work!” - Rebecca

Bud (Ralph) Jones expressed his appreciation of Hilda with this email:
“This past May-July Hilda Nevarez was both very professional and diligent in making sure to help with my receiving paychecks while I was on FMLA and Sick Leave bank. The calculations could get very perplexing; she kept me informed throughout the ordeal. I really appreciate Hilda’s attention to detail. Thank you” - Bud

Mark Blachford was happy to hear that Hilda was a nominee for the Strickland Award. He sent an email where he explained:

“I have worked with Hilda on several issues since she has been a member of the F & S team. In every instance, she has answered my questions (no matter how dumb they were) and provided exceptional customer service in a polite and professional manner. Hilda is one of our “hidden hero’s” that certainly deserves this award and the recognition that comes with it.”

These are just a few of the comments received expressing appreciation for Hilda’s exceptional service. Hilda is a shining star!

Polly Wagner writes:

In just over a year Mike Nevarez, quickly became a valuable asset to our team and we have taken great pride in how he represents our department. Mike is an independent, always on the go, type of employee and truly works with strong drive and self-motivation. He has stepped in and taken the lead on projects such as Knox Hall Flood, EC1 Roof issues, and EC1 Carpet Replacement. He has not only addressed the concerns of the customer but facilitated better communication among all applicable parties to get the job done. He has gone above and beyond many times to please his customer and already in 15 months’ time I have received multiple accolades by customers and peers.

Some examples of customer appreciation for Michael:

Jeanne Gleason, ACES, March 1, 2018: “Luckily Michael tested all the spots and said it was only dust
and dirt. Then, while he was up on the ladder, he graciously cleaned the grates for us. We realize that in the future this will be a custodian job or something that we should do ourselves, but we were impressed with Michael consideration.”

Tara Gray, Teaching Academy, September 25, 2018: “I wanted to give a shout out to Michael Nevarez who has been working diligently to resolve a problem in my office. He has come over and over again to check the situation under different weather conditions. He is to be commended.”

This next one came in for Mike and the whole FS team involved in the EC1 carpet replacement project. This was after Mike had sent out his own accolades to the FS team for the project.

Patricia Sullivan, College of Engineering (EC1), October 31, 2018: “Michael, I would like to echo your thanks to the entire team. While disruption of offices is never easy, your team worked diligently to accommodate us and expedite the work to get us back in our offices in a timely manner. You have no idea what the “refresh” of the building did to enhance faculty and staff morale. Everyone, including students, have commented on the “refresh” and we hope that funding can be identified to finalize the hallway. Thanks again to each and every one of you, you are an amazingly patient and talented group of professionals. Have a wonderful afternoon.

Mike’s examples of customer service is something for us to all strive for and I couldn’t be happier with his contributions to our team and his above and beyond approach with customers.

Johnny Carrillo, Fire Chief, says:

It is with great honor that I recommend Fire Captain John Guerin for the “Strickland Award”. John joined the NMSU Fire Department in April of 2015 after serving 20 years of dedicated service to the City of Las Cruces Fire Department. John did not really retire, as he came straight to NMSU’s Fire Department to resume a role in firefighting after only a week of so-called retirement.

Since coming to NMSU, John encourages professional development for his team as well as for himself. John acquired his Fire Arson Investigator Certification last year from National Fire Academy, which has really helped to solidify an NMSU Police and Fire investigation team. With Captain Tarkington, John received education on our reporting system and they have turned Emergency Reporting, our reporting system, into the backbone of several fire department processes.
John has continued to insure his team is prepared to mitigate life’s emergencies and insure that NMSU’s campus is a safe place to learn, work and visit. John brings his years of emergency response and supervisory experience to NMSU and eagerly shares his experiences with our student firefighters and mentors them to achieve degrees and find jobs in the areas they want after leaving NMSU. John recently worked to coordinate mock interviews with a diverse panel of NMSU professionals, to help our students prepare for the competitive world that we live in.

**AVP’s Award**

FS also has the AVP’s Award, started in 2012, and given out for excellent customer service annually or wherever the AVP feels like it. This year’s winner is -

**MARIA OLIVAS**

Chancellor Arvizu wrote:

That’s why I also want to acknowledge the work of Maria Olivas, a custodial worker familiar to many around campus. We recently had an unfortunate incident with a residence hall sewer line that left a number of rooms in desperate need of attention. Coincidently, this incident also happened during an Aggie Welcome and Orientation session. Without hesitation, Maria jumped right in to clean the rooms and help the students who were affected. When I heard of the outstanding work Maria had done, I invited her up to my office to personally say thank you. Maria was surprised to be recognized for the work she had done. She said, in Spanish, “We have to do whatever we can to support our students.” That was such a refreshing response and it demonstrates the pride our employees have in our Aggie community. It’s important to recognize the value everyone brings to our university. Maria did a great job in turning what could have been a miserable experience into a positive one for our students.
WHAT A LONG STRANGE TRIP IT’S BEEN

December 1 marked my 10-Year Anniversary, and it’s been quite the ride. To rehash a little uncomfortable history, the organization known as PPD had some improvements to make.

NMSU releases statement regarding ongoing criminal investigation of alleged misuse of university resources by employees

Author: Jose L. Medina Sun-News reporter  
Article ID: 5865442  
Date: May 10, 2007  
Publication: Las Cruces Sun-News (NM)  
LAS CRUCES — New Mexico State University has released a statement regarding the ongoing criminal investigation of alleged misuse of university resources by employees of the Office of Facilities Services.

The statement makes reference to an article in Thursday’s edition of the Round Up, the university’s student newspaper which first published the allegations Thursday.

In 2008 this was the known as the Insectary and I was in my third week, it was the day before we left for Winter Break.

They told me that it could get windy here.
Some of you may recall the infamous Boneyard up on A-Mountain where old equipment was taken to die. We decided that this was hardly the example that a land grant university should set and were able to clean it up through a cooperative effort with Environmental Health Safety and Risk Management.

After some organizational moves, Facilities and Services assumed a greater role in Housing maintenance. We had an opportunity to make significant facilities improvements, and we did.
Like with the Boneyard, after Chief Lopez leaves, no one will remember that NMSU had a landfill.

Not only did we have a landfill, however, we allowed people to dump “asphalt rubble” on top of it, under the misguided assumption that “we’ll use it later.”

Glen’s rule #4 is, “If it isn’t used, get rid of it” and this is but one example.

In any event, unsung heroes like Ron Fisher, Jack Kirby, Art Lucero, and Jon Padilla worked on this project literally for ten years, and while there will be many years of monitoring yet to come, we are now able to use this area as an overflow parking lot when we can garner crowds.
It was better to put some things back the way they were...or close, anyway.

Sol LeWitt’s A Square within Which Are Horizontal Parallel Lines, Outside the Square, Vertical Parallel Lines. On the Other Side: a Circle within Which Are Parallel Lines, Outside the Circle Are Horizontal Parallel Lines. That is truly the name of the piece that was installed in 1982!! Rumor has it that it may have been the beginning of the Art in Public Places!!

https://uag.nmsu.edu/campus-sculpture-walking/
Occasionally it was two steps forward and one back.

For those who like Physics, the elevation of the campus water tanks is around 50 feet higher than the street at this point. And in fact, the water level in the tanks at the time of the picture is (or was) the same as the rainbow at the apex of the plume.

With the help of a bunch of dedicated people, we made a little progress here and there. The APPA Award for Excellence isn’t just something you apply for, it is based on the criteria for the Baldrige Award, adapted for higher education, and APPA sends a site visitation team to review the application. There are not many winners, as APPA doesn’t give them away.
We got a lot done these last ten years.

We hear that we are too quick to hire from outside and then we also hear that we always hire from within, so maybe that means that we have the right balance. We do stress personal development and improving one’s skills, and we encourage people to seek licenses where possible.

How did we do over these last ten years? – well, take a look:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8locKo9hzk

Have a nice holiday everyone, unless of course you have other plans!

Glen

Associate Vice President for Facilities
One Team / One Goal

Our mission is to efficiently provide a safe, well maintained, and environmentally sustainable university community...
...and it takes each and every one of you.

And as always – thank you for all that you do!