

Inclusive PERSPECTIVE



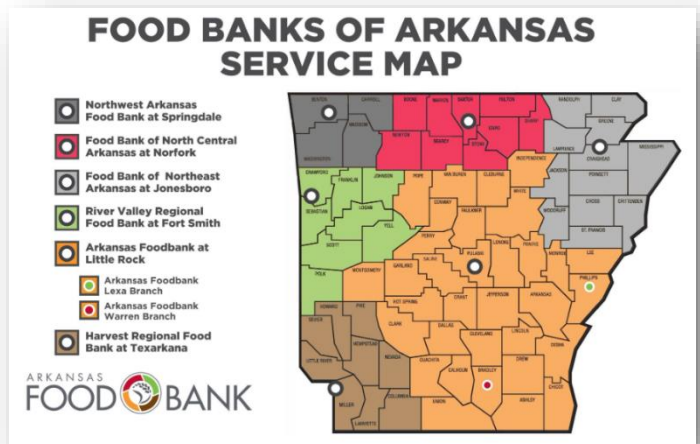
DFA University volunteers at the DFA-U Day of Service and Teambuilding event in October.

“Spud-tacular” Efforts achieved by DFA-U Volunteers

Why did the sweet potato eagerly volunteer? Because it aspired to be a "spud-tacular" contributor to the community! Just like the DFA University (DFA-U) volunteers in October at the Arkansas Foodbank in Little Rock. The 2024 cohort, along with their mentors, came together with the Arkansas Foodbank to package 7,000 pounds of donated sweet potatoes for delivery to food pantries across Arkansas, helping families in need during the holiday season.

The annual DFA-U day of service is always a favorite among members and alumni. This event creates an opportunity to step outside the typical work setting, build team camaraderie, get to know

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each other on a more personal level, and, most importantly, directly serve the communities we all live and work in. Many of our DFA volunteers expressed gratitude for the chance to serve and it showed in the large volume of work produced in a few short hours.

The event started with a tour of the warehouse for a better understanding of all that the Food Bank does to serve the citizens of our state. Afterwards, sleeves were rolled up and the sorting got underway. This year's work entailed devising a system of dividing commercial quantities of potatoes into manageable size boxes, weighing individual five-pound servings, and securing the food into bags for distribution. In any productive environment, some fun is essential, and this event was no exception. Laughter, singing, and encouragement filled the air as DFA-U volunteers supported one another throughout the day.

As the morning ended, the sweet potatoes weren't the only things fulfilled; the spirit of teamwork and generosity resonated throughout the team, leaving a lasting impact on all involved. The camaraderie forged among the DFA-U cohort and their mentors was a testament to the power of collective action and shared purpose. With every box sealed and every laugh shared, they not only contributed to an essential cause but also strengthened the bonds that unite them as colleagues at DFA. With their departure, the volunteers took with them the satisfaction of having made a tangible difference in the lives Arkansans in need, exemplifying the true essence of service. Together, they demonstrated that even the smallest efforts can yield "spud-tacular" results when driven by passion and goodwill.





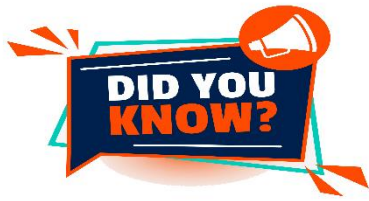
DFA Day of Service: Honoring our Veterans



Each year the Arkansas State Veterans Cemetery organizes a volunteer opportunity to honor the brave men and women who served our country. A flag is placed on the grave of each soldier as a meaningful gesture of respect and gratitude. Flags are placed ahead of Veterans Day and remain until the weekend following the holiday. This year DFA employees joined cemetery staff and members of the public in placing flags on the graves of more than 12,000 soldiers. The sight of employees carefully placing flags on each grave was a poignant reminder of the bravery and dedication of those who served. Many volunteers shared personal reflections about why this cause resonated with them, drawing on family ties or a deep sense of duty to show appreciation for the freedoms Arkansans enjoy every day. This heartwarming event served not only to honor veterans but also as an opportunity for employees to bond over a shared mission. DFA employees also participated in the cleanup and removal of flags.



Thank you to all DFA employees who volunteered their time to participate in these impactful events. Your efforts honored the fallen and inspired others within the organization to consider how they can contribute to our community.



All About DFA-YOU: Meet the DFA-U Class of 2025

The DFA University (DFA-U) Class of 2025 is underway and it's time to introduce you to our participants.

Be sure to look for the upcoming editions of this newsletter for additional DFA-U profiles.

IF THEY MADE A MOVIE ABOUT MY LIFE, THE PERSON I WOULD WANT TO PLAY ME IS: Emma Stone

SOMETHING IMPORTANT A MENTOR TAUGHT ME IS: Marlena has taught me how to give a healthy mix of feedback and encouragement.

MY FANTASY VACATION: Anywhere in the Caribbean!

PEOPLE MIGHT BE SURPRISED TO FIND OUT: I am a HUGE football fanatic!!!! College and Pro



THE THING THAT MAKES ME LAUGH THE MOST: My pets. They are little four-legged comedians.

THREE WORDS TO DESCRIBE ME: Patient, adaptable, approachable

Melissa Vice

Revenue Office Manager
SRO, Heber Springs



Yulonda Williams

Child Support Supervisor I
OCSE, Searcy



MY SECRET TO HAPPINESS:

Putting God First

MY GUILTY PLEASURE IS:

Eating Dubai Chocolate

THE SECRET TO BEING A GOOD

LEADER IS: Motivating my team

THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE TAUGHT ME MOST ABOUT LIFE ARE: My parents

SOMETHING IMPORTANT A MENTOR TAUGHT ME IS:

Never doubt myself

MY GUILTY PLEASURE IS:

Reese's Peanut Butter Cups

THOSE WHO HAVE TAUGHT ME MOST ABOUT LIFE ARE:

My parents, friends, and work family

SOMETHING IMPORTANT A MENTOR TAUGHT ME IS:

When things get tough, just stick it out. It will get better.

MY FANTASY VACATION DESTINATION: Hawaii

MY GREATEST

ACCOMPLISHMENT: This job of 24 years

Robert Johnson

Administrative Analyst
DSMV, Little Rock



CAREER ADVICE TO MY YOUNGER SELF IS: Be a lifelong learner. Continue expanding your knowledge through additional training and self-learning (in all areas of life). Seek out opportunities to improve both hard and soft skills to stay sharp and maintain a competitive edge.

IF THEY MADE A MOVIE ABOUT MY LIFE, THE PERSON I WOULD WANT TO PLAY ME IS: Jennifer Garner not just for her talent & beauty, but also for her authenticity & positive energy.

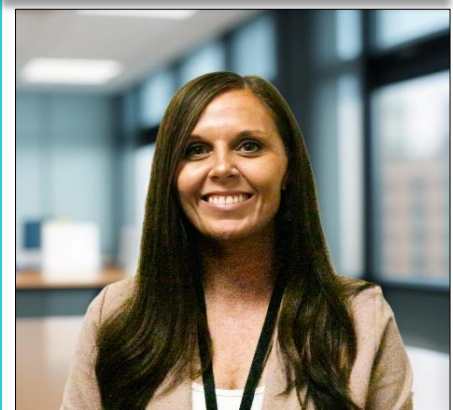
PEOPLE MIGHT BE SURPRISED TO FIND OUT: I have a twin sister who is also my closest friend.

MY SECRET TO HAPPINESS IS: Focusing on the things that bring me joy and peace— Staying true to what matters most. Spirituality keeps me grounded, my family's love and support provide a strong foundation, and exploring the outdoors helps me reconnect with nature and experience true tranquility.

MY FAVORITE PLACE IN ARKANSAS: Any & all State Park trailheads! Especially Mount Magazine Mountain, Pinnacle Mountain, & Petit Jean.

Sabrina Allen

Key Accounts Manager
Arkansas Lottery, Little Rock



THE SECRET TO BEING A GOOD LEADER IS: Being a good leader is to lead by example, be a team player, listen to your team, and understand their needs.

MY FIRST JOB WAS: Cashier at a restaurant. This position helped me develop my customer service skills, which have proven beneficial in nearly every job I've held since then.

MY GUILTY PLEASURE IS: All kinds of food, especially hamburgers, pizza, steaks, brisket, ribs, and tacos! 😊

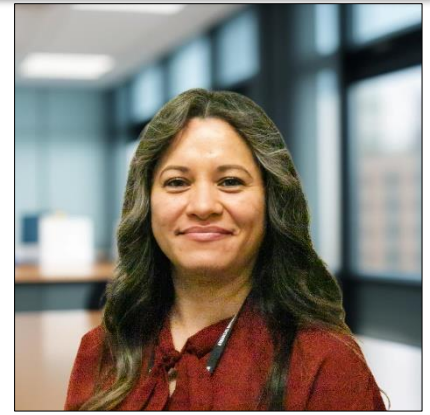
THE BEST ADVICE I'VE EVER RECEIVED: Stay close to God, and He will always take care of you.

THREE WORDS TO DESCRIBE ME: Loving, caring, and hardworking

THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE TAUGHT ME MOST ABOUT LIFE ARE: The people who have taught me the most about life are my husband and son.

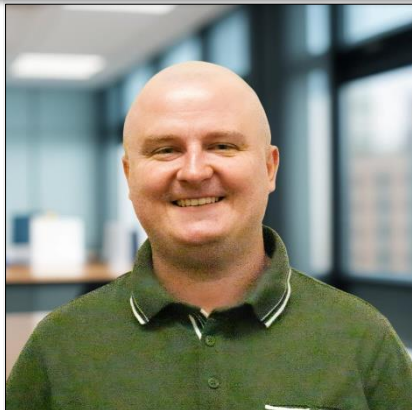
Patricia Diaz

DFA Service Representative
SRO, Malvern



Jordan Muir

Statewide Program Coordinator
Office of Accounting, Little Rock



THE QUOTE THAT RESONATES

THE MOST WITH ME: "Be curious, not judgmental." Walt Whitman

CAREER ADVICE TO MY

YOUNGER SELF IS: Take your time. You will get where you need to be when you are supposed to be there.

THE MOST DELICIOUS MEAL

I'VE EVER HAD: Bolognese in Vernazza, Italy

SOMETHING I THINK

EVERYONE SHOULD TRY AT LEAST ONCE: La Hacienda's salsa

MY FANTASY VACATION

DESTINATION: The Maldives

MY SECRET TO HAPPINESS IS:

Success

MY GUILTY PLEASURE IS:

Sweet potato pie

THE SECRET TO BEING A GOOD LEADER IS: Perseverance

IF THEY MADE A MOVIE ABOUT MY LIKE, THE PERSON I WOULD WANT TO PLAY ME IS: Denzel Washington

MY FAVORITE PLACE IN ARKANSAS: Harley Davidson Motorcycle Dealership

MY FANTASY VACATION DESTINATION: Dubai

James Curley

DFA Service Representative
SRO, North Little Rock



Empowering Our Workforce

The Department of Finance and Administration's Office of Field Audit recently hosted a comprehensive training session designed specifically for state auditing professionals. This training, held on October 8, 2024, marked a significant milestone, being the first event of its kind since the year 2000. Auditors from various audit districts gathered to engage in a collaborative learning experience focused on the latest auditing practices, regulatory updates, and innovative methodologies.

With over 100 staff members in attendance, the event not only served as a platform for professional development but also underscored the commitment of DFA to enhance the skills and knowledge of its workforce. Key guest speakers included Jim Hudson, the DFA Secretary and Chief Financial Officer, and Charles Collins, the DFA Commissioner of Revenue. DFA plans to expand this training to include auditors from Income Tax and Excise Tax.

Giving Back During the Holiday Season Statewide Holiday Food Drive

This holiday season, the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) partnered with the Governor's Office and the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance to make a significant impact in our local communities. The annual holiday food drive, held from November 6th to December 9th, was a resounding success. With the spirit of giving in mind, DFA set a goal to collect non-perishable food items to help alleviate hunger across Arkansas. This statewide initiative encouraged participation from all Divisions of DFA as well as other state agencies.

DFA employees exceeded expectations, collecting over **1,600 pounds** of food. The food collected included essential items such as canned vegetables, pasta, rice, and protein-rich foods. These donations will provide over 1,300 meals for Arkansans facing food insecurity this holiday season. Donations were given to local food banks like the Food Bank of North Central Arkansas in Mountain Home and the Arkansas Food Bank in Little Rock.

DFA believes in the power of community and the importance of giving back. Thank you to everyone who contributed, volunteered, or spread the word.

Plans are already underway for future initiatives.



Office of Arkansas Lottery



DFA-U Alumni Javon Harris, DFA HR Courtney Brown & Arkansas Food Bank staff



State Revenue Office, Mountain Home

**DFA Collected
over 1600 lbs.
of Food!**



Office of Field Audit

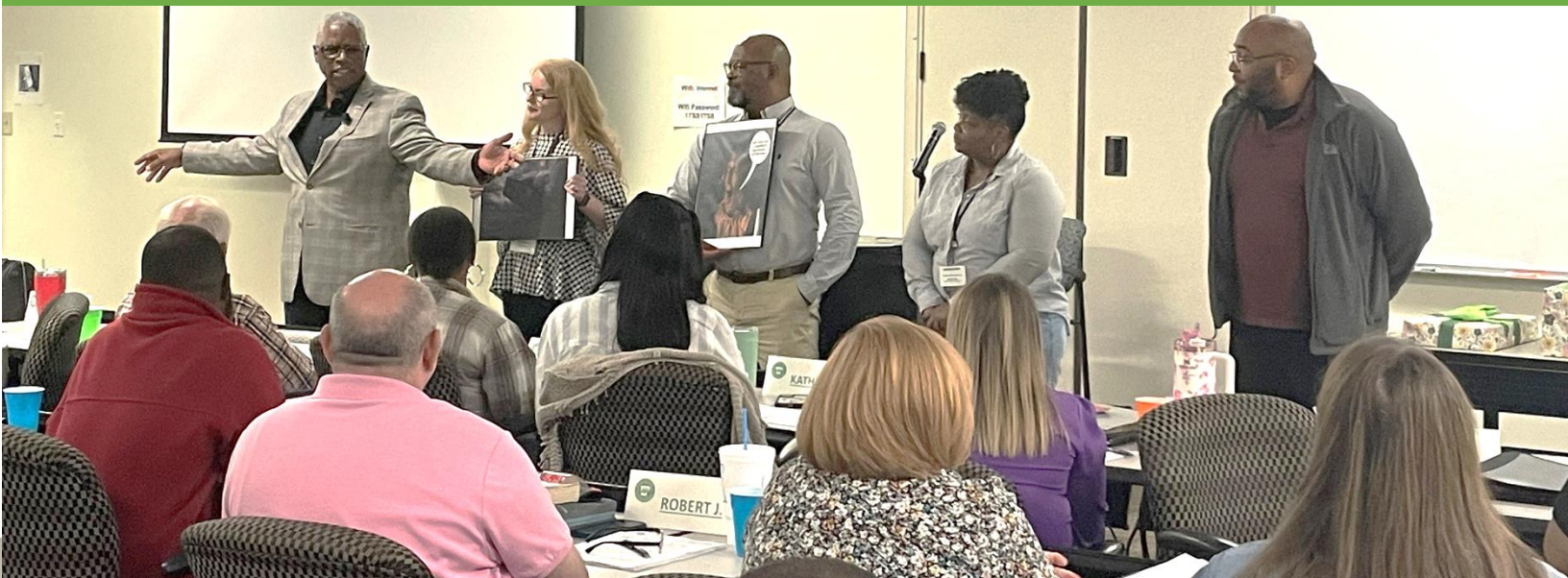
FACT:
1.2 lbs. of food
=
1 Meal



Office of Child Support Enforcement



Divisional Presentations – Community Speakers – Leadership Skills – Mentorship



Career Development - Public Speaking – Facilitation – Peer Evaluation and Feedback



ANGELIA CUNNINGHAM
DFA Division Manager I



CASSANDRA OTEY
Business Operations Specialist



LISA RUSHIN
Fiscal Support Manager



KIMBERLY GRUNDY
Fiscal Support Supervisor



**CONGRATUALTIONS TO DFA-U ALUMNA
ON YOUR RECENT PROMOTIONS!**

Secretary Hudson: Executive in Residence



Photo Credit: University of Arkansas Walton College of Business

DFA Secretary Jim Hudson recently spent a day as an “Executive in Residence” at the University of Arkansas’ Walton College of Business. Secretary Hudson walked students through the career opportunities across DFA for business graduates and the impact of this work on the state of Arkansas. He also discussed the significance of the strong relationship between DFA and the school’s leadership.

Leadership Development: DFA-U Mentors tour the Justice Building

The DFA-U mentor program has been enhanced this year through a series of leadership development workshops which incorporate insights from John Maxwell's book, *Mentoring 101*. Through structured group discussions and firsthand examples of coaching and leadership, our mentors are learning how to foster personal growth, build meaningful relationships, and build essential skills in their mentees.

In October, the program offered the opportunity for mentors to deepen their understanding of state government leadership through an enlightening tour led by Dr. Danyelle Cummings. Dr Cummings led the group through the newly expanded Supreme Court Justice building. The participants gained insights into the history of the Arkansas Judicial Branch and had the opportunity to explore the newly established mock courtroom and Civics Education Center. As a highlight of the visit, the group engaged with Arkansas Court of Appeals Associate Justice Barbara Webb who shared about her personal journey to the Court of Appeals. While in the Supreme Court, the mentors observed her swearing In an acting Chief Justice for a case involving a recusal by a current Justice.



Dr. Danyelle Cummings and DFA-U Mentors and Leadership Team

Take a Virtual Tour of the Supreme Court Justice building here: [Video Tour: Justice Building in Little Rock, Arkansas](#)

Photo Credit: Dr. Danyelle Cummings, Administrative Office of the Courts





Income Tax Admin.



OCSE – Hot Springs



OCSE - Benton



Corporation Tax



Sales Tax




Excise Tax



Sales Tax

DFA HALLOWEEN 2024

A Spook-tacular time was had by all!

 Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration



OCSE Blytheville



OCSE Lowell



OCSE Mena

OCSE Van Buren