

# Employee Recognition Award Program

The following employees have been nominated for work completed during the 2009 to 2010 time period. The classification and the location of the employees may have changed since the nomination was submitted.

## First District

### **Kathryn E. Asprey, Business Taxes Specialist I of the Oakland District Office**

Kathryn works independently and consistently assesses complex issues, performs thorough research, and takes appropriate action. She also volunteers for special projects such as recruiting events, participates as an in-house trainer, and most recently, as a District Office CROS Liaison.

### **Julia Casteneda, Tax Technician II of the San Jose District Office**

Julia has consistently demonstrated that she can perform a variety of job functions and can effectively and accurately provide coverage and assistance in many areas. She is dedicated, reliable and has a good work ethic.

### **Sandra H. Mitry, Staff Information Systems Analyst of the San Jose District Office**

During the past two years, Sandra has consistently assisted staff by providing technical guidance, training and system support. She also implemented processes to allow for improved efficiency throughout the district and branch offices. She is very knowledgeable and takes the initiative to make improvements where needed.

### **Amber M. Taylor, Tax Technician III of the Santa Rosa District Office**

As a district escrow technician, Amber manages her case load with a superior level of attention, especially with regards to statutory dates. She has demonstrated a commitment to customer service and providing the best experience to taxpayers who visit the office.

### **Gabriel Green, Associate Tax Auditor of the Santa Rosa District Office**

Gabriel Green is a productive and talented auditor. He is alert to recognize industries that are understating their tax obligation. His ingenuity and resourcefulness have resulted in significant revenue recovery for the state.

### **Catherine Sorg, Associate Tax Auditor of the Santa Rosa District Office**

Catherine has been instrumental in the outreach efforts to the Spanish speaking community. Her professionalism, enthusiasm, and communication skills have captured significant revenue for the state while promoting accuracy of self reporting for small ethnic businesses.

## Second District

### **Ginny Galang, Business Taxes Specialist I of the Ventura District Office**

Ginny goes above and beyond the call of duty to help the district in any way possible. She does an excellent job maintaining a low inventory of audits in review, while achieving a high degree of thoroughness and accuracy as evidenced by the district's high Audit Quality Evaluation Score.

## **Third District**

### **Wendy Wang, Business Taxes Specialist I of the Irvine District Office**

Wendy has been instrumental in helping the team audit program both as a leader as well as a team member. She has worked on the largest and most difficult audit assignments in the district and has completed them in a very efficient and effective manner.

### **Eduardo Villegas, Business Taxes Compliance Specialist of the Riverside District Office**

Along with being the E-File Coordinator, Eduardo is also the spokesperson for the district at Small Business Fairs and leads the Alcoholic Beverage Control Liquor License Auctions. He is commended for his hard work, versatility and dependability.

### **Cyndee Ellis, Business Taxes Specialist I of the San Diego District Office**

In addition to being a program lead, reviewer and mentor, Cyndee is also the district office compliance trainer. She has performed beyond the normal job requirements, consistently producing outstanding results.

### **Gloria Garcia, Business Taxes Specialist I of the San Diego District Office**

Gloria attains a consistent level of perfection and pride in her work that is unparalleled. In addition to performing and overseeing the district fiscal audits, she reviews all the district collection billing approvals and performs the vast majority of technical reviews for the district collection program.

## **Fourth District**

### **Russell Breeding, Staff Information Systems Analyst of the Norwalk District Office**

Russell served a key role in setting up an online appointment system where field office customers can schedule appointments for counter service through an outside vendor's site. In addition to setting up this system in every field office, he guided field staff in the proper use of the system.

### **Maria Christina Siegfried, Tax Technician III of the Norwalk District Office**

As a lead, Tina is primarily responsible for the overall operation of the public counter and training new counter employees. She has taught numerous Compliance Training Classes and serves as a Spanish translator. She is a tremendous asset to the office.

### **Guadalupe Dominguez, Associate Tax Auditor of the Norwalk District Office**

As a field auditor and lead district recruiter, Lupe has also been involved directly or as an assistant to Business Taxes Specialists in completing the largest and most complex audits in the district. She has an exceptional work ethic and a strong dedication to her job.

### **Susan W. Lee, Staff Information Systems Analyst of the West Covina District Office**

Sue possesses excellent time management skills and regularly applies them in resolving a myriad of problems that relate to the operation of the district's personal computers, laptops, printers and telecommunication equipment. Sue also plays an important role in the Injury and Illness Prevention Program.

**Maryanne Brauer, Business Taxes Specialist I of the Culver City District Office**

As the district compliance trainer and the primary technical resource person, Maryanne has provided invaluable support and knowledge in the development and implementation of new work strategies and policies aimed at improving the entire compliance unit.

**Yoana Darmasaputra, Associate Tax Auditor of the Culver City District Office**

Yoana has done an excellent job of training new auditors, contributing to team audits, and assisting her supervisor and coworkers with urgent assignments. In addition, she serves as a Sergeant at Arms for the Culver City Board meetings.

## **Out-of-State District**

**Anne Renee Hudson, Office Technician of the Houston Area Office**

Renee handles audit control, clerical, PC Coordination and other special projects with a high degree of accuracy and a smile. Her dedication and willingness to go the extra mile helps the office run smoothly.

## **Headquarters**

**Lou Bender, Associate Governmental Program Analyst of the Human Resources Division**

Lou developed and implemented the BOE's Student Internship Program. The State Personnel Board was so impressed with the program, they have asked to use BOE's program guide as a statewide model. Lou's extensive research and dedication with this program allowed her to produce a quality product with excellent results.

**Michelle Hey, Associate Business Management Analyst of the Administrative Support Division**

As a member of the Space Planning Unit, Michelle was the lead space planner on two projects which were highly successful. The first project involved coordinating the relocation of staff from multiple locations. The second was a large tenant improvement project and involved the relocation of 300 staff. Michelle worked diligently with multiple program staff, contractors, vendors and the Department of General Services through project completion.

**Jenny Romero, Associate Information Systems Analyst of the Administrative Support Division**

As a member of the Telecommunications Section Planning Unit, Jennie is responsible for critical voice communication systems for multiple field offices as well as the Legal Department. Jennie was instrumental in the design of the communications closets, cabling oversight, and the procurement and installation of the phone equipment. Her extraordinary efforts and commitment to customer service is commendable.

**Terri Deane, Staff Services Manager I of the Human Resources Division**

As the manager of the Board Member Liaison Office, Terri's primary responsibility has been to respond to the personnel, hiring and appointment needs of the Board Members and their staff. In addition to her primary work, Terri has volunteered to lead several projects that have enhanced and streamlined human resource processes within BOE and statewide.

**Ashleigh Jennings, Staff Services Analyst of the Human Resources Division**

Ashleigh was appointed to help launch the Career Center which was established to assist employees in several units within BOE who were facing organizational changes in the workload and workflow of their offices. Ashleigh was instrumental in developing a process for communicating information and providing assistance to employees, promoting the Career Center within BOE, and encouraging hiring managers/supervisors to consider impacted employees for vacant positions.

**Annamaria Snowden, Business Taxes Representative of the County-Assessed Properties Division**

Annamaria consistently demonstrates her ability to lead and train staff in support functions such as registration and return review processing. In addition, she volunteered to participate in representing the Timber Tax Section in recent Board programs such as the eRegistration and eFiling development. Annamaria also demonstrated leadership in coordinating equipment and personnel moves throughout the section and played a lead role in forms design and development, as well as equipment inventory.

**Sam Wang, Senior Specialist Property Auditor Appraiser of the State-Assessed Properties Division**

Over the past 3 years, Sam has handled the appraisals and appeals of two of the largest local exchange telephone companies in California. These cases had a high profile and were the most complex dealt with by the division over the past 7 years. Sam has communicated effectively with these assessees, the Board and its staff, legal and other interested parties.

**Arlene K. Dillman, Associate Tax Auditor of the Special Taxes and Fees Division**

Arlene was a key participant in the Digital Audit Pilot Program. Her ambition and devotion to the success of the project provided inspiration and enthusiasm to all others involved. Arlene's extensive skill, knowledge and dedication, greatly contributed to the successful implementation of this project, resulting in the expansion of the Digital Audit Program.

**Debra Waltz, Business Taxes Specialist II of the Legislative Division**

Debra is tenacious in her research of issues and continuously seeks the most up-to-date information on the legislative issues assigned to her. Debra has had to work on a number of complex legislative issues outside her regular tax policy expertise, including legislation related to the BOE headquarters building, acceptance of registered warrants, and proposed changes to the regulation adoption process. Her overall work is consistently high quality, timely and well organized, and she frequently goes beyond what is expected in performing her assignments.

**Joe Fitz, Operations Research Specialist III of the Legislative and Research Division**

Joe's work performance is outstanding and he makes numerous positive contributions to the Board on an ongoing basis. He has demonstrated exceptional abilities, strong initiative and superior skills in all his research projects. His analytical and writing skills are outstanding and he handles the work assigned to him with utmost tact, diplomacy, and professionalism. Joe has volunteered for various speaking engagements and receives high praise from the participants and coordinators.

**Aileen Lee, Research Program Specialist II of the Legislative and Research Division**

Aileen is a "self-starter" who needs very little direction. Aileen is willing to go far beyond her normal job responsibilities to get the job done. She has both superior technical knowledge and vast knowledge of all the Board's programs. Aileen has a heavy workload, but is always willing both to mentor more junior members of the section and take on additional assignments.

**Wun-chi Wang, Research Program Specialist II of the Legislative and Research Division**

Wun-chi has been instrumental in retooling the Board's Taxable Sales Report to include taxable sales data using North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes. The project has involved working with other sections of the Board and developing a new set of publication tables from scratch. Wun-chi's attention to detail and organization skills have contributed toward her success in meeting her demanding workload while maintaining a high level of enthusiasm.

**Carrie Sundahl, Associate Governmental Program Analyst of the ePublishing Section**

Carrie took the lead on developing, implementing, and maintaining the agency's email notification list serve called BOE Updates. This effort involved many planning sessions with program staff and with staff from the Office of the State Chief Information Officer who hosts the list serve. Carrie worked with the eServices team, program staff, and the Web Services team to ensure a smooth transition for the project implementation.

**Victoria C. Baker, Tax Counsel III of the Litigation Division**

In March 2010, legal representation for the BOE in bankruptcy and collection cases was transferred from the Department of Justice to BOE's Litigation Division. In a very short timeframe and with great skill and professionalism, Victoria assembled and trained a team of support staff and attorneys on bankruptcy law and procedures, implemented a case-tracking and calendaring system, and drafted a guide for the processing and evaluation of new litigation matters. As a result of her superior knowledge, skills, and experience, the Litigation Division has seamlessly assumed this dramatically increased caseload involving millions in tax and fee liabilities annually.

**Shirley J. Johnson, Tax Counsel III of the Appeals Division**

In addition to managing a large staff of attorneys, auditors and support staff in the Appeals Division in Sacramento, she was a significant lead in the establishment of the new Southern California Appeals Office in Norwalk. This office, established to address significant increases in appeals cases filed by taxpayers, is helping to accelerate the associated revenue to the General Fund and to further educate taxpayers and the public about the reporting and compliance requirements for California businesses.

**Clifford M. Oakes, Staff Information Systems Analyst in the Tax Policy Division**

This past year, Cliff implemented the Printer Asset Management plan in the Sales and Use Tax Department at Headquarters. Part of this project involved providing users with training on shifting their print work to another printer and also duplex and secure printing of documents. The project was completed and 19 network and 177 stand-alone printers were removed. Cliff was the expert resource person in all of these areas and is an invaluable member of the Technology Unit.

**Jo Trillo, Business Taxes Specialist I in the Tax Policy Division**

Jo was the lead for the project that reviewed the security deposit program. This project streamlined the process for release of security deposits, cleared the backlog of security deposit releases, and updated written policy. As project lead, Jo organized a comprehensive analysis of the security release procedures and successfully implemented both new policy and programming changes that greatly increased the process efficiency. As a result of Jo's work, time needed to process security releases was cut in half.

**Kirsten Stark, Business Taxes Specialist I of the Tax Policy Division**

As the project manager for the Digital Audit Program, Kirsten is the driving force behind moving the audit program into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. She is leading the effort to revolutionize the manner in which field audits are conducted, reviewed, processed and stored. A successful pilot program has just been completed and will be the map to guide BOE's implementation in 2011-12. Kirsten has broad knowledge and experience which complement her sound project management skills and respected perspective.

**Sonia T. Fong, Executive Secretary II of the Sales and Use Tax Administration**

Soni has served as the Executive Secretary II to the Sales and Use Tax Deputy Director since June 2007. She has exceptional organizational, secretarial, and communication skills. Soni has the ability to multi-task many important projects, meetings and schedules for the Deputy Director, while meeting critical deadlines. She has a "can do" attitude and follows through on all assignments to ensure completion.

**William Insalaco, Associate Tax Auditor of the Headquarters Operations Division**

Bill continues to perform exceptionally well in evaluating and processing claims for refund. He is a long-term, highly-skilled employee who consistently demonstrates excellent analytical abilities in processing difficult and complex cases. His work is always detailed and well documented and reflects explanatory notation where considered appropriate. Bill has demonstrated well-honed experience and a keen eye for considering important aspects in these matters which has aided in accurately addressing the particular policy or procedure at issue.

## **Group Awards**

### ***\*Paperless Monthly Telephone Bills and Expenditure Reports Team, Administration Department***

**Patty Langstaff, Senior Administrative Analyst  
David Healey, System Software Specialist II  
Amber Viduya, Associate Administrative Analyst  
Gina Lindsey, Accounting Trainee**

This group of staff members converted the Accounting Branch monthly receipt of 4,000 hard-copy telephone invoices to a paperless, online review/approval process. The group also reorganized and simplified access to all budget/expenditure reports. These achievements have eliminated manual distribution processes and reduced the use of the email server, as well as time spent on numerous routine repetitive processes.

### ***\*Budget Reduction and Staffing Report Team, Administration Department***

**Jennifer Edmond, Labor Relations Specialist**

**Staff Services Managers I  
Susan Gehrmann and Dena Loui**

**Associate Personnel Analysts  
Maggie Archibald, Lou Bender, Diane Frith, Judy Knight,  
Shivani Nath, and Sonia Provencal**

**Staff Services Analysts  
Darcy Dick and Lydia Matthews**

**Personnel Specialists  
Lisa Delgado, Brandon Ream, and Erica Richard**

This group of staff members performed the difficult research, analysis, and survey work necessary to prepare the BOE for a potential staff reduction. Facing dire outcomes and under the weight of strict timelines for both the project and its effects on continuing workload, staff faced and met this extremely difficult challenge with professionalism and sensitivity.

***\*Budget Reduction and Deficit Management Achievements for FY 2009-2010 Team,  
Administration Department***

**Steve Mercer, Staff Services Manager II  
Melissa Shelton, Staff Services Manager I**

**Associate Business Analysts  
Rebecca Gonzalez, Wendy Poon, and Lori Zavala**

**Hellen Ostapeck, Associate Governmental Program Analyst  
Ashley Tangeraas, Staff Services Analyst**

Facing a \$41 million dollar budget reduction and significant potential staff loss, this group helped all BOE departments identify ways to reduce costs in lieu of layoffs and monitored expenditures to ensure needed savings were achieved. Aided by the complex work of this group, the BOE was able to overcome potentially devastating budgetary constraints and enhance services and efficiencies.

***\*Assessor's Handbook Section 401 Rewrite Team, Legal Department and Property and  
Special Taxes Department***

**Carole Ruwart, Tax Counsel III  
Dan Paul, Tax Counsel  
Sherrie Kinkle, Supervising Property Appraiser  
Glenna Schultz, Senior Specialist Property Appraiser**

Thanks to this group's effort over three-plus years, section 401 now provides, for the first time since its passage, comprehensive guidance regarding issues of changes in ownership and changes in control under Proposition 13. From its first draft distributed to assessors and interested parties in June 2008, through a second revision distributed in September 2009, and a second round of interested party's comments in June 2010, this group successfully rewrote section 401; thereby providing an invaluable service to the Board and to the people of the State of California.

***\*Southern California Appeals Pilot Team, Legal Department***

**Amy Kelly, Tax Counsel IV  
Mariam Baxley, Tax Counsel III (Supervisor)  
Shirley Johnson, Tax Counsel III (Supervisor)  
Cathy Stroh, Associate Governmental Program Analyst**

This group was instrumental in the rapid start-up of the Southern California Appeals office. Over a short timeline, they worked as a team to develop both the informal issue paper and Budget Change Proposal needed for approval of the office. The office is designed to address significant and sustained increases in appeals, particularly in Southern California. In addition, the office will improve public education, enhance compliance, and expedite revenues.

## ***\*Efiling Transition Project (ETP) Team***

### **SEE LIST (244 names)**

This group was instrumental in developing and implementing the processes that transitioned sales and use taxpayers from paper-based filing to efilting.

Steps in the process included:

- Identifying targeted taxpayer groups
- Developing notifications, instructions and help videos, and
- Running clinics and monitoring feedback to help taxpayers more easily and effectively adapt to this transformative process

While this team had over 240 key contributors, they each belonged to one of five primary support groups that worked together to make this achievement possible. As we briefly describe the accomplishments of each support group, their names will scroll on the screen alphabetically by first name.

**Electronic Transition Plan Team:** The seven members of this support group were responsible for ensuring implementation and success of the plan. They coordinated the effort to make the transition as smooth as possible for BOE staff as well as BOE taxpayers.

**E-Publishing / Mail Services / Taxpayer Information:** This support group was made up of three teams. The seven members of the ePublishing team developed many new publications and notifications to ease the transition of taxpayers into efilting. The two members of the Mailroom team faced a significant increase in workload caused by the need to send these notifications to those taxpayer groups who were transitioning. The fifty-two members of the Taxpayer Information team successfully responded to a dramatic increase in calls to the 800 number, beginning with the first transition group.

**eServices Contacts – District Offices:** The twenty-six district office staff in the E-Services Contacts subgroup championed the plan in each of our field offices. They served as efilting experts and promoters to ensure staff and taxpayers effectively transitioned to the new processes

**Technology Services Department / Programmers / Testers:** The Technology Services Department subgroup was comprised of fifteen technical support staff who notified all the taxpayers of the impending change, turned off the paper mailings, developed new processes, and adapted existing processes affected by the transitioning to efilting.

**Volunteers:** Personal contact with BOE staff was the most efficient way to assist taxpayers in the transition to efilting. To ensure taxpayers would receive individual personal attention, almost 140 headquarters staff joined the Volunteers subgroup to assist the Taxpayer Information team as Remote Agents whenever the 800 number was overloaded with calls.

The Efiling Transition Project Team exemplified dedication to efficiency and teamwork and demonstrated how careful planning can result in quantum improvements to customer service and streamlined processes.

BOE introduced efiling in 2005 and by 2008 nearly all sales and use taxpayers were eligible to efile. However, participation in the efiling program was low.

To encourage taxpayers to efile, BOE initiated a program called "Toss the Paper." The team managing this program stopped distribution of paper returns and assisted taxpayers in the use of the efiling option. In just 18 months, this program increased eFiling participation from 3% of eligible taxpayers to over 80%. In FY 2009/10, taxpayers efiled over 2.7 million returns.

The results have been beneficial for both taxpayers and the BOE. Taxpayers now have a convenient, fast, secure, and accurate way to report their taxes. Efiling also provided taxpayers another convenient payment method.

BOE staff receives returns immediately, without delay. Efiled returns also reduce the number of errors since required fields must be completed and calculation of tax due is automatic.

These efficiencies have resulted in a reduction of operating costs by over \$3 million, including reduced printing and mail costs.

Thanks to the efforts of the Efiling Transition Project Team, BOE is now realizing the benefits inherent in doing business electronically as our taxpayers and our organization embrace efiling. We will be building on this success through increased taxpayer participation and providing more opportunities to conduct BOE business electronically.

This concludes the recognition of 315 Employee Recognition Program honorees. Thank you.