

Inclusive PERSPECTIVE



Back Row: Fernando Wilkins, Mark Corley, Christopher Henry, Marsharlette Lester, Autumn Hemphill, Christina Hulett, James Payne, Terrill Gilliam, Tommy Nabors, Stephanie Bartley, Janis Bartlett, Javon Harris Front Row: Chelsey Smart, Brandi Ratcliff, April Robinson, Jennifer Hoyt, Kelley Stephenson, Angela Parks, Ebony Jones, Toniesha Sargent, Jamie DuBois, Tanya Patton, Shaun Smith

Pony up! A day in the life...

DFA University tours Oaklawn racing operations

Oaklawn Racing Casino Resort hosted the DFA-U team for an informative tour of a day in the life of horse racing. Oaklawn staff Jennifer Hoyt, Director of Racing, and Nancy Holthus, host of *Oaklawn Today*, gave a detailed play by play of activities in the paddock, on the track and around the racing facility.

DFA employs staff on location at Oaklawn in Hot Springs, at both the DFA Racing Commission and the DFA Revenue Tax Division, who are responsible for verifying compliance of racing regulations and auditing the financial operations of casino gaming. Ms. Holthus informed the group that certain races include horses that are for sale. She noted sales tax is collected on all horses sold at the track and then the new owners can register their horse with the racing commission. She elaborated on the staff, animal care and fees required to board and maintain the horses at Oaklawn facilities. The DFA-U group had an exciting day learning the details of DFA business operations.

The Oaklawn Press Box

DFA-U received the grand tour from high above the festivities. Have you seen the view?



Success Stories: Our leaders are shining at DFA

Several members of the DFA University class have advanced from their positions within the Department. This issue highlights some of those leaders.

Since the program began in the fall of 2021, Terrill Gilliam was promoted to DFA Division Manager I and Toniesha Sargent was promoted to Tax Auditor Supervisor, both within the DFA Revenue Services Division. The DFA Office of Arkansas Lottery (OAL) also promoted Brandi Ratcliff to Treasurer.

DFA is proud to celebrate the success of these leaders and wishes the best of luck to a long career as a steward of the State of Arkansas. Each leader was asked a few questions about their journey at the DFA. Stay tuned for more shining leaders as the DFA-U program continues.

TERRILL GILLIAM, DFA Division Manager I



How long have you been with DFA? Nine years

Describe your career path at DFA? I started as a DFA Service Representative in the Withholding Tax section. I had several promotions, including Supervisor of Special Events, Supervisor of Accounts Receivable, Fiscal Support Analyst in the EFT and Refunds Division and most recently I was promoted to Division Manager I in the Sales and Use Tax Office.

What steps did you take to prepare for a promotion within DFA? I maintained effective communication with my team and management, good work ethic, and attitude. I encouraged and trained my staff and promoted a positive attitude. I learned more about my position and responsibilities while improving from failures and keeping open dialogue with peers and management.

Summarize the job duties you have performed at DFA. I lead the Accounts Receivable section which includes delinquent taxpayer accounts and business closures. I manage supervisor and employee performance by monitoring payment plans, penalty waivers, and business closures before the account moves to another DFA section. It is my responsibility to maintain a safe customer service-centered working environment with high morale for the staff in my section. I am available as a resource for the current staff and new employees for guidance, training, and the latest updates of DFA policy and procedures.

What is the most challenging part of your job at DFA? The most challenging part of my job within DFA is thinking outside of the box. Since working with my DFA mentors, I am learning to think outside of the box more.

What is the most valuable leadership skill you use to achieve success with your team or peers? Active listening

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Winter 2021 Puzzle Answers

1. MULTICULTURAL 2. DIVERSITY 3. CULTURE 4. LEADERSHIP 5. EQUALITY 6. EMPATHY 7. INTEGRATION 8. SPRING

DFA-U receives winning motivation

The May DFA-U session was all about winning! The audience learned there are no losers playing the lottery, only non-winners. Guest speaker Eric Hagler, Director of the Office of Arkansas Lottery (OAL), led an inspiring presentation to potential leaders of DFA. He started by saying "Remember the people who you sit here with today, you will see many of these faces again, throughout upcoming years, as you grow your career at DFA." He further explained that managers manage a process and leaders, with the right skills, lead the team. It was a great message to those who seek advancement opportunities at DFA to "fill the voids" using their own leadership skills.

The OAL is a self-funded entity that operates like a private organization. Therefore, it is not an ordinary office within DFA. The OAL was established in 2008 and became part of DFA in 2015. There are currently 65 DFA employees that keep the office functioning, including a wide array of skill sets among those business professionals. Mr. Hagler emphasized that regardless of a person's educational background or experience there is always an opportunity within State government and specifically at the OAL. Winning skill sets at OAL include advertising, finance, law enforcement, legal counsel, marketing, sales, and more! Are you ready to win?



Leadership Project Updates

The teams at DFA-U continue to sharpen their project management professional skill set. Both teams are wrapping up the planning stage for their respective project topics: *Retention* and *Communication*. During the next months, candidates will learn and practice the art of public speaking and presentation delivery. These skills will enhance the effectiveness of the final project presentations, which will be given at the DFA-U graduation in September. There, candidates will have an opportunity to highlight a real DFA issue and sell their ideas to DFA Administration by stating the problem, proposing a solution, and outlining an implementation plan for that solution.

Do you know a member of the DFA University Leadership Program? If so, ask them to tell you more about their participation in the group project.



Initiate ⇒ Plan ⇒ Execute

DFA 2022 Summer Internship

After wrapping up the 2022 Spring Internship session on April 29th, DFA kicked off its 2022 Summer Internship Session on May 31st. This is the sixth class of DFA Interns. Eleven students were welcomed into DFA Divisions and Offices including the Office of Excise Tax, Office of Accounting, Office of Budget, International Registration Plan (IRP), DFA Revenue Legal Department, Individual and Corporate Income Tax Offices, as well as all four districts of the Office of Field Audit. Through this paid internship program, students are provided with opportunities to gain hands-on experience in their areas of interest while exploring a career in public service.

To date, twenty-two individuals have successfully graduated from the program with nearly 25% of them hired into full-time positions.

Interns attend regular events with their assigned mentors. They have attended budget meetings at the capital, participated in field audits, and assisted with drafting policies.

The 2022 Fall session of this twelve-week program will begin on September 26, 2022, and end on November 23, 2022. Students are permitted to work up to 20 hours per week and earn \$15.33/hour. Applications must be received by July 17, 2022, for fall consideration.

DFA INTERN TESTIMONIAL: I wanted to express how wonderful I feel this internship is. The office dynamic is amazing. Everyone is friendly, helpful, and uplifting. I am doing real work helping employees perform audits. The tasks I do are a sample of what it would really be like to work at DFA. My supervisor has gathered as many opportunities as he can to get me out in the field and exposed to every facet of the job. They are eager for hardworking interns who could be future employees, as many students already have jobs lined up by their junior year.

I can work up to full time, with a flexible schedule. They work around my summer class as well. And their work hours are a major bonus. They work 8-4:30, and that's it. No weekends, no overtime, unlike the big firms. They offer an amazing work-life balance. I would highly encourage any student to participate in this internship. I have loved what I've done so far, and I am very seriously considering working at DFA upon graduation.

- Jenna Lewis, Tax Investigator Intern, Field Audit – Central District

Test your knowledge: *DFA Acronyms*

ABC	_____	_____	_____
EGS	_____	_____	_____
PET	_____	_____	_____
OAL	_____	_____	_____
SRO	_____	_____	_____
MMC	_____	_____	_____



BRANDI RATCLIFF, DFA Office of Arkansas Lottery Treasurer



How long have you been with DFA? Six years

Summarize the job duties you have performed at DFA. I was previously the Financial Analyst, where I was responsible for performing monthly analysis of our financial results for management. I also assisted in the development of the annual budget and Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) for our agency. I developed and maintained key operational and financial measurements and metrics.

I was promoted to Treasurer in March of 2022, where I am responsible for lottery financial matters, including collections and credits for all our retailers across the state. I also track collateral transactions, oversee procurement operations, and am responsible for all functions of the claim center.

What steps did you take to prepare for a promotion within DFA? I took every opportunity that was presented to me to learn more about my agency, our industry, and DFA.

What is the most challenging part of your job at DFA? The COVID-19 pandemic was a substantial challenge for all workplaces in 2020. My group quickly formulated a plan to work remotely and executed it within days. As a result, we collaboratively created more efficient processes that have been continued.

What is the most valuable leadership skill you use to achieve success with your team or peers? Communication and approachability

TONIESHA SARGENT, DFA Tax Auditor Supervisor



How long have you been with DFA? Six ½ years

Describe your career path at DFA? I started as a Tax Auditor I in 2015, in the Office of Field Audit, Southern District, Pine Bluff Office. I was then promoted to a Tax Auditor II in 2017, and later promoted to my current position as Tax Auditor Supervisor in January 2022.

Summarize the job duties you have performed at DFA. As a tax auditor, I performed business audits ensuring taxpayers followed the tax laws of the State. In addition, I completed refund requests, continued training, and maintained taxpayer confidentiality. In my latest position, Tax Auditor Supervisor, I assign work plans to auditors, review audit findings, and initiate staff engagement.

What steps did you take to prepare for a promotion within DFA? I took on the task of completing more difficult and time-consuming audits. Since being hired in 2015, I've prided myself in being honest and hardworking and learning new parts to the auditor job. I was always willing to help others and assist taxpayers.

What is the most challenging part of your job at DFA? The most challenging part of any job to me has been interpretation. There's a lot of information given and received and interpretation matters. At times, it can get difficult, but communication is key when making certain that everyone is on the same page and understands the information that is being relayed.

What is the most valuable leadership skill you use to achieve success with your team or peers? Collaboration