

# Inclusive PERSPECTIVE



## ***DFA-U2 Graduates Celebrate!***

In a packed room, anxiously waiting to give their final presentations, this year’s DFA-U graduates showed off the skills and talents they had honed during the previous nine months. Beginning in the fall of 2022, this second class of candidates began the leadership training provided by the Department of Finance and Administration University (“DFA-U”). DFA-U provides nine monthly classes where participants are given tools to develop their leadership skills and grow in their professional lives. Each candidate is selected by their manager because they have shown that they have the desire and potential to grow into leaders through the sharing of information, knowledge, skills, and mentoring. On May 5, 2023, fifteen mentees graduated from DFA-U with the support of their DFA peers, managers, administrators, and the DFA Secretary.

As part of the closing class and graduation, DFA-U gave candidates a group assignment. Working on this assignment provided candidates an opportunity to sharpen their business skills by helping to solve a real issue within DFA. This year’s group covered four topics: Technology in the Workplace, Employee Retention, Human Capital, and Change Management. The groups researched and presented different perspectives on these topics and each participant was able to use their individual talent and work with diverse personalities to negotiate solid solutions.

Graduation day kicked off with an inspiring message from Alan McVey, DFA Deputy Director & Chief of Staff. McVey, with over

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Harold Walls, Breanna Harris, Stacey Philamlee



Mya Hunter, Dylan Masterson, John Allen, Sandra Schenck



LaShuna Burks, Shanquita Berryman, Margaret Pace, Casey Hargis



Ann Allen, Scottie York, Ashley Davison



# College Events: Opens the DFA Door for Interns

Every semester the DFA Human Resource Office (“HRO”) attends campus events including career fairs, Exploring your Career Day, and Meet the Firms events. The HRO also visits classrooms and conducts on-campus interviews. These meetings provide excellent opportunities for the HRO to meet with potential interns and take advantage of every opportunity to interact with college students. By reaching out to the students, DFA is able to share the varied and amazing career opportunities available at DFA. Many students are not aware that they may find a career doing what they love while working at DFA.

DFA offers a variety of internships each semester. The diverse group of participating offices allows DFA to offer internships in areas including technology, legal, tax, communications, political science, marketing, management, business administration, state and federal grants management, auditing, finance, and accounting.

There have been 29 interns so far this year from Arkansas colleges and universities around the state.

Internship participants attended or were recent graduates of Philander Smith, the University of Central Arkansas, the University of Arkansas, Midsouth Community College, and many others.

The internship program offers flexible hours to meet the needs of students trying to balance school, work, and/or family life. Fall internship opportunities are currently advertising on ARCAREERS and will end on July 17, 2023.

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For additional information or assistance with internships or recruitment contact:

**Courtney Brown**  
**DFA Office of Human Resources**  
[Courtney.brown@dfa.arkansas.gov](mailto:Courtney.brown@dfa.arkansas.gov)



*Courtney Brown from the DFA Office of Human Resources attends college recruitment events around the state.*

## *DFA-U Celebrates Continued...*

twenty-seven years’ experience in government leadership, spoke of the importance of humility and respect for others in order to thrive as a leader. He shared that “only 66% of leaders are aligned with their staff” and he recommended that the graduates learn from those around them, and train and trust their instincts.

McVey shared his own professional stories of fear and success, including some anecdotes which could have been “career-limiting moves” but were, in fact, success stories. He stressed the importance and value of building relationships and the significance of opportunity, both of which, he said, contributed to his career success.

As part of the closing class, graduates shared their DFA-U experiences, including what they found valuable as well as their own fears and successes while going through DFA-U. One graduate stated, “This program gave me the confidence and support system I needed to take the next steps in furthering my career and being a manager here at DFA.”

Each year, DFA Administrators nominate employees for DFA-U who have demonstrated leadership potential and who has a career aspiration of leading at DFA. The nomination process is opening soon, then candidates will be selected for the next DFA-U class this fall!

College Ave

# Introducing the **INTERNS**

Do you have an intern in your office? The DFA Summer Internship Program began on May 30 and will wrap up in August. Help DFA welcome these professionals by saying hello or sharing your experiences with them.



**Bella Geisleman**

**MOTOR VEHICLE**

*Mentor: Kristin Lewis*

*College: University of Central AR*

*Major: Marketing*



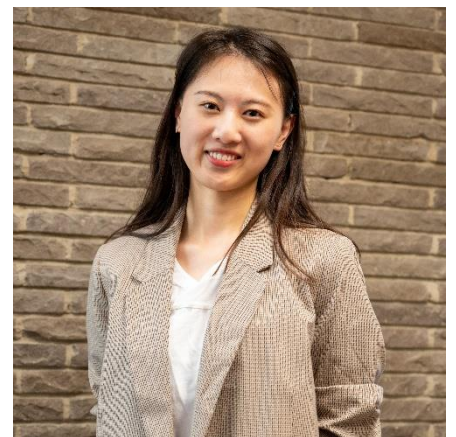
**Hannah Walker**

**CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT**

*Mentor: Tiffany Robinson*

*College: University of Central AR*

*Major: Political Science*



**Rachel Cheng**

**EXCISE TAX**

*Mentor: Vivian Ozura/Brian Fry*

*College: University of Central AR*

*Major: Finance*



**Liz Tilbury**

**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

*Mentor: Scott Hardin*

*College: University of AR*

*Major: Communications*



**Stephen Tillman**

**MOTOR VEHICLE**

*Mentor: Misty Fisher*

*College: U of A Pine Bluff*

*Major: Business Administration*



**Luke Phillis**

**MOTOR VEHICLE**

*Mentor: Derrick Rumph*

*College: Harding University*

*Major: Master of Business Admin.*





**Zachary Royal**

CORPORATION INCOME TAX

*Mentor: Scott Fryer*

*College: University of Central AR*

*Major: Accounting*



**Emma Davis**

INTERGOVERNMENTAL SERVICES

*Mentor: Debbie Bousquet*

*College: University of Central AR*

*Major: Political Science*



**Darvis Rasberry**

CENTRAL FIELD AUDIT

*Mentor: Robin Moody*

*College: Hendrix College*

*Major: Accounting*



**Caleb Mimms**

MOTOR VEHICLE

*Mentor: Kelley Stephenson*

*College: U of A Little Rock*

*Major: Political Science/Economics*



**Noah Lee**

MOTOR VEHICLE

*Mentor: Tameka Jordan/Richelle Jones*

*College: University of AR*

*Major: Communications*



**Destan Wilkerson**

DFA ACCOUNTING

*DFA Mentor: Dan Brassart*

*College: Jackson State*

*Major: Accounting*



**Jenna Lewis**

INCOME TAX

*Mentor: Tommy Burns*

*College: University of Central AR*

*Major: Accounting*



**Chancty Johnson-Miller**

EXCISE TAX

*Mentor: Kristie Jefferson*

*College: Midsouth Community*

*Major: Business Administration*

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# DFA Employees Aid Tornado Victims

When disaster hit Arkansas on the last day of March this year, the impacted communities were in shock. Homes were leveled and businesses were destroyed by the tornado that hit our state. Within days, the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) stepped into action by setting up Disaster Relief Centers (DRC) in Little Rock, Jacksonville, Sherwood, North Little Rock, and Wynne. Many Arkansans lost their social security cards, drivers licenses, vehicle registration, and birth certificates during the tornado. While food, and water were provided at each site, the vision for these centers was to create a “one-stop shop,” as explained by Scottie York, DFA Hearing Officer for Office of Driver Services. That’s when the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) joined the on-site relief effort.

The DFA was called to action and quickly formed an emergency customer service team. April Allison, April Galarza, Cyndi Kalpac, Deana Sisson, Doug Niendick, Melony Turner, Paul Fisher, Robert Johnson, and Scottie York, worked in conjunction with DFA Administrators and FEMA to implement a plan to get Arkansans what they needed. Processes were streamlined and fees were temporarily waived so that citizens could obtain the documents that were lost or damaged. The Governor conveyed the message to, “help now, get paperwork later.”

York serves as one of five DFA Hearing Officers who work with Arkansans on their license eligibility. His normal job duties include attending driver control hearings, and making decisions on citizen license suspensions, as regulated by Arkansas law. When asked why York decided to work extended hours onsite at the local DRC, he said that “it was a no-brainer.” His mindset for the job is that “it’s not always take, take, take. Our goal at DFA is to keep drivers on the road safe.” Therefore, York immediately decided to give, by extending his stewardship. York is a recent graduate of DFA University (DFA-U). With his success in the program combined with his compassion for the citizens of the state, Scottie understood what was necessary to lead in a time of crisis.

Unfortunately, the work for Arkansas relief efforts is far from over. York explained “there is still so much,” and affected areas in the state are still in distress. FEMA is continuing to support citizens in the DRC for people that are needing help. We are proud of the efforts that all our DFA colleagues are making to go above normal customer service standards to help Arkansans affected by this natural disaster.



*Cyndi Kalpac  
DFA Hearing Officer*



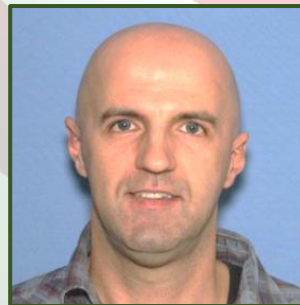
*April Galarza  
DFA Hearing Officer*



*Robert "BJ" Johnson  
DFA Administrative Analyst*



*Melony Turner  
DFA Division Manager III*



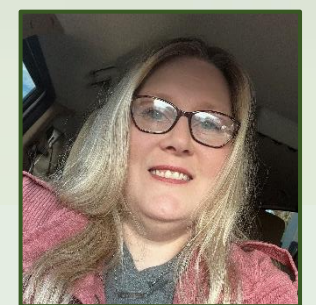
*Doug Niendick  
DFA Hearing Officer*



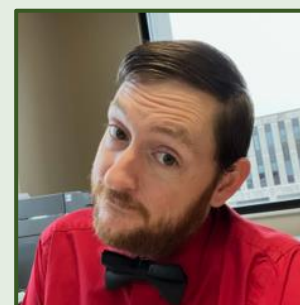
*April Allison  
DFA Hearing Officer*



*Paul Fisher  
DFA Hearing Officer*



*Deana Sisson  
DFA Hearing Officer*



*Scottie York  
DFA Hearing Officer*

# Toniesha Sargent

Help us recognize DFA Tax Auditor Supervisor, Toniesha Sargent, on her attainment of a master's in business administration (MBA) with a prestigious 4.0 GPA!



Toniesha is an alumna of the DFA University leadership program, the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, and is now a proud graduate of Southern New Hampshire University, where she finished her MBA in the spring and will attend graduation this fall. She is proving to be a lifelong learner.

Initially, her motivation was driven by the desire to position herself to sit for the CPA exam. She explained, "However, my aspirations shifted. I recognized that not only would the degree fulfill CPA requirements, but it also provided me with a broader scope for professional growth and development. I've taken several courses pertaining to management, leadership, and strategic goals. In my role as Supervisor, I have been provided with various resources that complement the concepts learned in those courses."

She encourages others that are thinking of furthering their education to simply, "Do It!! No matter how long it takes, take your time and "Just Do It"! Higher education can open doors to networks and connections that can propel your career forward."



## Terrill Gilliam

Congratulations to DFA University alumnus Terrill Gilliam on his promotional achievement to Division Manager III within the Excise Tax Division!

Terrill began his career at DFA ten years ago in the Withholding Tax section. His transition to DFA from retail allowed him more structure, better benefits, and a work schedule that accommodated his family balance.

I sat down with Gilliam to discuss his path to success. He mentioned that throughout his advancements he has honed his leadership skills by observing and listening to his many coaches and mentors at DFA. And with the help of the DFA-U studies of the book *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, he is continuously practicing self-development and improving his own leadership style. He said his challenge in this new position will be to lead his supervisor team and still be hands-on with all his staff. It is important to him that all of the employees in his purview have a voice, are heard, and feel a sense of belonging.

His advice for aspiring DFA leaders is something his previous manager Terri Joslin reinforced in him: Always bring a positive attitude and a willingness to learn. Specific job skills and DFA processes can be taught, but "you can't teach a good attitude."

**DFA-U** DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE  
AND ADMINISTRATION  
UNIVERSITY

**IT IS THAT TIME OF YEAR!**

**DFA NOMINATIONS START SOON!**



Administrators and management teams identify your shining stars now!



If you have been an employee or supervisor at DFA for at least two years, this might be for you!



DFA-U begins in the fall.

**WANT TO LEARN MORE?**

VISIT:  
<https://www.dfa.arkansas.gov/human-resources/leadership-training-and-recruitment/dfa-university-program/>