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OSH Update

December 2022 / January 2023

Seasons Greetings from the Director's Office,



I'm writing this message about a week after we all gathered for Annual Training at the McKimmon Center in Raleigh. While I've known some of you for years, this event allowed me the opportunity to meet many of you in person for the first time. I arrived at the McKimmon Center on Monday afternoon a little nervous, but also excited, to spend time with all of you and to participate and engage in the training sessions. After two days of informative and substantive presentations, I left feeling confident and optimistic about the direction and future of the OSH Division and our state-plan program.

To say that the past three years have been challenging would be a bit of an understatement, but I'm grateful for the commitment and dedication exhibited by each one of you as we figure out how to continue fulfilling our mission in a completely different landscape. Thanks to the proactive and creative work of Commissioner Dobson and other members of the department's leadership team, we've been able to recognize your efforts through salary increases, retention bonuses and additional leave options. We will continue to pursue additional initiatives during the upcoming legislative long session, and I hope to share more about that in the coming months. In the meantime, I'd love to hear what you enjoy about your job, as well as your thoughts about opportunities to improve our work and our morale.

Paul and I covered a few bureau highlights on the final morning of annual training, but I'd like to add a few additional thoughts here. Congratulations again to the OSH Division's two recipients of the Commissioner's Award for Excellence in Service, Cory Dunphy and Griselle Negron. Read more about their awards in the coming pages of this edition.

The work of our compliance staff was highlighted on the first day of training, as several CSHOs presented the details of significant cases successfully completed over the past couple of years. I was impressed by the quality and thoroughness of these presentations, but I also realize they represent only a small portion of the inspection work conducted by the entire compliance bureau. Your work is very often thankless, but its importance to the safety, health and wellbeing of our state is beyond measure. Whether you work in the mountains, coast or somewhere in between, your work is valued by this Division and the entire department. —*Continued on page 5*

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Annual Training & Recognition Banquet

It was so good to be able to be 'in person' for the annual training and the NCDOL Recognition Banquet this year. I think more than ever we appreciated the comradery and presence of our fellow NCDOL employees. To be able to communicate in person rather than via the internet was a joy.

Thank you to all those who joined forces to put these few days together. Congratulations to all the prize winners and those formally recognized. It took a lot of work and planning and turned out to be a successful event .



FIS Updates

Alerts

[UV1 – Ultraviolet \(UV\) Wands](#)

The FDA is warning consumers about unsafe UV wands advertised to disinfect surfaces and kill germs. These wands may expose users and those nearby to unsafe levels of UV-C that may cause injuries after a few seconds of use.

FOM

[FOM Chapter 6 – Penalties](#)

This chapter provides guidance in the calculation of penalties and adjustment factors to be used. Revisions included updated penalty amounts.

[FOM All in One – Field Operations Manual – All in One](#)

This document contains all of the current FOM chapters. Search for terms or keywords using the Find feature (CTRL-F) within the document. This reflects the recent changes to Chapter 6 – Penalties.

OPN

[OPN 128X – Public Sector Surveys and Inspections](#)

This instruction provides guidance for the public sector survey process and inspection targeting. This revision changes the reference years for OSHA 300 logs and the DART rates for 2020.

OSH Superlative Award Recipients

Cory Dunphy is a health standards officer in our ETTA Bureau, providing technical support to NCDOL staff, state and local government, and employers and employees across the state. In addition to his primary job duties, Cory also serves as the department's Homeland Security and Emergency Response Coordinator and is a member of the State Emergency Response Team. As part of those duties, Cory is responsible for ensuring that the department's Continuity of Operations Plan is up-to-date and practiced annually by NCDOL's leadership team.

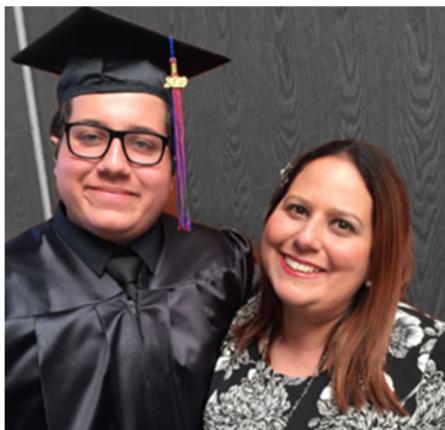
Cory consistently provides excellent customer service by always ensuring accurate and timely responses to internal and external customers. He exemplifies credibility and accountability and generates enthusiasm and a positive work environment for everyone around him. Thank you Cory for demonstrating the highest standards of service to the department and the state!

Griselle Negron is a safety compliance officer II in our Charlotte office. In addition to her regular duties as a compliance officer, Griselle has been instrumental in teaching junior CSHOs how to properly conduct inspections and build solid case files in accordance with the division's policies and procedures. She was also selected as the Team Leader for the Sanders Utility project partnership due to her strong construction background and experience. Among Griselle's many skills, she is bilingual, which means she is able to provide critical translation services to staff across the entire OSH division.

Griselle exemplifies public service through her efforts to train and assist new compliance officers which not only helps our newer staff grow, but also ensures that the department is successful in meeting our overall goals and positively impacts the employers and employees of our state. Thank you Griselle for your commitment and positive attitude!

You look familiar, are you new around here?

Meet Griselle Negron. I was born in the beautiful island of Puerto Rico (PR) in the capital, San Juan. Growing up I had a keen interest in interior decoration, construction, and trains. I spent multiple hours reading decoration magazines such as Good Housekeeping and Better Homes and Gardens. Still, as an adult, I continue to watch the HGTV channel. After high school, I attended the University of Puerto Rico Mayaguez Campus where I received my bachelor's degree in civil engineering with a major in public transportation and construction management.



After college, I had the opportunity to work in the construction of the first modern metro system in Puerto Rico. The Tren Urbano, a \$2.28 billion construction project, complements other forms of public transportation services in the San Juan metropolitan area. I started working with the general contractor as an assistant project manager on the pile driving of 30-meter concrete piles for the foundation of elevated track columns. It was a complicated task due to having to stop the traffic in both directions on one of the main roads in the area at rush hour in the afternoon. That resulted in a lot of happy commuters! Later, I was hired by the PR Highway administration, for the same project, starting from zero on another of the metro stations, San Francisco station. My boss at that time said that this station should bear my name because of all the long hours I worked casting reinforcement concrete for the station's foundation slab (there were thousands of cubic yards of concrete poured in just one night) at the same

time that my son Javier Andre was born (2001). In 2002, I took a Professional Enhancement Course in Public Transportation, Service, and Operations Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

When I finished that station, I was promoted to Deputy Contract Manager to conclude the construction of the stations close to the famous banking area of the island, Hato Rey Golden Mile, and close to the recently built, Coliseo de Puerto Rico José Miguel Agrelot, which is the biggest indoor arena in Puerto Rico dedicated to entertainment. During the years of this project, I became very active in safety due to the relationship, coordination, trainings, and meetings with all regulatory local, state, and federal agencies. After the conclusion of the project, I was hired as a Resident Engineer in a public housing construction project with a combined budget of \$1 billion. Next, I was responsible for the overall management of a \$50 million medical building construction project. All those working opportunities gave me the experience to learn the different aspects, elements, and requirements between transportation, housing, and medical construction projects.

During the downturn in the economy that affected the construction industry, I applied to and was hired to work in the environmental health and safety field. As an EHS Consultant, I audited and inspected industrial facilities from the pharmaceutical, manufacturing, electric power generation, oil and gas, housing, utilities, and the public-transport sectors. I also designed and developed safety and health trainings, including ISO 45001 - Guide to Internal Auditing.

In 2010, I moved to Concord, to be close to my oldest brother and his family. In 2014, I enrolled in the nursing field and obtained my CNA I & II and Medication Technician certifications. There my passion for health and caring for people increased. I want everyone to feel well, physically and emotionally.

I applied for a position with NCDOL in 2016 and was interviewed and hired for the Charlotte office as a Safety Compliance Officer. Then in 2020, during the pandemic year, I was promoted to Safety Compliance Officer II. I enjoy reading, decorating, all water activities (miss the beautiful beaches in PR), and culinary appreciation. On a curious note, I have a passion for professional markers used for art. Recently, we added a new member to the family, a Goldendoodle named Gabby Rose.



Highlights of the NCDOL Safety and Health Steering Committee

The last Safety and Health Steering Committee Meeting was held on October 15, 2022, and the following issues were discussed:

Fire extinguishers



Reminded the committee members to please complete the monthly fire extinguisher inspections and reminded the committee members that the inspections should be documented on the tags as well as on the spreadsheet located on the F drive.

ORB odor issue



Repairs have been made to address the sewer odor in the ORB. The opening in the wall between the pump room and the HVAC room has been sealed and a fan has been installed in the pump room to continuously remove the air which has been vented via ductwork to the outside. This hopefully should have resolved the issue.

Mass notification system



This is on hold until it can be determined who has the authority to disseminate the alerts. Administration and the Director's Office will be making the final decisions on who has access and permissions.

Building security concerns for ORB



There have been discussions with other building occupants, that are connected to the ORB, about holding joint building meetings to discuss safety and security issues. A meeting schedule will be announced later in the year and attendance will be voluntary.

Emergency Building Coordinators



Any fire, weather or emergency drills that are held in NCDOL buildings should be overseen by the floor monitors. It is their responsibility to keep track of employees when they have evacuated or relocated and be able to account for all personnel that are present, in the field, on leave and current visitors. Staff are reminded to close the door to offices as they leave their area.

Ergonomics Subcommittee



There is a new form located on the Intranet to get an ergonomic evaluation. The form is completed by the individual requesting the evaluation and the individual's supervisor, then it should be sent to Human Resources. There was a discussion about adding several more members to the subcommittee so that all offices across the state would have staff available to complete ergonomic evaluations

[Next meeting-January 10, 2023 at 2:00 pm.](#)

Retirement update from Winston-Salem

Chris Oberst, a Health Compliance Officer II in District 5, will be retiring from the Department of Labor on January 31, 2023. Chris, a Kentucky native and graduate of the University of Kentucky, began his career with the North Carolina Department of Labor in 1996 as a Health Compliance Officer. Over the course of his 27 years, Chris was based out of three Winston-Salem field offices, while working for four district supervisors. He managed the field office's industrial hygiene lab and was then promoted to a Compliance Safety and Health Officer II position, in which he conducted more than 1,000 OSHA compliance inspections. Away from work, Chris has enjoyed his home in North Carolina alongside his wife, Della, as they raised their son and daughter, Matthew and Sarah.

After his retirement, Chris intends to spend his time helping his son-in-law, Aaron, with woodworking and art projects, and spending as much time as possible with his grandson, Henry James. Chris has been a valuable and exceptional Compliance Officer and member of the NCDOL family and will be truly missed.

Congratulations!



Director's message continued-

Our Agricultural Safety and Health Bureau may be small in number but is overwhelmingly effective and productive. Last year, ASH conducted 2,034 migrant housing pre-occupancy inspections and an additional 52 compliance inspections. ASH also provided safety and health training on many topics including COVID-19 and heat stress, both of which are of significant importance to the farming community.

The Consultative Services Bureau conducted 1,500 visits to employers across the state, which resulted in the elimination of 6,200 hazards. The bureau also recently received another stellar Regional Annual Consultation Evaluation Report. The FY 2022 report contained no negative findings, observations or any recommendations for improvement. We also had the opportunity to host the regional on-site consultation meeting in Asheville and welcomed the safety and health director of the Biltmore House as the keynote speaker.

The Education, Training and Technical Assistance Bureau has been hard at work on various projects including an upgrade of the One Stop Shop, the integration of a new internal and external online training registration system and the establishment of a Virtual Training Studio. The 25th annual Carolina Star Conference was a resounding success, welcoming 724 attendees and recognizing nine 25-year award recipients.

The Planning, Statistics and Information Management Bureau was also hard at work processing 971 disclosure requests for compliance files, providing data for the monthly OFIR report, the NCDOL annual report and various other annual department, division, and legislative reports. The bureau also surveyed nearly 3,300 public sector establishment locations earlier this year and has collected nearly 100% of the surveys at a 100% clean rate.

And to the Director's Office and our administrative staff – we couldn't function without your experience, knowledge and support. I am incredibly honored to work with all of you and am proud of the many and various ways that we serve North Carolina's workers and employers.

Merry Christmas & Happy Holidays,

Jennifer

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Happy Holidays!*

