

# WVDOH Today!

## WVDOH Prepares for Tomorrow With Scholarships for Future Engineers.



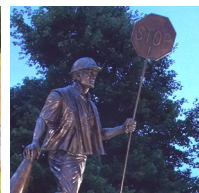
West Virginia Division of Highways engineering scholarship recipients were recognized by Commissioner, Jimmy Wriston, P.E., and State Highway Engineer, Aaron Gillispie, P.E., on Friday August 2. To maintain scholarship eligibility, students must earn at least 12 credit hours per semester, maintain a satisfactory GPA, work as Engineering Summer Co-Ops and sign letters of intent to work as an Engineering in Training with the WVDOH upon graduation.

“It’s really great, it’s my second year doing it,” said scholarship recipient Jacob Hill, pictured here with his son, Henry. “The first year I was on the Beckley Bypass, and so I saw everything. This year I’m on a bridge right outside of Shady Spring, so it’s a different type of job there, but it’s been a really great, informative experience, so I’m excited to come work for the state after I’m done. “

This years recipients were Jacob Hill, Nicholas Humphrey, Lauren Owens, Victoria Peyton, Jacob Stanislawczyk and Jonathan Williams. Each has already begun to serve the citizens of West Virginia and gain experience through the Engineering Summer Co-Op Program. For a photo of each student, see page 6.

### Also in this Issue:

**New Equipment  
SAG Award  
Corridor H  
Never Forget  
No Picnic!**



# Tools of the Trade for All Ten Districts: Equipment Being Distributed Statewide



Employees in Buckhannon recently got a look at the new equipment that is being distributed to every District across the state. The equipment is being undercoated with a rust preventative while in Buckhannon, to help insure it stays in the best condition possible for as long as possible.



The items being distributed will help dedicated employees work more efficiently with fewer frustrating breakdowns. In total, 279 pieces of new equipment have been purchased. Some of it, such as the first 10 Gradalls, has been received by the WVDOH, and the rest, such as the other 10 Gradalls, is on the way.



**20 Gradalls**

**60 Tandem Dump Trucks**

**60 Single Axle Dump Trucks**

**20 F-550 Dump Trucks**

**23 Highway-Grade Mowers**

**11 Cranes**

**8 Pavers**

**2 Brine Trailers**

**75 Crew Cab Pickups**





Employees display their SAG Award.

## Planning Division Receives Prestigious Award While Working Toward Transparency for WVDOH



Hussein Elkhansa

“Within the past five years, a citizen actually has the ability to go online and print their own map, get their information electronically,” said Hussein Elkhansa, M.S.E, G.I.S.P, of the Planning Division, who, along with his team of dedicated employees, recently received the prestigious SAG Award.

The SAG Award was presented at the ESRI Conference in San Diego, California, on July 8—12. Approximately 20 thousand organizations from around the world were considered, of those, the top one percent received the award.

Elkhansa, who has spent 31 years working with the West Virginia Division of Highways, describes what his team has developed as the “Google Earth of the DOT.” Gathering on the state capitol grounds for the photo above, there was much laughter and goodwill among the employees as they described how they worked together. Their goal was to do the work, not to win the award. They are a driving force behind the WVDOH’s work to become even more transparent to meet the information needs of today’s public.

“My people, I brag about them,” Elkhansa beams. “They don’t make me feel guilty if I call somebody on the weekend and say, “I need your help.” They volunteer. Some times we get jobs, real quick jobs from the Governor, and

I ask people to stay after five o’clock. They did. They don’t complain and say, “It’s not my job.” They stay, and they were happy.”

“This is the century of transparency,” said Elkhansa, “You have to be. You have to actually put all your cards out. People are looking for that. There is nothing you can hide anymore, and when you hide it, people are going to question it. “

With this success, the work of the Planning Division continues. The need for transparency in the work of government agencies is unprecedented. “Easy access, that’s the most important thing,” Elkhansa says of the application they are currently creating. “Anybody , using any computer or your smartphone, can get the information about DOT and the jobs we are doing over here.”

Openness requires substantial effort when there is much to tell. The Planning Division must organize information that comes in many forms from all over the state, and present it in a format that is readily accessible. Elkhansa says even his own family have noticed the increase in roadwork. “People complain, I mean, even my family, my personal family, they say, “I was delayed because of your construction.” I say, well okay, what do you want? Do you want a hole in the road, or do you want the road to be paved?” Elkhansa says with a smile.

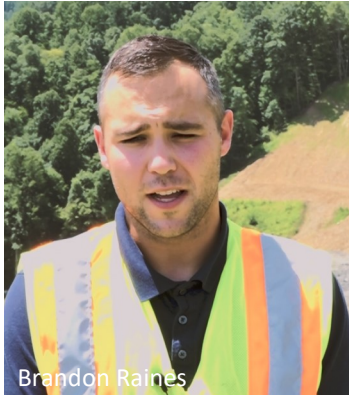
“I would like for any of the public out there, if they need information or would like to know about our ‘Google Earth of the DOT’ to contact us,” Elkhansa says. “That’s the model of this Administration, to engage with the citizens as much as we can.”



## Corridor H Expansion: Growing Infrastructure Gives Employees a Chance to Grow

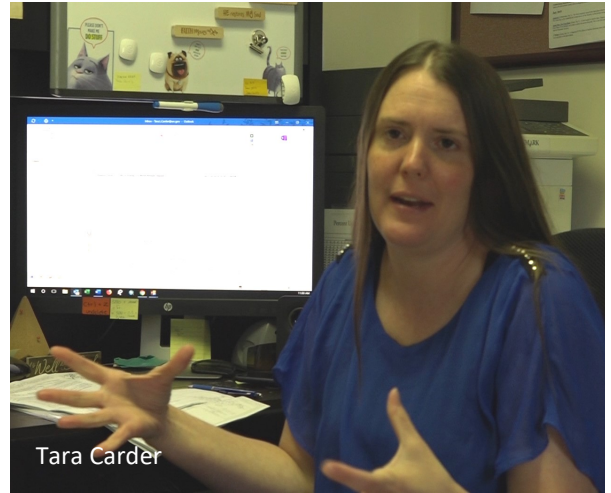
“We have the opportunity to train some young folks, and it’s just a good challenge to take on,” said Tommy Collins, P.E., the District 8 Maintenance Engineer, of the Corridor H project. “It’s awesome to see employees develop, and we just have an opportunity that maybe wasn’t there 10 or 15 years ago, that’s here today.”

One such employee is Brandon Raines, who serves as the Project Manager for the project. “Seeing such large equipment, and just such massive amounts of excavation and these large bridges that people in my position will probably never see again once this is done,” said Raines. “It’s a once in a lifetime opportunity to be a part of something like this.” As Raines establishes his engineering career, it is an opportunity he is not likely to forget.



Brandon Raines

## Above and Beyond: Tara Carder, District 4 Driveway Permits



When asked by her District Engineer, Darby Clayton, P.E., to go before the Preston County Commission to share with the public how the driveway permitting process works, Tara Carder took the assignment a step further and developed an extensive PowerPoint presentation and handout, designed from the perspective of the public she was trying to help.

“It can be very confusing when people look at the M109 form,” said Carder. “We get phone calls all the time asking, ‘how do I fill this out?’” Carder thought about the problem from the perspective of the people who needed her help, creating a solution she would want to see if she were in their shoes. “I put together a little information sheet with questions. It’s a lot easier for them to get started.” Above and beyond is the new normal in the West Virginia Division of Highways,



Corridor H, showing earthwork and bridge piers.

# I ~~JUST~~ WORK HERE.

**Editor’s Note:** The West Virginia Division of Highways is a network of dedicated people with diverse skills, making a heartfelt effort to improve our West Virginia. That is who we are at our core. With each road we repair, we make it possible for people to accept jobs in neighboring towns, we make something new again, we help people get food, we keep families safe. The work we complete is connected to everything good that West Virginia hopes for; supporting education and tourism, helping communities recover from addiction, (everything!) This monthly newsletter could be hourly and not run low. - Jennifer Jo Dooley, editor



# Wellness Corner: Help is Available for Employees With Alcoholism and Drug Addiction

It's a scenario no one would find easy; talking to your employer about your alcoholism or drug addiction. But the West Virginia Division of Highway's encourages employees who are facing difficulties with these problems to ask for help. This is an important health crisis that faces our state right now and it is hurting many people. It takes a brave person to ask an employer for help, but help is available, and the problem will not be held against the employee who self-reports, asks for help and follows the program.

The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 made it mandatory that workplaces be free of illegal drug use and alcohol. The Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991 requires employees in safety-sensitive positions to be tested for these substances. West Virginia Department of Transportation's Administrative Procedures Volume III, Chapter 15 contains details on job classes with drug-testing requirements, confidentiality, consequences for prohibited conduct and more. In this month's Wellness Corner, the focus is on making sure every employee is aware of the Voluntary Referral portion of the policy. The reason is simple; the WVDOH wants its employees

to stay safe, healthy and alive.

Section V, Part B on the policy states "Employees covered by this policy who, of their own accord and prior to being informed they are to submit for testing, voluntarily seek the aid of a Substance Abuse Professional (SAP), will be allowed a leave status consistent with the WV Division of Personnel's and WVDOT's Administrative Rules up to forty-five days to meet initial rehabilitation demands established by a SAP. No disciplinary action will be initiated as a result of Voluntary Referral. The employee may return to duty upon recommendation of the SAP and may be subject to follow-up testing at the discretion of the SAP. "

If you have a problem with addiction or alcoholism, you are encouraged to talk to your Human Resources section and your insurance carrier about the programs offered. No matter what your job position is with the WVDOH, rest assured, your employer wants you to be well and to be safe and your co-workers depend on you. In the WVDOH today, there is an increased spirit of teamwork and solving problems together. This problem affects many and is no different in that regard.

## Secretary, Commissioner Visit Co-Workers Statewide



District 6—Sally's Backbone Road. District 9—Steve Hawkins retirement. District 8—office hello's (photos by Randy Damron.)

Wherever you are in the WVDOH, your co-workers Byrd White and Jimmy Wriston, P.E., might stop by to see you at any time. They can't be everywhere, but they could be anywhere. White, who serves as Secretary of Transportation, and Wriston, who serves as Deputy Secretary of Transportation and Acting Commissioner of Highways, share a guiding principle which shapes their work. "If you're going to have a plan," said White, "you have to start with the people who are going to implement it." To have effective statewide teamwork, you need to have everyone on the team, be aware of the value of each and give them the tools they need to work efficiently. "I've never worked with better people in my life," said Wriston, of his experience working with WVDOH folk. White and Wriston are working together with all their co-workers all around the state to build a WVDOH that is a great place to work every day.



## WVDOH Scholarship Recipients Recognized



Jacob Stanislawczyk



Jonathan Williams



Lauren Owens



Nicholas Humphrey



Victoria Peyton



Jacob Hill

## Environmental Section Preserves Crawdads, While Preparing for New Roads

"This should be celebrated by the West Virginia Division of Highways as a great accomplishment," said Greg Bailey, P.E., of the work of the Engineering Division's Environmental Section. "It preserves our environment and allows us to move forward with needed roadway improvements."

Traci Cummings, Sydney Burke, Sondra Mullins, Ben Hark and others within the Environmental Section, have partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and West Liberty University to conserve two species of crayfish (crawdads), the Big Sandy crayfish and the Guyandotte River crayfish. The work our Environmental Section does is challenging at times, and they are to be commended for their diligence in making sure we take care of West Virginia while we are improving and maintaining our infrastructure. Thanks to them, we can have both — roads to go somewhere and crawdads in the creek when we get home. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently shared a story on the front page of their newsletter, available at [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov), for those wishing more information.



Big Sandy Crayfish (*Cambarus callainus*). Photos by Sydney Burke.



Environmental section, selfie with Big Sandy Crayfish.



**From:** Gum, Jason R <[Jason.R.Gum@wv.gov](mailto:Jason.R.Gum@wv.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 10, 2019 11:26 AM  
**To:** DOT Secretary <[DOT.Secretary@wv.gov](mailto:DOT.Secretary@wv.gov)>  
**Cc:** DOT Commissioner <[DOT.Commissioner@wv.gov](mailto:DOT.Commissioner@wv.gov)>  
**Subject:** Leadership

Good day,

My name is Jason Gum, I am a Project Supervisor at District 4 HQ-Construction here in [Clarksburg, WV](http://www.clarksburg.wv.gov). I wanted to share a photo of our Acting District Engineer, Darby Clayton, P.E. Today Mr. Clayton assisted in an employee appreciation dinner at District. It was 90 degrees and barely a cloud in the sky, yet Mr. Clayton commanded the grill! In the 17 years being with the WVDOH I have never seen a District Engineer remotely do anything like this. To few it may be nothing much, but to many of us it's true leadership. Just wanted to share this, the DOH has never been as great as it's been here in the last couple years. There is no intent in this email other than an employee appreciating real leadership, something we haven't had here in a long time.

Thank you,

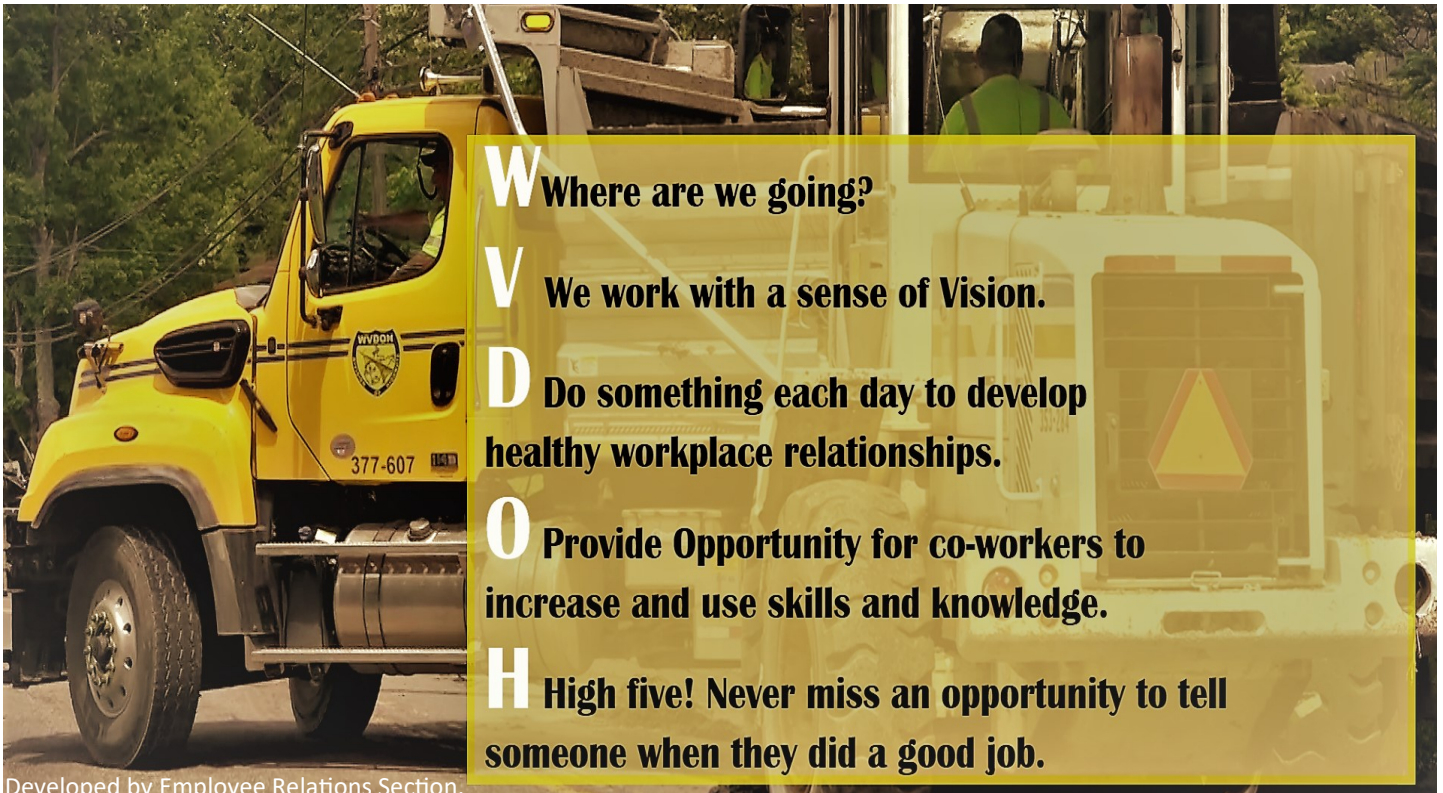
Jason R. Gum  
 Project Supervisor  
 WV DOH  
 District 4 Construction

## Leadership: It's No Picnic!

On Wednesday, July 10, the Secretary and Commissioner received an email that demonstrates all five of the concepts in the acrostic (below) developed by the Human Resources Division.

Where are we going? We work with a sense of Vision. Do something each day to develop healthy workplace relationships. Provide Opportunity for co-workers to increase and use skills and knowledge. High five! Never miss an opportunity to tell someone when they did a good job; the acrostic reminds us. Jason Gum, a Project Supervisor in District 4 Construction, took it a step further.

In the WVDOH we are working hard and fast to become, we create opportunities and recognize the above and beyond in each other. This makes for an increasingly better working environment for all involved. We recognize we are not here to hold each other back, but to do all that we can, not just for our work but also for our amazing team of co-workers across the state. While the email communicated the leadership qualities of Mr. Clayton, it reflected positively on Mr. Gum as well. We have nothing to lose by appreciating the best in each other. That is the nature of true teamwork.



**W** Where are we going?  
**V** We work with a sense of Vision.  
**D** Do something each day to develop healthy workplace relationships.  
**O** Provide Opportunity for co-workers to increase and use skills and knowledge.  
**H** High five! Never miss an opportunity to tell someone when they did a good job.

Developed by Employee Relations Section.





Fallen Worker Memorial. Photo by Bridget Buffington.

## Never Forget: Work Zone Safety—All Day, Every Day

The Fallen Worker Memorial stands, at Exit 185 off I-77, as a reminder to slow down in work zones, pay attention, look out for each other and be as safe as possible. The names of the people on it are names of people who were doing the same things we do. They may have been following all the safety rules themselves, but while good things take time and effort to build—bad things tend to happen fast. Take time to remember them each day, and look out for each other in all you do.

**Victor D. Abbington**

**Edward Arnold**

**Bernard J. Beto**

**Wetzel L. Bias**

**Randall W. Bland**

**Eli Blankenship, Jr.**

**Timothy R. Boothe**

**Joseph Chetock**

**Stephen M. Cogar**

**William D. Cook**

**Arthur Coulter**

**Timothy A. Cox**

**Susan J. Custer**

**Okey Dean**

**Chester Delong**

**Francis Doran**

**David Earliwine**

**Robert E. Fleece, Jr.**

**James A. Galloway, Jr.**

**John D. Greenwide**

**Morris Hansford**

**Benjamin Harris**

**Stephen A. Herold**

**Charles E. Himelrick, Jr.**

**Nelson E. Ingram**

**Robert Kanode**

**Paul B. Kile**

**Robert Lilly**

**Edwin Logston**

**Glenn F. Lough**

**Oscar Maynard**

**Millard M. Mcatte**

**Woodrow W. McGraw**

**John A. Moat**

**John A. Murphy**

**Dennis C. Neely, Jr.**

**Ellis Ogden**

**Steven L. Oldaker**

**John L. Poland**

**Robert Pritt**

**Forest A. Raynes**

**Okie Riser**

**Rickie H. Sanders**

**Jack Sharps**

**Harold Sherr**

**Glen Shrewsbury**

**Luke G. Simplicio**

**Roger E. Skinner**

**Frederick L. Sponaugle**

**Eugene Sullivan**

**Ralph W. Swisher**

**John Townsend**

**Roy Vanscoy**

**James H. Watts**

**Terry L. Webb**

**Johnny L. Wilson**