

VAanguard

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

January/February 2012



*Recovery, Transition, Growth
Yet Success on Campus
Simulation and Health Care
Core Values in Practice*

VA's Talent Management System Named Best in the Industry

In October, VA's Talent Management System received the 2011 Insight Award for "Best Deployment to an Organization." This prestigious award is bestowed on public and private sector organizations that have found imaginative methods to launch learning management solutions to their organizations. Previous Insight Award winners have included ImClone Systems, Allegis Group and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

VA's TMS is the result of a Department-wide effort to expand support of employee learning and training needs. The success of this project was made possible through well-coordinated collaboration across the VA Learning University, Office of Information and Technology, all three administrations, staff offices and Plateau Systems.

VA assigned a highly skilled team to plan, design, develop and deploy a 21st-century learning and training system of record. The result was a groundbreaking system that provides online training and puts professional development just a mouse-click away.

The new talent management and career development tools accomplish the goal of enhancing employees' personal and professional development by offering the training they need when and where they need it. Beyond providing users with an improved interface, the new TMS supports enhancement of leadership, occupational proficiencies and personal growth for employees.

With an intuitive, user-friendly interface and enhancements to functionality, the new TMS streamlines the process of accessing and completing training and simplifies

other learning-related tasks and activities. This ultimately results in cost and time savings to the federal government, VA and the Veterans it serves.

"We understand that we need innovative, agile approaches to design and deliver education, leadership development, learning and training—both now and in the future," said VA Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration John U. Sepúlveda. According to Sepúlveda, "in the months ahead, VALU will help us build upon our existing successes by ensuring that our learning initiatives continue to meet the changing needs of our employees and the Veterans we serve."

Sheila Bayne is an electrician with the VA Hudson Valley Health Care System. Her story is a testament to how the new TMS delivers improved on-the-job-training. "I take a lot of training to make me more qualified for my job as an electrician," Bayne said. "TMS was very easy to understand. I am also an automated data processing application coordinator, so I assist fellow employees with computer issues. The training offered through the TMS helps me help them."

In fiscal year 2011, VA learning and talent management system users recorded nearly 8 million training completions. According to VALU Dean Alice Muellerweiss, TMS has a lot to do with that. "TMS is the backbone for learning throughout the VA enterprise," she said. "VA strives to become one of the best places to work—a place where employees are empowered to reach their full potential. By having the right system

at their fingertips, employees can access on-demand content regardless of their location."

VALU Director of Learning Infrastructure Dr. Reginald E. Vance emphasized that "it's all about the people we serve. VA employees are exhibiting a thirst for learning and training that is indicative of a transformative organization." Vance added that one of VALU's goals is to operate and sustain state-of-the-art learning delivery systems. "To achieve that goal, we are providing functionality within a learning system that is employee development-centric."

The fresh, friendly design and contemporary look and feel of TMS is apparent to users as they navigate the system, and includes such enhancements as dashboards for at-a-glance views of activity. The new TMS provides access to a full complement of human capital development tools and capabilities in an intuitive format.

Lyn Costaldo, a training officer with the VA Office of Construction and Facilities Management, offered a personal testimony based on her experience and that of her employees. "The TMS management team has done outstanding work in improving the system," she said. "It's a huge improvement from the early LMS days."

"This upgrade enhances VALU's ability to transform learning across VA," said Vance. "The new, easy-to-use education, learning, leadership development and training system gives employees access to the tools they need to take charge of their careers."

Vance added that "TMS is a step in the right direction for VA to achieve a single system of record for all employees to access, track and record their learning."

Currently, VALU is highlighting the "Switch" video series on the TMS. "Switch" is an exclusive video presentation on change management. Industry thought leader Dan Heath adapted his best-selling book into a video presentation



Users can find much of what they need on the TMS home page. It presents them with the information they need in an intuitive format.

to relate to a VA audience.

The videos are now available to all employees. The "Switch" video presentations deliver useful and entertaining insights on the nature of change, how to overcome resistance to change, and practical techniques on managing change initiatives.

To access the TMS, or to learn more about course offerings and career development tools, visit www.INSIDE.TMS.va.gov, or contact VA TMS Training Manager Clarence Bashshar, at clarence.bashshar@va.gov or 202-618-5527.