

- Grants Center of Excellence Publishes "Excellence"

The Grants Center of Excellence (CoE), under the executive sponsorship of the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (HHS/ACF) has launched a quarterly newsletter to foster greater communication with the CoE partners. This first issue of "Excellence" provides information about the GrantSolutions.gov system, including accomplishments, new improvements to be released soon, and government-wide activities of interest to CoE partners. "Excellence" should be of interest to agency grants management officials, grants specialists, and others involved with supporting the grant-making process.

Each issue will contain a special **Tips and Alerts** section for greater understanding of the GrantSolutions.gov functionality and use. **Upcoming Events** will serve as a near-term calendar of CoE presentations, training opportunities, and other relevant activities planned for the next quarter.

The CoE has also established a new listserv, GRANTS-COE-NEWS, to broadcast information and to transmit the quarterly newsletter. Here is the link to the signup page:

<https://list.nih.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=grants-coe-news&A=1>

- Welcome to the CoE - Denali Commission

The Grants Center of Excellence is pleased to announce that a new partner – the Denali Commission – has signed up for CoE services. The Denali Commission was created by federal legislation in 1998, as an innovative federal-state partnership that is focused on meeting the immense infrastructure and economic challenges faced by rural Alaskan communities.

Alaska is said to be America's "Last Frontier," over twice the size of Texas, yet with approximately one person per square mile. Almost 40% of the population lives in over 200 communities that are not connected to the rest

Did You Know Alaska Has:

- 656,425 square miles (twice the size of Texas)
- 6,640 miles of coastline (longer than all other states combined)
- More than 3 million lakes larger than 20 acres in size
- An estimated 100,000 glaciers that cover almost 5% of the state
- 80% of all the active volcanos in the U.S.
- 39 mountain ranges, containing 17 of the 20 highest peaks in the U.S.

-From Denali Commission Annual Report 2006

of the state by a road or ferry network. The viability of rural Alaska depends largely upon how innovative the federal and state government can be in partnering to provide basic community infrastructure and public services.

During fiscal year 2006, the Denali Commission received over \$130 million in federal funds and made awards under six basic areas. Over one-third of the funds were awarded to support energy projects and nearly one-fourth of the funds were awarded to support health projects. The remaining funds were awarded to support other areas including transportation projects, training programs, community facilities, and economic development projects.

The Denali Commission signed an Inter-Agency Agreement with the CoE on March 6th, and has completed initial testing of the GrantSolutions.gov system. Work has begun to identify the system components and CoE services needed. A CoE staff site visit to Alaska is planned in July. Additional conference calls will be held during May and June regarding Denali's data needs.

- GrantSolutions.gov – New Release 2.0

Version 2.0 of GrantSolutions.gov has completed development and was released in March. This version has three enhancements, including a Notice of Grant Award (NGA) that is dynamic in appearance and content, depending on the agency that issues the award.

The first enhancement is the provision of a new "Manage Defaults" link, which allows the Federal user to set default terms and conditions templates for each Grant Program Type (GPT) by a specific action type, such as New, Competing Continuation, Non-competing Continuation, etc. The droplist, which is a filtered list showing only those terms and conditions templates to be used by a GPT, now provides the specific terms and conditions template for a particular action type.

The second enhancement is a new "Select Org Address" link on the draft NGA screen, which allows the user to pick from a pop-up window of addresses for the grantee organization if the default primary address (from the grantee organization record) is not being used. The user may also add a new address on this screen, for use on the draft NGA, in which case it will be stored as another secondary address (but will not change the primary address).

The final enhancement of Version 2.0 is the provision of multiple NGA formats, to accommodate the needs of new CoE partners.

- Grants Center of Excellence Partners

- Denali Commission
- HHS Administration for Children and Families
- HHS Administration on Aging
- HHS Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
- HHS Health Resources and Services Administration
- HHS Indian Health Service
- HHS Office of Public Health and Science
- Treasury Community Development Financial Institutions
- USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service

- Funds Control Subsystem Coming Summer 2007

A new release of GrantSolutions.gov, version 2.1, is planned for this summer to provide users with a robust funds control subsystem. The enhancements include:

- A shared funds control module that can implement fund control features for an interface with any external accounting system, starting with the HHS Unified Financial Management System (UFMS).
- Interfacing with the UFMS to both import current financial account balances and export commitment and obligation transactions.
- Functionality to enforce funds checking before commitments and obligations can be certified, as an optional function by agency. This functionality is required by all agencies currently using the UFMS.
- Retaining the funds planning limits ("caps") by grant program and financial account (this can be optionally enforced by agency).
- Implementation of both individual commitments and bulk commitments.

- Data Migrations Are Underway

GrantSolutions.gov is the new expansion of GATES grant award capabilities, and its first full release was January 2007. Current users of the GATES client-server environment are migrating their data to GrantSolutions.gov on a phased-in basis during FY 2007 and FY 2008.

The HHS Office of Public Health and Science (OPHS) migration has been completed and GrantSolutions.gov is fully operational for OPHS agency and grantee users. CoE staff have been meeting with the HHS Administration on Aging (AoA), the HHS Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Denali Commission, and the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) to prepare for the data migration of each agency.

A special Customer Relations Management (CRM) team was established as a resource to facilitate the data migrations to GrantSolutions.gov. The migration process involves migration to a training database by summer as the first step toward final migration to the production system.

- Standard Performance Progress Report (PPR)

Under Public Law 106-107, Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999, the Post Award work group developed a government-wide standard Performance Progress Report (SF-PPR) which consists of five optional formats. This initiative meets the legislative mandate to streamline and simplify administrative procedures and grantee reporting requirements.

The Grants Center of Excellence is targeting pilot use of the SF-PPR formats for the Fall of 2007. In preparation for this pilot, ACF published a Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) clearance notice in the April 2, 2007 issue of the *Federal Register* for public comments due no later than June 1, 2007.

- Grants Center of Excellence Awarded

The Grants Center of Excellence (COE) received the Electronic Solution Award from the National Grants Management Association (NGMA) on April 26th at the annual Grants Management Training Conference. The NGMA award is particularly meaningful because it is from our peers who know better than anyone else the work and dedication it takes to provide world class grants management services and solutions.

Mr. Curtis Coy, the ACF Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration, accepted the award on behalf of the COE. Mr. Coy stated that "the motto of Grants Center of Excellence is 'Linking services, solutions and communities'. The COE team with the support of our partners, OMB, the GMLOB and the other Grants Management Consortia Leads has shown us all how that can truly be done. The result has been improved services for the grantee and grantor communities and more money going to America's grantees because less money is consumed by government."

- TIPS and ALERTS

- ** ACF requires that all ACF FY 2007 grant awards be completed no later than September 15, 2007. However, GATES will continue to operate normally beyond that date.

- Upcoming Events

- May 14 - GrantSolutions.gov presentation to Treasury
- May 15 - GrantSolutions.gov presentation to the Veteran's Administration