

Transition Manager Hired for HR Redesign

Feb. 15, 2007

The university has hired a transition manager to lead and guide the redesign of HR services in Fairbanks. John Duhamel started work Feb. 12 as the HR transition manager.

Duhamel, who has extensive experience with logistics and business management, will coordinate efforts to develop and implement a plan that will combine and restructure Human Resources at UAF and at Statewide. The decision to redesign services followed a consultant's report that recommended a number of changes aimed at improving HR services. The university hired Segal-Sibson to review UAF and Statewide HR functions, and the nationally known consulting firm forwarded its assessment and recommendations late last year.

A preliminary outline for a plan has already been approved by the two MAUs, as developed by Ro Bailey, the UAF vice chancellor for administration, and Jim Johnsen, the vice president for administration.

Johnsen said a small steering committee will guide Duhamel as he works to flesh out plan details, develop communications strategies and to identify a time line for implementation of changes. As transition manager, Duhamel will seek the active involvement of campus and Statewide HR staff as well as customers of HR in the consideration of design and implementation issues.

During his first day on the job, Duhamel said, "Step one is figuring out where we are and where we want to go. I hope to engage HR staff and university customers in an open dialogue as we evaluate how best to optimize HR functions."

One redesign feature is that HR services for Statewide and those on campus will be consolidated as a single entity centered around a "service delivery model," in which HR consultants will provide services more directly to university customers. UAF HR advisors, called "consultants," will be based

in the units they serve, such as the Tanana Valley Campus, the Geophysical Institute or the College of Liberal Arts. The consulting firm also suggested that an effort be made to improve, streamline and wherever possible, automate HR processes and procedures. All HR services and employees at Statewide and on the UAF campus will be included in the redesign.

One of Duhamel's first tasks on the job will be to lead the effort to collect information on current HR business processes. The analysis of this information will form the basis for deciding which processes need to be re-engineered. Duhamel believes his experience with logistics and business management is a good fit for the job.

Duhamel specialized in logistics during a 20-year Air Force career. He graduated from the Air Force Academy in 1979 with a degree in engineering services and he has earned two master's degrees from Golden Gate University, in public administration and in business administration. After retiring as a lieutenant colonel in 1999, he founded and served as chief operating officer of three subsidiaries for a Doyon-area village corporation, K'oyitl'ots'ina Ltd. One of the subsidiaries he founded employs 400 people who maintain government buildings and facilities across the United States.

Duhamel is from New Hampshire and describes himself as a "cold weather kind of guy." He likes outdoor activities, including cross-country skiing, and he jumped at the chance to move his family to Alaska in 1995 for his last active duty station. After he retired, no one in his family wanted to leave, he says.

Anyone with questions or ideas about the HR redesign project may forward them to Duhamel at snjld1@email.alaska.edu.