FDIC News

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Employee Newsletter

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INSIDE

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Professional Learning Account (PLA) is a Win-Win for Employees and the FDIC

By LaJuan Williams-Young
Office of Communications

Are you prepared for the next financial crisis? Do you want to grow or sharpen your skills and knowledge base, or cross-train in other areas that support the FDIC's mission?

Would you take advantage of training and development if you had the funds and supervisory support to accomplish your goals? Will the training support the FDIC in achieving its mission? If you answered yes to those questions, the FDIC has a program for you. If you are a permanent full-time or part-time employee (with the exception of employees pursuing commissions or summer or year-round interns), you are eligible to participate in the Professional Learning Account (PLA) Program.

Rossana Milton, Administrator of the PLA Program, makes a presentation on the PLA at an Office of Communications staff meeting.

The PLA started in 2005 as an 18-month pilot program. Today, the PLA Program is a permanent component of the FDIC's training strategy. The PLA is an annual account of FDIC funds and/or official business hours that you manage in partnership with your supervisor to facilitate employee development and to train the workforce to face the changing landscape of banking.

If you are ready to use your PLA to improve your professional skills, here is what you need to do:

- Create a Career Development Plan (CDP). You must have an approved CDP to access PLA funds. You may want to meet with a Career Counselor and talk with your supervisor. Make an appointment with a counselor through the Career Management Center to discuss developing a strong Career Development Plan (CDP). The CDP captures your career development goals for the year and your specific training requirements, along with your personal justification statement for the supervisor's review and approval.
- Prepare a list of courses that you believe meets your training goals and discuss it with your supervisor. The training should support both the FDIC's objectives and your professional development goals.
- Log-in to MyEnroll.com to create a CDP for your supervisor's approval. Once the CDP is approved, create and submit a PLA training request for approval. Once your training request is approved, your division or office administrator will process and pay for the approved training.

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If your request is denied, your supervisor must provide justification. Reasons for denial include, but are not limited to, training that is not consistent with your CDP or that is completely unrelated to your work or potential opportunities within the FDIC. Make adjustments to your career plan and/or training requests based on your supervisor's feedback, and try again.

For instructions on entering a training request via MyEnroll.com, click here. For checklists for employees and supervisors, click on Employee Checklist and Supervisor Checklist.

Allocated funding and training hours are as follows:

Grades	PLA Funds Per Eligible Learner	Annual Training Hours Per Eligible Learner
11 and below	$1,500	Minimum of 24 work hours and maximum of 48 work hours applied to all categories
12-15 (non-managers)	$2,000	
CM/EM/CX	$2,500	

Employees can choose from a variety of training and delivery options, such as online courses, individual college courses, or classes offered by professional organizations that are related to an employee's current occupation or future career opportunities.

There are a few reasonable limitations to the program; click on PLA FAQs for specific restrictions. In order to attend training using PLA funds and training hours, an employee must obtain supervisory approval, and full payment by the FDIC must be completed prior to the first day of the training.

Ready – you've got an approved CDP and an approved PLA training request.

Set – you've successfully completed the course.

Go! – well, not exactly. You're back at work and ready to apply this new knowledge, but there is one more step—the evaluation process. You must complete the electronic evaluation, via MyEnroll, to receive credit for the training and access any remaining PLA funds. This is a very important component of the program that must not be overlooked.

Employees can choose from a variety of training and delivery options, such as online courses, individual college courses, or classes offered by professional organizations that are related to an employee's current occupation or future career opportunities.

Congratulations – You are on the way to sharpening your skills and growing your professional career, which will enable you to handle whatever the FDIC might face, now and in the future.

Questions about the PLA Program can be sent to PLAhelpdesk@fdic.gov. Make this the year you will take a class or attend a conference that can help propel your career to the next level at the FDIC.

CMs and EMs: Succession Planning Review Takes Shape

A pilot in 2015, the Succession Planning Review (SPR) gains permanent status this year and expands to include all CM employees.

By Sally Kearney
Office of Communications

The Succession Planning Review (SPR), a program designed to strengthen leadership succession at the FDIC, is expanding this year after the completion of a pilot in 2015. While the pilot targeted a more limited pool of managers—CM2s and EMs—the program is broadening its scope to include all CMs—both CM1s and CM2s—and all EMs, with the exception of division and office directors.

"The pilot targeted about 270 people and was very successful, with an 86 percent participation rate," said Rowie Pangilinan, Human Resources Specialist, Division of Administration, and the SPR team leader. "This year, more than 500 CM1s are being added to the program, bringing the total target group to more than 800."

Strengthening the Succession Pipeline

The SPR was established in response to a 2014 study that found the FDIC's succession pipeline inadequate to meet its future leadership needs. In some cases, the survey found major succession gaps for critical leadership positions. The SPR aims to strengthen the succession pipeline by surveying the existing management workforce, ascertaining which individuals aspire to more senior roles, and encouraging professional development both within divisions and offices and mobility across the agency.

The two cornerstones of the SPR program are the annual survey and divisional and cross-divisional meetings in which FDIC senior leaders identify needs within their divisions and offices, and make recommendations to individuals on how they can continue their professional development.

All CMs and EMs, with the exception of division and office directors, will receive an invitation to complete the 2016 SPR survey in late March. The survey will ask recipients questions about their interest in more senior leadership roles. Are they interested in pursuing such opportunities, and if so, when? Would they be open to developmental opportunities that would make them more competitive for such positions, including rotations or permanent transfers?

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Planning, *from page 2*

The survey will also gather information about each individual's professional experience. The purpose of the survey is to gain a clear and accurate picture of those individuals who aspire to more senior leadership roles within the FDIC.

After recipients respond to the survey, the SPR team will create individual fact sheets based on a person's career highlights. The fact sheet will include a summary of work experience, projects and assignments, and other relevant comments that the recipient provided as part of the survey response. "Senior leaders will use these fact sheets as a reference during their reviews," Pangilinan said.

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Identifying Opportunities for Aspiring Leaders

Two types of meetings will evaluate the survey respondents. In May, each division and office director will hold a meeting specific to his or her division or office. "Division and office directors and some of their senior leaders will evaluate their workforce needs and assess the potential applicant pool according to those needs," Pangilinan said.

In June, all FDIC division and office directors will meet to evaluate the agency's succession needs from a cross-divisional perspective. The directors will review the fact sheets of respondents who have expressed an interest in more senior leadership positions, who are high performers according to their LPMRs, and who have indicated a willingness to make a change in a short timeframe. "This agency-wide meeting will facilitate information sharing across divisions and offices," Pangilinan said. "Directors will be able to consult with each other about the succession gaps in their areas and identify ways that individuals can continue their professional development to build the succession pipeline and address gaps. They will look at each individual's experience and determine whether the person needs additional development of skills necessary for senior leadership roles. The directors will then be able to make meaningful recommendations for the individuals on how they can continue their professional development."

The cross-divisional SPR meeting is designed to break down what up to now has been a more stovepipe approach to succession management and instead open opportunities for leaders to move across divisions and offices. "Succession pipelines for any division or office can originate from other divisions and offices," Pangilinan said. "For example, someone from DIR might benefit from experience with RMS or DCP. Expertise within specific functions is not necessarily a requirement for all leadership roles. In a departure from the past, in many cases, the emphasis would be on developing additional leadership skills that could be transferred to a number of opportunities."

Nonbinding Recommendations

The approximately 80 individuals reviewed during the cross-divisional meeting in June will receive developmental recommendations during their mid-year LPMR discussions with their supervisors. Recommendations may include attending Corporate University training programs, receiving executive coaching, participating in the Executive Mentoring Program, and taking advantage of expressions of interest, external details, or rotation opportunities to develop specific leadership skills.

Pangilinan emphasized that the recommendations are nonbinding. "Each individual can decide for himself or herself to pursue or not pursue the recommendations," she said. "There is no obligation to do so. However, given that these individuals have expressed a desire to advance and a willingness to make a change in the near future, we anticipate that many will take advantage of the developmental opportunities available to them."

"Succession pipelines for any division or office can originate from other divisions and offices," Pangilinan said. "For example, someone from DIR might benefit from experience with RMS or DCP. Expertise within specific functions is not necessarily a requirement for all leadership roles. In a departure from the past, in many cases, the emphasis would be on developing additional leadership skills that could be transferred to a number of opportunities."

Also underscored by Pangilinan is the fact that no position or training participation is guaranteed; individuals who receive the recommendations must compete for any opportunity as would any other candidate. "The SPR is a way for the FDIC to identify its succession needs and make recommendations to aspiring leaders about how they can develop their potential," she said. "Whether they follow up on those recommendations is a personal decision. And there are no guarantees. Each of the selected individuals must compete, if they choose to do so, for any position."

To address the needs of this year's expanded program participation, the SPR team is designating points of contact within each division and office to serve as liaisons between the SPR team and their division or office. These points of contact will serve as resources for EMs and CMs on the SPR process.

Pangilinan encourages CMs and EMs to complete the survey. "The SPR is a systematic and deliberate approach to assessing and cultivating leadership talent within the FDIC," she said. "The program points to potential opportunities for aspiring leaders and offers specific developmental steps to help these aspiring leaders compete for opportunities. As a result, the SPR opens new and exciting career paths for CMs and EMs."

Trainees Blossom During DRR-Dallas Rotations

Whatever specialty they end up choosing, Corporate Employee Program (CEP) participants reap benefits from their seven-week DRR rotations in Dallas.

By Sally Kearney
Office of Communications

Note: This story is the first in a four-part series on the rotations that CEP participants undergo during their first year in the program. Each story will focus on a rotation in one of the four driver divisions: DRR, RMS, DCP, and DIR.

Five times a year, a crack team of resolutions professionals welcomes an incoming class of Corporate Employee Program (CEP) participants who will spend seven weeks in Dallas learning about the resolutions side of the FDIC's mission. The curriculum, carefully prepared by the Dallas team, starts with two weeks in the classroom followed by four weeks of practical training in various DRR departments. The program concludes with a seventh capstone week that offers final training to reinforce all the students have learned since their arrival. After saying farewell to the students, it is time for the team to get ready for the next incoming class.

The DRR-Dallas team has conducted this educational program since the CEP was launched in 2005, and although theirs is a collateral responsibility, the team members willingly devote time and energy to creating a learning experience that is meaningful, stimulating, and productive for the CEP participants, otherwise known as Financial Institution Specialists, or FISs. "Our goal is to give the students a strong grasp of what we do," said Bob Schwarzlose, a Closings and Resolutions Manager who has taught the franchise marketing segment for 10 years. "We want to empower them with this knowledge." With a note of pride, Schwarzlose added, "We also want them to leave thinking, 'Wow, I'm impressed with how DRR strives to meet its part of the FDIC mission.'"

The Right Amount of Information

On their first day, the 25 to 35 CEP students who make up a typical class arrive at the Corporate University (CU) training center to begin their classroom instruction. During the next two weeks, instructors convey the fundamentals of franchise marketing, asset management, claims, investigations, and more. These experts distill decades of experience into presentations containing just the right amount of information—not too little and not too much. "When teaching introductory courses I've learned that you don't have to give every detail," said DRR Project Manager Kristen Williams, a longtime instructor. "Sometimes that just confuses things. Instead we have to figure out how to get the essence across while keeping it at a level that ensures a basic, solid understanding."

Resolutions and Receiverships Specialists Cassandra Knighton and Lametra Off, who both teach the deposit insurance regulations segment, describe terms and concepts in a way that is easily understandable for each participant. "Most importantly, we remember what it feels like to be new to the claims department, so we talk to each individual without ambiguous acronyms, jargon, and abbreviations," said Knighton. "We firmly believe it is important to take special care to make sure each participant is heard and understood."

An instructor with the DRR-Dallas rotation since the CEP was launched in 2005, Bob Schwarzlose said, "It has been a real privilege to help the next generation get a well-rounded perspective of the FDIC that includes DRR."

But teachers do not shy away from getting into some of the nuts and bolts. "I give them a rundown of the major processes we have to complete at a closing to get control of the assets," said Joe Wilkinson, an Asset Management Resolutions and Receiverships Specialist.

Schwarzlose and Mike Quarry, Senior Franchise and Asset Marketing Specialist, devote part of their franchise marketing segment to chronicling a brief history of major bank failures. Using an exercise entitled, "Why Did This Bank Fail?" they group the students into teams, assign each a case study of an actual bank failure, and leave the groups to confer and think through the material to reach a conclusion, which is written on white boards and presented to

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Claims Instructors Lametra Off and Cassandra Knighton build competition into their classroom exercises to keep participants engaged.

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the class. This exercise leads into a broader discussion of bank failures for which the students are now prepared. "It's a kind of reverse learning technique that gets them immersed right away and gives them a context for what follows," said Quarry.

Keeping the curriculum current also keeps students engaged. "Last year we revised our curriculum in franchise marketing to make it more topical," Quarry said. "One thing we did was to update our list of case studies to include failures from the most recent financial crisis. We also kept some case studies from the past, because some of those stories are just too good to leave out."

Kristen Williams concurred. "As events come up, we integrate them into the courses," she said, recalling classes she taught during the financial crisis and afterward. "We were teaching claims when the limit for deposit insurance increased from $100,000 to $250,000, so we quickly redesigned the test. When provisions of the Dodd-Frank Act were being implemented, it was pretty exciting, because something new was coming out almost every day, and the class was very engaged. They came in every morning and asked, 'What is in the news today? What has changed?'"

Instructors stay on the lookout for ways to make learning participatory. "We try to keep them engaged," said Joe Wilkinson, who pointed to a game he uses in his asset management course, "Backwards Jeopardy," based on the television game show "Jeopardy." "We call out questions and the teams compete," he said. "It gets them motivated and prepares them for the quiz at the end of the segment."

Fred Brown, DRR Chair for CU, and Kristen Williams, a longtime instructor, work together to develop a creative and educational curriculum for CEP participants.

Now earning her RMS commission, Nicole Lurvey applies what she learned about problem banks during her DRR rotation to her risk examinations.

Another student favorite is "FAMB Feud," modeled after the game show "Family Feud." Schwarzlose, Quarry, and their colleagues designed this game as a learning tool. "We'll throw out a question such as, 'Tell me the three or four ways the FDIC markets banks,'" Quarry said. "They become fierce competitors."

The claims instructors agree that competition is important. "One thing that we find engages and reinforces learning from the claims perspective is the competition created through knowledge checks throughout our presentation," said Lametra Off. "The students are divided into teams and each team has an opportunity to answer a question. When the answer is incorrect, other teams are allowed to answer correctly and steal for the points. With the competition, we find that all of the students are excited and engaged, thereby increasing retention of the information presented."

During their first week, students also designate their top choices for the four-week specialization. The end of classroom instruction signals the beginning of these practical assignments; FISs disperse to the various departments and work with training specialists. If an opportunity arises, they also go to closed bank sites. During the financial crisis, CEP rotations were temporarily extended so that FISs could assist at failed bank sites, a once-in-a-career experience that led to several FISs electing the DRR commissioning track.

Yogesh Patel enjoyed the practical portion of his DRR rotation so much that he elected to take the DRR commissioning track. He is working toward that goal now.

When the practical experience portion of their DRR rotation is over, the FISs return to the classroom for a capstone week of summing up and collective learning. "The first thing they do is talk about what they learned during their assignments," Schwarzlose said. "A student who was in claims, for example, hears what a student in ORE [Owned Real Estate] learned."

Students Gain Traction

The multifaceted nature of the program offers abundant opportunities for students to latch on to the subject material. Yogesh Patel's interest was piqued during the classroom instruction, but his interest deepened during his assignment in the Franchise and Asset Marketing Branch with training specialist Tony Dixon, now retired. "Tony had a wealth of experience and had worked in several departments," Patel said. "He had a gift for discerning your level of experience and pitching to your speed. His game plan turned my classroom knowledge into working knowledge."

During that assignment, Patel decided to take the DRR commissioning track and is now working on earning his commission. Every so often, when a new CEP class comes through Dallas, he lends the training specialists a hand by serving as an additional resource. "It was not that long ago

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that I was in their shoes, and I remember what it felt like," he said.

FISs whose rotations coincided with the financial crisis enjoyed a unique opportunity to become part of resolution teams at failed bank sites. For Mona Thomas, now a commissioned DRR specialist, the experience was a turning point. "I had fabulous classroom instructors for an entire month of training," she said. "When we were assigned to program areas, I got to see in action what I had been learning in class. I was in awe at the work done at failed banks. We trained in all the functional areas of the closing. I sat with the pro forma [accounting] team, asset marketing, claims, and so on."

Thomas knew she wanted to work in DRR, so when she was told she had been selected for the division's commissioning track, she was elated. "I can still recall that moment," she said.

Nicole Lurvey may have opted to become a risk management examiner, but she still has fond memories of her DRR rotation. "Bob Schwarzlose made sure that my time in FAMB was well spent," she said. "I made calls to market institutions, and Bob sent me on a due diligence assignment at a failing bank. I really experienced what the branch does on a daily basis." Now earning her commission, Lurvey said she has a "big-picture feel" for what can happen to a bank if problems persist. "Knowing what could happen makes me want to help management straighten out their issues before it is too late," she said.

Dominique Gloster was one of four members in the first DRR commissioning class, and she took an immediate liking to everything about the work. "During my DRR rotation, I enjoyed working in pro-forma/settlements," she said. "What I liked was talking with the bank president to let him or her know about the options within the agreement. What I also find interesting is working with people both inside and outside the agency." Gloster went on to earn her DRR commission in 2011. What Kimberly Anderson most enjoyed about her DRR rotation was accompanying the DRR team to a failed bank in Puerto Rico. Now specializing in risk management examinations, she appreciates having a broader perspective when she walks into a bank.

Jelani Bracey found his rotation exciting from the very first day. "The instruction was informative, and I really enjoyed it," he said. "What appealed to me was discovering that every bank failure is different. Some are due to fraud, others to bad loans. I immediately found this to be very interesting work."

During the more informal moments, when he had the chance to sit and talk with senior professionals at a bank site, Bracey decided to specialize in DRR. "I listened to their stories about previous closings," he said. "These stories were intriguing and fascinating. I decided that I wanted to do this work and be a part of this tradition." Bracey earned his DRR commission in 2011.

Resolutions and Receiverships Specialist Jelani Bracey, a member of the first DRR commissioning class, was inspired to specialize in DRR after hearing stories from seasoned resolutions experts during his DRR rotation.

A member of the first DRR commissioning class, Resolutions and Receiverships Specialist Dominique Gloster took an immediate interest in pro forma/settlements during her DRR rotation.

Resolutions and Receiverships Specialist Mona Thomas, who received her DRR commission in 2012, still recalls how elated she was when she learned that she had been selected for the DRR commissioning track.

Teaching's Many Rewards The teaching staff works with Fred Brown, DRR Chair for CU in Dallas, to design and present the CEP curriculum. Recently, they cooperated to strengthen the courses in each area. Brown helps bring in new instructors to add to the pool. "We simply could not do this without the commitment and enthusiasm of our instructors," he said.

Brown and Steve Cooper, Associate Chief Learning Officer, CU, manage the logistics of the rotation, from providing classroom facilities to producing student guides. "They do all the heavy lifting involved in hosting these students," said Quarry.

Explaining what motivates them to return year after year, instructors and coaches point to their commitment to the FDIC's future as well as the work's inherent advantages. "I have the best job at the FDIC, because among my many other responsibilities, I get to host the FISs," said George Fritz, Resolutions and Closings Manager, and the manager of the DRR rotations. "It is very personally rewarding to see a student successfully complete the CEP and for some to become commissioned in DRR."

Schwarzlose agreed. "It benefits us to

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share what we know, even if many of the students go on to RMS or DCP, because the knowledge they gain helps them do their jobs more effectively. Besides," he added, "we are pleased that 38 FISs have earned their DRR commissions."

Kristen Williams explained why teaching matters to her. "Teaching is one of the most gratifying things I do," she said. "There is something awesome about that moment when you see in a student's eyes that he or she has really understood what you are trying to explain." She recalled experiencing that recognition while teaching her first CEP class. "It was the second or third day, and when I realized that they were actually getting it, I was excited. When the next class came to Dallas a couple of months later, I said to one of my colleagues, 'Do you think it will happen again?' I thought that 'aha moment' might have been a one-time occurrence. But amazingly, it happened again, and has been happening ever since. So I guess you could say it gives me a teacher's high."

Schwarzlose sometimes looks back to the first class of CEP students. "I can't believe that we have been doing this for 10 years, and that at the end of 2015, we taught Class 50," he said. "I think about all the students who have gone through the DRR rotation. It has been a real privilege to help the next generation get a well-rounded perspective of the FDIC that includes DRR. We love what we do, and we hope that enthusiasm is contagious. I am always thrilled when I run into my former participants and hear about what they are doing now."

WDI Perspectives

George Parkerson offers insights on pursuing diverse career opportunities.

This month, the *FDIC News* introduces *WDI Perspectives*, a new occasional feature that looks at how individuals are pursuing career opportunities at the FDIC. For this first installment, Connie Evans of the Legal Division, who writes stories for the *FDIC News*, sat down with George Parkerson of RMS to learn about his career choices and experiences. Following are excerpts from their conversation.

FDIC News: *We understand that you have enjoyed a well-rounded career at the FDIC. Can you tell us about the positions you have held?*

George Parkerson: Since joining the FDIC in 1984, I have served in a variety of positions, including as a risk management examiner in both the Seattle and San Francisco Field Offices. Subsequent positions included Regional Training Coordinator, Case Manager, and Assistant Regional Director in the San Francisco Regional Office. Currently, I am a Senior Policy Analyst for risk management in our Washington Office. Pursuing a position in our Washington Office was itself a diverse career choice to gain valuable headquarters experience, including broader divisional and agency perspectives.

Serving in a variety of roles has provided valuable and diverse experiences in bank supervision; administrative functions, such as employee recruitment, training, and development; and employee supervision. Along the way, I also pursued temporary responsibilities through details and served as Chair of the Chairman's Diversity Advisory Council in San Francisco; as Deputy Ethics Counselor, both in Washington and San Francisco, and on the Editorial Board of the *FDIC News*.

FDIC News: *What prompted you to pursue diversity in your career?*

George Parkerson: Since early in my career, I have deliberately pursued diverse roles to gain a broader understanding of our organization and better serve as a leader, when such opportunities are presented. Part of my approach has also been to pursue meaningful academic achievements to further broaden and balance my experiences and capabilities.

FDIC News: *What kinds of strategies did you use to guide you in your path?*

George Parkerson: Before joining the FDIC, I identified my long-term career goal to aspire to leadership positions in business and finance, including at the executive level. Later, after reading *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen R. Covey, I developed a personal mission statement that includes pursuing challenging leadership positions as a core professional objective. Memorializing this objective has helped guide my pursuit of targeted positions, details, and networking, including several informal mentoring relationships.

FDIC News: *Among the strategies that you used, which worked the best? Which would you recommend to others?*

George Parkerson: Among the most effective approaches I have used has been to annually conduct a self-assessment and establish a Career Development Plan, then identify and pursue appropriate work experiences and training opportunities. As a result, I've consistently used my Professional Learning Account funds to attend meaningful external courses, including as part of graduate- and executive-level programs. I also routinely let those in my supervisory line know of my career aspirations and plans, which helps secure supervisory concurrence and ensures being considered for relevant opportunities. Such discussions can also generate new ideas.

FDIC News: *Do you enjoy new experiences?*

George Parkerson: I thoroughly enjoy the challenges of new assignments. Since coming to the Washington Office in 2010,

see **Parkerson**, *page 8, column 1*

Parkerson, *from page 7*

I have served in several supervisory roles, including Acting Associate Director for Planning and Resource Management, DIR, and Acting Chief for three RMS sections—the Policy and Program Development Section, the Administrative Management Section, and the Risk Management and Applications Section III. Each role required quickly becoming familiar with another work unit and staff and related organizational priorities. Meeting with key supervisors and employees early helps ensure proper focus and allows me to be productive more quickly. Understanding a work unit's culture—what might be described as "the way we do things around here"—typically takes longer.

FDIC News: *What training have you participated in and how has it contributed to your growth within the agency?*

George Parkerson: I have consistently pursued meaningful training and developmental opportunities, including through graduate- and executive-level programs. I pursued an Executive MBA at University of San Francisco and a certificate at the Pacific Coast Banking School at University of Washington. I have also pursued executive-level program courses at both the Wharton School at University of Pennsylvania and Chicago Booth at University of Chicago. In addition, I have regularly attended FDIC-sponsored courses, including those offered through the FFIEC Examiner Education Office.

In addition to participating in training as a student, I have also served as an instructor for several courses: the Financial Institution Analysis School; the FFIEC Management Workshop; and the FFIEC Instructor Training. Leading these courses has enhanced my knowledge and understanding of the

topics covered, such as financial analysis; management theory and practice; and communication and approaches to learning. Attending training for and serving as a facilitator has also increased my awareness of group dynamics and processes.

FDIC News: *Some people may hesitate to explore different options because they do not want to be perceived as "dabbling" or simply pursuing new experiences for the sake of novelty. Could you explain how you ensure that you stay on course with your goals while at the same time exploring diverse opportunities?*

George Parkerson: I only pursue the few vacancy announcements that align with my career and developmental goals. This approach ensures that I only apply or express interest in opportunities that would meaningfully enhance my experience and capabilities. It also ensures that I'm properly considering the impact that temporary assignments may have on my permanent work unit. I also routinely share my rationale with my supervisory line to ensure awareness of how particular opportunities may provide experiential value.

FDIC News: *Can you share with us some of the results of your efforts—perhaps some of your achievements?*

George Parkerson: There are a few key examples. Having served as Assistant Regional Director, including during the recent financial crisis, strengthened my bank supervision experience and is helping me better serve as a resource to the RMS Policy Branch. Also, my experience as Regional Training Coordinator, focusing on employee training and development issues, has significantly enhanced my ability to serve as a supervisor. Along the way, formal achievements include being selected as an RMS *Employee of the Year* in 2001, honor roll for graduate programs, and class president for the Pacific Coast Banking School program.

Most importantly, preparing for this article and reflecting on my many career opportunities and choices over the years, I realize that my approach has been successful. Serving in a variety of roles, including those with increasing levels of responsibility, has been and continues to be quite fulfilling!

FDIC News: *How is it different for employees today to change positions, divisions, or disciplines?*

George Parkerson: Over the years, opportunities to work on various initiatives and in different areas have increased. For example, our Expression of Interest programs were introduced as a more formalized approach to identifying and selecting interested candidates. Also, our Corporate Employee Program, which was launched in 2005, provides entry-level employees with corporate, rather than only divisional, experiences and perspectives. As a result, our organizational culture fosters cross-divisional career exploration.

FDIC News: *How did you get involved in the Workforce Development Initiative (WDI) and why?*

George Parkerson: I first became involved in the WDI when it was announced by our Chairman in 2014. At the time, I was serving as Acting Associate Director for Planning and Resource Management in DIR. In this role, I served as a resource for DIR divisional management to contribute to achieving our agency workforce goals. As an aside, serving in DIR was quite rewarding as a cross-divisional experience. After having served as an examiner with a core duty to "protect the deposit insurance fund," it was a privilege to temporarily work for the division and staff that manage that fund!

FDIC News: *How has the WDI benefited you?*

George Parkerson: The WDI has provided our agency with a more structured approach to ensuring that leadership and other staff capabilities are identified and developed now and for the future. In 2015, partly as a result of my temporary position in DIR and support of the WDI, I started participating in our agency's Mentoring Program as a mentor. Serving as a mentor

see **Parkerson**, *page 9, column 1*

Parkerson, *from page 8*

provides me with a tangible way of supporting employees in identifying and achieving their career goals. It has also introduced me to many talented individuals who are exploring their career goals.

FDIC News: *What advice would you give to FDIC employees who would like to try a new experience in another area? How can they go about making a change, even if they are somewhat hesitant at first?*

George Parkerson: First, I would recommend clearly identifying and memorializing your professional objectives within the context of your personal mission. This approach establishes the foundation for assessing whether prospective experiences align with your developmental plans and career goals. Keeping your career and developmental objectives updated at least annually helps ensure they serve as a guiding resource. Second, I recommend being willing to explore and pursue a broad range of experiences. Having confidence in your capabilities and career potential is essential. Finally, prepare yourself and be ready for new experiences and look forward to your career adventure! 🏛

Where Are They Now?

With this news brief, FDIC News *introduces an occasional feature, "Where Are They Now?" If you know of a former FDIC employee who has moved on to an interesting activity, please send your suggestions to Sally Kearney (skearney@fdic.gov).*

The *FDIC News* recently learned that **former FDIC Chairman Don Powell** has been selected to lead a search committee for a new President of West Texas A&M University. Current West Texas A&M President J. Patrick O'Brien, set to retire on June 30, will be temporarily replaced by James Hallmark, A&M System Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, who will serve as Interim President.

Powell, who served as FDIC Chairman from August 29, 2001, until November 15, 2005, was previously Chairman of the Board of Regents of the Texas A&M University System. 🏛