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APHSA Announces Recipients of 2019 ISM Awards of Excellence
The Awards Give National Exposure and Recognition for Support of State and Local Government Health and Human Services

The American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) is pleased to announce the award winners for the 2019 Information Technology Solutions Management for Human Services (ISM) Awards of Excellence. ISM, an affinity group of APHSA, recognizes and promotes excellence in health and human services information technology at its annual national conference. Award winners were recognized at an Awards Luncheon on Monday, September 23 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Each award winner highlighted their project in a video presentation available upon request.

Awards were presented in the following categories and the recipients are as follows:

**Collaboration Across Boundaries:** This award recognizes the use of technology to support collaboration and/or integration that crosses traditional program or organizational boundaries. The Commonwealth of Kentucky was selected as the winner for its development of the Kentucky Engagement Enterprise Suite (KEE Suite). The system was designed to provide more holistic workforce training and education services, as a partnership between the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) and the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet (EWDC). Three portals were integrated with the eligibility system of CHFS, allowing for a seamless flow of information between citizens, community partners, and both Cabinets. The Commonwealth worked with Salesforce on this initiative.

**Best Use of Technology for Operations – Internal Focus:** This award recognizes an agency’s effort to define and implement a solution which enhances and improves the internal productivity and/or efficiencies for their own workforce. Twelve agency programs were nominated in this category and the ISM peer review committee selected the Child Protective Services (CPS) Mobile Investigator from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Program to be recognized for their use of hyper-agile methodology to deliver technology within 60 days to support the new business vision for the agency.

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**Best Use of Technology for Customers – External Focus:** This award recognizes the innovative use of technology to enhance and expand external service delivery to health and human services clients. For the first time, three different organizations—Accenture, IBM Watson Health, and KPMG—nominated the same program, underscoring the strength and depth of their collaborative effort on the program, and thus the review committee selected the obvious winner, the City of New York Human Resources Administration’s AccessHRA digital platform. AccessHRA is being recognized for its user-centered design interface which has modernized New York City’s approach to providing public benefits and transformed the way New Yorkers access these vital resources. AccessHRA has contributed to a more than 50 percent decrease in foot traffic at the City’s brick-and-mortar HRA facilities. At the same time, between 2013 and 2019, the percentage of SNAP applications submitted online increased from 23 percent to 87 percent. Similarly, the percentage of SNAP application interviews conducted by phone increased from 29 percent in 2013 to 97 percent in 2019. This channel shift has had a tremendous impact on the way the City delivers services to New Yorkers, making it simpler and faster for clients to manage vital benefits information on the go, reducing client wait times, and freeing up staff to focus on cases that may require more facetime. “In New York City, we are fundamentally transforming how we serve our clients and connect them with benefits, making it easier for them to access the resources they need at their own convenience,” said Lauren Aaronson, Deputy Commissioner of Business Process Innovation, New York City Human Resources Administration. “AccessHRA is a powerful example of what we can achieve through innovative use of technology and collaboration that places clients and their needs at the forefront of the design, development, and implementation process. We are thankful for this recognition, proud of our progress bringing the Agency into the 21st century on behalf of the people and look forward to taking this progress further.”

**Jerry W. Friedman Individual Excellence in Leadership:** This award recognizes an individual who has demonstrated a clear understanding of the fundamental role that information technology can play in efficient and effective operation in the field of health and human services. It honors innovative leadership that has promoted sound information technology solutions, policies, and practices. The award pays tribute to Jerry W. Friedman who was a champion of eligibility workers and the former CEO of APHSA. Laurie Snow, New HEIGHTS Manager with the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services is this year’s winner. Honored for her 45 years of public service, Snow was an early pioneer of integrated eligibility and enrollment systems, set national benchmarks for SNAP error prone profiling, and was the first to deliver a 360-degree integrated medical and financial eligibility system. In her nomination, Christine Santaniello, Director of Economic and Housing Stability with New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services described Snow as a tireless champion for incremental modernization of our systems and programs. “Laurie has always focused on building solutions that are easy to use for the staff and provide the best customer service possible.”

**Congratulations to all this year’s award winners!**

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The American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) is a bipartisan, nonprofit membership organization representing state and local health and human services agencies through their top-level leadership. Through a member network and three national Collaborative
Centers, APHSA seeks to influence modern policies and practices that support the health and well-being of all children and families and that lead to stronger communities. APHSA connects its members to national policymakers and human-serving organizations across a wide circle of stakeholders in the health and human services sector, as well as key partners in education, housing, employment, and others. APHSA also helps members build more capacity for their teams through access to professional education and development conferences, technical expertise, publications, and their Organizational Effectiveness practice.

**IT Solutions Management for Human Services (ISM)** is an association of health and human services (H/HS) information technology professionals representing federal, state, and local governments from the United States, its territories, Canada, other countries, and the private sector. We promote solutions that support the mission and vision of H/HS programs. ISM advocates on behalf of state and local H/HS entities to federal agencies for improvements in policies, processes, and procedures. We promote best practices in information technology (IT) by sharing innovative solutions, connecting IT professionals, and collaborating with our private-sector partners.