



State Personnel Newsletter

State Employee of the Year

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State Employee of the Year Winner Robert Turner (center) with ALDOT Deputy Director of Administration Lamar Woodham (left) and East Central Region Engineer DeJarvis Leonard (right)

Congratulations to the 2017 State Employee of the Year, Mr. Robert Turner! Mr. Turner is employed with the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) as a Service Patrol Operator Supervisor in the East Central Region. Mr. Turner is one of ten charter employees that helped launch the Alabama Service and Assistance Patrol (ASAP) program in 1997. ASAP is an official State emergency response unit operated in the Birmingham area. The primary responsibility of ASAP is to initiate measures to minimize traffic congestion from accidents or other incidents restricting normal traffic flow. Patrol employees work around the Birmingham area helping direct traffic around wrecks, removing debris from the road, and helping motorists with car troubles, amongst other things. The ASAP program is a no cost service and motorists can call the ASAP dispatch number (205-251-1397) anytime between 6 a.m. - 10 p.m. Monday - Friday for roadside assistance.

In the letter nominating Mr. Turner for State Employee of the Year, he was praised

by a motorist for changing a flat tire in 100+ degree heat and maintaining an extraordinarily positive attitude. The motorist added that her encounter with Mr. Turner was a bright spot in the middle of a very frustrating flat tire situation and that his service was above and beyond expectations.

Throughout his career, ALDOT has received numerous letters praising Mr. Turner for his helpful attitude and his willingness to go the extra mile. One letter even suggested that Mr. Turner be granted Knighthood and subsequently referred to as "Sir Robert." Mr. Turner has assisted motorists with everything from hurricane evacuations to helping a family moving from Texas after their car trailer caught fire. Several years ago, he sustained serious injuries himself after being involved in an accident while assisting a motorist.

Mr. Turner is undeniably a dedicated public servant and deserves the honor of State Employee of the Year. A huge thank you to Mr. Turner for serving the State of Alabama and its citizens!

Point of Interest:

- The State Personnel Board will meet on June 21, 2017.

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Reminder: PerksCard Has A New Website!

START SAVING TODAY

SAVE

LOCALLY

NATIONALLY

ON THE GO

The State of Alabama and PerksConnect have updated the discount website! All the deals you have been using are still there, plus new features and benefits – both locally and nationally. You can save at thousands of retailers in your neighborhood and around the country.

- ☆ Local Show & Save Discounts: Browse the site on your computer, phone, or download the mobile app to find discounts in your neighborhood and around the country.
- ☆ Discounted Gift Cards: Access exclusive discounted gift cards and printable coupons online from companies such as Barnes & Noble, Chili's, Lands' End, Cabela's, and JC Penney.
- ☆ Online Discounts: Click the National Deals tab and find over 300 web-based savings such as Xfinity, PC Care Support, Disney Parks, and From You Flowers. PerksConnect offers great discounts on all your travel needs, from rental cars to hotels.
- ☆ Insurance and Benefits: As a PerksConnect member, you are eligible for special low rates on many insurance options. Get affordable coverage on Home & Auto Insurance and Pet Insurance.

Registration is simple and FREE. Simply go to alabama.perksconnection.com, pick the region closest to you and complete the short form. You can start saving immediately.

PLEASE NOTE: PayCheck Direct has been discontinued as a program on the PerksCard platform. However, a similar program called "Shop Now, Pay Over Time" has been added. Information about the new program is available on the PerksCard website under the "Insurance & Benefits" tab.

Employees' Suggestion Incentive Program Award Winner



Mr. Dilly (Left) with ABC Administrator, Mac Gipson

A huge congratulations to Mr. Jared Dilly for receiving an Employee Suggestion Incentive Award! Mr. Dilly is an Electrician with the Alabama Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Board and submitted a cost-saving suggestion related to the light fixtures in the ABC main facility. His suggestion will save approximately one-third of the agency's \$15,000 monthly power bill. Since ABC signed off on the suggestion and is willing to implement the idea, Mr. Dilly was granted a \$1000 cash award. Thank you to Mr. Dilly and the previous winners for submitting suggestions that will save the State of Alabama significant amounts of money. See [Page 3](#) for information on how to submit your own cost-saving idea!

A Word from Empower Retirement



Investing for your later years? Think asset preservation, but don't forget growth.

After years of investing for retirement and other goals, you may have accumulated a substantial portfolio. If you're approaching retirement, there are important steps you can take to help ensure that your investment plan – and your nest egg – is on track for your golden years.

Reassess your income needs and portfolio. A few years before a planned retirement, it's important to know where your money will come from and how much you'll need. It's number-crunching time. Figure out how much income you may receive from Social Security, a pension plan, and personal savings and investments. Weigh your anticipated income against your estimated living expenses; be sure to pad your estimate to account for unexpected events or market drops. Do the two match up? If not, review your portfolio with a qualified financial professional.

Hedge against inflation. Your investment focus will probably shift from growth to income in your later years. Naturally, you want to help protect your nest egg from market volatility. But that doesn't mean moving your portfolio's entire stock fund allocation into less risky holdings like bond funds and cash alternatives. People are living longer, increasing the risk that some will outlive their money. You may want to *gradually* shift some stock investments into more liquid, income-oriented investments. However, it may be important to keep part of your portfolio in growth-oriented investments – stocks and stock funds – to give your portfolio the potential to outpace inflation.

Protect what you've achieved. A solid financial plan also includes estate planning to help preserve assets for your heirs. "I'm all set," you say. "I've drawn up a will." A comprehensive and effective estate plan often involves a variety of tools in addition to wills, including trusts and different types of insurance. Talk with an attorney about your specific needs.

After a lifetime of investing, make sure that your financial plan is on target in your later years. Annual reviews of your portfolio with a qualified financial professional can help you pursue your objectives and spot potential problems before they occur. To speak with your Retirement Plan Counselor about your retirement plan needs, call 334-240-0057.

Employees' Suggestion Incentive Program REMINDER

EMPLOYEES' SUGGESTION INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Don't forget to submit your cost-saving ideas to the Employees' Suggestion Incentive Board for a **CASH AWARD** up to **\$5,000!** You can find the rules and form on the State Personnel Department website, www.personnel.alabama.gov, under the "Employee Resources" tab, then "Online Options." **Please remember that your completed submission form must include approval from your appointing authority in order for your suggestion to be awarded.**



Spring/Summer Recipe

HEIRLOOM TOMATO, FETA & THYME PASTRY



Image and recipe courtesy of
[One Kings Lane](#)

INGREDIENTS

1 sheet frozen puff pastry (half of a 17-ounce package), thawed
All-purpose flour, for dusting
1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
5 medium tomatoes sliced
Olive oil
3 sprigs of thyme
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
Egg wash: 1 egg, 1 tbsp of water, beaten

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Unfold the defrosted puff pastry onto a floured piece of parchment paper and roll out into a 9-by-11-inch rectangle.
3. Score 1/2 inch in from the edge, all the way around, using a paring knife. Slide the pastry (on the parchment) onto a baking sheet. Poke the middle area all over with a fork.
4. Sprinkle crumbled feta in the middle area and arrange sliced tomatoes.
5. Drizzle with olive oil, thyme, kosher salt & pepper.
Tip: Brush the 1/2 inch edge with an egg wash (1 egg + 1 tbsp water, beaten) to make the edges a lovely golden brown.
6. Bake until golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes. Transfer to a rack and let cool completely.

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www.personnel.alabama.gov

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The Alabama Merit System law created the Personnel Department to be administered by a Personnel Director who answers to an independent board. The Board currently consists of five members who serve staggered six-year terms. Two members are appointed by the Governor, one by the Lieutenant Governor, one by the Speaker of the House, and one member is an elected classified State employee who is subject to all merit system rules and regulations.

By law, the Board is required to meet once each month. Its principal functions are to:

- * adopt and amend rules and regulations;
- * adopt and modify classification and pay plans;
- * hear the appeals of employees who have been dismissed;
- * represent public interest in the improvement of personnel administration in state service; and
- * advise and assist the Personnel Director.

The State Personnel Board is scheduled to meet on June 21, 2017, at 10:00 a.m. in the Board Room on the 3rd Floor of the Folsom Administrative Building in Montgomery. The meeting is open to the public.