



June 2019

The Auditor's Report



Travis County Auditor's Office Newsletter

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Posts from Patti

We all know what "IQ" means and some of us actually know what ours is; but do you know your "EQ", or even what it means?

Today it takes more than just IQ and intelligence to be successful. You must also have EQ, or emotional intelligence (also known as *Emotional Quotient*). There are five categories that are evaluated to determine a person's emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-regulation (control), motivation, empathy, and social skills. You may even know someone who is very smart, but falls short in the area of emotional intelligence.

I'm a firm believer that to be a good leader you must have a high EQ. So, I'm putting it to the test. Each manager in my office who manages a team, including myself, is having their EQ tested. This is being done by having a 360EQ survey completed by everyone around us—our peers, subordinates, managers, friends, family and anyone else that could give valuable input. We are all a little scared to get the results but being a little out of our comfort zone will be good for us.

In addition to receiving their individual EQ survey results, each manager will have a coaching session with a professional coach to figure out ways to improve. I already have a great team of managers...I'm just trying to make the best even better!



Employee News



The Auditor's Office bids a fond farewell to staff that are off to new adventures and opportunities:

- ◆ **Grants:** **Sabrina Bullard** (Financial Auditor/Analyst) who left for a job in the private sector.
- ◆ **GL/Disbursements Auditing (GL/DA):** **Stephanie Villarreal** (Financial Auditor/Analyst) who transferred to Juvenile Probation accepting a Financial Analyst Lead position.
- ◆ **Administration:** **Carlos Meda** (Office Specialist), who is pursuing a degree and other personal goals.

We wish them every success in their new endeavors!

Volunteer Spotlight — Caritas

We Came...We Prepped...We Served More Than 230 Meals



On May 20, staff volunteered at Caritas to prepare and serve lunch to the homeless community. *Our Awesome Volunteers* (l-r) are: **Hailan Zhang, Janek Niefeldt, Deb Owens, Beth Adams, Alexa Rabb, Karina Carr, John Rabb, and Butch Soto.**

Travis County Superstar “Shout Outs”



Barbara Warren (FMD), Camille Cortez (TNR), Lynda Liscano (ITS), and Rachel Fishback (Purchasing) for their invaluable input during the design/rollout of the new *SAP BI Shopping Cart with Purchase Order Data* report.

The ITS Travis County Web team (**Samantha Casertano, Ava Vejdani, Chloe Mun, Chris Stangland, Kelly Novak, Larissa Mae Sarangaya, Mark Goldstein, and Rudy Valdez**) for their professionalism and responsiveness in posting time sensitive information to the website. They always go above and beyond.

Joyce Miller (ITS) for assistance in adding captions to a video file.

ITS staff, **Terri Montgomery and Amy Nichols**, for data extraction assistance.

Ryan Meurer (ITS) who has been instrumental in keeping the *Financial Transparency Portal* postings updated to the public facing site.

NACo Award (Tuition Reimbursement)

Collaboration Recognized with National Award

The National Association of Counties (NACo) recognized Travis County's initiative to redesign and automate its Employee Tuition Reimbursement Program with a *Personnel Management, Employment, and Training* category Achievement Award. The awards honor innovative, effective county government programs that strengthen services for residents.

In collaboration with Human Resources Management Department (HRMD) staff, the SAP team developed an online application that automated the County's Tuition Reimbursement program. HRMD staff provided design/process feedback and testing as well as spearheading changes to County policy to enable the automation. As noted by Christina Adair, SAP Team Director, *"This project is a great example of teamwork across County organizations. It also shows how technology projects need business involvement to be successful."* Team members who provided support/assistance in this initiative include HRMD's Director, **Tracey Calloway**, and HR Services staff: **Kim Austin-Smith**, **Cedric Myers**, and **Rian Nilsen**; SAP team staff: **Robyn Wright**, **John Rabb**, **Murtuza Khan**, **Thruna Shanmuga**, and **David Stanton**; and **Barbara Wilson** (County Attorney's Office) who provided updates to County policy.

According to Patti Smith, Travis County Auditor, *"We are always trying to work with different departments and Offices in the County to streamline their processes and help any way we can. This was a project that benefits both HRMD and any employee taking advantage of the County's tuition reimbursement program."*



Congratulations to All — Well Done

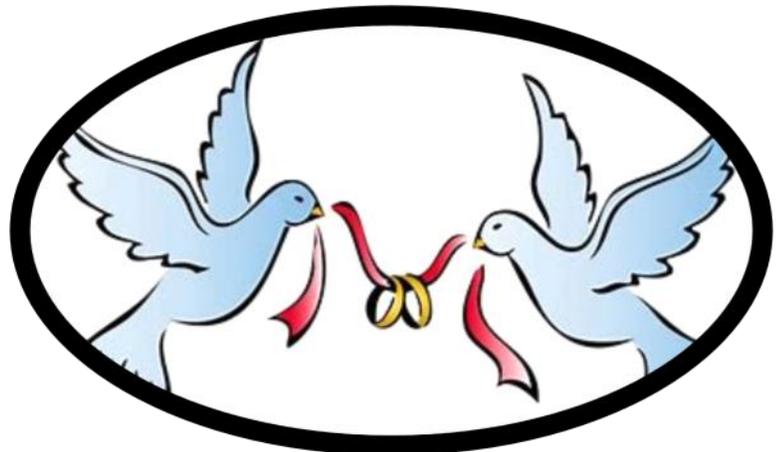
Love is In the Air...

Congratulations to our happy couples:

Ben Yardenay (SAP Team) and **Leora Rockowitz**, who were married on May 26th.

Travis Lee (REC Division) and **Camille Cortez** (TNR) who will marry on June 1st.

Jennifer Ballard (Financial Systems Integration & Reporting Division) and **Mitchell Goertz** (TNR) who will marry on July 27th.



Around the Office: SAP Webinars

There's always something new in SAP. How does one keep up with it? One way is webinars presented by the SAP team.

These are online sessions led by team subject matter experts (SMEs) that you can access and watch from the comfort of your office. With the guided webinar, you can practice along with the SME, ask questions, and most importantly, provide feedback to guide future topics.

So far, there have been three Reporting-related webinars, with more planned:



- ❑ **Time Reporting.** This April 24th webinar presented by Brooke Greenfeder, was geared towards new and existing Dept Time Administrators. It focused on how to find time related reports, specifically how to see leave balances and details of leave earned/taken by an employee over time.
- ❑ **Organizational Management Reporting.** Tom Stephenson led this March 26th webinar on how to use the Organization and Staffing Display screen to view the Org Units, Positions, and People in your department. Users learned about how the data is displayed, what the icons mean, and some tips & tricks to use this tool to better understand their organization.
- ❑ **Shopping Cart Report.** Nisha Sharma led this May 9th webinar about a new SAP report that provides Shopping Carts with Purchase Order (PO) data all in one report. It answered questions like: What are Shopping Carts/Related PO numbers for your office? Where are all of the *Shopping* reports? How can you quickly generate a list of your Shopping Carts and their status?

The webinars have been well received. Participant survey comments have included:

"Thanks for the awesome work you do to keep us updated with SAP!"

"Will use (Shopping Cart Report) and feel it will be very helpful."

"Nisha did wonderful! I just feel that I have to visit this a couple of times and do it myself before I feel confident...Thank you!"

"These webinars are great (Time Reporting)! They are a refresher for me."

Unable to attend? No worries! We recorded them—Click **Ctrl + the Links** to access/view them.

[Time Reporting Webinar](#)

[Organizational Management Webinar](#)

[Shopping Cart Webinar](#)

Have ideas for new webinars? Please submit an SAP Help Desk ticket to let us know!

Around the Office: It's Revenue Estimation Time



It's budget time (revenue that is). Our **Revenue Estimation and Financial Analysis (REFA) Division** is responsible for estimating County *revenue*. Simply put, the amount of *available revenue* directly affects how much the County can budget to spend in a given fiscal year. And, it is a key element of the annual budget adoption process.

Revenue estimation is very much a partnership with County departments. In April, they submit their revenue estimates to REFA. These estimates include the projected dollar value of the revenue (by line item) along with supporting documentation. REFA staff first reviews the submitted estimates and their corresponding calculation methodology. They then apply various statistical techniques to validate and refine them. The individual line item estimates are consolidated into revenue estimates that are used by PBO in developing the expenditure budget.

During the budget process, REFA will generate five revenue estimates. The first estimate is for the General Fund only. Each subsequent estimate includes more funds (e.g. Special Revenue Funds, Internal Service funds, Debt Service funds, etc.) and becomes more refined as additional revenue information becomes available (e.g. legislative actions, certified property tax rolls, updated Commissioner Court fee schedules, contract renewals, etc.). The final revenue estimate becomes part of the Adopted Budget.

Revenue Budget Fun Facts—Did You Know???

- ★ Besides the General Fund, we generate estimates for **2** Internal Service funds, **2** Debt Service funds, and **45** Special Revenue funds - all told more than **\$1 Billion** of available resources;
- ★ *Property taxes* are our primary General Fund revenue source;
- ★ *Mixed beverage tax* revenue (more than **\$10 million**) is our largest revenue source after property taxes - so Keep Austin Weird (and hydrated);
- ★ Our revenue comes from diverse sources - from autopsy fees to park entrance fees and more.



Planned Upcoming Audit Reviews

Constables 2 & 3
County Clerk
Special Revenue Fund Disbursements

Investment Management Office
HHS Permits
Treasurer

Around the Office: Risk Evaluation & Consulting

Risk Evaluation & Consulting (aka Internal Audit or REC) is in transition, moving from *Yellow Book* auditing standards (produced by the Government Accountability Office) to *Red Book* (International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF)) auditing standards promulgated by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA). A primary difference between the two is that *Red Book* focuses on risk-based auditing, while *Yellow Book* primarily emphasizes audit planning.



2019 is a busy year for completing the transition to *Red Book* standards. REC is currently drafting changes to the Audit Charter, which will be briefed to Commissioners Court in early July. REC is also creating *Red Book*-compliant policies and procedures for all applicable processes, such as risk assessments and Information System audits, as well as various checklists, forms, and questionnaires. The goal is completion of these remaining items by December 31st.

Beginning in January 2020, REC will begin performing audit activities in compliance with *Red Book* by following the new policies and procedures and using/creating the required documentation. This will result in more risk assessment protocols during the planning phase of audits, more timely follow-up on audit findings and recommendations, and the development of more extensive quality control processes.

Around the Office...Did You Know We have a Data Scientist On Board?

WHO is the Data Scientist and who does he support?

- Dr. John Gomez is our Data Scientist (and no, he's not a *mad scientist* at work in our Office). He supports our Risk Evaluation and Consulting (internal audit) Division as they transition to *Continuous Auditing*, an audit method to perform audit-related activities on a more frequent basis. *Continuous Auditing* changes audit activities from a snapshot review of sample transactions to ongoing audit testing of 100%.



WHAT does a Data Scientist do?

- A Data Scientist uses methods of mathematics, computer science, and statistics to perform processes such as data mining, process mining, and machine learning to discover new knowledge from large amounts of data.

Using these methods and automated tools, data is formatted in a way that allows for quicker analysis and visualization of trends and exceptions to identify areas of risk, fraud, errors or misuse.



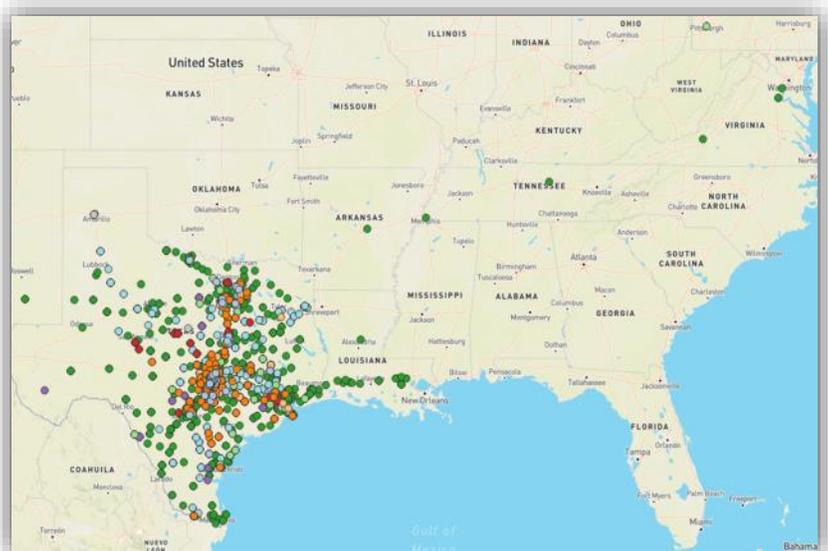
WHY is a Data Scientist important to audit activities?

- A Data Scientist allows our REC group to:
 - Be more effective and efficient by leveraging data and technology;
 - React more timely to business risk;
 - Focus audits more specifically; and
 - Monitor compliance with policies, procedures, and regulations.

AUDIT DATA ANALYTICS IN ACTION (FUEL REVIEW)

In this review, John used *Geo-Analytics* to visualize the relationship between the county's fuel card data and the physical location where the fuel cards were used, which allowed us to identify and follow up on *exceptions*.

It saved tremendous amounts of staff time and easily beat using a spreadsheet to spot patterns.



Thank you John for all you do—and your contributions to our success!

Around the Office: Did You Know...

We congratulate four of our staff on their 20+ years of service to the County, attained this year and celebrated as part of the County's Employee Recognition Day. Did you know that **20 years** is equal to:

- **240** months
- **1,042.858** weeks (we are numbers people after all)
- **7,300** days
- **175,200** hours
- **10,512,000** minutes

Any way you slice it, it's a LOT of time!

All kidding aside, please join us in recognizing our 'Superstars':

- ★ **Christina Adair**, SAP Support Team
- ★ **DeDe Flanagan**, Grants
- ★ **Sean O'Neal**, Financial Systems Integration & Reporting (FSIR)
- ★ **Mary Reyna**, FSIR



Thank You for Your Service and Dedication!

"Help others and give something back. I guarantee you will discover that while public service improves the lives and the world around you, its greatest reward is the enrichment and new meaning it will bring your own life."

— *Arnold Schwarzenegger, American actor and former California governor*

Around the Office: Legislative Analysis

The 86th Texas Legislature regular session ran from January 8th through May 27th, 2019 and is now over—WHEW! The County's Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) staff reached out to various County departments for their help in monitoring and analyzing legislative bills and **tracked 2,507 bills** during the session.

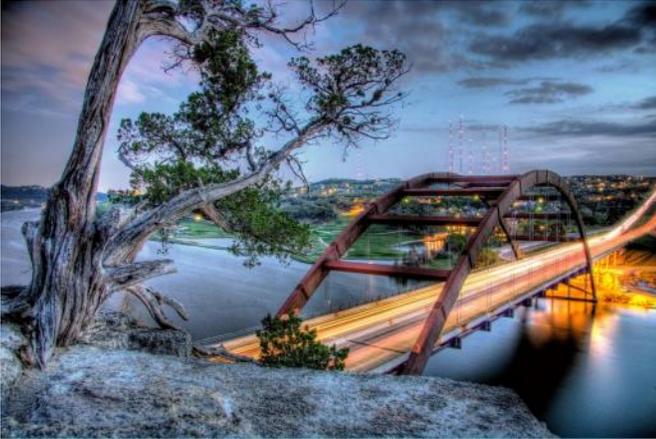
Several Auditor staff (**Beth Blankenship, Dan Wilson, David Jungerman, and James Marlett**) provided subject matter expertise and analysis of various legislation. Now that the session is over, they will be working with other County stakeholders to determine the impact of enacted legislation on County operations and finances.

According to IGR statistics, during this session, there were **7,541 bills and joint resolutions filed** (6,800 in 2017). The Auditor's staff responded to **344 bills** (283 in 2017) and posted **language change comments on 68 bills** (27 in 2017).



The Eyes of Texas...View Our Talented Staff's Photos

John Rabb Photo Gallery



James Rannefeld Photo Gallery



Woody Whitten Photo Gallery



Volunteer Spotlight —



The Center for Child Protection helps young victims of abuse tell their story and begin the healing process. They also provide forensic, medical and therapy services to children during the investigation and intervention process as well as continuing education to the Austin community to help end the cycle of child abuse.

During March, staff collected, donated, and delivered a variety of requested items from the Center's *immediate, daily, and additional needs* lists such as: basic hygiene items (deodorant, brushes, combs, socks), activity items (glue, colored pencils, markers), and basic needs items (towels, toilet paper, water bottles).



Food for Thought

In this cartoon, the man doesn't know that there is a snake underneath. The woman doesn't know that there is a stone crushing the man.

The woman thinks: *"I am going to fall and I can't climb because the snake is going to bite me! Why can't the man use a little more strength and pull me up?"*

The man thinks: *"I am in so much pain! Yet I'm still pulling you as much as I can! Why don't you try and climb a little harder?"*

The moral: You can't see the pressure the other person is under, and the other person can't see the pain that you're in. This is life, no matter whether it's with work, family, feelings or friends—we should try to understand each other.

Learn to think differently, perhaps more clearly, and communicate better.

A little thought and patience goes a long way.



Meet the Auditor's Office

Meet Karina

Karina Carr has been with the Auditor's Office since 2008. She is a Planning and Training Coordinator with the SAP Support Team. Originally from LaGrange, she moved to Austin on Tax Day 2001. Karina has a Bachelor's degree in Drama and Communications from San Angelo State. She currently resides in Austin with hubby Jason and girls, Kaelee (5) and Kinslee (3). Karina has carried on the 'K' naming tradition with her girls' names, which spans several generations on her Mom's side.



Karina's favorite part of working for Travis County is *Teamwork*—and learning about co-workers during team building exercises. She loves **PURPLE** (Go 'Frogs) and loves playing volleyball, sales shopping, watching movies, and doing activities with her girls.

Ask Karina * *What is on your bucket list?* Be DEBT free—isn't it one of everyone's?

- * *What is the most unusual job you've ever had?* A newborn hearing screener and a bell cart lady.
- * *What is one thing you can't live without?* With little ones & activities—COFFEE (and a little chocolate doesn't hurt).

Meet Cynthia

Cynthia Sayles has been with the Auditor's Office since July 2013 as an Auditor/Analyst in our Grants Division. An only child, Cynthia grew up in Seguin. She currently lives in Austin, providing a home for her 80-year old mother. Her daughter Alyssa, provided a new addition to the family, grandson Jayce, who arrived on May 8th. She likes to travel, garden, cook, and to attend live music events.

Cynthia is passionate about helping others and notes that in an indirect way, grants provides a way to help. Her favorite part of working for Travis County is that it *"offers so much opportunity. It's not just a job—you have unlimited opportunities to get involved with the Austin and Travis County community"*.

Ask Cynthia * *What book did you last read?* *Becoming* by Michelle Obama.

- * *What is your proudest moment at Travis County?* Leading the fundraising drive to provide holiday bags (with basic hygiene items) for SAFE Austin. What started as a goal of 50 bags, ended up being more than 100.
- * *How do you define success?* Success is in the heart. It's giving it your best and being confident and sure that your goals and motives are sincere and positive. Success is a *"feeling, not a show"* - you don't need to be the center of attention to make a difference.



Auditor Speak

Things you've heard us say,
but didn't want to ask!

Check out this month's Lingo Board. It is a list of acronyms or terms you've probably heard us mention before and their meanings.

Test your knowledge—how many did you already know? Heard others that you want to know? Email them to Donna Scarbrough.

AUDITOR'S OFFICE LINGO BOARD

CAFR

⇒ Acronym for Comprehensive Annual Financial Report—the annual financial statements of the County.

PAFR

⇒ Acronym for Popular Annual Financial Report—summarized information from the CAFR designed to be accessible and understandable to the general public.

GR IR

⇒ Acronym for Goods Receipt Invoice Receipt—a *clearing account* in SAP for goods and invoices in transit. The goal is for GR and IR to be 'in balance' (meaning that invoices for items and services 'match' what has been physically delivered).

LMS (aka Success Factors Learning)

⇒ Acronym for Learning Management System—part of Success Factors in SAP, where you can register for, take online courses, and track training (both online and classroom).

Personnel Area

⇒ A four-digit designation of 'department' in the SAP HR module. It is equivalent to the 3-digit department number in SAP's financial module.

Performance & Goals (aka Success Factors)

⇒ Online, *cloud-based* system by Success Factors (integrated with SAP), where Commissioners Court departments and participating elected/appointed officials are tracking individuals' work objectives (goals) and conducting performance reviews.

Transaction Code (T-Code)

⇒ An SAP shortcut key composed of numbers, letters, or both that can be typed into a command line, allowing you to access a specific activity (e.g., FV60 is the transaction for accessing Direct Payments). **Note:** there are now navigation links located in folders that do the same thing.