



Office of the New York State Comptroller  
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# PAYROLL EXPRESS

Bureau of State Payroll Services

## Director's Message

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My vision of a better future for the payroll community was the motivation for the creation of the Payroll Users Group in December 1999. The payroll community needed a vehicle to improve communication between the Bureau of State Payroll Services and agency payroll staff, increase training opportunities and educate others on the importance and difficulty of the payroll function. The most important part of the vision was the opportunity to improve the working lives of the New York State payroll community.

Over the past seven and a half years, I have seen aspects of this vision come to fruition. The Payroll Users Group acts as a liaison between the Bureau and the agencies, allowing an exchange of ideas and best practices that continue to improve payroll processing today. The Bureau is now using webinar technology to offer "at their desk" training sessions on a variety of topics to payroll staff statewide. We have even provided opportunities for payroll staff to attend platform skills training intended to develop them as individuals, a benefit to both the participant and their agency. The Payroll Users Group has accomplished many other goals as well; too numerous to mention here.

But it is the Payroll Users Group's most recent success which has made the biggest impact on the future of the payroll community. By now I'm sure most of you have heard the news, but I am enormously proud to announce again that our long term goal has been reached: in late June, the Division of the Budget approved the Payroll Examiner Title Series.

This remarkable achievement was the result of an unprecedented partnership between the Payroll Users Group, the New York State Personnel Council and the Department of Civil Service (DCS). The payroll community recognized that they had a problem. Recruitment, retention and development of payroll staff were becoming more difficult every year.

But rather than approach DCS and ask them to fix the problem, the Payroll Users Group and the NYS Personnel Council chose to research the problem, and together they presented DCS with a potential solution. DCS then became an enthusiastic participant in the process.

Our partnership became the catalyst to monumental change which I believe to be the pinnacle of the Payroll Users Group's achievements so far. This undertaking is the perfect illustration of what can be achieved when we work in partnership to solve our problems.

I would like to express my personal thanks to everyone involved with the Payroll Title Series Initiative (see page 7). They worked tirelessly to make a difference in the lives of our payroll community, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to be a part of this. Pride in your work is sometimes hard to come by, but I hope that this group takes a moment now to feel that pride, and to know how much this community appreciates their efforts.

I would also like to specifically thank Mary Starr, who truly lived up to her name during this process. Under her leadership, this initiative was made a priority of the Payroll Users Group. She never lost focus though there were many meetings where she had to announce, "no new updates."

The approval of the Payroll Examiner Title Series was a win for everyone involved: the Payroll Users Group, the NYS Personnel Council, the payroll community, OSC and the entire State government. More than this, it was a win for the concept of partnership itself. I hope that our formula for success here becomes a model for future action within State government.

Robin R. Rabii