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Revenue's Vikki Smith named co-winner of national leadership award

Washington, D.C. – April 9, 2012 – Vikki Smith, who started with the Department of Revenue as a summer temporary clerk in 1970 and rose to the position of deputy director, is co-winner of a national leadership award.

The Washington-D.C.-based Federation of Tax Administrators announced today that Smith is co-winner of its 2012 Leadership and Service award, along with Nonie Manion of New York State.

The award recognizes individuals who have made significant, sustained contributions that improved the efficiency and service delivery of their agencies.

Revenue Director Brad Flaherty said Smith has been a tireless proponent of making it easier for taxpayers to understand and comply with state tax laws.

“She revolutionized the paradigm of a regulatory agency, putting its customers—Washington’s taxpayers—at the heart of its work,” Flaherty said. “She understands that they are the keystone to keeping the state running.”

After starting with the agency fresh out of high school, Smith gained experience in different areas of tax administration before being named in 1991 to head a newly formed Taxpayer Services Division. She used technology to build that division into a hub of taxpayer information and education. For example, where once the Department had only a single individual to answer taxpayer calls from little more than a broom closet, it now had a sophisticated call center using interactive voice technology to quickly respond to nearly 340,000 taxpayer calls a year, better helping businesses to understand their tax obligations.

She also employed the Internet to provide an unprecedented amount of information to taxpayers, including online industry-specific guides, streaming video, and an electronic filing system that increased the accuracy of taxpayer returns.

In 2007, Smith was named head the agency's Information Services Division, where she focused on providing Revenue employees with the tools they needed to do their jobs and giving businesses the tools they needed to more easily comply with state tax laws.

Finally, in late 2011 she was named deputy director, the second highest position in the agency responsible for supervising the work of all operating divisions, including Audit, Compliance, Taxpayer Services and Taxpayer Account Administration.

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