

# The Family Journal

Working to improve your future ... not just account for the past



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- 9/6 Labor Day--Office Closed
- 9/16 Show Us Your Mask Contest
- 9/16 National Guacamole Day
- 9/15 Deadline for third-quarter estimated tax payments for the 2021 tax year
- 9/25 National Coffee Day
- 9/26 National Pancake Day

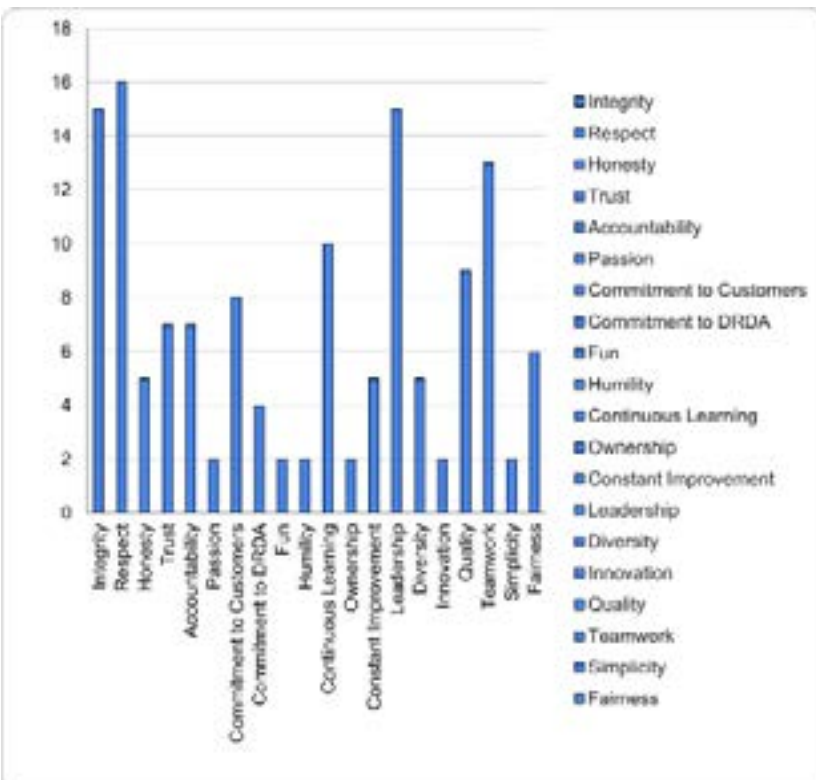
## DRDA formed a Culture Committee...

The Culture Committee was formed and held its first meeting the middle of August. Thank you to the people that accepted the opportunity to be on this new committee to help shape the culture of our firm for the future. The committee discussed many important topics and focused on making DRDA's culture better with the help of all employees was the highest priority. We were excited to learn that although there are many important Cultural Values at DRDA the highest ranking of these as per employee feedback are: Teamwork, Integrity, Leadership, and Respect.



## DOUG'S CORNER

With the coming of September, we reach the end of Summer and transition to fall. We hope everyone had some time with their family and enjoy the final days of summer. With September also comes the beginning of the second and final tax filing season for the year. Please be certain to stay up with your dashboard as each of us depend on what the other does. If one person falls behind, it affects each of those that come after that person for each of the projects that are delayed. We are a team and that is how a team and family works. Another element that comes each September is the intense portion of hurricane season for those of us here on the Gulf Coast. Please prepare your families and homes. You and your family are always the top priority. If you are new to the area please reach out to HR or any of us long-timers and we will be happy to help make certain you are safe. Should a storm come our way you will be notified of the plan and process we use during such events. As always, we appreciate you and are thankful to have you as a part of the DRDA family.



## Tax Trivia

If you want a snack in Hungary, better reach for an apple instead of a bag of chips. Otherwise, you'll have to pay the country's junk food tax, which is officially called the public health product tax. The tax is on packaged snacks high in salt and sugar – as well as sodas and energy drinks – and adds about 20 cents to the price of these items.

Buying nuts with shells will save you money in England. That's because there's a 20 percent value-added tax on shelled nuts. There is an exemption, though, for peanuts – which escape the tax if they're shelled as long as they're not salted or roasted.



In 1705, Russian Emperor Peter the Great placed a tax on beards, hoping to force men to adopt the clean-shaven look that was common in Western Europe.

# Departmental News

Part of creating a strong community involves knowing what all our members are up to at DRDA. All too often we are too focused on what we are doing not knowing what our colleagues are accomplishing.



## ADMIN

Life seems to happen at an incredible pace at times. Here in the ADMIN Department, we have deadlines too, some of which coincide with the Production Department, and others that encompass taking care of our "clients", the staff that work at DRDA, PLLC. Every so often it is good practice to take a pause and help us to help you by ensuring your information on file with the company is up to date and current. The recent downturn in the interest rate has led many people to upsize, downsize, buy, sell, or otherwise refinance their house. In taking care of you, it is critical that the ADMIN Department is notified timely of changes that may impact your benefits, or for other considerations:

1. Start out the year by considering if you need to update your W-4 withholding allowance. You may want to review your W-4 again, after you file your taxes (think raise), as well to make sure you are on track with your withholdings for the year.
2. If you move, or change your personal phone number, make sure we're notified of your new information. Some information you can change yourself if you have an online account, but there are others like One America where the ADMIN Department needs to change it at the plan sponsor level.

3. Perform an annual benefits "check-up" prior to the Firm's Annual Open Enrollment. Here you should weigh the costs and benefit offerings in terms of your insurance needs.
4. In addition to a benefits checkup, prior to open enrollment is an excellent time to review and update your insurance beneficiaries. Updating your beneficiary information is an often overlooked part of Open Enrollment. Out of date information can delay or impede mailings, or a claim, if one needs to be made. and your benefit could possibly be paid out to the wrong person in the worst case. Highly important to keep beneficiaries in line with your wishes!
5. Insurance needs can change from time to time, particularly if you've had a "Life Event", like the birth of a child, gotten married, or divorced. Qualifying Life Events need to be addressed as they happen. No need to wait for open enrollment. We're here to help you.
6. Maximize your Firm benefits to the extent possible. Make it a point to be aware of what the Firm will pay for. Don't leave money on the table.
7. Prior to the end of every calendar quarter is open enrollment for the Firm 401(k) plan. Are you enrolled? (See number 5 if your answer is "No".) The next Open Enrollment is the month of September for an October 1st effective participation date.
8. You can change your 401(k) deduction and your investment allocations at any time during the year. The ADMIN Department needs to know about any changes you make.
9. Are you aware of the free benefits that can be used at any time, like LifeMart EAP? LifeMart goes far beyond traditional EAP services.
10. Going on vacation or just shopping? Check out available Firm discounts.
11. In December, remember you will have a new W-2 coming in January. Make sure your employment record is correct, check your wage and earning statements periodically and notify us if there are any discrepancies.

If you have any questions or concerns, contact Michael Whitley. The ADMIN Department is here to help you thrive at DRDA, PLLC!



## AUDIT & ATTEST DEPARTMENT

We continue to look for audit staff to join the team and we are currently in learning mode for upcoming reporting standards updates.

Since last year we have been challenged with auditing almost entirely by electronic means. We continue to perform our audit fieldwork remotely for the most part. One of the most difficult tasks is when it comes to being proactive with our clients for information that we need to stay on schedule/deadline.

Today's spotlight is on Laura Espinoza who came up with a great idea to hold the audit fieldwork via Teams meeting so that she could keep the clients on task when it came to answering questions and providing audit evidence. Laura schedules half day Teams meeting as needed for the audit fieldwork as if she was going out to visit the client offices. The meetings have been successful with keeping the clients engaged in the process so that we can obtain information timely to continue our work. Laura found a way to problem solve and approach the challenge head on and the team appreciates her quick thinking and hard work to make the process efficient!

## MANAGEMENT ADVISORY SERVICES

The Management Advisory Services ("MAS") Department has continued scaling our Profit & Cash Flow Optimization ("P+CFO") service offering. We are reaching the last couple of milestones in service development and will be offering P+CFO to the public soon. To prepare for "going live", we have been working closely with our marketing team to develop blogs and additional content. This content will be used to help convert future P+CFO prospects into clients so we can help build their future.

One of the next steps within our service development is to take all of the knowledge, processes, and lessons learned, and document them into PODs. This is one of the final milestones within our service development, with the goal of "sealing the deal" and ensuring P+CFO will remain a sustainable service for both the Firm and its future clients.

As many of you all know, we recently had a lunch and learn for P+CFO. We appreciate everyone who took the time to watch the presentation and ask questions. If you have any questions in the future or have a client in mind that could benefit from our P+CFO service offering, please let us know.

## TAX CORNER

The tax department has been hard at work this summer trying to stay ahead of the fall deadlines.

The following number of tax projects were completed between the June 15, 2021 deadline and today (08/12/21).

- Payroll – 40
- Gift Tax Returns (709) – 1
- 990 – 1
- 1040 – 70
- 1040X – 4
- 1041 – 4
- 1045 – 2
- 1065 – 22
- 1120 – 47
- 1120-PC – 8
- 1120S – 24
- 1120X & 1139 – 9
- 5500 – 60
- 8886 – 15
- Property Renditions – 2
- Texas Franchise – 99
- Tax Planning – 14
- Sales Tax – 3
- State Income Tax – 42
- IRS Change Forms – 9

Total Project Count – 476

Excellent work everyone!

There are currently 142 tax projects in process and 143 tax projects in Not Received status that are due 09/15/21. The managers are diligently working on getting the information for the ones that are not received. I'm confident that we can get all of these done by the deadline if we work as a team like we've been doing all year.

## September Birthday Club

- 9/8 Kyla ODell
- 9/22 Uyai Ekong
- 9/23 Violet Robinson







## HUMAN RESOURCES

The month of August has been a busy one for DRDA's HR department. Lucinda Williams-Turner started with the Firm on August 23rd. She is a remote employee who lives in Abilene, TX. She is the Tax and Accounting Production Coordinator in training.

Our very own Deedra sent Lucinda's resume to us, they had worked together in the past. Thank you very much Deedra, and welcome Lucinda! Recruiting for DRDA has been busier than ever. We are currently looking for Tax Senior, Tax Manager, and Audit Staff I.

If any employee knows someone with experience in these fields, please send them to [Jennifer.lopez@drdacpa.com](mailto:Jennifer.lopez@drdacpa.com).

A few reminders:

1. The office has gone back to mandatory masks in shared areas when you are in the office.
2. Labor Day holiday is Monday, September 6th.
3. If you are interested in the flu vaccination or the Covid vaccination and you HAVE NOT emailed Jennifer Lopez, please do this immediately. A pharmacist is coming out to give on-site vaccinations on Friday, September 17, 2021.

We are aware that children and college age kids begin school in August. We wish them a great school year. We are aware of the ongoing uncertainties that families face. Please keep yourselves and your children safe as possible during these tough times.

As a reminder, if you feel like you or anyone in your family needs some additional help with any feelings of anxiety. ADP Lifecare offers free counseling services. Their number is 1-800-697-7315.

## DRDA U: LMS UPDATES

We have been working with SME's to get more information into the LMS pertaining to 1120s and 5500s. We have continued updating and properly loading our videos and documents into the LMS system. Sometimes we have had to recover videos from YouTube or some other platform to be able to create a video rather than having a link because the link has expired and makes the resources unavailable. Organization and structure are key elements for a successful learning experience. As such, though the tedious process of downloading, uploading, converting, and tagging courses is extremely time-consuming, it is a necessary process for a positive learning experience.

Our POD system is a wonderful resource to standardize how to do a process at DRDA. These are organized based on departments and can be located in your shortcuts on the DRDA landing page once you log into your Right Networks Cloud Portal. We almost have all of our processes up to date based on the new technology and laws that have changed throughout the past year.

## IT DEPARTMENT

The Team has been focused on Developing a Digital Marketing Strategy. Our current products such as BORSA and MSO have been on the Market for quite a while, and now with P+CFO about to launch – we need a platform to expand into new market segments. Our approach is to incorporate a hybrid of automation with personal contact to enhance the prospects experience.

Marketing Strategy always begins with Research, Demo's, Data and Analysis, and takes planning with an interdisciplinary team for it to succeed. Currently, we are in the research phase, recently acquiring Salesforce which will be the Hub for our Digital Marketing Plan integrating cross channel-collaboration such as email, web social media, SEO content, websites, and new digital strategies to reach our target audience.

One essential advantage to a Marketing Strategy is to ensure everyone in the Firm has a voice and are excited about our services. Before services are launched, we conduct a brief overview of the product to introduce the program to the staff. We know every staff member listens to their clients and has ideas, sometimes the greatest marketing advantages come from unexpected team members. In the coming weeks, we will be wrapping up the final stages of Pipeline Networks and Campaigns Integrations within Salesforce. One final aspect to the marketing strategy will be capturing email correspondence between staff and prospects/clients that are in the onboarding stage within Salesforce.

## Welcome Lucinda

Her new role at DRDA will be the Tax & Accounting Project Coordinator. She has nine years of experience in Admin Accounting and over ten years' experience in management and training. She has four kids who are all kind, respectful and loving!

She loves Zumba and Church, but not together. Her hobbies include helping others. Lucinda and her husband volunteer at their church and they also lead an accountability group that encourages others and gives others a support system. We are excited to have you join our DRDA team and look forward to working with you.



## Welcome Baylie

His new role at DRDA is IT intern. He has been in the software development field since 2019 and is looking to further expand his knowledge into marketing and social media management. His favorite thing about this kind of work is that there is always something new to learn. He looks forward to learning more about creating engaging web pages and marketing campaigns throughout these next few months.



## SALES & MARKETING

The Digital Media Marketing Team made up of Jay and Baylie has been hard at work creating landing pages, social media posts, blogs, and press releases. Our first roll out of this new sales and marketing process will be with BORSA since it's familiar. Eventually we will roll out all services that can be found on our website's wheel of services.

Thanks to everyone that attended the P+CFO Lunch and Learn. If you have any questions about a client that may be a prospect reach out to Brian Mayville, and he can help you evaluate the opportunity.

If your client ever tells you they are thinking about liquidating their retirement funds to buy or start a business, send them to Suzy for BORSA Plan information.

The most interesting prospect I've worked with this month is buying land and building a high-end glamping campground! Doesn't that sound like heaven?

We closed two BORSA deals so far in August with several still in the Pipeline.

Eventually we will reach the point in our migration to Salesforce.com that Jay will be getting with you to connect your Outlook. Don't worry, you won't have to log into Salesforce. It will be a permanent connection through Outlook. You will receive appropriate training at that time.

Suzy was able to get back into the real world with the first Post-Covid SBA Lending Conference in Philly. Travelling was pretty normal, but having access to food and drink – even in large hotels – can be tricky. Expect to show your vaccination card.

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

**D**uke Patterson is a familiar face if you work in the DRDA, PLLC office. If you have any interaction with the Bookkeeping department, Duke is one of the go-to people for answers. When it comes to Quickbooks Online or desktop he is well versed in the nuances of the programs. Duke also does a very good job at interacting with clients to get the information needed to push projects through to completion and gives 110% in terms of effort in all he does.

**D**uke is a Houston native. He grew up near Sagemont, and eventually migrated south to Clear Lake where he has lived for the last 24 years which is where he plans to retire eventually. Duke started out playing bass guitar in a garage band in 6th grade and recently hung up his guitar due to problems with his hands, however he has played paid gigs and made recordings with various local bands. Duke's passions in the 90s through the mid-2000s were scuba diving, offshore fishing, and surfing and he has traveled well beyond the confines of the Houston area to pursue them. Now Duke spends his free time riding on his Harley with his wife of 13 years, April, outdoor cooking, and mentoring his 15 year old grandson Ryland in sports.

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**W**e would like to thank Rene Lewis for being patient and generous with her knowledge when it comes to the PreBoard Team. They appreciate your help with Client Onboarding. They feel confident in always being able to ask her questions and her going out of her way to answer them. Thank you

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**S**hout Out to Misti Perez her production coworkers consider her a very valued employee and team player. One coworker compared her to a Swiss Army Knife. She is resourceful and a "go to" person if you need help or cannot figure something out! Thank you Misti!



## CLIENT ONBOARDING

"Customer Service is the new marketing, it's what differentiates one business from another – Jay Bier"

**J**uly 1 thru July 31, 2021 approximately 36 Engagements = entities (business and individuals) were sent out

**C**OB team successfully welcomed 19 entities (business and individuals) for the month of July with estimated annual fees of \$27,600.

**T**his amount includes tax compliance only so the actual amount will be higher once the amount of bookkeeping is determined.

**J**uly 1 thru July 31, 2021 Clients (business and/or individuals) lost: 5 = \$10,963.75 estimated annual fees lost (Tax, accounting & consulting)

**A**nn Knuppel and her husband Ron climbing their 8th Fourteener in Breckenridge, Colorado with their two dogs Ellie and Skye. Colorado has more peaks that are over 14,000 feet above sea level than any other state in the United States.



## Tax Spotlight

**M**atthew Dinh is a native Texan and has lived here his whole life. He started working for DRDA, PLLC as an intern in the fall of 2020. He graduated from the University of Houston – Clear Lake in December 2020 and was hired as a Staff One.

**M**att spent his first tax season preparing Management Fee Analyses (MFAs), payroll reports, bookkeeping, 5500s and 1040s. He is now learning to prepare forms 1120. He has taken on every new challenge with enthusiasm and has learned a great deal during his time at DRDA, PLLC.

**O**n July 22, 2021, Matt, his wife, Jennifer, and his son, Evan, welcomed a new baby, Caroline, to their family. He reports that she is happy, healthy and sleeping a lot.

**W**e thank Matt for his dedication to his work and for always having a positive attitude.

**Q**uote for the month from Matt: Opportunities multiply as they are seized.