

# 2022 NASPEs AWARD

## *Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award Nomination Innovative State Human Resource Management Program*

Nominations from dues-paying states are considered for eligibility. Nominated leaders and programs should have a positive effect on the administration of state human resource programs. A state's central human resource department or line agency human resource operations may administer nominated programs.

Programs and projects must have been operational for at least six months and must be transferable to other states. Selection criteria are based on the questions asked on the award application. Included in this packet are the specific criteria for each award and their categories. Nominations are encouraged in all areas of human resource management administration.

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### PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Title: MassAchieve: Learn. Grow. Succeed!                      State: MA

Contact Person: Dana Yonchak

Contact's Title: Senior Director, Employee Engagement & Advancement

Agency: Human Resources Division

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### NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nominator: Dana Yonchak                      Title: Senior Director, Employee Engagement & Advancement

State: MA                      Agency: Human Resources Division

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#### ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST:

- Meet all eligibility requirements
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### **DETAILS**

Please attach a one-page summary of the program. Provide a narrative answer for each of the questions. You are limited to four pages (based on regular 8 1/2 x 11-inch paper double-spaced in 12-point font). The four-page limit does not include the one-page summary.

1. Please provide a brief description of this program.

The new MassAchieve learning system was procured, developed, implemented and launched within 8 months, to deliver a powerful and robust new learning experience for development and growth to 43,000 executive department employees at the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It is designed as an impactful, contemporary and future-facing resource, to support Commonwealth employees shape, adapt and redefine their core skills to meet the changing needs of the future workforce.

2. How long has this program been operational (month and year)?

The program launched in August 2021.

3. Why was this program created? (What problem[s] or issues does it address?)

The criticality of real time access to training and development solutions that address the needs of a high-performing workforce were never as apparent as they became during the 2020 Pandemic. Similarly, the limitations of a learning system that had not been managed nor updated in 15 years became crystal clear. Within a few weeks in Spring 2020, most of the Commonwealth's 40,000+ employees were forced to switch nearly immediately to a remote, virtual working environment. In 2 weeks, the teleworking rate of employees soared from 2% to nearly 80% of telework eligible employees. How to work and learn productively, communicate effectively, manage successfully and maintain performance integrity collided in this brand new, virtual world order. With no access to live training options, and without a solid and responsive learning system, critical training gaps were coming to light each day.

4. Why is this program a new and creative method?

Previously, the Commonwealth's learning system had been a static delivery platform for stale and outdated training, for the most part. Training efforts were focused on live, in-person trainings and eLearnings were an afterthought. In many ways, the pandemic forced an acceleration of innovative learning strategy that required creativity and technological support that put learning easily into the hands of our employees, working virtually and now, working in a hybrid model.

5. What was the program's startup costs? (Provide detailed information about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place.)

The Commonwealth purchased licenses for the Cornerstone learning system, seen as a worldwide leader in learning platforms. An implementation partner was part of procurement, and a small and mighty team of Commonwealth employees made up the core project team. General hard (external costs) for the system were \$500,000.

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6. What are the program's operational costs?

License are available for annual renewal, estimated at approximately \$500,000 annually

7. How is this program funded?

The program is funded through the Human Resources Division largely, with some portion supported through a charge back model to 9 Commonwealth executive department secretariats.

8. Did this program originate in your state?  Yes

9. Are you aware of similar programs in other states?  No

If yes, how does this program differ?

We know that many states have learning management systems, but we believe that the MassAchieve motto of "Learn. Grow. Succeed!" speaks to our use of the system as a foundation to create the learning organization of the future, with connections to performance management, talent management, recruitment, retention and overall employee engagement and satisfaction. We like to say it's much more than just mandatory compliance trainings.

10. How do you measure the success of this program?

There are a number of success metrics and key performance indicators that we have adopted and evolved over our first year launch phase, including active users as a percentage of total headcount, completion rates for trainings, and targets for self-directed, optional trainings that employees choose to take.

11. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

At about our 6 month mark, we saw more than 25,000 employees using, engaging with and learning with MassAchieve. A satisfaction survey returned more than 1000 employee "thumbs up" and satisfaction with MassAchieve.

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## **Commonwealth of Massachusetts: MassAchieve Powers the Future of Work**

**VISION FOR LEARNING.** The MassAchieve team at the Commonwealth of MA is proud to have successfully delivered more than just a learning management system or a software solution to our 44,000 teammates. The goal and motto for MassAchieve is to provide an equal playing field for all employees at all levels to “learn, grow and succeed.” The future of our workforce is less system focused and more human and performance-focused, to support the learning, growth, engagement, retention, professional development and success of all Commonwealth employees, with a learning strategy that considers the skills, aptitudes and talents that employees need for the future. The opportunities for employees, managers, supervisors and leaders at all levels to build skills, improve performance, and to deliver even higher levels of service to constituents, colleagues and the citizens of Massachusetts will result in a stronger, more resilient, more effective, productive and future-focused Commonwealth.

**EMPLOYEES DESPERATE FOR TRAINING SUPPORT.** The new world birthed by the pandemic also meant that employees and supervisors were hungry for virtual training, learning, support and development resources. And, since they were on screens for hours a day, they needed virtual training resources that were easy to navigate, inspirational, dynamic, simple to use, and that could deliver online training and learning tools at a moment’s notice for many different needs and situations, as well as meeting employees where they were with the varying degrees of computer literacy across our workforce.

**BUILT FOR EMPLOYEES, BY EMPLOYEES.** Between January-August 2021, a small but mighty core team, the “MassAchieve dozen” (or so), engaged with and benefitted from the input, feedback, support and contributions of every Secretariat and agency from across all executive departments. Their goal was to shape a new training system and resource that could support the growth, development, skill-building and advancement of all Commonwealth employees. In cooperation with several working groups they assembled, about 75 employees had a signature on the development of the system, training strategies, content re-imagining, and communications and launch planning. They connected with experts in training, learning and development, IT, procurement, finance, HR, leadership, accessibility, labor, performance management, communications, project management, systems testing and more.

**PARTNERS IN LEARNING.** The MassAchieve team has developed a system that is much more than a software solution. They have created a learning and training resource for professional growth, development, advancement and support so that employees can perform at their best, whether serving the needs of a co-worker, a customer at their counter, a colleague at another agency, a patient or recipient of services, a family in need, or their Secretariat’s leadership. MassAchieve supports all employees, whether they are serving the public or serving their own colleagues, and the trainings available in MassAchieve reinforce the Commonwealth’s commitment to the growth and development of its employees overall as a high-performing workforce.

**EMPOWERED LEARNING FOR ALL.** The MassAchieve team did what others had tried unsuccessfully to do over the years, to upgrade the training and development resources available to employees across the Commonwealth with a training platform and eLearning courses that were easy, cost and time effective to access. With dedication and commitment, creativity and courage, and input from across the Commonwealth’s agencies and Secretariats, the team was inspired to create a plan for the introduction of a new training and education resource, that would lay the foundation for a culture of learning, training, and development at the Commonwealth, with equal access and opportunity for all employees.