



# Streamlining Vital Internal Communications:

What Does Success Look Like and How is it Measured?

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May 24, 2023

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## **Poll: Does your agency currently have an internal newsletter?**

1. Yes, we are seasoned pros
2. Yes, we recently launched our newsletter
3. Not right now - I'm here to learn more!

# Today's Speakers



**Melissa LaCombe**

**Branch Chief, Division of External Affairs**, Bureau of Health Workforce



**Elle Schwarz**

**Senior Implementation Project Manager**, Granicus

# How it all works...

## Relevant Content

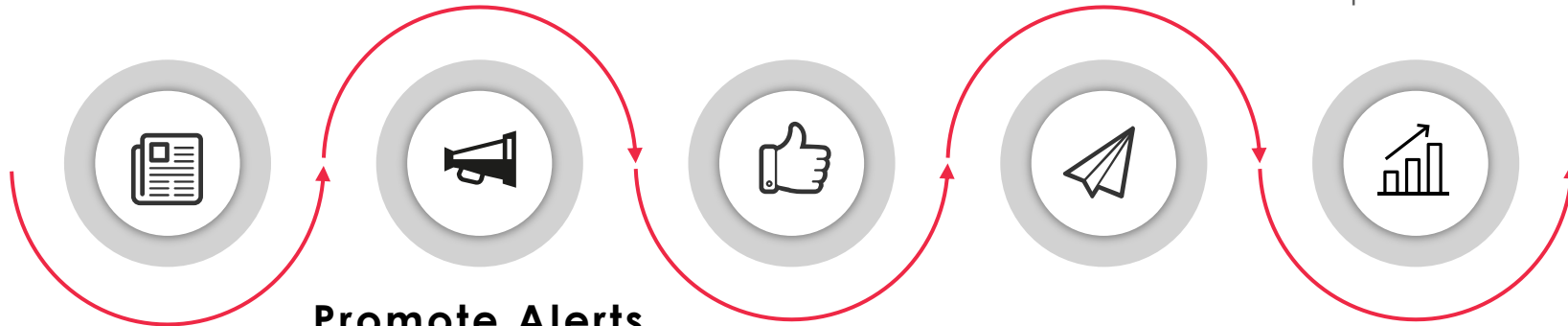
Curating content that is important and easy to digest for your internal newsletters

## Maintaining Lists

Curate internal groups for department specific or needed information.

## View Results

Reporting and Analytics to measure the impact of your communications and what resonates with your internal partners.



## Promote Alerts

Add subscription links on your internal employee pages for opt ins communications.

## Send Messages

Messages can be sent automatically (Page Watch) or Admins send scheduled and curated information via email to ensure all employees are receiving their content

## govDelivery

- ✓ Cloud-based SaaS (web-based platform)
- ✓ Secure
- ✓ Easy to use

# Best Practices



What information would you want to receive?



How do you digest content?



Where do you go to get more information?



What sparked the idea or need for streamlining your agency's internal communication strategy?

# What We Heard



Too many single subject emails



Overreliance on email



Too many forms of content dissemination



Inconsistent schedule



Top down, one-way communications



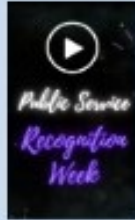
Irrelevant information



## BHW, Briefly

Happy Public Service Recognition Week!

Thanks to each of you who dedicate yourselves to public service each day. Your work makes a difference in achieving our mission of providing quality and culturally competent health care to rural and underserved communities. BHW senior leaders appreciate all that you do to promote and protect the health of all Americans.



Watch Video

**See You Today:** The BHW All-Hands Meeting is today at 1:00 p.m. ET. Do you have questions? [Email us](#) by 12:00 p.m. ET and we'll answer them during the Q&A session. All questions submitted in advance are anonymous. [Add to calendar.](#)

**Upcoming Meeting:** The [National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice](#) will meet on May 10, 2025. The council will discuss and vote on the recommendations for the 10<sup>th</sup> Report to Congress. The council will also discuss and vote on legislative letters to Congress and the Secretary. [Add to calendar.](#)

**Help Spread the Word:** BHW will hold a webinar on the new multifactor login process for Electronic Handbooks (EHD) on Friday, May 12 from 1:00-2:00 p.m. ET. The webinar is intended for applicants, grantees, service providers, consultants, and technical analysts. [Learn more and register.](#)

**Save the Date:** HHS's Office of Women's Health, Bureau of Health Workforce, Bureau of Primary Health Care, and the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy are collaborating on a webinar in celebration of National Women's Health Week. "Connecting Women to Health Care Through HHS's Programs" will be held on Wednesday, May 17, from 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. ET. Dr. Michèle Weitzko, director of the National Center for Health Workforce Analysis, will be a featured presenter. [Learn more and register.](#)

## Celebrating National Nurses Week

National Nurses Week is a nationwide celebration of the nursing profession and the invaluable contributions of nurses. This year's theme focuses on promoting self-care, recognition, professional development, and community engagement. BHW thanks all nurses in their many roles for their dedication to providing quality health care and improving the health of communities. Nurses make a difference!



Be sure to join the [HHS Workforce Funding Opportunities for Nursing Students and Nurses Webinar](#) on Wednesday, May 10 from 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. ET to learn about funding opportunities available to nursing students, practicing nurses, and nursing programs. [Register today](#) and share with your networks.

At today's [BHW All-Hands](#), you'll also hear how BHW nursing grantees have used funding to make a difference in their programs.

**Calling all BHW Nurses:** Join HHS Administrator Candie Johnson and other senior

# What We Created

- » Scannable & timely content
- » Consistent message delivery
- » Celebratory – both the work and the people
- » Balance of informative and fun
- » Connection to the mission



How did your team create an editorial calendar and distribution timeline?



# Top 5 Questions to Consider

1

Is content timely? (Occurring in the next two weeks/happened recently)

2

Is there a link to access additional information?

3

Does the subject matter pertain to all staff members?

4

Is this submission succinct? (Ideally no more than 4 sentences!)

5

Is there a graphic associated with the topic? (optional)



How has internal feedback  
helped evolve the  
newsletter design?

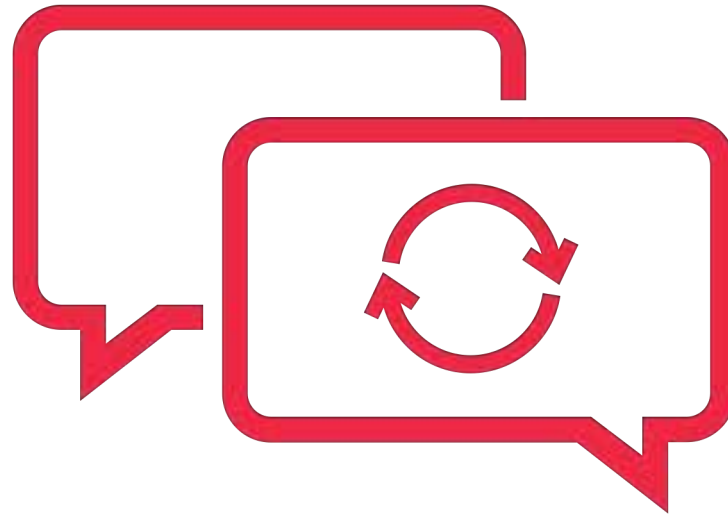
# Feedback Mechanisms

Granicus email metrics

Open ended feedback

Focus groups feedback

Informal polls





What metrics are most impactful for determining newsletter success?



BHW had many employees in an almost fully remote staff during the pandemic. How did Vitals help build culture during that time?

## #IAmBHW - Jay Rosenfelder

James (Jay) Rosenfelder is a public affairs specialist in the Division of External Affairs. Jay was born and raised in the [DMV](#) and believes the variety of people and cultures in the area taught him to respect everyone around him and see them for who they are. "We are all unique and have different experiences throughout life, and I think that's awesome."

When Jay first started working in the federal government, he was a member of a production team for a [feature on veteran support animals](#), which won a regional Emmy. "Unfortunately, since I was an intern, I was seen as a contractor and my name wasn't submitted with the award package, but it still counts to me, and I feel comfortable saying that I'm an Emmy award winner!"

To make the most of teleworking, Jay commandeered a guest bedroom and turned it into his office. "When we first started working remotely during the pandemic, my office was in the basement. I quickly learned that a dark office wasn't for me. It's amazing how much a little bit of sunlight can change everything. That and investing in a good chair are my top two bits of [advice for anyone working from home](#)."



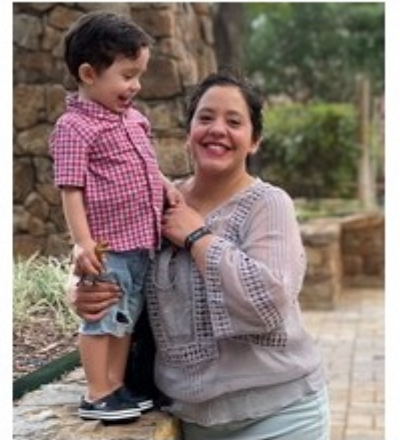
## #IAmBHW - Lorener Brayboy

LCDR Lorener Brayboy is a project manager in DHCFS. Lorener grew up in nearby [McLean](#), Virginia, where different languages, cultures, customs, and traditions made her curious about the world. "My friends would invite me to their homes or family parties, and it was such an honor to participate in their customs and dances and eat their delicious food."

Lorener's first job was at [Inova Health System](#) where she served as a program coordinator connecting uninsured children to health insurance. She says, "In that job, I learned it is important to [listen](#), understand different perspectives, and acknowledge that everyone has their own personal journey."

She also learned from several mentors and supervisors in her professional life. Some of their pearls of wisdom were:

- Go for it! The worst someone can say is no. She works every day to not let fear hold her back from doing or asking for something.
- When communicating with someone, whether by phone, email, or Teams Chat, be [clear with your message](#) and know that it's okay to draft what you want to say beforehand.
- [Take your time to make decisions](#). You don't have to act on or respond right in the moment, but don't take too much time to process or you'll stall on progress.







# BHW VITTLES

The April 1 Dish of the Bureau

## BHW, Beefly

The Pop-Up Cafeteria is getting into the HRSA spirit with its new menu items.

- From the deli: THCGME (turkey, ham, and cheddar on a gluten-free muffin, English)
- From the hot bar: NHSC LRP (newly harvested spring chicken with lemon-roasted potatoes)
- From the dessert tray: CHWPTP (cherry, hazelnut, and whipped-cream phyllo tarts & pastries)
- And they are partnering with the new 7-Eleven across Parklawn Ave. for everyone's favorites: SLRPeet!



Pod: [Should the cafeteria honor your ten-year-old coffee reward card?](#)

## The Meat is Virtual but the Beef is Real: The BHW Virtual Cookoff



BHW's annual Rib, Chili, and Barbeque Cook-Off is going virtual this year, but the competitive spirit is still very real.

With fewer BHW staff at Fishers Lane, the event that once filled the atrium with smells of smoked meat will now take place in individual kitchens across the nation.



## BHW VIRALS

The Bureau's Quickly Spreading News

## BHW, Bytes

BHW is in the news... with many of its programs going viral!



Cheer National News featured a story about a Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education grantee whose new recruitment video went viral on YouTube. "It's fun to work at the [P-QH-QH](#) (with more cowbell)!"

A Nurse Corps Scholarship applicant made national news when *The Daily Bowl* reported about the Instagram Reel he submitted as an essay; he calculated how many packs of ramen he could buy for one semester's worth of classes.

A new thread on TIL, Reddit's new competitor, had thousands of responses to help "decode" BHW's latest acronym soup. "ICYMI: BHW has SRSLY cool program acronyms. NP they are SPW, FAWG, there is BHWET and SLRP. A new NOFO (not to be confused with ANEW) will be here ASAP." But even this was TLDR for some applicants.

Finally, *The Sneeze* reported that a NHSC site went viral (literally, viral) after all health center employees called in sick with a [case of the Mondays](#).

## BHW Shorties is Here!

Streamlined-NOFO

Equitable-NOFO

BHW has secured its position as the most innovative bureau in HRSA with a new NOFO initiative, BHW Shorties.

"We applaud the efforts of the folks who are already working to streamline our traditional NOFOs, but let's be real, folks today can't even make it through a restaurant menu, much less a technical government document with multiple pages," said BHW Associate Administrator Dr. Luis Padilla. "BHW Shorties responds to the needs of our nation's ever-shrinking attention spans."

While prior NOFO streamlining efforts have aimed for an eighth grade reading level on the Fleisch-Kincaid Grade Level Scale, BHW Shorties goes a step further. "We shoot for a reading level between a goldfish and a toddler," says OPD Acting Director Elizabeth Kitzie. Recognizing that neither goldfish nor toddlers can actually read, she clarifies, "We incorporate emojis, animated GIFs, and bright colors, and when absolutely required by OIG, short, bulleted phrases in large fonts."



What tips do you have for agencies that are stuck trying to start a newsletter?



**Questions?**



**Thank you**

Questions? Contact [info@granicus.com](mailto:info@granicus.com)