

## 2022 List of Past Participants

### January - Katie Suel



Katie joined DBS as a Licensing Specialist in June of 2020. She was brand new to the industry, having just graduated from Winona State University. However, she learned the tasks quickly and was able to work independently within her role very soon after being hired.

Katie works full time from our DBS office in St. Louis Park and helps out in many different ways both within the Licensing & Commissions team and with other teams on the Operations side of the business. She started cross-training within the L&C team by learning to enter some commissions, helps with issuing policies and also helps out with inforce on top of her daily licensing work!

Katie is always willing to help out with any additional projects. Her constant flexibility to help out both her team and other teams, along with her positive attitude, helps DBS provide great service to our customers.

We received some great feedback about Katie this month. One employee shared the following:

*"Katie has been an enormous help to the Inforce team with issuing the paper policies that come in. The Inforce team has been in need of assistance for some time, and Katie caught on very quickly to the process. She does the majority of the policies and is happy to do so in addition to her own licensing work. There were quite a few policies coming in at the end of 2021 and she was able to handle the volume like a champ and is continuing to do so into 2022! Thank you so much Katie!"*

Another DBS Employee added:

*"Her work helping with paper policies is having a big impact on the whole organization! Katie always has a positive attitude and is a good communicator."*

**This is Katie's 1st EOM WIN! We are so happy to have her be a part of our DBS TEAM! Congratulations, Katie!**

### February - Dawn Goss



Dawn is no stranger to the Employee of the Month program – in fact this is her 4th time being recognized! She previously was named the Employee of the Month in May, 2014; March, 2016; and September, 2019. Also, she earned the Distinction of Employee of the Year in 2019!

She has continued to build on her strong reputation and strive for excellence in everything she does.

Dawn joined DBS in June of 2010 and has been an instrumental part of our licensing team ever since. She is our resident licensing expert, a leader within her department and is known for her remarkable knowledge in all things licensing. She also has a strong willingness to help and train others on the team.

In addition to helping the team with processing appointments, she takes on additional projects, helps our Field Relationship Managers with onboarding new accounts, and keeps up all of the firm's licensing updated. Dawn always stays calm under pressure and is great at getting creative to solve complex licensing issues for advisors.

We received some amazing feedback about Dawn:

*"Dawn is our dedicated licensing specialist for RBC and every time we ask her something we receive an immediate response! Exceptional customer service is provided with each interaction that we have with her. It's like she's waiting for us to send something, which I know she's not."*

Another nomination read:

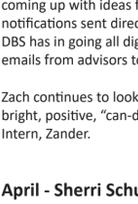
*"She's a trusted partner. We enjoy working with her and appreciate her ability to make our lives easier with her speedy turnaround times. Her efforts are a big help for me and my team. Each interaction is always followed by an immediate response, or a note to let us know she is working on something. We are never left wondering where something is when it's on her plate."*

And finally, we heard this:

*"Last night I sent a request to Dawn for a list of users that hold access to your website and gave 2/7/22 as a deadline. She turned that around and I had her response by 9:30 the next day! That gives me a few extra days to scrub it for anyone that should be removed before we submit to Toronto. Keep up the great work!"*

**We are so happy to have her be a part of our DBS TEAM! Congratulations, Dawn!**

### March - Zach Goodermont



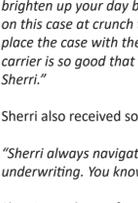
Zach joined the Marketing Team at DBS in August of 2019 as our Marketing Media Specialist. In this role he works on a variety of projects and tasks, such as photography and graphic design for our marketing collateral, email marketing campaigns, and working with the sales team on tracking advisor engagement. He also works on all our videos, gathering raw camera footage, cutting and trimming it, adding audio, and creating shells and templates to make the final product look great whether for internal use, advisor training or external projects.

Zach has recently been getting attention for his video work, receiving praise for his Wednesday Webinar series, training videos for the NALBA Case Manager Certification Program, Finseca webinars and other video marketing projects for DBS. All of this helps elevate the DBS presence in the industry and shows how we're embracing the latest technology tools.

Last month, Zach launched the first set of electronic underwriting questionnaires to replace the fillable PDF forms we currently have on our website. This was a project that took many months of consulting with the underwriters and coming up with ideas for improving the overall customer experience. Having these as an electronic form with automatic notifications sent directly to the underwriting box will save advisors time and it will reinforce the continuing commitment DBS has in going all digital. Also, more and more browsers are not supporting the fillable PDFs, so this will save calls and emails from advisors to our internal teams. Zach will convert all 79 forms over the next couple of months.

Zach continues to look for ways to put DBS in a positive light, not just with this project but with all he does. He has a bright, positive, "can-do" attitude and has been a tremendous asset in sharing his knowledge with our new Marketing Intern, Zander.

### April - Sherri Schug



Sherri joined DBS in February, 2015 and is a hybrid Case Manager, handling both Permanent and term cases. She is also responsible for a few key advisor offices.

Here at DBS, Sherri has the discipline and mental fortitude to remain cool, calm, and collected, even when faced with the most difficult of situations. She communicates expertly with her offices and she always makes sure that they feel like they are her number one client. Sherri is meticulous with the details of her cases, which is just another reason why she is so very good at what she does.

Sherri received some fantastic feedback this month.

First, we received an email from an Elite Access advisor, who took the time to write in, singing the praises of Sherri along with our Chief Underwriter, Lori Walker. Here is the feedback he specifically shared about working with Sherri:

*"It is special when there are team members that demonstrate effort above and beyond the call of duty. Not only does it brighten up your day but it also makes it easier to continue your work day no matter how hard it is. In working with Sherri on this case at crunch time, she is not only so good at easing the tension for us but also providing all the detailed steps to place the case with the carrier when we had little time to spare. The communication from her to our team and with the carrier is so good that even though I have worked in the business for 33 years I haven't met someone like her. Thank you Sherri."*

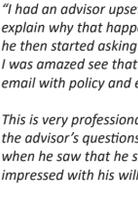
Sherri also received some fantastic feedback from one of her co-workers:

*"Sherri always navigates her way around tough cases and did so again this month. Some are Inforce and others in underwriting. You know she is doing everything possible on a daily basis to get these cases done. She is a Pro's Pro."*

Sherri was chosen from a total of 13 employee nominations. This is her 3rd EOM WIN!

**We are so happy to have her be a part of our DBS TEAM! Congratulations, Sherri!**

### May - Jeremy Upshaw



The May 2022 DBS Employee of the Month is Jeremy Upshaw!

Jeremy joined DBS as a Case Coordinator in October, 2021. Prior to that, he had been with Conduent, an outsource company that provides phone support.

As a Case Coordinator with DBS, Jeremy is responsible for handling applications, policies, and delivery requirements. He also assists advisors in the iGO Queue and helps them troubleshoot various issues.

Jeremy is a very reliable employee, and he thrives in the iGO Queue supporting our advisors when they call. He is always cool and collected, even when talking to someone who may be frustrated. He is a great team player and is active in the team chat, assisting other team members. His manager, Sara Lloyd, has noted that she is impressed with his performance and how eager he is to learn new things. He gets along well with his team and always has a funny comment or gif to brighten the team morale when needed.

Here is some fantastic feedback we received about Jeremy from one of his co-workers:

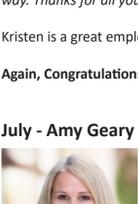
*"I had an advisor upset about a whole life premium being \$15,000.01 versus just \$15,000 even. I called the advisor to explain why that happens sometimes on whole life policies, and he understood and was happy with my answer. However, he then started asking questions about what was needed for delivery. Operations was in a meeting so I went to Paperclip. I was amazed see that Jeremy separated out the policy pages from the documents requiring a signature on the outgoing email with policy and e-documents to the advisor. Even the signature page of the illustration was separated!"*

*This is very professional. I am not a New Business expert, but because of Jeremy's attention to detail I could easily answer the advisor's questions. I was training and shadowing our new CDA, Jason Zwick (who is a former agent himself) and when he saw that he said verbatim, 'I would have loved that as an agent.' Jeremy is a new employee, but I have been impressed with his willingness to learn and help our customers. GREAT JOB JEREMY!!!!"*

**This is his 1st EOM WIN!**

**We are so happy to have him be a part of our DBS TEAM! Congratulations, Jeremy!**

### June - Kristen Kennedy



The June 2022 DBS Employee of the Month is Kristen Kennedy!

Kristen, one of our senior underwriters, has worked at DBS since 1992. Since joining DBS, Kristen has worked in almost every department and has become familiar with virtually every aspect of the business. Kristen's initial hiring and job interview was with the DBS founder, George Van Dusen III, so she has a great deal of longevity with the company.

She has been a valuable member of the DBS family and has provided great service and loyalty for many years. There are a lot of "Kristenisms" that have developed over the years that we still laugh about to this day.

Last month, Kristen stepped in on a case that was a very sensitive situation. A co-worker said:

*"We had a case declined for a client. It was a rather delicate situation as the proposed insured was the advisor's nephew. Kristin shopped the case and found a carrier, that under the right circumstances, would consider him. Kristen brought this case up at the LIBRA Underwriting meeting and secured an offer from a different carrier. The app is now in process and the advisor is thrilled."*

Separately, another co-worker adds:

*"Kristen is an all-star. She is experienced, knowledgeable, and goes above and beyond helping with underwriting cases. She is proactive in opening older cases, she explains situations well and gives talking points or suggestions on how we can pivot. If necessary, she is even willing to call advisors or clients directly herself. She is a pleasure to work with in every way. Thanks for all you do Kristen!"*

Kristen is a great employee and she embodies the word TEAMWORK every day.

**Again, Congratulations Kristen!**

### July - Amy Reynolds



Amy joined DBS in November of 2008. After spending ten years as a Case Manager, she left DBS to explore other opportunities. However, after about a year-and-a-half she returned "home" in July, 2019. Amy is well known for her calm demeanor and ability to keep even the biggest and most complicated cases moving along. This is due in large part to her great communication skills and eye for details. Amy is the Case Management Supervisor for the Western Region, and she leads the Jumbo case and Premium Finance case process for Operations.

Many of you might not know that Amy was our very first 'hybrid' Case Manager who consistently handled both permanent and term cases. Amy has played a huge role since her return to DBS with training new hires and documenting the Case Management process.

Amy manages her cases so that they move smoothly by planning ahead and proactively communicating when she sees a potential issue. Advisors trust Amy with their biggest cases and often express their appreciation for her work.

A member of the DBS sales team had this to share about Amy regarding some larger cases she's been working on recently:

*"These cases have a ton of moving parts. She keeps me in line by letting me know daily what is needed to complete cases. Any of the upbeat, positive and fun to work with, and she doesn't get discouraged when I keep calling or emailing her. She makes it easy to interface with the financial advisor or client."*

**We are so happy to have her be a part of our DBS TEAM! Congratulations, Amy!**

### August - Gail Burkhardt



Gail joined DBS in October of 2015 as a member of the Trad Team and is a Senior Case Manager in the Eastern Region. Prior to joining DBS she had been with SBIA.

Our field partners appreciate Gail because she is the calm during the storm. She is detailed and provides clear status and follow-through on her cases.

Here is some of the amazing feedback we received about Gail.

One advisor wrote:

*"Gail, I wanted to let you know that the clients were again effusive in their gratitude for your help with this policy. I have never seen any client so happy to have an LTC policy! Please add my name to that gratitude list to you!"*

Another advisor had this to say:

*"Since I started in my position just over 4 months ago, I have had the pleasure of speaking to Gail on several cases of ours. She has gone ABOVE & beyond in helping me complete whatever paperwork was needed to close out the cases. She is always patient, courteous & extremely knowledgeable & helpful. When someone goes above and beyond I always feel that they should be praised for doing so. In this day you do not always come across such dedicated individuals. She is a true asset to DBS."*

Finally, we received this feedback from an advisor stating how much he appreciated Gail as his Case Manager on a difficult case:

*"Why are you not my case manager on my case? Why someone else? I like working with you and would like all my cases to be managed by you!"*

This is great praise indeed, and we're happy he feels fully supported by Gail.

**This is Gail's second Employee of the Month win! We are so happy to have her be a part of our DBS TEAM! Congratulations, Gail!**

### September - Annette Miller



Annette Miller has been with DBS for over 12 years, and in fact, she just celebrated her 12-year anniversary in September! As a valued Senior Case Design Analyst for the CDA Team, Annette has always proven to be an asset, not only to the team, but to the entire organization. Her hard work and dedication to DBS is evident in everything she does. Everyone in the company knows they can rely on Annette for assistance with a difficult case or to answer a challenging question whatever it may be. She is a well-known source of information to all.

It is no secret that Annette is, and always has been, a star performer. This is her 5th Employee of the Month win, and she was Employee of the Year in 2016.

With some recent turnover on the CDA Team, Annette has had to step up even more. She has done this with enthusiasm and positivity, and has truly been a "rock" of consistency for her teammates through this transitional period. She has taken on more responsibilities, all without affecting the top-level service she provides to her advisors.

The Case Design Team always appreciates Annette's extra efforts and support to the team, but her efforts are also recognized by other departments as well, only proving that the impact she makes is felt company wide. Her nominations this month demonstrate this. One DBS employee wrote,

*"Annette is a powerhouse. Advisors call asking specifically for her, and I know that she provides service that exceeds expectations. She's always willing to help out if a team member is out of the office or is not available. She has helped me out with upset advisors, many times when it's not necessarily her jurisdiction and smoothed the situation over. She took one disgruntled advisor, and he turned around and sent her supervisor a glowing email about her! Annette goes above and beyond in her service and is a very kind and helpful coworker to me as I am new and getting my bearings at DBS."*

We also heard this:

*"Annette has done a fantastic job bringing in advisors to the AppVantage program. She provides excellent documentation and communication of expectations for her customers. We have had successful cases with this program due to how well she has set up the AppVantage Team."*

Finally, another employee had this to say:

*"Her normal puffy calculator, and in between a very busy schedule with teammates out of the office due to hurricane Ian and Covid. She helped walk me through the presentation and prepare me for the in-person client meeting. I could then confidently explain the benefits of selecting 'life only' with a life insurance backdrop and how it applied to different ages. Thank you Annette!"*

**Congratulations to Annette for consistently being recognized as a star employee for DBS!**

### October - Thea Luknic



Thea joined DBS in July of 2022 as our receptionist within the Support & Services Team. As "Director of First Impressions," she anticipates the needs of others, radiates patience, and provides outstanding service to all our customers. Oftentimes, Thea is the very first person a new customer to DBS interacts with, and she does a fantastic job welcoming them to our organization.

Working with our carrier partner's Inforce teams is not always the easiest, but Thea has continued to grow her knowledge, ask key questions, and share what she has learned with her team to best support our customers.

Thea comes in each day ready to help. She owns each call along with all requests she receives to make sure our customers get to the proper team member and their needs resolved.

Here is something one of her fellow co-workers had to say:

*"A carrier overnighted a very large file to me at the DBS office. I needed this file, which was close to 1600 pages of medical records, to be scanned to me. Without hesitation, Thea took on the task and scanned the file and placed it in PaperClip for me in a very timely manner. Not only is she an S&S Specialist, but she is also our receptionist, and I can not only image how much time this took for her to do. She is a breath of fresh air in reception and is just very poised and professional!"*

Another co-worker mentioned:

*"Thea is fairly new to DBS. Since she has been here, she has learned several new processes very quickly and has taken on many new responsibilities to help out not just the S & S team, but case management and the IGO team as well. She is dedicated to doing a top-notch job in all aspects and takes ownership for every incoming call, making sure every caller reaches the person or destination they need. She is tenacious and is very willing to get to the bottom of problems at the carriers for checks and inforce requests she handles."*

*Thea is very flexible and is willing to learn and take on whatever is given to her. She is a delight to work with and we are glad to have her on the S&S team."*

**This is Thea's first EOTM WIN! We are truly blessed to have her be a part of our TEAM! Congratulations, Thea!**

### November - Alaina Winson



Alaina joined the DBS team in January 2014 and has been an asset since day 1! She has held several different roles within our organization and made an impact in each of them. She currently leads the Support and Services team and is the Project Manager for many key projects for DBS.

Alaina was most recently a critical contributor to the launch of our DBS Communications Hub. Her drive and dedication helped the project move quickly from an idea to an amazing tool we are all able to use and benefit from! Alaina is always willing to help out fellow DBS employees and will dive into any task asked of her.

Here is some feedback that one of our key advisors gave regarding the service Alaina provides for inforce policies and why he loves working with DBS:

*"...I could go elsewhere but it's not worth it. The support I get after the sale, specifically from Alaina, is unmatched in the industry. I have been in the business over 30 years both in the field and in carrier management, and Alaina is one of the best I have seen. You will get more cases in 2023, and it's due to her and her team. Thank you."*

**This is Alaina's 3rd EOM WIN! We are truly blessed to have her be a part of our TEAM! Congratulations, Alaina!**

### December - Andrew Georges



Andrew joined the team in April 2021 after working at Gustavus Adolphus College as a User Services Technology Coordinator. He quickly made his mark on DBS, catching the notice of employees early on in his tenure, and won the Employee of the Month title two months later in June 2021. He has continued to have an important impact on both the IT department and the organization as a whole ever since.

The work of an IT professional isn't always glamorous, with much of the work often done behind the scenes, sometimes without a typical user even noticing or realizing that a change or enhancement has been made. This is true for several of the projects that Andrew has been involved in. He has been an integral part of continuing to make DBS a leader when it comes to implementing new technology platforms, enhancing and utilizing cloud-based services, and instituting data security measures, including protocol and training for employees. Whenever DBS is audited or needs to provide vendors with information, DBS passes with flying colors, due in part to Andrew's attention to detail and commitment to keeping DBS up with the times.

Andrew is often called upon to serve on projects to provide an IT perspective or provide technical expertise. Recent projects include serving as an IT SME for the Salesforce conversion, automating new computer setup, completing Microsoft training courses, and many, many more. He does this while still maintaining his daily workload and answering IT help desk tickets.

This past month Andrew completed our migration to ConnectWise, the new ticketing and collaboration system that allows IT to interact with customers seamlessly and fully, and should make solving issues much quicker. Andrew has been working on this through all the hurdles with fast steam, accountability, and tenacity, and has again gone above and beyond in this endeavor.

Here is what a co-worker had to say:

*"All year, Andrew has worked hard, but especially so on the ConnectWise project. He constantly and quietly makes DBS a more efficient and secure place to work. It's not flashy but it's critical to business."*

**Congratulations, Andrew!**