

Meet the Professional Development Team!

Dr. Mirna Barker is DOAS' chief learning officer. She has extensive experience in the design, development and implementation of training and certification programs for internal and external clients. Her diverse background includes the development of documentation and training programs in retail, banking, and healthcare. She also has several years of experience implementing complex health-care IT systems at large hospitals in the United States and abroad. Mirna holds a bachelor's and a master's degree in computer science from Georgia Institute of Technology and a doctorate in education from the University of Georgia.

Iris Gathing has more than 22 years of experience in marketing management and training and currently is a training specialist for DOAS. Her experience spans work in enterprise resource planning, human resource development, and training analysis, design and development. Prior to joining the State, Iris consulted with several Atlanta based firms including Bell South, Coca-Cola, and Home Depot. Iris earned a B.A. in Business Administration, and an M.A. in Instructional and Training Technology, both from Governors State University.

Maria Gibbons is a procurement training specialist and has worked in training and development for over 13 years. Her experience includes delivering training on Microsoft Office



The Professional Development Team
 Pictured clockwise from the top left are Dr. Mirna Barker, Melanie Spencer, Mary Zirock, Maria Gibbons, Gayle Porster, and Iris Gathing.

software with a concentration in database software. She has developed curriculum as well as classroom-based and web-based training for a variety of software and topics. Maria attended State University of New York at Albany, majoring in English and African American Studies.

Gayle Porster has worked for the State for 29 years. The veteran started with Pardons and Paroles as a parole investigator, then quickly moved to the Department of Corrections, where she worked for 17 years, first in probation counseling,

then as a correctional counselor, and lastly as a trainer. The veteran came to DOAS in 1997 as a human resources trainer and then moved to the State Purchasing Department (SPD) in June 2002 as purchasing trainer. She has an Ed.S. in Counseling and Psychological services and a CPPB certification.

Melanie Spencer's 6 years with the State of Georgia began as a student assistant at the Board of Regents in 2001. During her 4 years with the Board of Regents, Melanie assisted various departments with clerical work, deliveries, and receptionist duties. In 2005, she joined DOAS as a front desk receptionist for the Commissioner's Office. A year later, she joined SPD as a Knowledge Center secretary and is now a DOAS procurement training coordinator. Melanie holds a B.S. in Exercise Science from Georgia State University.

Mary Zirock has more than 15 years of experience in procurement, 7 of which she has earned at the State. A subject matter expert in print media, she began with SPD as a buyer in 2001. Starting in 2004, she worked for the Department of Transportation as a compliance officer for three years. SPD was happy to see her return this year as a procurement specialist. Mary has a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Baldwin Wallace College. ■

TRAINING SPECIALIST WANTED:
 An additional Procurement Training Specialist position is currently posted on the DOAS website on the [Jobs page](#). This position will complete the Professional Development team. This newly added position will be responsible for Supplier training.