

Employee Spotlight

Laura Albert Payroll Manager

Each month, Town Administrator Patrice Garvin highlights a single employee whose hard work and dedication exemplifies what it means to be an employee for the Town of Belmont. In the Employee Spotlight series, we are able to shine a light on incredible employee achievements and provide an opportunity to introduce and recognize Belmont Town employees throughout the Belmont community.

In this month's Bulletin, Town Administrator Garvin would like to recognize Laura Albert of the Town of Belmont's Accounting Department. Laura is a relatively new member of the accounting team and began her role as Payroll Manager in 2023. Though her tenure so far has been short her impact has been felt though her ability, professionalism, and her willingness to learn and collaborate with colleagues. Her contributions to conquering challenges and her ability to learn the ropes over the past year has allowed her to become an imperative member of the Accounting Team.

The Accounting Department works to maintain the fiscal records and internal financial controls for all Departments of the Town and School, as well as, processing the Town's payroll and accounts payable to the Town's vendors. When asked about the role that Laura plays in all this, she says with a characteristic smile and chuckle, "my main responsibility is processing the Town's payroll from start to finish."

Those who work with and know Laura are likely to recount her professionalism, willingness to learn, confidence take on challenges, an unrelenting drive to get to the root cause of an issue and her collaborative approach to getting things done. Handling a payroll that includes hundreds of employees along with other temporary and seasonal positions is no easy task and Laura prides herself mastering the details and intricacies of her work, which is where she finds her motivation.

As Laura explained, having so many details and intricacies can, on a regular, basis lead to searching for answers to complex questions, evaluating current systems and practices to discover ways they can be more efficient, as well as, learning nuances of our current payroll systems and tools to leverage that knowledge to increase and maintain accuracy. As Laura says, "I kind of feel like I'm Scooby-Doo—digging and digging until I solve the mystery and there is nothing better than pulling the mask off a problem that you're trying to solve."

Laura found her way into the municipal sector at a time when she was seeking better use of what she sees as her to greatest professional skills: customer service and a drive to help people. In Laura's words, "I wanted to work somewhere that I would be on the forefront of helping people." Laura has a deep appreciation for the impact that working for a municipality can have from witnessing the work of her mother who spent over 20



years in the in the municipal world and also her brother. Laura had even worked for a short time when she was 18 in the Belmont Treasurer's Office. All of this helped Laura know that the Town of Belmont would be a good fit.

Since starting in Belmont, Laura has seen challenges as exciting. As Laura says, "Any new job that you have is going to have its challenges and I think you have to expect that. As someone who recently completed their first year, my biggest challenge is understanding how everything works, because everywhere is different. I think of it like you're climbing a ladder, just taking it one rung at a time getting closer and closer to understanding. With each rung of the ladder, the more confident I get."

Part of achieving that confidence has been Laura's ability to prioritize communication and collaboration with her fellow employees, a quality that has led her to achieve much in a short time. Whether it is solving a payroll issue, cleaning up pay and deduction codes, W-2 reporting, working toward a full digitization of payroll or playing a hand in the roll out of the new Employee Self Service (ESS) portal, Laura credits collaboration as the main force that drives things forward. Like Scooby, Laura knows that the mystery can't be solved without the help of the rest of the "gang" and she is always ready to hop aboard or welcome aboard collaborators on the "Mystery Machine."

Laura still has much to aspire to in the coming years with Belmont. Looking forward she is still focused on the people that work for the Town and the people of the Belmont community. In Laura's words, "I work a lot with numbers when I'm doing payroll, however what I'm doing isn't all about the numbers—it is the people behind those numbers who've done the work and how that work has done so much good for other people. At the end of the day, we are all just people helping other people."

When Laura is not problem solving and enjoying her work, she enjoys kayaking, a special hobby that she took up during the Pandemic. She enjoys taking her kayak to many beautiful spots across the State and is looking forward with great anticipation to the upcoming "kayak season" this spring and summer.