



# Finding the Magic



## Jessica Ballard-Culp

Team Lead / Lease Contracting Officer  
Leasing Division

Since being selected to be a top workplace by the Denver Post for the third time in four years, it is important to delve into what makes Region 8 PBS so special.

For Jessica Ballard-Culp, GSA Region 8 PBS has always held a magical quality when she talks about working in the region.

She started working at the regional headquarters in July of 2000 as a Realty Specialist but went to another agency in 2014 for a promotion opportunity. Higher pay was an incentive to get her to work somewhere else but she did not feel as welcome or find the same community experience as with GSA. Within 18 months she came back to Region 8 PBS - even taking a downgrade to return.

“Community is a big thing for me, feeling like I am part of a community speaks to me personally as well as professionally. GSA Region 8 provides that community and it allows me to contribute in a way that makes me feel fulfilled,” said Ballard-Culp.

When she first came to PBS, GSA was taking a new approach to focus on its associates rather than only the mission. It was the year 2000 and the economy was thriving, new innovation was sweeping business and the Dot Com bubble was at its height. GSA was facing a time of significant loss of personnel through attrition as well as a high number of retirements after a hiring freeze in the '80s stunted the workforce. They needed to change to attract and retain talent.

The change was gradual but remained steady, like starting with kindling and building up to a roaring fire. Now Ballard-Culp, like all other Region 8 PBS associates, operates in an environment that feeds off collaboration, embraces flexibility and allows people to learn and grow. “Associates know that PBS invests in them, appreciates them and values the time and energy they put into their work,” said Ballard-Culp. “That creates a workplace where everyone wants to work and produce together.”

Another aspect that Ballard-Culp attributes to the success of Region 8 is the culture allows people to find their way while getting to know people on a personal level, building connections and breaking down barriers in order to tackle problems together. It is a place where friendships are forged and people choose to hang out with coworkers after hours, according to Ballard-Culp.

The real “magic” in Region 8 PBS is the culture that has been cultivated over time while allowing people to contribute in a supportive environment where achieving operational excellence is the goal. “There is magic when work is fun. Leadership sets up the framework and makes it very clear - this is our culture, this is what we value and then people have the room to find their magic,” said Ballard-Culp.

Over the years, Region 8 PBS has progressed past the stereotypical government office by purposefully combining our mission with our culture and focusing on the people as well as the work we deliver. There is a single thread that runs through all the divisions in PBS: competence, professionalism and the ability to connect to one another.

“It amazes me, what we have been through and what we have learned, how we have evolved and how we have managed to keep the emphasis on our people,” said Ballard-Culp.

