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Center personnel supported Iraq war

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. -- Huntsville Center employees supported the war in Iraq by deploying to perform a variety of functions in support of Corps of Engineers projects.

The war in Iraq has ended; however, deployment opportunities exist for Afghanistan.

According to Jeffrey Davis, Huntsville Center's deployment coordinator, some 70 Center employees volunteered to serve in Iraq, which comes to approximately 1 percent of the Huntsville Center work force.

"I deployed to Iraq twice," said Quintessia Fuller of Huntsville's Internal Review Office.

"In January 2008 for 18 months, I worked in a dual role of accountant and program analyst. I returned from a five-month deployment in April 2011 after serving as a program analyst.

"There are so many things to say about deploying and my experience, in particular, but if I had to pick a couple words, I would say exciting and humbling," Fuller said.

"Volunteering for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn was exciting because it is a major part of history. This is something I am proud to have been a part of and can share with others. There is also excitement whenever you meet new people and learn new things. The friendships that I made while working in Iraq developed from sharing a common focus in completing the mission and supporting one another through long work hours and home sickness.

"Each deployment was humbling by making me aware of my abilities and my limitations," Fuller said.

"These experiences made me want to improve, both personally and professionally. I was but a minor part of a much bigger picture and I am proud to have been able to support the soldiers, sailors, and airmen in my small way. I am proud of those I served with and their dedication to the mission. I would do it again with no reservations."

Fuller was responsible for 147 projects worth approximately \$405 million, weekly monitoring of all district funding documents, training on the Corps of Engineers Financial Management System and all accounting functions for the district.

Gerald Ramos, in Huntsville's Medical Operations Division, was in Iraq from August 2007 to October 2009. He served as a deputy chief, project management; chief, civil works and energy sectors; and program manager.

"I spent 4 tours in Iraq," Ramos said. "These were the best professional experiences in my 25 years working for the Army. It provided the opportunity to take on responsibilities far beyond what would be given elsewhere. It also provided the opportunity to become an important participant in executing a critical Army mission."

Ramos supervised and mentored project managers and project specialists at two different locations. He was responsible for identifying, developing and implementing strategies and policies to assure quality and efficient project execution.

He was hand selected by the Gulf Region District commander with concurrence from the Department of State to complete projects such as the Basrah Children's state-of-the-art Pediatric Cancer Treatment Center worth more than \$166 million.

Some of his other accomplishments were the successful execution of more than 600 projects totaling more than \$2.27 billion in Gulf Region Central and the successful execution of more than 119 active projects totaling more than \$634 billion in Gulf Region South.

He also coordinated the receipt, installation, testing and commissioning of more than 4,000 pieces of hospital equipment donated by Project HOPE.

Fuller and Ramos are representative of the level of work accomplished by Huntsville Center employees in Iraq. Each of the 70 employees provided support that was crucial to winning the war.

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