



US Army Corps  
of Engineers

Vol. 28 Issue 9  
September 2007

Huntsville Center

# Bulletin

## Women's Equality Day awards not just for women

By Becky Proaps  
Public Affairs Office

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. — Two U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, employees were recognized at the Women's Equality Day luncheon Aug. 23 at Redstone Arsenal's Officers' and Civilians' Club.

Richard Grulich, the chief of the Architectural Branch in the Engineering Directorate, Huntsville Center, received the Equal Employment Opportunity Supervisor of the Year Award for his

See *Equality* on page 6



Photo by Dorothy Moore, Redstone Arsenal Photo Lab

**Col. Larry D. McCallister, commander, Huntsville Center, presents Richard Grulich with the EEO Supervisor of the Year Award at the Women's Equality Day luncheon Aug. 23.**



Photo by Dorothy Moore, Redstone Arsenal Photo Lab

**Col. Larry D. McCallister, commander, Huntsville Center, presents Anne Williams with the EEO Outstanding Career Achievement Award at the luncheon Aug. 23.**

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## IMCOM's energy program can help garrisons lower energy costs

By Debra Valine  
Public Affairs Office

Just like Civilians can call their local power company for an energy use assessment, Army garrisons can call on the energy experts of the Installation Management Command's Energy Engineering Analysis Program.

"HQ IMCOM implemented EEAP to assist

garrisons in achieving energy reduction goals mandated in EPACT 2005 and Executive Order 13423," said Paul Volkman, IMCOM's Energy and Utilities Program manager.

The EEAP team includes the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, the Construction Engineering Research Lab, the Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest National Lab, contractors and the

garrison staff.

"The team performs building surveys to observe operations and identify energy and water saving opportunities," Volkman said. "Region and garrison support and participation is essential for a successful assessment and follow-up action. The team works with the garrison to identify energy saving opportunities

See *Energy* on page 11

# Commander's thoughts

With our fiscal year nearing an end and local schools in full swing, September begins by recognizing our hard work with a holiday. We have our work cut out for us as we close out Fiscal Year 2007 and prepare for Fiscal Year 2008. But we are also seeing many new opportunities and challenges coming our way.

I attended the Corps of Engineers' Senior Leaders Conference in August and the Chief of Engineers, Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp, again emphasized how important it is to maintain the integrity of the Corps castle, which gives us our "brand." He also stressed that integrity and trust come from delivering our projects on time, which is reliability. The Chief wants people to use the Corps' technical services by choice, because we deliver. When customers choose the Corps for its technical expertise, they are telling our story and helping us establish credibility, according to the Chief.

The Chief recommends reading the

book "Good to Great" by Jim Collins. The definition of "good to great" is delivering superior performance as defined by others, your performance has a distinctive impact on people, and it's a long-term effort that gains momentum (you build a bench). "Good to great" is built upon the principles of disciplined people, disciplined thought and disciplined action, and building greatness to last.

The good-to-great leaders are what Collins defines as "Level 5," or those who combine extreme personal humility with intense professional will. The Chief calls this "being all about the organization" and resolving to deliver the mission ... "git 'er done." This also is one of the Chief's favorite analogies used in the book — having the right people on the bus AND in the right seats! According to Collins' book, if you have the right people doing the right jobs, problems

will get resolved. But if you have the wrong people on the bus or the right people but not taking advantage of their strengths (i.e., the right seat), it doesn't matter whether you have the right direction, you probably won't ever be a great organization.

Disciplined thought refers to confronting the brutal facts of reality and focusing on what you do best, what drives your economic engine and what you can be best at. The discipline comes from sticking to this approach and learning to say no to opportunities that do not fit into this approach. It also means having self-motivated people who act in the organization's best interest without constant oversight from leadership.

Disciplined action means having a culture of self-discipline and recognizing the pros and cons of



Col. Larry D. McCallister

See *Commander's Thoughts* on page 3

## Hails and farewells

**Welcome to new employees** – Lynda Bonds, Contracting Directorate; Wanda Jones, Contracting Directorate; William Mason, Resource Management Directorate; Juan Renard Pace, Engineering Directorate; Maria Parra-Ludwig, Contracting Directorate; Dan Plugge, Ordnance and Explosives Directorate; Carine Ramirez, Installation Support and Programs Management Directorate; and Patsy Saisuwan, Ordnance and Explosives Directorate.

**Farewell to** Lt. Col. David Diehl, deputy commander;

Timothy Flinn, Ordnance and Explosives Directorate; Donna Gravette, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Learning Center; Holly Hoagland, Executive Office and EEO Office; Yashpal Kainth, Engineering Directorate; Ed Marrerro, Chemical Demilitarization; Jonathan Pace, Engineering Directorate; Lawrence Romett, Engineering Directorate; Kathryn Simmons, Contracting Directorate; Brian Spear, Engineering Directorate; Francis Steele, Contracting Directorate; Carolyn Steuart, Engineering Directorate; Rebecca Terry, Engineering Directorate; Rebecca Vaughn, Contracting Directorate; and John Wrona, Engineering Directorate.



US Army Corps of Engineers

The Huntsville Center Bulletin is printed by digital copier as an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-1. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the U.S. Army. Inquiries can be addressed to Public Affairs Office, U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, Attn: CEHNC-PA, P.O. Box 1600, Huntsville, AL 35807-4301. Phone: DSN 760-1693 or commercial 256-895-1693. The Bulletin is also online at [www.hnd.usace.army.mil](http://www.hnd.usace.army.mil). Circulation: 1,000.

## BULLETIN

Commander..... Col. Larry D. McCallister  
 Chief, Public Affairs..... Kim Gillespie  
 Editor..... Becky Proaps

## The Bulletin asks:

# *How do you make time for yourself and what do you do with that time?*



James L. Steele  
Installation Support and  
Programs Management  
Directorate

**This is a difficult question since I have twin girls who are 17 months old. I usually go jogging for a few miles in the afternoons when I get home from work. I do take my girls with me but it feels as though I am alone since they love being outside. That allows me to forget about everything while on a good run. Also, I like doing work around the house. Currently, I am renovating the master bathroom.**



Leanne Carter  
Resource Management  
Directorate

**I make time for myself in the evenings and on weekends. I like to work out, so I do an hour of cardio three to four times a week. I also like cooking for friends and, of course, shopping on the weekends.**

**After dinner I have always set aside time for myself. I sit in my backyard and read a book, or go for a walk in the neighborhood.**



Alicia Wilson  
Business  
Management Office

## Commander's Thoughts

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continued from page 2

technology acceleration; don't just follow the fad, determine what technology makes the most sense and then pioneer its application.

The Chief summarized the good-to-great philosophy this way: Do the job well for the good of the organization; improve along the greatness line; be the organization that delivers a superior performance. Greatness is as much about what you do, as what you stop doing. Good is the enemy of great!

The Chief will be looking

at the Corps' outputs and finding what he calls "best in breed" to use for the good-to-great concept. Huntsville Center already has a good start in many of the good-to-great concepts, particularly in technology acceleration and pioneering the application of technology and relying on customers to choose us for their needs. The fact that we are now ISO certified is a key step to going from a good-to-great organization as the processes we developed are now integrated into our daily business routine.

Huntsville Center also does well in supporting contingency missions and operations. We have been tasked by headquarters to put together our first Huntsville Center Planning Response Team (PRT) for housing. The PRT requires specific technically qualified individuals. We have outstanding people who are fully qualified to accept the responsibility of supporting this PRT which could be activated for short durations in times of national emergencies such as tornados, flooding, hurricanes, etc. I encourage

you to make a commitment to join if you are qualified and willing. Please see Lt. Col. James D'Arienzo in the Installation Support and Programs Management Directorate for more information.

I also encourage everyone to recognize Patriot Day, Sept. 11 and Hispanic Heritage Month, which begins Sept. 15. Our Equal Employment Opportunity Office will be providing information about Hispanic Heritage Month events. Thanks for all you do for the Center and for the nation.

# Housing Planning Response Team wants you

## Forms, job descriptions on Intranet

By Kim Gillespie  
Public Affairs Office

Remember the Uncle Sam recruiting poster stating, "I want you"? Well, Huntsville Center wants you for its Housing Planning Response Team (PRT).

The PRT is used to support U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' contingency missions by bringing together personnel with specified job skills and training them to act as a team for emergency support.

Effectively preparing for and responding to disasters is one of the Chief of Engineers' mission priorities. "Some Huntsville Center employees have committed to other Corps PRTs, but this is the first PRT to be managed and fully staffed by Huntsville Center," said Lt.

Col. James D'Arienzo, acting Housing PRT manager.

The Housing PRT's primary mission is to provide support to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the development of temporary housing for disaster victims. FEMA typically asks the Corps of Engineers to provide temporary housing support when all other resources have been exhausted. A secondary mission of the PRT is to provide temporary structures for the restoration of public infrastructure (such as government offices, police and fire stations, etc.) as directed by FEMA.

"The Housing PRT has 17 different positions, and these range from site engineers and quality assurance to contracting and logistics specialists," D'Arienzo said. All individuals assigned to the Housing PRT must be technically and medically qualified for the position.

"An additional stipulation is that Huntsville Center employees cannot be a member of another Corps PRT and be a primary on the Huntsville Center Housing PRT," D'Arienzo said.

Individuals must agree to be prepared to depart within six hours of notification and the standard deployment is 45 days. A commitment to the PRT is also expected to cover a period of three years. Additionally, individuals must complete the required training/certification and in some cases this may require



travel to another location for one week, D'Arienzo said. The target date for having the fully staffed and trained Housing PRT available for deployment is June 1, 2008.

Individuals interested in joining the Housing PRT must complete the volunteer form. The volunteer form

and Housing PRT job descriptions are posted on the Huntsville Center Intranet site at <https://hnc-ws-intra.hnd.usace.army.mil/>.

"The form must be completed so each team member can be rated," D'Arienzo said. "It also formally documents the team member's commitment for the intended three-year period.

"Once you have submitted your form it goes through your supervisor, but Col. (Larry) McCallister, the commander, is the only individual who has the authority to approve or disapprove the volunteer's status or actual deployment," D'Arienzo emphasized.

"I expect to have no problem staffing this Housing PRT. Huntsville Center employees are always ready to meet the challenge, especially when they are needed to support our national security at home or abroad," he added.

## Huntsville Center contractor employee killed in Iraq

**HUNTSVILLE, Ala.** — A U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville contractor employee was killed in Iraq Aug. 28.

Frans Robert Brand, 34, from South Africa, died when the vehicle he was riding in was struck by an Improvised Explosive Device. Brand worked as a security specialist for Armor Group Iraq, which is headquartered in London.

This brings the number of contractor casualties killed while working for the Coalition Munitions

Clearance Program since September 2003 to 39.

"Our condolences go out to the family," said Bill Sargent, program manager, Coalition Munitions Clearance Program. "Our personnel are highly trained and experienced and are doing a superb job, but it remains a very dangerous mission."

The incident is under investigation. Huntsville Center is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Center of Expertise for Military Munitions. Huntsville Center's Coalition Munitions

Clearance Program is responsible for receiving, trans-orting, segregating and destroying captured or any other munitions posing a danger in Iraq. Storage and disposal of the ammunition is performed at several locations throughout Iraq. To date, more than 400,000 tons of ammunition have been destroyed by the Huntsville Center program, significantly reducing risks to Iraqi citizens and U.S. personnel serving in Iraq.

# You can assign FEGLI benefits or cash them in

By Reg Jones  
Federal Times

It's been over a dozen years since two features were added to the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) program. First is your right to irrevocably assign your life insurance benefits to another person or persons. Second is your right to cash in your basic life insurance if you have been diagnosed as terminally ill. Under the law, these options are mutually exclusive — if

you elect one, you can't elect the other.

## Assignment of benefits

Before 1994, you couldn't make an irrevocable assignment of your FEGLI insurance as part of an estate planning effort, to obtain cash before your death, or for other valid reasons. That's because the original FEGLI law allowed you to change your mind at any time and for any reason. All you had to do to invalidate a prior designation of beneficiary was to fill

out a new designation.

Now, with one exception, you can transfer ownership and control of your basic and optional insurance to individuals, corporations or irrevocable trusts — which can be advantageous from a tax or probate point of view. The exception: You cannot assign your benefits if a court order — filed with the Office of Personnel Management because of a divorce, annulment or legal separation — specifies who is

See *FEGLI benefits* on page 15

# Per diem rates to jump in October

By Daniel Friedman  
Federal Times

The standard daily per diem for federal employees will jump \$10 in fiscal 2008, the General Services Administration announced in August.

Starting Oct. 1, federal travelers can receive a standard daily allowance of \$70 for hotel rooms, up from \$60, which has been the lodging rate since 2005. The daily reimbursement for meals will remain at \$39.

The standard rates apply mostly to smaller, less frequently traveled locations in the continental United States. GSA sets specific rates for 393 nonstandard markets, including most large cities, where prices are higher.

Lodging per diems in most of the more frequently traveled destinations increased to keep pace with

rising hotel rates, while reimbursements for meals remained at a maximum of \$64 in the continental U.S.

Some of the largest per diem increases target Manhattan, where peak season lodging rates will jump from \$274 a night this year to \$311. Other cities with large increases include San Diego, San Francisco and Chicago.

Rates will fall in a few cities, such as New Orleans, where the maximum lodging reimbursement drops from \$148 to \$131. In the borough of Queens in New York, home to hotels near La Guardia Airport, the rate fell sharply from a maximum of \$177 this year to \$135 in 2008.

In all, lodging rates increased in 369 nonstandard locations, dropped in 17 and remained unchanged in seven.

See *Per diem rates* on page 14

## PER DIEM IN TOP 10

Maximums for federal business travelers' spending beginning Oct. 1:

	Lodging		Meals, expenses		Total	
	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007
<b>Washington</b>						
October through June	\$201	\$195*	\$64	\$64	\$265	\$259
July through August	154	162	64	64	218	226
September	201	195	64	64	265	259
<b>San Diego</b>						
October through December	139	131	64	64	203	195
January through March	146	131	64	64	210	195
April through September	139	131	64	64	203	195
<b>New Orleans</b>						
October through June	131	148*	59	59	190	207
July through September	99	102	59	59	158	161
<b>Las Vegas</b>						
October through December	108	114	64	64	172	178
January through May	124	114*	64	64	188	178
June through August	93	100	64	64	157	164
September	108	114	64	64	172	178
<b>Dallas</b>						
October through December	109	100	59	59	168	159
January through March	123	111	59	59	182	170
April through September	109	111	59	59	168	170
<b>Atlanta</b>						
October through December	129	124	49	49	178	173
January through March	139	124	49	49	188	173
April through September	129	124	49	49	178	173
<b>New York**</b>						
October through December	311	274	64	64	375	338
January through June	244	214	64	64	308	278
July through August	220	196	64	64	284	260
September	311	274	64	64	375	338
<b>Norfolk, Va.</b>						
	94	94*	59	59	153	153
<b>Honolulu</b>						
	177	177	112	112	289	289
<b>San Antonio</b>						
	112	103	54	54	166	157

\* More than one rate applied for these seasons in 2007 because the seasons were divided differently than in 2008, so the highest per diem figure is used.

\*\* Includes boroughs of Manhattan, Brooklyn, Bronx and Staten Island. Lower rates in Queens and in Newark, N.J., contribute to New York's standing as one the top 10 travel destinations.

SOURCE: General Services Administration and Society of Government Travel Professionals

GRAPHIC BY CHRIS BROZ

# Have you done your MANDATORY training in Composite Risk Management (CRM)?

Suspense Date: Sept. 30



The CRM Course is available on the Intranet at [https://hnc-ws-intra.hnd.usace.army.mil/safety/crm\\_Civ](https://hnc-ws-intra.hnd.usace.army.mil/safety/crm_Civ).

For additional information contact Donnie Butler at 895-1849 or Wanda Griffin at 895-1225.

The CRM training is included on your Individual Development Plan (IDP) in the Automated Training Management Program (ATMP). After course completion, please notify the admin POC in your directorate/separate office to mark your IDP completed for this training.

## Equality

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leadership and role with the Huntsville Centers of Standardization Program. Anne Williams, the Huntsville Center Administrative Support Employee of the Year, received the Outstanding Career Achievement Award for her significant contributions to the success of the Engineering Directorate in general and the Civil Structures Division in particular.

Grulich is a registered architect, and has received numerous awards for contributing significantly to the rapidly developing and growing Centers of Standardization Program. In the nomination packet his team explained how he recognizes diversity, values each team member's

differences and makes every effort to turn those differences into advantages. They highly praised him for creating an atmosphere of excellence and one in which women, minorities and individuals with disabilities can excel and be rewarded with top-ranked assignments and high profile positions within the Architectural Branch.

According to the nomination synopsis, Grulich dedicates himself, not only to the mission, but recruitment, selections and promotions for those employees who exemplify diligent and professional work ethics. His motto is "to whom much is given, much is expected."

"It was quite a nice surprise that the Branch's clandestine efforts resulted in

this highly valued award," Grulich said. "My thanks to the architects, the Civil Structures Division, Architectural Branch secretary, the EEO staff, the Engineering Directorate and management for their support."

Williams effectively performed many additional duties over the past year enabling her to make significant contributions to the Engineering Directorate. According to the nomination package, Williams assumed numerous responsibilities during periods of staffing shortages. She maintained a positive, supportive outlook throughout and assisted both new and experienced administrative personnel in a professional manner.

"I would like to thank

Rick Suever and Sam Sang who submitted my name for the Administrative Support Employee of the Year," Williams said. "It is an honor to be recognized for the work that I do. Thank you."

According to the nomination synopsis, Williams understands what needs to be done and ensures that all suspenses are met in spite of numerous, constantly changing requirements.

Women's Equality Day is sponsored by the Federal Women's Program, a program established by the Office of Personnel Management in 1967. The overall mission of the FWP is to improve employment and advancement opportunities for women in the federal work force.

# Civil engineer running to lose weight, raise money for cancer research

By Debra Valine  
Public Affairs Office

**W**hen he got married two years ago, he weighed 285 pounds.

Todd Watts, a civil engineer with the Engineering Directorate, U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, said he decided to do something about it. He joined a weight-loss program and decided he wanted to run a marathon.

Watts was inspired by his brother-in-law, who had lost 40 pounds. Watts said since his wedding he has lost 56 pounds.

"I need a goal," Watts said. "I wanted to run in the ING Georgia Marathon in Atlanta March 25. My longest run prior to ING was the half-marathon at Callaway Gardens, Ga., Jan. 28."

To meet that goal, Watts got involved with the Team-In-Training (TNT) Program for The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS). His participation would help him reach three goals: weight loss, run a marathon and honor the memory of his friend, Brent Ullom, by raising money for LLS.

"One of my other hobbies is playing ice hockey," Watts said. "Brent was one of the guys who taught me a lot and was on my Senior Open League hockey team. He was 24 years old — very young — when he was diagnosed with bone cancer. He fought it and basically went into remission for a little while. By Thanksgiving last year, we found out he was in pretty bad shape. The cancer had come back and spread through his entire body. In January he passed away; he was 26 years old.

"Between realizing I needed to get in shape and watching Brent succumb so early in life to cancer, I decided I needed to do something," Watts said.



Photo by Sarah Watts

**Todd Watts is all smiles the night before he runs his first marathon in Atlanta.**

"I knew there was nothing I could do to change when I was going to die, but there was a lot I could do to eliminate certain risk factors."

It was Brent's struggle that helped Watts decide to get involved with TNT.

Watts is in training to run The Marine Corps Marathon, Oct. 28, in Washington, D.C. He has set a goal of raising \$5,026 for LLS. Money raised will go toward research for blood-related cancers, patient aid and education. To support Watts in this effort, visit his Web site at <http://www.active.com/donate/tntagc/todder>.

"Todd is awesome and we appreciate his hard work! Once he meets his fundraising goal, we will send him to the event," said Cindy Walton, senior campaign manager for LLS Team-In-Training. "We will be sending 15 participants to The Marine Corps Marathon. It's because of Todd's generosity and the generosity of other TNT participants that we are moving closer to finding a cure for blood-related cancers. Without funds, we wouldn't be able to do the research."

"I've already raised \$2,565, but I have a long way to go and a short time in which to do it," Watts said. "Every penny helps us come one step closer to



Photo by Sarah Watts

**Todd Watts celebrates the successful completion of his first marathon in Atlanta.**

finding a cure."

Watts said if you want him to run in honor of someone you know who has fought, is currently battling, or in memory of, just send him an e-mail and he will add them to his Web site and wear a ribbon on his singlet with their name at the race. His e-mail address is [todder@knology.net](mailto:todder@knology.net).

For every dollar TNT receives, 75 percent goes to research and helping patients. The other 25 percent goes to fundraising expenses. For instance, TNT pays for Watts' airfare, hotel and race registration fees, if he reaches his fundraising goal. TNT also helps with training. Watts attends meetings and group runs that teach him about nutrition, proper stretching and technique as well as how to build-up to marathon distances. To learn more about the program, visit the Web at [www.teamintraining.org](http://www.teamintraining.org).

"I have seen these guys (TNT) everywhere," Watts said. "They help you train for century (100-mile) bicycle rides, triathlons and marathons.

"My best friend, Jackie Whitaker, will be running with me. Even if I do not make my fund-raising goal, if Jackie can make it and run the whole marathon with me, it will be worth it."

# Everything you ever wanted to know about National Security Personnel System Contributing Factors

*(Information from an NSPS fact sheet)*

## What are Contributing Factors?

Contributing factors, part of the National Security Personnel System Performance Management System, are attributes of job performance that describe the manner in which a job objective is achieved. They reflect behaviors that the Department of Defense deems important for the accomplishment of work in DoD organizations.

## Why use Contributing Factors?

The NSPS performance management system aligns individual work with DoD's mission and priorities — and focuses on outcomes and results. The employee's job objectives define “what” the employee's work priorities should be, or what work needs to be accomplished.

Employees must know “how” to approach the work. Contributing factors address how employees should complete their job objectives and identify the work behaviors necessary for effective, efficient work accomplishment.

## How Are Contributing Factors selected?

The supervisor is responsible for selecting contributing factors to correspond with each job objective. The supervisor should select the factors that are the most relevant, critical and meaningful attributes for successful job accomplishment. Supervisors and employees should work together to

### **There are seven Contributing Factors:**

- 1. Communication**
- 2. Cooperation and teamwork**
- 3. Critical Thinking**
- 4. Customer Focus**
- 5. Leadership**
- 6. Resource Management**
- 7. Technical Proficiency**

establish a shared understanding of work expectations and behaviors.

## What is the role of a Contributing Factor?

Prior to selection, supervisors and employees need to understand what a contributing factor is intended to do. An effective contributing factor should:

- Reflect the manner of performance important for accomplishing the job objective.
- Elaborate on the job objective, providing meaningful information about the employee's approach to work that could potentially lead to an adjustment in the job objective rating/overall compensation.
- Be selected based on the relevance to the job objective and not based on the employee's strengths and weaknesses in performing the work.

The “leadership” contributing factor plays a special role in NSPS:

- o It must be selected for the mandatory supervisory job objective.

o It may be selected for a supervisor's other job objectives.

o It may be assigned to any employee who is responsible for directing work and developing other employees.

## How many Contributing Factors should be selected?

- Generally, each objective should have at least one and no more than three contributing factors.
- Best practices have shown that selecting one or two contributing factors is most effective.
- Supervisors should resist the tendency to select all of the contributing factors that could potentially correspond with the job objective.

## How are Contributing Factors evaluated?

1. The supervisor reviews and rates each job objective using the appropriate performance indicators.
  - Performance indicators are included in the NSPS Implementing Issuances and provide general descriptions of levels or thresholds of work performance. Level 3 (valued performer) and Level 5 (role model) performance indicators are available for each NSPS pay schedule and pay band. The supervisor uses the performance indicators to measure, evaluate and score the achievement of job objectives.
2. The supervisor evaluates the contributing factors.
  - The supervisor compares the

contributing factors and associated work behavior descriptions for each of the employee's job objectives to the DoD benchmark descriptors for the employee's pay schedule and pay band.

o Benchmark descriptors are included in the NSPS Implementing Issuances and provide general descriptions of "expected" and "enhanced" behaviors for each contributing factor within each NSPS pay schedule and pay band.

- With the benchmark descriptors in mind, the supervisor decides whether the assigned contributing factors collectively made an impact on the accomplishment of the job objective—and whether the employee's work behaviors (contributing factors) were at the expected or enhanced level based on the employee's work level (pay schedule and pay band).

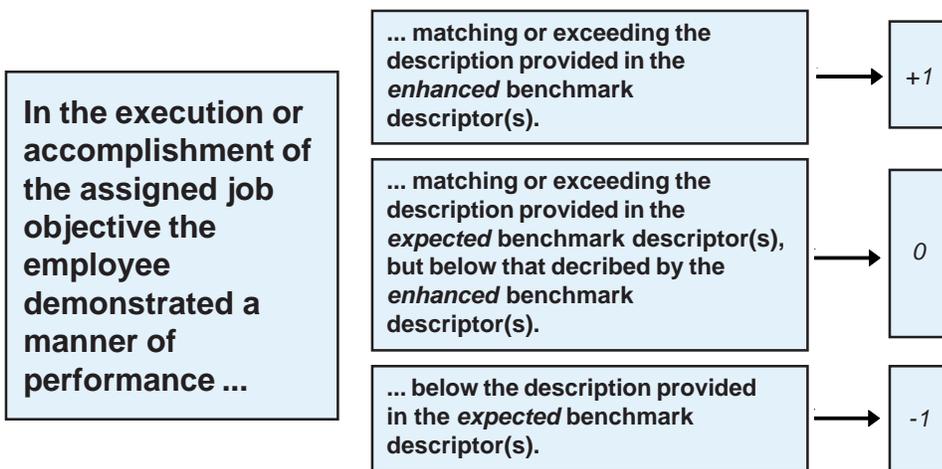
- Based on the influence of the contributing factors, the supervisor determines whether to adjust each job objective rating by +1, -1 or 0 (no impact).

- The adjusted job objective ratings are then averaged to determine the employee's recommended rating of record. The employee's performance plan and recommended rating are provided to the pay pool panel for higher-level review.

### What if more than one Contributing Factor is selected for a single job objective?

The successful accomplishment of a job objective sometimes requires the use of several specific work behaviors (e.g., technical proficiency, cooperation/teamwork). When a supervisor selects more than one contributing factor for an objective, the supervisor evaluates the selected contributing factors in the aggregate (as a group) to determine whether, collectively, the factors had a major influence on the accomplishment of the objective.

## Contributing Factor Evaluation Process



The "aggregate" review of contributing factors is a deliberate design element of the NSPS performance management system. The system recognizes that some factors may be more important than others in achieving the desired outcome. Rather than constructing a formulaic approach for evaluating contributing factors, the system provides supervisors and pay pool managers with the flexibility to make the best decision based on a review of the total impact of all selected contributing factors.

### Are there special situations to consider when evaluating Contributing Factors and adjusting ratings?

Yes. Some special situations are:

- If a job objective is rated at **Level 1**, contributing factors cannot be used to raise the rating to a Level 2.
- If a job objective is rated at **Level 2**, contributing factors cannot be used to lower the rating to a Level 1.
- If a job objective is rated at **Level 5**, it has received the highest possible rating.
- If the employee is a **supervisor** whose position is classified in a **non-supervisory pay schedule**, it is

important to use the work behaviors and benchmark descriptors that are applicable to the pay band.

### Is additional information available on Contributing Factors?

Yes. Several important resources are available:

- The NSPS **Performance Management Implementing Issuance**, including Appendix 6 (Contributing Factors), is available at: [www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/docs/1940PerformanceManagement.pdf](http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/docs/1940PerformanceManagement.pdf).

Several NSPS training courses include information on Contributing Factors:

- o NSPS 101 is available at [www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/nsps101/index.htm](http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/nsps101/index.htm).
- o iSuccess is available at [www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/iSuccess](http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/iSuccess).
- o HR Elements for Managers, Supervisors and Employees course guide is available at [www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/docs/HRMSEMagazineS1V3.pdf](http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/docs/HRMSEMagazineS1V3.pdf).
- o NSPS Performance Management Training course guide is available at [www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/docs/PMEPGS1V3.pdf](http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/docs/PMEPGS1V3.pdf).

## Retirement plan adds, changes features

# Thrift Savings Plan celebrates 20 years

**W**hen the Thrift Savings Plan was introduced in April 1987, its 563,000 participants had only one investment option (the Government Securities Investment [G] Fund), contributions were strictly limited and benefits like loans and withdrawals were still pending. Although all involved knew it was a great benefit for federal employees, they didn't know whether the TSP would "catch on." Well, now they do.

This year, the TSP is celebrating its 20th birthday as the largest retirement savings plan of its kind — with more than 3.7 million participants and assets of approximately \$225 billion. Since 1987, the TSP has changed a lot. It has introduced four new funds and the L (Lifecycle) Funds, moved from a monthly to a daily valued plan, and brought the uniformed services on board. It has eliminated contribution restrictions (except for the IRS limits), and participants continue to increase the amount they're saving for retirement. On average, TSP receives \$1.6 billion in contributions each month. Age now has its advantages, too, with the introduction of the age 50 and over catch-up contributions.

Benefits and services also have been added (like the general purpose loans and the toll-free number for the ThriftLine). And while

<b>July Thrift Savings Plan Returns</b>					
	<b>G Fund</b>	<b>F Fund</b>	<b>C Fund</b>	<b>S Fund</b>	<b>I Fund</b>
<b>July 2007</b>	0.50%	0.80%	(3.10%)	(4.57%)	(2.39%)
<b>Year-to-date</b>	2.90%	1.89%	3.63%	4.58%	8.33%
<b>Last 12 Months</b>	4.97%	5.68%	16.14%	17.27%	22.93%
	<b>L Income</b>	<b>L2010</b>	<b>L2020</b>	<b>L2030</b>	<b>L2040</b>
<b>July 2007</b>	(0.23%)	(0.92%)	(1.75%)	(2.13%)	(2.52%)
<b>Year-to-date</b>	3.29%	3.85%	4.36%	4.62%	4.83%
<b>Last 12 Months</b>	7.59%	10.71%	13.47%	14.86%	16.33%

These returns are net of the effect of accrued administrative expenses and investment expenses/costs. The performance data shown represent past performance, which is not a guarantee of future results. Investment returns and principal value will fluctuate, so that investors' shares, when sold, may be worth more or less than their original cost.

Percentages in ( ) are negative.

Rates of Return were updated on Aug. 1, 2007.

participation and assets have been going up, the TSP's expense ratio has been going down — so you're saving even more.

Today, the TSP's Web site provides program, investment and account information, and you can make transactions and get your participant statements online. Or you can use the ThriftLine to access information about your account 24/7. The call centers are also open longer hours — 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern Time during the week.

The revised booklet, *Withdrawing Your TSP Account After Leaving Federal Service* is available on the TSP Web site, contains information about all the TSP withdrawal options, including things to consider before making a withdrawal decision. Also included is an extensive

section on the TSP annuity options. To access the booklet go to <http://www.tsp.gov>.

### Watch for your new TSP account number!

Be on the lookout in late fall for a mailing from the TSP with your new TSP account number. This account number will replace your Social Security number as your primary ID for your TSP account. You will need to use your account number when filling in TSP forms. You will use it with your TSP password when entering the Account Access section of the TSP Web site. You will use it with your TSP Personal Identification Number (PIN) to gain access to your account through the ThriftLine. And if you send the TSP loan

payments from your own funds, you will need to include your account number on the loan coupon that accompanies your check or provide it to your online bill-paying service if you have one. Substituting this randomly selected account number for your Social Security number will make your TSP transactions more secure. The TSP Retirement Board is doing all it can to protect the security of your personal information. The rest is up to you. Be careful about giving out your account number, and don't write it down where it can be seen by others who should not have access to it.

*(This is an excerpt from the Thrift Savings Plan Highlights, July 2007. For more TSP information, go to <http://www.tsp.gov/forms/highlights/high07c.pdf>.)*

# Energy

continued from page 1

and funding strategies; then provides garrison DPWs with technical assistance in developing projects.”

Recent energy assessments at Fort Polk, La., and Rock Island Arsenal, Ill., could mean big savings in energy cost and consumption, if the garrisons decide to implement the suggestions.

At Fort Polk, the study identified 247 energy conservation measures that were presented in four packages: low-cost improvements (including building envelope insulation improvements); lighting improvements; heating, ventilation and air conditioning improvements; and central energy plant improvements.

According to study results, these packages have simple paybacks between .8 and 4.2 years, without consideration of avoided costs. If these ideas are implemented, they can save Fort Polk about \$3.6 million per year in energy cost and an additional \$547,000 in maintenance costs, while reducing annual energy consumption by as much as 26.2 percent. These projects have an estimated total capital cost of \$13.6 million with a simple payback of 3.3 years.

At Rock Island Arsenal, the study identified 259 different energy conservation measures that were presented in eight packages that include building envelope insulation improvements, lighting, mechanical, steam distribution and central energy plant measures. The measures have a different impact on the size of the new power plant and differ in implementation costs and payback periods. Four of the packages have simple paybacks between 4.7 and 6.1 years, without consideration of the central energy plant costs. When the avoided cost of the larger-capacity replacement central energy plant is considered, the simple payback of eight packages is between 0 and 6.1 years. If the packages are implemented, savings could reach \$21.8 million and reduce the

## EEAP efforts include:

1. Energy consumption assessments for selected facilities and installations,
2. Evaluation, identification and recommendations of implementation options for energy conservation projects,
3. Overseeing implementation of selected options,
4. Assistance in sustaining local energy programs,
5. Providing energy-related training and
6. Water conservation and waste water treatment

arsenal’s annual energy use by up to 26 percent.

According to Mark Allen, an electrical engineer functioning as the EEAP technical manager for the Huntsville Center, the primary energy uses on an installation are heating, cooling and lighting.

Allen said the way EEAP improves savings is by developing strategies that decrease energy transfers to/from conditioned (building) spaces, and optimize the delivery and use of energy during the times the buildings are in use.

“There are more energy efficient lighting fixtures than those the Army currently uses in many cases, and improvements can be made in heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC), and renewable resources,” Allen said. Examples include lighting piped into buildings, solar generation of electricity for small uses, solar water heating, and geothermal (ground) heating and cooling.

Ground temperature averages 55 degrees year round. When ambient atmospheric temperature is higher than 55, we can use pipes in the ground to transfer heat from buildings to the ground, Allen explained. When the temperature is below 55 degrees, the ground is a better heat source so we transfer the heat from the ground back into the building.

“We can optimize size of windows in the building and use double pane windows, improve on doors and improve gaskets around windows and doors, and put in better insulation,” Allen said. “Additionally we need to be installing roof systems that have higher reflectivity because higher reflectivity means less heat transferred to the interior of the building. It has to do with the coating material more than it does the color.”

IMCOM’s goal is that Huntsville Center be a resource for garrisons to implement energy conservation opportunities, Allen said.

There are basically three steps in the process:

- o Identify the process
- o Write the scope of work
- o Find funding (the hardest part)

“If a lot of these measures are implemented, there will be real cost savings in consumption and that would provide funds for paying back the capital investment in doing these things,” Allen said. “There is a pay back period associated with each project (typically less than 10 years). After that, the measures continue to produce savings that result in a reduction in the costs for energy and water.”

Once measures are identified, and funds are available through garrisons or IMCOM, we can go directly to contractors under our Facilities and Medical Repair and Renewal or Utility Monitoring and Controls programs to get these things implemented, Allen said.

“If the garrisons don’t have the money in their budgets, they can apply for funds through the Energy Conservation Improvement Program through the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management,” Allen said. “Alternatively, we can use the Energy Savings Performance Contract (ESPC) where we get a third party to fund the projects. We pay more for doing it that way and it is not as cost effective, but it is a way to get the work done where garrisons don’t have capital to invest in energy conservation measures.”

# Lean Six Sigma helps revamp SI program

By Chris Gardner  
Public Affairs Office

Leaders throughout the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are optimistic about changes to the Site Inspection program meant to streamline the process.

The Office of the Secretary of Defense tasked the Corps with completing approximately 765 Site Inspections (SI) at formerly used defense sites (FUDS) across the country by fiscal year 2010.

With the old methods in place, the Corps was not on pace to meet that deadline.

With 2010 right around the corner, the people working on the SI program around the Corps knew that something had to be changed and Betty Neff, the quality manager at the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, asked Headquarters USACE

VSA with Lee Campbell, a Lean Six Sigma black belt from Headquarters USACE.

“The team conducting the VSA went into the event with little knowledge of Lean Six Sigma but with a sincere desire to make the process better,” Campbell said. “The results demonstrate the power of Lean Six Sigma concepts when combined with dedicated people.”

## Streamlining the review process

The part of the SI program taking the most time was the review and approval of draft SI reports, which explain the recommendations of what further action, if any, is necessary at a FUDS as determined by the SI.

The goal of the VSA was to speed up the review process, without diminishing the quality of the end product.

The biggest change is the roles that the Military Munitions Center of Expertise (MM CX) and the Hazardous, Toxic and Radioactive Waste Center of Expertise (HTRW CX) play in the draft SI report review process. Both CXs (which will be combined into one CX this fall) will now provide more oversight to the overall SI review process, rather than dealing in depth with every draft SI report.

In the old process, both CXs were required to review every draft SI report from across the country at the same time as concurring reviews by local district offices and regional design centers.

With the streamlining, the new combined CX will review only a small sampling of SIs, which will make the

districts and design centers more accountable for their reviews.

“This change in process gives the districts and especially the design centers more review responsibility,” said Betina Johnson, SI program manager for the Corps. “That has always been the intent, and I think they’re ready now.”

The change also will put more pressure on the contractors producing the original reports to do a better job from the beginning, said John Sikes, Quality Assurance specialist in the MM CX.

The combined CX will still review a small random sampling of SIs, as well as all SIs that recommend that no further Department of Defense action be taken at a site or that removal action is necessary.

“Those would be the more potentially contentious sites if there are going to be any contentious sites,” Sikes said. “So we’re going to flag those and make sure the CX reviews them.”

## By the numbers

The ultimate goal of the changes was to speed up the SI program, without diminishing quality, in order to meet the FY 2010 deadline set by the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Tim Bohannon, the independent technical review lead for the SI program, said he is confident about being able to meet the 2010 goal with the new process in place assuming funding is not restrained.

“The changes being implemented will decrease the number of steps involved in the SI report review process by 35 percent, the number of persons involved by 48 percent and the number of approvals required by 61 percent,” Bohannon said. “The SI program will greatly benefit in the near term due to the plan’s ease of implementation and in the long run due to the plan’s resource savings.”



Photo by Betty Neff

**Betina Johnson, Military Munitions Response Program Site Inspection program manager, reviews the SI approval process steps during the value stream analysis.**

to help with a Value Stream Analysis (VSA) of the SI approval process.

The VSA involves leaders spending two to four days taking Lean Six Sigma principles for improving efficiency and applying them to a single process or program.

Leaders from across the Corps met in Huntsville, Ala., for a three-day

# Huntsville Center emerging leaders support Corps future

By Andrea Takash  
Public Affairs Office

## Commentary

**T**hirty five emerging leaders representing every U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' division, lab and centers gathered in Providence, R.I., to learn how their strengths as leaders can support the future of the Corps.

The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, chose Spencer O'Neal, project

manager with the Ordnance and Explosives Directorate, and me as this year's emerging leaders.

The Emerging Leaders Conference is a prestigious event conducted by the Corps in conjunction with the annual Senior Leaders Conference. I was honored to be chosen, along with Spencer, to represent Huntsville Center.

Even before the conference started Aug. 3, both Spencer and I put many hours into preparing for the event. From taking the Gallup Strength Finder to reading books on leadership, we discovered a small inkling of what to expect at both the emerging leaders and senior leaders portions of the conference.

When the first day finally rolled around, I was amazed

by the diversity and achievements of the other emerging leaders. Two emerging leaders came from Asia — Japan District and Korea District. Three of the emerging leaders held doctorates. Despite the range of professionals in the group, the emerging leaders had one thing in common — a passion for the mission of the Corps of Engineers.

As part of the Emerging Leaders Conference, the Gallup Organization conducted a three-day training session on strengths. The facilitators with Gallup taught the group how to best use their individual strengths to benefit their professional and personal lives.

After the emerging leaders portion, I tucked my new found skills under my hat

and proceeded on to the senior leaders segment of the conference. I particularly enjoyed this part because I met many senior leaders and shadowed the Corps' chief of Public Affairs, Suzanne Fournier. This experience gave me insight into high-level work that takes place at headquarters.

At the conclusion of the conference, I felt a renewed pride in saying that I work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



Photo by F.T. Eyre

Spencer O'Neal



Photo by F.T. Eyre

Andrea Takash

### Davis visits FUDS site Camp Sibert

Joseph Cudney, center, project manager for Parsons, Inc., points out various landmarks to Addison (Tad) D. Davis, IV, center with dark glasses, the deputy assistant secretary of the Army for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health, during a visit Aug. 16 to Camp Sibert, Ala., a formerly used defense site. John Matthews, far left, deputy of Programs and Technical Management and Sherri Anderson-Hudgins, front right, Camp Sibert project manager were two of several Huntsville Center employees present during the Davis visit.



Photo by Marilyn Phipps, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District

Show your support to those deployed

# Adopt a Soldier, Airman or Civilian in time for the holidays

Everyone loves to get a package or letter from “home,” whether it’s from a loved one or from a caring stranger. It’s nice to know someone cares.

With the holidays approaching faster than you may want to believe, it’s not too early to do something special for deployed military members and civilians.

Several Huntsville Center employees have family members deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan who have expressed how important care packages are. These deployed family members have provided names and addresses for individuals in

their units who have expressed a desire to be “adopted.”

There is also a Civilian employee of the Huntsville Center who has deployed and has expressed an interest in being “adopted.”

Adopting one of these individuals means your gift of support and caring will go directly to someone who has said they are interested in the program. On many “adopt a Soldier” Web sites, you don’t get to send to a particular individual, and often, you don’t receive any sort of acknowledgement of your gift.

Debra Valine in the Public Affairs Office has a list of

names and addresses. You are welcome to come down and “adopt” an individual — not just for the holidays, but any time to offer support to an American who is far from home.

Anything you decide to send the person is at your own expense. Please keep in mind postal restrictions for mailing packages overseas. Some items are prohibited and,

especially for the holidays, there is a deadline for mailing to military units.

If you would rather support military members in the United States who are recovering from injuries sustained overseas, there is an address for Walter Reed Army Medical Center. That address also is available from the Public Affairs Office.



## Per diem rates

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The increases put projected federal spending on lodging in 2008 at about \$1.4 billion, 6.2 percent higher than this year. The increases track with hotel rate hikes overall. The average daily hotel rate climbed nearly 7 percent nationally last year, said a federal official familiar with the per diem rates.

For an estimated 93,000 federal employees on travel on any given weekday, as well as employees of many states and government contractors that use federal per diems to set their reimbursement rates, the increases will likely offer more options.

Industry officials said the \$70 standard rate would increase the number of rooms offered at per diem rates, particularly by big hotel chains at

locations outside major cities.

“You will see both individual hotels and chains that are significant players in the market make a change,” said Mary Sarkis, regional vice president for intermediary marketing at Choice Hotels International.

Sarkis said some of her hotel’s licensees are “practically dancing in the street,” over the increase.

Tracy Shook, director of FedRooms, GSA’s outsourced lodging program that offers rooms at or below per diem, said the \$10 jump would help attract hotels to the program.

But Scott Lamb, government segment director for Hilton Hotels’ travel industry relations division, said the change may have little impact on the number of rooms offered to federal employees.

Agencies have until the end of the calendar year to request a review of rates for specific locations. Last year, GSA updated rates in 22 locations after review.

The agency uses a contractor, Smith Travel Research, to set nonstandard rates by calculating average daily hotel rates in certain markets. For the first time this year, the company also based the standard per diems on average daily rates from hotels around the country. The standard rate increase results partly from the new method, said Kevin Messner, acting associate administrator for GSA’s Office of Governmentwide Policy.

*(This article ran Aug. 15 in the **Federal Times** and has been reprinted in its entirety with permission from the **Federal Times**.)*



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## FEGLI benefits

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entitled to your FEGLI benefits.

Regardless of whether you assign your benefits or a court order is in effect, you'll have to continue paying the premiums. Further, you won't be able to cancel your life insurance nor will you be able to make any future changes in your beneficiary.

If you are able to and want to assign your FEGLI policy, you'll need to get Form RI 76-10, Assignment of Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance, from your personnel office or download one on the OPM Web site, [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov), under Forms.

### Living benefits

For years, private-sector "viatical settlement" companies have offered to purchase life insurance policies. They buy policies at less than their face value. How much less depends on the life expectancy of the policy owner and the company's profit margin.

Owners of FEGLI policies were unable to sell their policies until 1995 when the law changed. Under the new law, if you are terminally ill and have a life expectancy of nine months or less, you may elect what is called a "living benefit." In effect, it's an accelerated payment of basic life insurance benefits to the policyholder, rather than to a beneficiary.

Living benefits differ from viatical settlements in two important ways: First, only basic insurance can be cashed in to FEGLI; optional FEGLI insurance can't be cashed in and is paid only to beneficiaries. Second, viatical settlements may be made with individuals who are terminal but whose life expectancy is greater than nine months.

You can elect a living benefit only once, and you can't retract that decision. So, if you elect a full living benefit, you'll be cashing in your entire basic policy, and you will no longer have to pay premiums. On the other hand, if you elect a partial living benefit, you can

cash in a portion of the policy, in multiples of \$1,000. Then you would pay only premiums for the remaining coverage. Note: Retirees and employees receiving workers' compensation can elect only a full living benefit.

If you elect a full living benefit, your survivors would be left without any basic insurance benefits while a partial benefit will leave them with the remainder. However, if you are an employee who chooses this option, it's important for you to understand that the dollar value of that remaining amount will be frozen. It will never change, even if your salary goes up.

Living benefits are predicated on your dying within nine months or less. So, what happens if you don't die when expected or, better yet, recover from your terminal illness and live for many more years? Nothing happens. You won't have to repay the money you received.

If you believe you qualify for a living benefit, call the Office of Federal

Employees' Group Life Insurance at 800-633-4542 and ask for Form FE-8, Claim for Living Benefits, and a calculation sheet. That will allow you to determine how much basic insurance you have available.

If you are eligible for a living benefit, the amount you receive will be reduced by an amount representing interest lost to the FEGLI fund because of the early payment of benefits. However, since there is no profit margin included in a living benefit, the amount you receive will usually be greater than that offered by a viatical settlement firm.

*(Reg Jones was head of retirement and insurance programs at the Office of Personnel Management. He and Mike Miles, **Federal Times Money Matters** columnist, answer readers' questions on the **Federal Times Web** site. Go to "Ask the Experts" at [www.federaltimes.com](http://www.federaltimes.com). This article ran Aug. 13, in the **Federal Times** and has been reprinted in its entirety with permission from the **Federal Times**.)*

# Milton Matsuyama: the real deal



*Coworkers  
remember  
special  
member of  
their team*

**M**ilton Matsuyama was a senior project manager for several programs beginning in June 2002 at the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville. On Aug. 1, Matsuyama, 55, died from complications of a kidney transplant, leaving behind a family who will miss him greatly and coworkers who will miss his humor, his intelligence and who have nothing but the best to say about him.

Matsuyama was chief of the Medical Repair and Renewal Program, the Operation and Maintenance Engineering Enhancement Program, and the Integrated Modular Medical Support System Program. He was the chief of the Facilities Repair and Renewal Program before the Installation Support/Program Management Directorates' reorganization. He was also the Huntsville Center's liaison with the Medical Facilities Center of Expertise.

"Milton had an amazing knack for bringing in talented people to his team and utilizing those talents for the right jobs," said Cheryl Renz-

Olar, project management specialist with MRR and IMMSS, Installation Support and Programs Management Directorate. "He cared about his employees, their health and their family life. Although very conservative, Milton had a great sense of humor and you could easily make him 'blush' at a funny joke or when teased. We often talked about our sons' commonality in being in the same grade in high school and in the medical internship programs aspiring to be doctors."

Ron Larkin, friend and longtime contracting officer who worked with Matsuyama for years remembered his humor and other special qualities.

"I was fortunate to have known Milton on both a personal and professional level. He was a great program manager/director, always providing support, guidance and leadership to the Medical Team," Larkin said. "Milton helped ease the stress of our demanding program with his unique sense of humor. He had a way of making each team member feel special and encouraged us to give our best in all areas of our lives. I will always remember his positive example and special friendship."

"Milton was the real deal. You knew where he stood and he never left you wondering. He cared for us, believed in us," said Raul Alonso, a project manager in the ISPM Directorate. "Milton believed enough

in me to allow me to be a project manager ... and that has had a tremendous impact on my career. His family meant everything to him, and I am convinced his legacy will be carried on by them."

"All in all he was a humble and caring person whose leadership was 'quiet but effective,'" said Rex McLaury, project manager for the Medical Repair and Renewal Program.

Matsuyama received his master's degree in business administration from Pepperdine University and his bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the University of Hawaii.

Matsuyama worked in several Corps of Engineers' offices and districts during his career. They included the Pacific Ocean Division in Hawaii; several different offices in the Far East District; the 20th Support Group, 19th Theater Support Command, Eighth U.S. Army in the Republic of Korea; and U.S. Forces Korea.

Matsuyama's contributions to the Huntsville Center, the Corps of Engineers and his coworkers will not be forgotten. Renz-Olar said it best.

"I can honestly say that it will never be the same working around here without Milton. His memory will live on in my mind and heart forever, and I will miss him dearly."

There's no doubt many others feel the same way.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
ENGINEERING AND SUPPORT CENTER, HUNTSVILLE  
P.O. BOX 1600  
HUNTSVILLE, AL 35807-4301

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