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Neel selected for fellowship program

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HUNTSVILLE, Ala. –Deborah Neel, a project manager in Huntsville Center’s Installation and Support Programs Management’s Central Furnishings Program, was recently invited to be in the fourth group of the U.S. General Services Administration Sustainability in Procurement Fellowship Program.

Nineteen people were selected from an open solicitation and they came from various federal government agencies. Neel is the only candidate selected from the Army.

According to the GSA website, the SPF program is a professional development program that provides employees in-depth training on sustainability. The program covers regulatory requirements, industry trends, systems thinking concepts and provides hands-on sustainability project experience. As part of the fellowship, each employee will receive training in relevant sustainability in procurement topics, perform substantive work on sustainability initiatives and assume an active role in the government-wide sustainability community.

President Barack Obama in the Executive Order on Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy and Economic Performance, committed the federal government to leading by example in making ambitious and broad improvements in the overall sustainability of the federal government.

GSA understood the importance of procurement in meeting this requirement and as a result, the Sustainability in Procurement Fellows program was launched in February 2011.

Each candidate participates *in situ* for six months for 20 hours per week. The program begins in late September.

This intensive program aims to empower its alumni to serve as tomorrow’s federal sustainability leaders and enable them to serve as knowledge resources for staff government-wide.

A background in sustainability, environment and/or procurement is not required. However, successful candidates are individuals with the ability to communicate clearly and concisely, think critically, work corroboratively and who hold themselves and their work to a high standard of excellence.

Successful fellows are those who have a desire to leverage procurement to increase the sustainability of the federal government and are persistent in achieving this goal.

In order for fellows to gain the professional knowledge and experience necessary to become sustainability change agents, they are expected to: Work on at least two projects; read a book a month and lead one weekly book discussion; participate in various interagency meetings by phone and engage in work groups as appropriate; engage in web training exercises; actively engage with fellows from the current and past cohorts on sustainability in procurement topics/initiatives and participate in two mandatory training seminars in the Washington, D.C. area.

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