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## Emerging leaders attend Senior Leader Conference

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**HUNTSVILLE, Ala.** –Two Huntsville Center team members selected as emerging leaders attended the USACE Emerging Leader Conference and Strategic Leader Conference in Little Rock, Ark.

Braden Preston, a structural branch engineer, and Jordan Miller, Contracting Directorate procurement analyst, attended the conference which focused on moving the Corps into 2020 and potential future problems senior USACE leaders will likely have to resolve.

Preston and Miller both said it was a great opportunity to attend the Emerging Leaders and Senior Leader Conference. Preston said the first three days of the event were spent with other emerging leaders attending leadership training and group exercises.

“The leadership training provided by The Flippin Group, was by far the best leadership training I have experienced,” Preston said. “The Flippin Group instructor’s main focus was on the importance of mentoring and relationships, building on this with topics of encouragement, experiences and commitment vs. compliance. The ELC was a great opportunity to network with my peers in other USACE districts. Sitting at the table with peers from headquarters, divisions, districts and centers, provided me with several different perspectives and a greater understanding of USACE as a whole.”

Miller said he came away understanding that USACE plays a vital role in mitigating many of the nation’s toughest challenges such as developing sustainable energy solutions, leading overseas and domestic contingency operations, and energizing the economy.

“This made me proud to work for USACE, because the projects that we execute matter to our nation and allies, and have a lasting impact on our war fighters and citizens. For me, this drove the fact that what we do is much bigger than the individual and that it truly takes a dedicated and diverse organization of people to get the job done,” Miller said.

During the SLC, each emerging leader was assigned a senior leader to shadow for three days allowing the emerging leaders to see how senior leaders worked with their peers.

Preston spent his time with Afghanistan and Iraq war veteran Nate Self who was representing the Flippin Group.

As an Army Ranger Captain in 2002, Self led a group of Soldiers atop Takur Ghar Mountain in Afghanistan to rescue a missing-in-action Navy SEAL. What ensued was the highest-altitude battle ever fought by U.S. troops – and seven of the first 10 men to die in the War on Terror fell there. The effort was dubbed “Rescue on Roberts Ridge.” Self was widely recognized as a national hero, awarded a Silver Star, Bronze Star and a Purple Heart, and he was invited by President George W. Bush to be a guest at the 2003 State of the Union Address.

“I got to spend some time personally talking with Nate and it was awesome to witness his humility and sincerity,” Preston said.

Preston said he was also allowed to sit in on a press conference with Katherine Hammock and Gen. Thomas Bostick as they released the RFP for the \$7billion MATOC that Huntsville Center has been working on.

“It was pretty cool to see these folks first hand working under pressure,” Preston said.

Miller was paired with James Hearn, Director, Regional Business for the Northwestern Division. “He provided great insights on leadership and career development,” Miller said. “I gathered that successful personal development and leadership development is dynamic and continuous – it never stops. I am appreciative that he took the time to engage me and answer all of my questions. I could tell he had a love for teaching and mentoring, so I consider myself blessed to have that experience with him and hope to continue talking with him in the future,” Miller said.

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