



US Army Corps
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Huntsville Center

Bulletin

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*Mark your
calendar now...*

Fun Run
March 16



Photo by Amanda Macias, Catholic High School

A world of opportunity in a day of work

Andrew Fox, a student from Sparkman High School watches Sherry Masters, chief, Internal Review, as she explains a program on her computer. Fox was one of six students who visited the Huntsville Center in February for job shadowing, an event organized by the Junior Achievement of Northern Alabama. For more about the event go to page 14.

Blue Grass Chemical Agent Destruction Pilot Plant supports corps' campaign goals

**By Kim Gillespie
Public Affairs Office**

The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center's role in support of the Corps of Engineers' campaign goals includes its chemical demilitarization mission. Construction of the Blue

Grass Chemical Agent Destruction Pilot Plant near Richmond, Ky., will enable the U.S. to continue to destroy the nation's chemical stockpile. Destroying the chemical stockpile will eliminate the potential for accidents and terrorism, and further protect the public and the environment.

Huntsville Center's Chemical Demilitarization program functions as the Corps of Engineers Life-Cycle Project Manager for facility design and construction, equipment design, acquisition, and building complex facilities at

See *Blue Grass* on page 15

Commander's thoughts

The energy that comes with spring has already arrived at Huntsville Center. The Battle of the Bulge offensive continues, and this month's special event is a one-mile St. Patrick's Day fun run on Friday, March 16. St. Patrick is the patron saint of engineers, and to mark the occasion we will begin the run (or walk if you prefer) in the front parking lot at 11:30 a.m. Come wearing your green (Army, of course) and enjoy the spring weather.

Energy and momentum were also apparent at the Corps Winter Leaders' Conference held in late February. Much of what the Chief of Engineers highlighted at the town hall here in Huntsville was discussed more in-depth. The focus of the meeting was providing more specific guidance for the Command Strategic Review (CRS) Program. This focused on the Campaign Goals Objectives, Enablers and USACE 2012. The roles we place in infrastructure management and as a learning organization are particularly important to the Corps. The CRS program allows leadership from all Corps organizations to exchange ideas, build relationships and share best practices.

Lean Six Sigma was also an important part of the discussion at the Winter Leaders' Conference. Improving processes is what ISO 9000 and Lean Six Sigma are intended to accomplish. Surveys are an important part of improving processes. I encourage every Huntsville Center employee to participate in the Climate

survey. This survey will allow us to identify relevant issues and implement new and better strategies. We all have a role to play in not only making the Center successful, but also an enjoyable place to work.

Participation in the Safety Climate Assessment Survey was good, and I appreciate employees taking the time to provide their input. Our safety record is commendable, but the survey will help us to determine if there are areas where we may need additional education or emphasis.

The Chemical Demilitarization program is one area where our safety program has been extremely successful. I made a site visit to the Blue Grass Chemical Agent Destruction Pilot Plant in February, and I will visit the Pueblo site this month. The Huntsville Center employees who support our site work may not physically be in Huntsville but remain a critical part of our team. Much like our personnel who are supporting contingency missions, they fill a critical role for us in supporting the Army and this nation. Future missions will increasingly rely less on establishing large offices and staffs, but instead use a limited number of personnel who rely on personnel at the home organization to support them. Because we do not have geographic boundaries, we are already leading the way in this trend.

Our employee recognition ceremony

in February saw almost 50 of our employees receive either the Civilian Award for Humanitarian Service and/or the Armed Forces Civilian Service Medal for their support following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Again, I thank you and the Army thanks you for your contributions.

We are working hard to finalize our ISO 9000 certification. We will complete the nine minor findings necessary to complete our certification this month. I commend everyone for their dedication and hard work to this important milestone in providing quality services to our customers.

We recognize employees in many ways, and in the Army commanders have the privilege of using a coin that represents their unit or organization. I would like to update and redesign the Huntsville Center Commander's coin to better represent our various worldwide missions. If you have suggestions, please submit your suggestions or design to the Public Affairs Office by March 15. If I incorporate your suggestion(s), you will be the first to receive the new coin.

And please remember, March is Women's History month. This year's theme is "Generation of Women Moving History Forward." This theme recognizes the wisdom and tenacity of the generations of women who have come before us and those who will follow.



Col. Larry D. McCallister



US Army Corps of Engineers

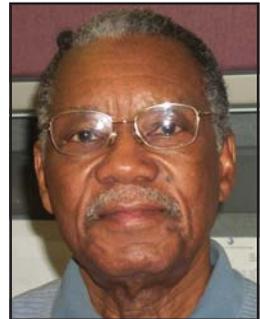
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BULLETIN

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

Which woman has had the most influence in your life and why?

My mother, without a doubt. I think there is no one else who influences like a mother. It has been said that “the hands that rock the cradles, rule the world”. The God-centered influences that my mother had on my life will be forever treasured. I’m thankful, and it has made me a better person. It has given me a greater concern for trying to reach out and help others.



Robert Ager
Engineering Directorate



Melodie Schroder
Management Review
Office

My mother has been the most influential woman in my life. She was a single parent and raised two girls, worked full time, often putting in overtime to make ends meet. Our needs were always met, and she tried to meet our wants too. She taught me the value of hard work. Although she did not have any formal education beyond high school, she worked hard and made her way up the ranks in the government. She taught me the importance of taking responsibility for myself and being dependable. Her motto has always been “plan ahead”. This has saved me many times. She was fortunate to retire in 2003 with 33 years of federal service and continues to work part time for a contractor. Her faith in God, however, is what has made the most impact on my life.

Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp nominated for Corps’ Chief of Engineers position

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates announced Feb. 5, that President Bush has nominated Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp, the commanding general of the U.S. Army Accessions Command since November 2004, to become the 52nd Chief of Engineers.

Van Antwerp, will succeed Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock, who announced his retirement last summer after two years in the position.

Before his assignment as the commanding general at USAAC, Fort Monroe, Va., Van Antwerp served as the commanding general

of the U.S. Army Maneuver Support Center and commandant of the U.S. Army Engineer School at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. He served as an engineer officer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District during the Northridge Earthquake of 1994, the 326th Engineer Battalion, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) during OPERATIONS DESERT SHIELD/STORM and has also served as an associate professor of mechanical engineering at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

Van Antwerp’s Senate confirmation hearings are expected in the near future.



Courtesy photo

Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp, commanding general of the U.S. Army Accessions Command, has been nominated to become the 52nd Chief of Engineers.

Huntsville Center closes in on ISO certification

By Becky Proaps
Public Affairs Office

For five days during January every person working in the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, knew they could be called upon to answer questions about the processes they use every day. For those same five days two auditors examined those processes for compliance with the ISO 9001:2000 standard for quality management. And at the end of those five days, Huntsville Center successfully completed the ISO certification audit of the new Quality Management System with only nine minor findings.

“The nine minor findings identified nonconformities such as inadequate retention of records, failure to implement a process as documented, and failure to update process documentation when requirements changed,” said Betty Neff, Planning and Quality Manager, Business Management Office. “Huntsville Center champions assigned to each finding are developing corrective action plans to eliminate the

causes of the nonconformities.”

Once the corrective action plans are developed and implemented, Huntsville Center will submit proof of implementation to the ISO auditor. “Proof” constitutes objective evidence that we have actually carried out our plans, Neff said. The auditor will not return to Huntsville Center, but rather, he will review the Center’s plans and its evidence to see if they address the root causes.

Huntsville Center has 60 days to correct the deficiencies. After certification, Huntsville Center will use the quality management system to meet customer and legal requirements and to continually improve.

“The QMS standardizes processes so that we can limit variation and deliver the same high quality to all customers. In addition, the Lean Six Sigma methodology will help us meet the ISO requirement to continually improve,” Neff said. “If we use the QMS as intended, one benefit to our work force would be less stress because everyone works from standard processes. If we would all

agree on what is needed to do the job right the first time, there would be less rework, fewer arguments and smaller problems. Through continual improvement, we have the tools to make the system serve our needs. All that is left is for us to do it.”

This concept is not new. Huntsville Center with Neff’s coordination and guidance started developing the QMS in May 2004.

“We established an ISO team to identify and create quality procedures and work instructions that met the ISO 9001:2000 Standard for Quality Management Systems. The ISO team became the Quality Council coordinating and monitoring the QMS for the center,” Neff said.

“If we use the QMS as intended, we will provide what every customer wants: quality (few errors), speed (on time) and lowest possible cost,” Neff explained. “If a process is prone to errors, it will not only lack quality, but the process will be slow and costly because errors mean rework. Speed, quality and cost, therefore, are inextricably linked.”

Want to help design a new Huntsville Center coin?

Col. Larry McCallister is looking for input for a new design for the front of the command coin.

The new coin should be about 2 inches in diameter, but the shape can vary. It must incorporate elements of Huntsville Center’s history, mission and support to the Army. The deadline for submission is **March 15.**



***If you have any ideas, please draw a picture on paper or design it electronically and submit it to the Public Affairs Office.
If you have questions please contact the Public Affairs Office.***

Range provides Soldiers with the most realistic training in the Army

By Andrea Takash
Public Affairs Office

In today's Army, the American Soldier quickly learns to adapt on the battlefield and work as a team to accomplish the mission, whether calling for air support from a nearby helicopter squadron or radioing the commander to dispatch armored vehicles.

With the development of the digital air/ground integration range — DAGIR,

the U.S. Army Training Support Center, Fort Eustis, Va., the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, produced a standard design for a range, which supports ground and air training. As the mandatory center of expertise for range modernization, Huntsville Center is responsible for range design at all Army installations in the United States.

"The DAGIR design was unique because we worked

complex. We also worked closely with the Program Execution Simulation Training and Instrumentation Office, who developed the special effects, targetry and instrumentation package for the range."

The DAGIR combines aviation, military operations on urban training — MOUT — and combat live fire training onto one range.

"Like MOUT ranges, the DAGIR will have building facades, after-action review

buildings and targets," said Bill Stephenson, deputy of the Range and Training Lands Program. "But the DAGIR will also have a hover pad for Army pilots to land helicopters. Soldiers will even be able to fast rope from helicopters onto the building facades."

Since the DAGIR standard design is just a template, Huntsville Center works hand-in-hand with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' geographical districts to assess different regional factors when working on ranges for specific installations.

"We have to take into account the landscape at the

installation," said Jerry Haley, Huntsville Center project manager for the Fort Bragg, N.C., DAGIR. "Noise levels, erosion, endangered species and historical areas also are factored into the design. For instance, on the Fort Bragg DAGIR, we made sure the design did not impact the red caucated woodpecker."

Bill Edwards, Fort Bragg range manager, also noted that the team strategically worked around wetlands when designing the layout for the Fort Bragg DAGIR.

"Instead of building a convoy route through wetlands, the team designed bridges to go over the wetlands," Edwards said. "Bridges provide realistic training for Soldiers. So, this is a win-win for everybody."

Not only do factors on the ground affect the design but also items below the surface influence the layout.

"Per the Secretary of the Army's policy, installations must build all new ranges on an existing range, which sometimes contain various military munitions above and below the terrain,"

Stephenson said. "Huntsville Center's Ordnance and Explosives Directorate is responsible for evaluating the military munitions on the proposed range location. An environmental analysis is done in the very beginning so installations can make an



Courtesy photo

Realistic training ranges prepare Soldiers for the battlefield.

Soldiers will soon use these multi-functional, state-of-the-art training ranges to train in true combined arms scenarios.

Based on lessons learned from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, U.S. Army service school leaders are developing new training doctrine. With support from

with three Army service schools: Aviation School, Armor School and Infantry School," said Mark Fleming, chief of Huntsville Center's Range and Training Lands Program. "After all of the customers explained their needs, we designed the technical aspects and infrastructure for the range

See Range on page 14

Huntsville Center celebrates Engineer Week

By Chris Gardner
Public Affairs Office

The Huntsville Center embraced National Engineers Week, Feb. 18 through Feb. 24, both inside and outside of the center.

The Engineering Directorate held its annual “Engineering Jeopardy Game” Feb. 22, in the cafeteria where the civil structures engineers took the top prize.

Civil structures engineers Mo Bryant, Marilyn Scott, Jennifer Kelley and Derek Beck, the Dirt Dobbers, came out on top of teams of

mechanical, system and cost engineers.

Randy Miller, Andrew Blaisdell, Bunky Rollins and Wesley Bushnell, the System Tornados, reached the championship round against the Dobbers but fell short by a score of 1100 to the Dobbers’ 1600.

The mechanical engineers, the Air Handlers, included Brian Johnson, Alan Ast, Jonathan Stephens and Tim Brown.

The cost engineering Bean Counters included Severo Lopez, Theresa McFarland, Carol Zurowski and Eric Booher.

Questions included Corps of Engineers history, Huntsville Center history, tenets of quality, technical

questions and potpourri, which included many questions about New Orleans.

The following day Huntsville Center engineers Mike Lanier, Arthur Martin III, Mo Bryant and Kelly VanSandt interacted with more than 100 students at New Century Technology High School.

They showed the students what engineers do in the real world and also led students in competitive experiments.

Lanier and Martin led students through a paper bridge building experiment. Students were challenged to support as many pennies as possible with a single piece of paper.

Bryant talked about his work with explosives and showed the students real shrapnel. He also shared samples of different varieties of concrete. He also showed students the 3-D Building Information Modeling program used at the Huntsville Center to design buildings.

VanSandt led a group of students in a competition where the students were given supplies, like straws, cotton swabs, tape, paper and some modeling clay, and asked to design and build from scratch a free standing rollercoaster-like track for a glass marble.



Photo by Chris Gardner

Randy Miller, far left, Andrew Blaisdell, Bunky Rollins and Wesley Bushnell take on Derek Beck, far right, Marilyn Scott, Jennifer Kelley and Mo Bryant in the “Engineering Jeopardy Game” Feb. 22. Sandy Woods, middle, ran the Jeopardy computer program.



Photo by Chris Gardner

Huntsville Center engineer Mike Lanier rewards the group of New Century Technology High School students who built the sturdiest paper bridge in their class.



Photo by Chris Gardner

Huntsville Center engineer Kelly VanSandt poses with the group of New Century Technology High School students who won the marble track building competition in their class.

New career development plan for program and project management

By Chris Gardner
Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers unveiled a new Program and Project Management career development plan at the start of this fiscal year and the Huntsville Center is taking on the challenge of incorporating it.

The Program/Project Management Career Development Plan (PPM CDP) has received the thumbs up from USACE Headquarters PPM Community of Practice and Lt. Gen. Carl Strock, USACE commanding general and all PMs are strongly encouraged to participate in it.

The main goal of the program is to attract, develop and maintain outstanding PMs in order to enhance the projects and programs of the Corps and to offer employees a career development opportunity.

Why this and is it mandatory?

Tammie Learned, the PM for the implementation of the PPM CDP at Huntsville Center said the plan has been adopted by Huntsville Center and takes the place of the former PM Training Plan. She also said this plan may become mandatory rather than “encouraged” by Headquarters in the future.

All employees with project management and program management duties will need to become familiar with the program.

Learned said although participation cannot be used as a requirement for hiring, individuals who participate and complete the PPM CDP may be more competitive for assignments and promotions within USACE.

Can this work with NSPS?

The PPM CDP specifically mentions General Schedule pay grades as criteria for attaining different certification levels and not National Security Personnel System “pay bands.”

Learned said since the Huntsville Center employees switched from GS to NSPS in January, Headquarters USACE PPM Community of Practice (COP) has provided guidance for the transition period. An employee’s grade as of Jan. 1, 2007, is key to their eligibility for the transition period certification.

Learned said that specifics regarding pay bands instead of GS grades would probably be available by the summer.

Transitioning to the system

The PPM CDP will most likely become a part of the natural advancement of

PMs, who will all start at the lowest level of certification, Level I, as they start managing projects and programs.

The requirements for the certification levels will all be included in employee individual development plans and as each employee advances he or she will naturally fulfill the requirements needed to reach higher certification levels as they work.

One year with in grade experience as of Jan. 1, 2007	Level I	Level II (with PMP)	Level III (with PMP)
GS-12	X		
GS-13	X	X	
GS-14	X	X	
GS-15	X	X	X

For now 2007 is a transition year. Program managers, project managers and project management specialists who are GS-12 through GS-15 with a year of PM work under their belt will need to apply for a level of certification ranging from Level I through Level III.

“We’ll have one year to get a lot of people certified,” Learned said. “Employees who did not start their one year of experience at the GS-12 level prior to Jan. 1, 2007, won’t have enough time in grade by Dec. 31, 2007, to apply for certification under the transition period. They can start the training, but

they won’t be able to put in the packet for certification until January 2008.”

Transition period certification packages will be routed through the immediate supervisor, director, the director of project management and lastly through John Matthews, the deputy for programs and technical management at the Huntsville Center.

Matthews is the certifying

official and will use the information in the certification packages to assign an appropriate certification level.

Levels of Certification

The program offers three levels of certification for PMs ranging from GS-12 through GS-15.

Level I Certification will require having been a GS-12 with at least one year of PM experience. All who fit into that category will need to apply for at least Level I Certification.

Lower GS grade employees and GS-12

See Career plan on page 13

NSPS in a nutshell:

At the Core of NSPS is:

- Aligning work with mission and/or organizational goals
- Communicating an understanding of how employee contributions tie to the mission/organizational goals
- Acknowledging and rewarding performance
- Distinguishing levels of performance so that those who are contributing are rewarded appropriately

Keys to Alignment:

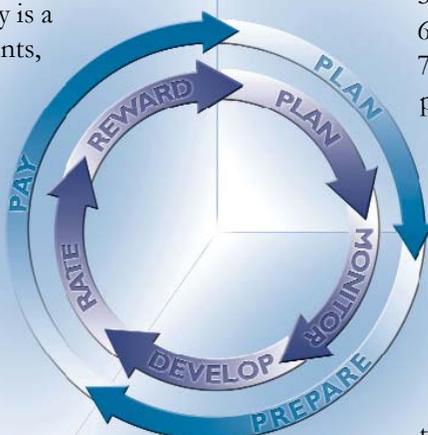
- Relationships are clear and transparent
- Responsibility is understood and accepted
- Results are demonstrated and measurable

Consider:

- Do my primary goals and expectations relate to organizational goals?
- Is there a shared understanding of priorities and responsibilities throughout the organization?
- Do I have the right type of resources to accomplish my priorities and responsibilities?
- Do I have a communications strategy in place to keep my staff informed?

NSPS Performance Management at a glance

Performance management consists of the integration of two cycles: appraisal and pay pool. While the actual convening of the pay pool panels and the final share value determinations and payouts occur following the end of the performance management cycle, this activity is a culmination of a series of events, activities and discussions that take place throughout the appraisal period. The Plan, Prepare and Pay phases of the pay pool process support and parallel a broader range of activities related to the NSPS performance management cycle.



Writing Effective Job Objectives

Writing job objectives is a collaborative effort between a supervisor and employee.

Effective job objectives:

Focus on Performance — Job objectives should be created to bring out the best in individual and team performance.

Align With Your Organization — Job objectives must make sense in the context of the organization. Individual objectives must align with the organization's mission and goals.

Serve as an Appraisal/Management Tool — Job objectives serve as a method to assess accomplishments.

Well-written job objectives enable a continuous evaluation by monitoring progress, resources, and effort, and allowing for corrections on the path to accomplishment.

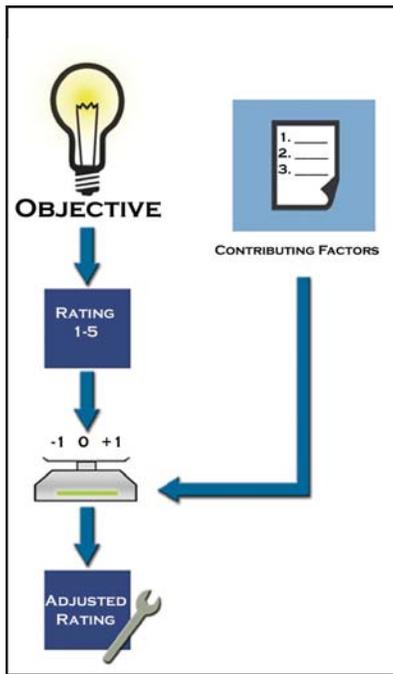
What should I consider when writing a job objective?

Think about the work to be performed and ask the following questions:

1. Is the job objective mission-focused and results-oriented?
2. Is the objective specific?
3. Is there a cost consideration that needs to be included?
4. Is a quantity identified?
5. Is quality a consideration?
6. Is the objective realistic?
7. Can the objective be accomplished within the period of performance?

Rating Performance

Job Objectives — Job objectives identify “what” to do. Typically, employees have three to five job objectives. While employee involvement is crucial in developing job objectives, it is the supervisor's responsibility to document them.



Rating Job Objectives — NSPS Performance Indicators

Provide general descriptions of levels of performance used to measure, evaluate, and score the achievement of an employee’s job objective(s). Performance indicators are established at Level 3 and Level 5 for each pay schedule and pay band.

You determine which contributing factors are important to achieving the job objectives. Typically, there are between one and three contributing factors for each job objective.

Evaluating Contributing Factors – Based on pay schedule and pay band, **Benchmark Descriptors** define the “expected” and “enhanced” performance level for each contributing factor.

Rating of Record – Employees are assigned a rating of record for their overall performance. The rating is based on a scale of 1 to 5. The rating of record determines what performance award employees are eligible to receive.

Contributing Factors – Along with identifying what employees do, supervisors discuss “how” employees are going to do it.

Contributing factors are the attributes and behaviors that identify the “how”. 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

Rating of Record	Share Range	Eligible to Receive
5 Role Model	5-6	Base salary increase, bonus or combination
4 Exceeds Expectations	3-4	Base salary increase, bonus or combination
3 Valued performer	1-2	Base salary increase, bonus or combination
2 Fair	0	No increase
1 Unacceptable		No increase

Pay Pool Process at a glance

The Pay Pool Process

- Provides a means for ensuring managers and supervisors apply standards equitably
- Provides incentives for the work force
- Allows organizations to recognize and reward individual and team accomplishments.

Keys to Successful Pay Pool Management

- Continuous communication
- Fairness and consistency
- Informed judgment
- Shared understanding

Plan Phase

– Setting the Course and Laying the Foundation

When it occurs:

- Generally begins at the end of the previous

See NSPS Alignment on page 10

A simple way to develop and assess job objectives

SMART

Specific

- Objectives should describe the results expected.

Measurable

- Objectives should be written in a way that results can be quantified and/or qualified.

Aligned

- Objectives should draw a line of sight between work and organizational goals.

Realistic/Relevant

- Objectives should be something achievable with available resources.

Timed

- Objectives should identify realistic timeframes.

NSPS Alignment

continued from page 9

appraisal cycle and continues for 3 – 4 months

Key activities:

- Pay pool structure is established and/or recalibrated
- Financial data is captured
- Organizational mission statements and goals are reviewed
- Previous pay pool activities and timelines are reviewed

Prepare Phase

– Strengthening Skills and Improving the Process

When it occurs:

- Shortly after the appraisal cycle begins and continues until the final rating process begins

Key activities:

- Review performance plans
- Build a shared understanding of performance levels
- Fine-tune skills and pay pool processes
- Conduct a mock pay panel

Pay Phase

– Rating and Rewarding Performance

When it occurs:

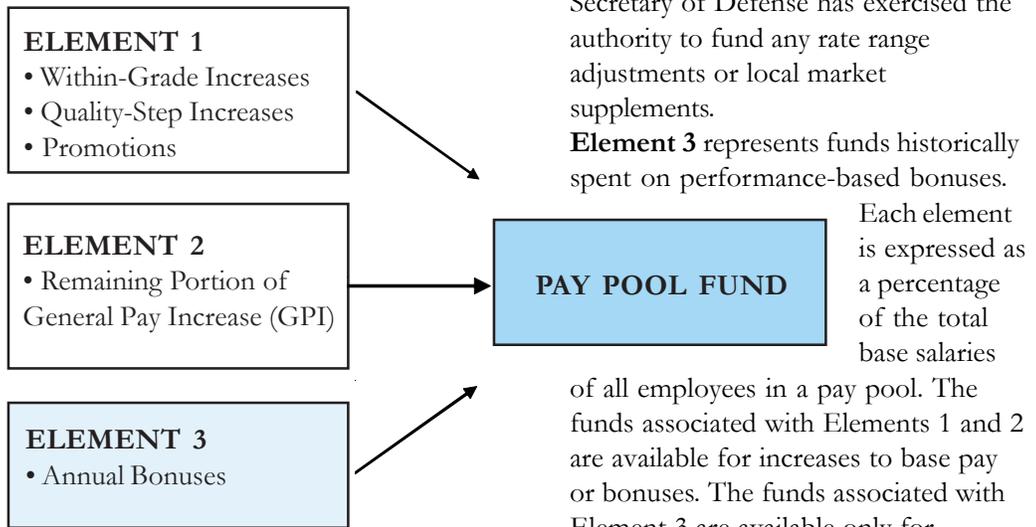
- Within three months of the end of the appraisal cycle

Key activities:

- Review and reconcile ratings
- Determine share and payout distribution
- Communicate results

How the pay pool is funded

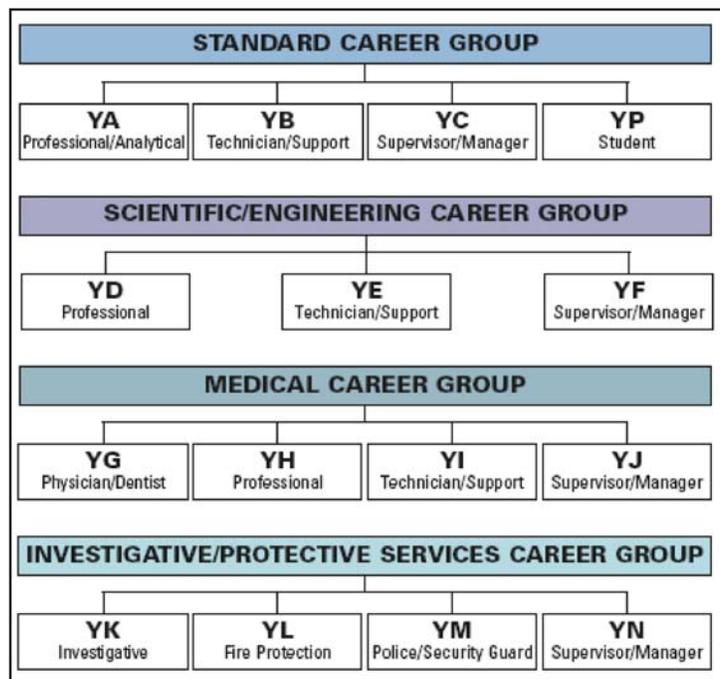
The pay pool fund has the following elements:



Element 1 represents base pay funds that were historically spent on within-grade increases, quality-step increases, and promotions between General Schedule grades that no longer exist in NSPS. **Element 2** represents funds (if any) that remain available from the government-wide general pay increase after the

Secretary of Defense has exercised the authority to fund any rate range adjustments or local market supplements. **Element 3** represents funds historically spent on performance-based bonuses. Each element is expressed as a percentage of the total base salaries of all employees in a pay pool. The funds associated with Elements 1 and 2 are available for increases to base pay or bonuses. The funds associated with Element 3 are available only for bonuses. Organizations may supplement any of the elements if funding is available. Funding for accelerated compensation for developmental positions, extraordinary pay increases and organizational/team achievement recognition is separate from the Pay Pool Fund.

Career Groups and pay schedules



Group

Pay Schedule — Combination of similar types of work within a career group, based on nature of work performed, career patterns, mission and job competencies.

Example: *Professional Pay Schedule*

Pay Band — Further delineation of positions within a pay schedule, typically Expert, Journey, and Entry/ Developmental. A pay range with

a minimum and maximum pay rate. Example: Journey level, *Pay Band 2* Classification: *Mathematician, YD-1520-2*

Career Group — Broad group of jobs that perform related work and have similar career progression patterns. Example: *Scientific/Engineering Career*

Take a break and exercise

Wellness Center offers many options to help employees stay healthy

By Andrea Takash
Public Affairs Office

In the fast paced world, seizing a half-hour out of a busy day to exercise seems daunting to most, but with the rise of diabetes and high blood pressure it is vital to start moving.

The wellness center located at the Huntsville Center offers government employees many options to get in shape and on track with their personal well-being.

Getting started is half the battle of losing weight, but Marsha Russell, Fitness for You director, said she will tailor an exercise program to fit anyone's needs.

"I like to meet with people for one-on-one consultations because everybody's fitness needs are different," Russell said. "I find out where a person is in their current exercise program, and I also ask if they have medical concerns."

Despite injuries or medical issues, Russell said employees need to continue some type of exercise program.

"It is hard to get back in shape if someone completely stops exercising," she said. "Muscle atrophy sets in after two to three weeks of no exercise. The key is to just do something, even if it is just stretching."

Russell explained that a good workout does not

necessarily mean running two miles on the treadmill and lifting three sets of 20-pound weights.

"Exercise is not just about weights or machines," she said. "There are other ways to strengthen muscle groups, such as Pilates class, the fit ball and resistant tubes. To build up the cardiovascular side of fitness, just walking around the building or up and down the staircase will improve someone's health."

Russell said she encourages everyone to find what type of exercise makes them happy and stick to it.

Since exercise is only one factor in healthy living, Russell provides guidelines on eating and sometimes brings fruit to fitness classes.

"There are several healthy eating plans on the market, but I don't endorse any particular plan. I like to give employees a variety of options," she said.

When it comes to losing weight, Russell said everyone looks for the quick fix and hopes to shed pounds overnight.

"People get quickly discouraged because they want fast results. They do not look at the big picture," she said. "Quick rapid weight loss only leads to quick rapid weight gain. Losing one to two pounds a week is a healthy way to lose weight."

Besides unhealthy eating habits and lack of exercise, other less obvious causes for

weight gain exist for some people, Russell explained.

"Along with basic lifestyle principles of fitness and weight management, other factors such as hormone balance and regulation of the metabolic rate must be considered," she said.

"If one suspects their weight gain is related to an imbalance, I suggest a consultation with a specialist in endocrine hormone balance. The primary goal is to become more efficient at burning calories in the metabolic systems."

To stay motivated, Russell suggests employees find a partner to exercise with. Amy Matthews, training services coordinator and Pat Lomax, program support assistant, both with the USACE Learning Center, united and decided to use the buddy system to improve their health.

"The accountability of the buddy system keeps me committed to exercising, which has been an excellent tool in helping me to stay consistent with my workout program," Matthews said. "The encouragement I get from my buddy helps keep me focused even when I don't want to be."

"My buddy and I keep each other motivated," Lomax said. "We need



Courtesy photo

Lee Ann Toth works on her weight lifting form with Marsha Russell's guidance.

someone, something, anything to help push us, and my buddy is all those things. On most days if it wasn't for my buddy, I wouldn't make it to the gym."

Russell offers three other simple ways for the work force to make changes.

"First, start walking. Try to walk briskly if possible," she said. "Second, sit on the floor and stretch. Finally, start drinking water."

Starting March 7, from 12:15 to 12:45 p.m., Russell will offer an intro to exercise class, Let's Get Started. She plans to hold the class for beginners every Wednesday in March.

"During the class, I will show participants different ways to work a variety of muscles," she said. "I intend to teach stretching and a basic workout. My goal as a personal trainer is to train people so they learn how to exercise without me."

Civilian Education System replaces old leadership development program

By Sharon O'Connell
Business Management
Office

Transformation of the Army begins with educating the Army's leaders. The Civilian Education System (CES) is a new progressive and sequential leader development program that provides enhanced leader development and education opportunities for Army Civilians throughout their careers.

CES replaces the old Army Civilian Leader Development Program which consisted of LEAD (Leadership Education and Development Course), OLE (Organizational Leadership for Executives), PME I and II (Personnel Management for Executives I and II) and SBLM (Sustaining Base Leadership Management).

The CES leader development program includes four courses that replace the previous inventory of legacy courses offered for Army Civilians.

1. The **Foundation Course** is for Civilians entering the Army with various levels of previous experience. This course is entirely distributed learning (dL) (e.g., self-paced instruction such as CD-ROM-based courseware, Web-based courseware, correspondence courses, e-mail or recorded video from an instructor). Students will

learn to understand and appreciate Army values and customs, serve professionally as a member of the Department of the Army, acquire foundation competencies for leader development, develop effective communication skills and be ready to assume a first leadership role.

2. The **Basic Course** is for leaders who exercise direct leadership to effectively lead a team. This course will be a combination of dL and a two-week resident phase at the Fort Leavenworth, Kan., campus. Students will understand and apply basic leadership skills to effectively lead and care for small teams, apply effective communication skills and develop and mentor subordinates.

3. The **Intermediate Course** is for leaders who exercise direct and indirect supervision and is a combination dL and a three-week resident phase at the Fort Leavenworth, Kan., or Fort Belvoir, Va., campuses. Students learn skills to manage human and financial

resources; direct program management and systems integration; display flexibility, resilience and focus on the mission.

4. The **Advanced Course** is for leaders who exercise predominately indirect supervision and is a combination of dL and a four-week resident phase at the Fort Belvoir, Va.,

resident portions will be centrally funded (travel and per diem). Students who are local to the training facilities will not be in a temporary duty (TDY) status.

Training Approval Authority

Employees may not be assigned to training or permitted to enroll in a course, regardless of course length, before formal approval has been granted by the management official delegated authority to approve training. Such approval is documented by signature when electronically authenticated through the automated training request system, CHRTAS.

Requests for approvals after employees have enrolled or actually begun the training must be disapproved. Employees who enroll in a non-government training course without written prior approval are personally responsible for the total training cost.

More CES information and course dates are located at <http://www.amsc.belvoir.army.mil/ces/>.



campus. Students become skilled in leading a complex organization; managing human and financial resources; leading change; inspiring vision and creativity; directing program management and systems integration; and displaying flexibility, resilience and focus on mission.

Attendance during the

Golf anyone?

Huntsville Center's Golf League is gearing up for another fun season at Redstone Arsenal Golf Course.

The season runs April 18 through Sept. 19

**First tee time each week will be 3:45 p.m.
There is space for 40 golfers (10 tee times)**

**Spouses, family members, contractors and all Huntsville Center employees are eligible to play.
(The only stipulation is that you must have access to Redstone Arsenal.)**

**Fees are only \$3 each week
Contact Tommy Hunt for more information.**

Career plan

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employees without that year of experience will not be eligible for certification until 2008.

One of the biggest differences between Level I and Level II certification is being professionally certified as a Project Management Professional (PMP) by the Project Management Institute.

Level II requires that PMP certification.

With PMP and Acquisition Career Field (Facilities Engineering) certifications being required, employees participating in the new PPM CDP will have those outside certifications paid for. All funded training must be approved on the employee's IDP. Certifications, like PMP, can cost several hundred dollars and some employees certified in the past have had to pay that money out of pocket.

These are the core requirements for certification at each level during the year long 2007 transition.

Every level has several more requirements for each certification which includes things like reading and understanding the Project Management Book of Knowledge (PMBOK) and other leadership books, preparing project management plans and coaching and mentoring employees in lower levels.

These other criteria and qualifications will be required for each level of certification after the 2007 transition is over. During the 2007 transition, however, Matthews as the certifying official will have flexibility in granting equivalencies when levels of certification are awarded. That will not be the case after the transition period.

All of the requirements for each level can be found in detail in

Appendix V.1, V.2, and V.3 of the Headquarters USACE Program and Project Management Career Development Plan on the Huntsville Center intranet site on the PM Resource page on the PM Directorate home page.

Not as new as it seems

While the new Corps-wide initiative may seem daunting, Huntsville Center employees should have a much easier time handling the new Corps-wide initiative than most other Corps locations, Learned said.

She said the PPM CDP actually incorporates what the Huntsville Center has been doing for nearly two years with the Project Management Training Plan.

"You'll see a lot that was in our former training plan in this new plan," Learned said.

High school students explore different career paths at Huntsville Center

By Amanda Macias
Catholic High School

As high school students prepare for the upcoming completion of the second semester, they are given many opportunities that offer experience and guidance that will benefit them for college and the work force.

Junior Achievement of Northern Alabama made these opportunities possible by organizing a job shadow event in which the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville hosted six students from local high schools.

David Hall from Covenant Christian Academy, Amanda Wells from Buckhorn High School, D'Andre Crutcher and Lamar Fitchard from Butler High School, Andrew Fox from Sparkman High

Commentary

School and Amanda Macias from Catholic High School shadowed Huntsville Center employees Feb. 8. Sidney Simmons from Grissom High School participated in the job shadow event Feb. 22.

Before we set out on our day's adventure, Lt. Col. David Diehl, Huntsville Center deputy commander, spoke with the group about his experiences in college and after graduation.

I was really impressed with Diehl's straightforward answers. He offered great advice.

After the meeting with Diehl, we paired up with Huntsville Center employees who work in our area of interest.

Fitchard shadowed Dustin Ray, a geographical

information systems (GIS) specialist, and Tommy Hunt, GIS team lead, who shared their college experiences and hobbies with him. Fitchard said Ray and Hunt made his experience comfortable and welcoming.

"It was rewarding to help Lamar recognize the different professional opportunities that he can pursue," Ray said. "I also explained that career choices are as wide open as his curiosity will allow."

Wells shadowed Ken Criswell, (now a former Huntsville Center employee.) "He explained the differences in civil and mechanical engineering and helped me make a decision in a future career," she said.

Students also shadowed Jonathan Stephens, electrical

engineer in Electronic Technology; Betina Johnson, program manager for the Military Munitions Response Program site inspections; and Sherry Masters, chief of Internal Review.

The Huntsville Center job shadow that I participated in provided me a view into the aspects associated with a career in public affairs. While shadowing Andrea Takash, public affairs specialist, I was exposed to required job skills, expectations in performance and the diverse characteristics of Huntsville Center employees.

I found my day at Huntsville Center to be educational. All my questions were welcomed and articulated thoroughly by everyone. I am thankful for this opportunity and the hospitality of all the Huntsville Center employees who I met throughout the day.

Range

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informed decision."

Huntsville Center also provides the installation with the cost analysis and cost estimate for construction of the range and additional technical features.

"We originally estimated the cost for the DAGIR at Fort Bragg to be \$70 to \$80 million, but after discussions and compromises from the customers, the actual cost was changed to \$28 million for military construction and \$12.5 million for targets and instrumentation," Haley said.

Now that the DAGIR design is published in the Training Circular-25-8 Army Training Ranges and Range Design Guide, several ranges will go to the construction phase at various installations, such as Fort Bragg, Fort Stewart, Ga.; Fort Hood, Texas; and Yakima Training Range, Wash. The DAGIRs at Fort Bragg and Fort Stewart are out for construction bids.

Once the DAGIRs go to construction, Huntsville Center will continue to monitor the ranges at various phases of the construction process.

"We will look at the project

halfway through construction to make sure at least one of the required items from the standard design is done correctly. Then, we look at the project at the 95 percent completion phase and ensure that everything was done correctly," Stephenson said.

From cradle to grave, Fleming said he focuses on the ultimate customer — American Soldiers.

"The DAGIR makes for the most realistic training in the Army," Fleming said. These ranges are the best training facilities in the world and produce the best Soldiers."

Blue Grass

continued from page 1

continental U.S. facilities that use a variety of technologies to safely destroy the nation's stockpile of aging chemical weapons. Additionally, the program oversees the construction management of the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program's Russian Weapons Destruction Facility in Shchuch'ye, Russia.

Huntsville Center has administered the architect/engineer designs and systems contractor construction of six facilities in the United States, but the Blue Grass Chemical Agent Destruction Pilot Plant will be unique from its sister facilities. It will incorporate elements such as the material handling systems that are common to the incineration facilities at Anniston, Ala.; Pine Bluff, Ark.; and Umatilla, Ore.; and the agent reactor vessels at the bulk agent plants at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., and Newport, Ind. It will also incorporate a supercritical water oxidation process to treat the neutralized agent byproduct on site.

"We are using alternative technology, a wet chemistry agent neutralization very similar to the Aberdeen and Newport bulk agent plants," explained Terry Stroschein, project manager for the Blue Grass facility.

"The site has

rockets and projectiles containing three types of agent — GB, VX and mustard," he said.

First-of-a kind equipment to be used at the Blue Grass Pilot Plant include the rocket cutting machines, modified rocket shear machines, agent batch hydrolyzers, munitions washout system and metal parts treaters. These are all needed to process the rockets and projectiles.

"The energetics will be separated from the rocket warheads and processed separately," Stroschein said.

These are all part of the primary destruction process. A secondary process, supercritical water oxidation, treats the liquids that come out of the primary process. Organic components in water solution are subjected to high pressure and temperature, in order to be turned into relatively harmless salts and gases like carbon dioxide.

Huntsville Center's

Chemical Demilitarization program personnel work closely with the systems contractor, Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass, Stroschein said.

"One of the biggest challenges we've had is funding," Stroschein said. While Bechtel Parson Blue Grass and the Corps have continued to examine design changes to lower costs, the funding delays will probably negate any cost savings, Stroschein said. The current project cost is estimated at \$3 billion.

Construction work began at the site in April 2006, and work so far has included the construction of the main plant access road and restricted area and fencing which are security-related.

"The Blue Grass site is also unique from other stockpile sites in that they also store conventional munitions and are currently supporting the war theatre which makes accessing the area a challenge," he

explained.

Huntsville Center's commander, Col. Larry McCallister, made his first visit to Blue Grass in February and met with Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternative Site Manager James Fritsche, the Blue Grass Army Depot commander Col. Richard J. Mason, Jr., and Louisville District project engineer Maj. Jeff Hoover. The Corps' Louisville District is executing the support contracts for the facility.

McCallister also visited with Huntsville Center's Blue Grass Resident Office.

"Right now we have a staff of seven, but we expect to have 15 to 20 people when we reach the peak of construction (anticipated to be in fiscal year 2009)," Stroschein said.

"We've got a great team, and they are doing everything they can with the funding we are allocated," he added.



Courtesy photo

The Blue Grass Chemical Agent Destruction Pilot Plant Resident Office near Richmond, Ky., includes from left to right, Larry Root, civil engineer; Carol Rooney, Contract Administrative Branch secretary (has moved to the Huntington District); Roy Moon, mechanical engineer; Jim Harris, chief of Quality Assurance; Sheryl Leeper, chief of Contract Administration; Don Haring, resident engineer; and Carol Spratley, Quality Assurance representative. Not pictured is Ed Marrero, Administrative Contract Office.

Ethics Corner

Avoid appearance of contractor favoritism

**By Toby Harryman
Office of Counsel**

Spring is in the air, and flowers are everywhere. It seems a perfect time of the year to contact your “partnered” contractor and share a refreshing beverage or meal in a downtown café while discussing progress on the contract.

Hold the mint julep cappuccino!! Huntsville Center employees who work with, manage, help procure or have any type of involvement with contracts and/or contractors might want to pass on the above scenario. 5 C.F.R. Part 2635 states that government employees should avoid

any action that creates even an “appearance” of favoring one contractor over another. Socializing with contractors at an official partnering session is one thing, but socializing on other occasions should be kept to a minimum, if at all.

While partnering is necessary and effective, we should not forget the oath we took when we started working for the government. Relationships with contractors should be kept at the professional level. That includes restricting information provided to contractors and discussing official matters with them. Time and time again, we read in newspapers about government employees who cross this “professional line” while dealing with

contractors and end up either purposely, or inadvertently, passing protected or sensitive information to contractors. Worse still is when government employees may not have done this, but by their actions, give the appearance of favoring one contractor over another, and are accused of providing information, even if it never happened.

Our advice is to keep those mint julep cappuccino meetings with family, friends or co-workers and keep ties with contractors on the professional level.

And a big thank you to everyone for helping the Office of Counsel meet the OGE 450 filing deadline. We appreciate the support.

Hails and farewells

Welcome to new employees —

Douglas Garretson, Ordnance and Explosives Directorate; Jim Hug, Ordnance and Explosives Directorate; Brandy Hyche, Contracting Directorate; Janice Jamar, Contracting Directorate; Claude Jones, Chemical Demilitarization Directorate; Cassandra Mora, Contracting Directorate; Felix Navarro, Ordnance and Explosives Directorate; Lisa

Pate, Engineering Directorate; John Pitsinger, Engineering Directorate and Althea Rudolph, Contracting Directorate.

Farewell to Kenneth Criswell, Project Management Directorate; Dan Copeland, Ordnance and Explosives Directorate; George Escher, Contracting Directorate; Christopher King, Engineering Directorate and Julian Savage, Ballistic Missile Defense Directorate.

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