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Huntsville Center

# Bulletin

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## **REMINDER**

**Scale Back Alabama registration and weigh-in Jan. 22-25 in the Life Center.**



Photo by Jo Anita Miley

## ***If you'll look right here***

John Rigozzi, a control room operator at the City of Huntsville Solid Waste Disposal Authority, demonstrates facility operations for Maj. Gen. Kendall Cox, deputy commanding general for Military and International Operations, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. After visiting Huntsville Center Dec. 19 for an overview of the Center mission and what makes it different from other USACE organizations, Cox toured the solid waste disposal facility on Redstone Arsenal as a part of a Team Redstone briefing on the status of energy production projects at the Arsenal.

## **New collaboration tool available**

**By William S. Farrow  
Public Affairs Office**

**W**hen an earthquake struck Japan Dec. 7, Huntsville Center's director of Engineering wanted to know if the Center had employees there, and he wanted to know

if they were in the area affected by the earthquake.

Boyce Ross' questions were answered using a common operating picture GIS tool created by the Center's Geospatial Information System team made up of Jay Plucker, Dustin Ray, George Wade

and Beverly Richey

"I combined U.S. Geological Service data with the CFEMS travel data and pulled up the map of Japan," said Jay Plucker, a member of the GIS team.

"Using travel data in

**See TOOL on page 5**

# Commander's thoughts

**H**appy New Year Team!  
It is time to get back into our routine after a great holiday season. It was wonderful to be able to take time off and enjoy family and friends. My family had a great Christmas here in our new home. I hope you were able to enjoy your well deserved time off.

In December we had Maj. Gen. Kendall Cox, the deputy commander for Military and International Operations visit us. We provided him an overview of the Huntsville Center and then expanded briefings into key areas Ordnance and Explosives, Medical, a GIS initiative, metering and the Power Purchase Agreement Multiple Award Task Order Contract. It was Maj. Gen. Cox's first visit to the Center, and he made it clear to me that he was impressed with everything the Center is doing for USACE and the nation.

Maj. Gen. Michael Eyre, commander, Transatlantic Division, also visited earlier in the month. We briefed him on the key work we are doing in Afghanistan.

Several of us attended the annual SAME Small Business Conference in Grapevine, Texas, where we were able to talk to folks about our upcoming acquisitions and opportunities to do business with the Huntsville Center. It

is clear to me that industry recognizes our program as one they want to be part of.

Earlier I mentioned the PPA MATOC. We anticipate the evaluation of proposals for all technologies (solar, wind, biomass and geothermal) will be completed in early second quarter of FY13. Soon after that, staggered contract awards will begin and extend throughout the year for all four technologies. As soon as contracts are awarded we can begin placing task orders. It's been a long journey to get this far, but this \$7 billion in shared capacity contracts will provide options for helping installations meet mandated energy goals.

Huntsville Center has been transitioning to Voice over Internet Protocol telephones. Some of your customers may have trouble getting to you at first. There is a small chance they could get an error message dialing your number. There is a prompt on our website that tells them to call 1-866-562-2348 and provide the number dialed from, the number dialed to and the time the call was attempted. If you have been expecting a call from a customer, and have recently received the VoIP phone, you might want to send them an e-mail. They may have tried to contact you but was unsuccessful. All the bugs should be worked out soon. Thank you



**Col. Robert Ruch**

for your patience.

Jan. 21 is the federal holiday honoring the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. King's legacy is one of service. From the website [www.mlkday.gov](http://www.mlkday.gov), "The MLK Day of Service empowers individuals, strengthens communities, bridges barriers, creates solutions to social problems and moves us closer to Dr. King's vision of a beloved community. Dr. King believed in a nation of freedom and justice for all, and encouraged all citizens to live up to the purpose and potential of America by applying the principles of nonviolence to make this country a better place to live — creating the Beloved Community.

"The MLK Day of Service is a way to transform Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s life and teachings into community action that helps

**See RUCH on page 5**

## Hails & Farewells

Welcome: **Samantha Randolph, Janie Nabors, Susan Quick**; Engineering Directorate; **Mary Elizabeth Hayes**, Chemical Demilitarization Directorate; **Natalie Jackson, Amanda Pommerenck**, Installation Support and Programs Management Directorate; **Kristal Huinker**, Ordnance and Explosives Directorate. Farewell: **Morgan Ruther, ED; Betty Pettigrew, Van Pinion**, Center Contracting; **William Gray, Debra Mayes, Thomas Small, ISPM; Edward Powers, CD; Darlene Fowler**, Resource Management; **James Nichols, ED** (deploying to Afghanistan).



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## BULLETIN

Commander..... Col. Robert Ruch  
Chief, Public Affairs..... Debra Valine  
Editor..... William S. Farrow



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# The Bulletin asks:

*Now that the New Year is here, I'd like to...*

“ ... be more creative in my spare time. Specifically, I want to develop my sewing skills – on my new sewing machine. I would also like to tackle some more challenging projects and see them through to completion. There’s nothing more rewarding than seeing a project come to life and enjoying the finished result. ”



**Erin Zeanah**  
Engineering Directorate



“ .... do more reading – I really haven’t had a lot of time to read lately. I can think of a couple of good books I’d like to read soon. I traveled during the holidays and ate lots of good food. Now I want to focus on eating healthy and exercising. I plan to take better care of my health. ”

**Kathy Kelly**  
Center Contracting



“ ... relax and spend more time with my family. ”

**Elizabeth Stiles**  
Engineering Directorate



## Help for New Year’s resolutions

Year after year, people commit to New Year’s resolutions. Whether you are committing to lose weight, continue your education or save money, USA.gov has a site with links to resources to help you achieve your goals. Check out the USA.gov site:

<http://www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/New-Years-Resolutions.shtml>

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## Employee Spotlight

# Alicia Wilson

**By Jo Anita Miley**  
**Public Affairs Office**

**Where do you work and what is your job title?** I work in the Business Management Office as a human capital management specialist.

**How long have you worked for the Corps?** I've been with the Corps for four and a half years, and with the federal government for 15 years.

**In your own words, what is your job? What do you do?** I work on the team that takes the lead on Huntsville Center training coordination, the Leadership Development Program Level I, II and III efforts, manpower issues and policy and procedures as they relate to General Schedule and other personnel issues. I am responsible for all Center policy pertaining to human capital.

**Review the Campaign Plan goals and objectives. Which one(s) apply to you?** Actions 4a and 4d apply to me. Specifically, 4a which states in part, "Increase professional registration/certification across all Communities of Practice" and 4d which states in part, "Establish tools and systems to get the right people in the right jobs, then develop and retain the highly skilled work force."

**How do you see your job making a difference and contributing to the Corps' success?** Since



I'm responsible for updating policy in the Center, I see my job as making a difference and contributing to the Corps' success by fostering consistent implementation of policy and affecting that policy in an efficient manner across the Center.

Keeping the employees informed of new regulations, such as ad-hoc teleworking in special circumstances and teleworking, which fosters employees' ability to work from home when necessary.

**What do you love about your job?** I love working with people. I get to work with diverse people at the Center.

I also love that I get a chance to work on special projects with HQ, USACE and the South Atlantic Division. Once new Army policy is set, I work closely with them to extract information and to make applicable changes in order to set Huntsville Center policy. I love doing my job.

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The **Employee Spotlight** is intended to let our Center employees shine for positively impacting our organization through mission achievements. Employees are nominated on a monthly basis and are featured monthly on the Huntsville Center Web site. If you'd like to nominate someone within your office for this recognition, please contact Jo Anita Miley, Public Affairs Office, at 256-895-1585, or e-mail: [JoAnita.Miley@usace.army.mil](mailto:JoAnita.Miley@usace.army.mil).

## TOOL

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the CEFMS database, I was able to tell him the location of the people there on temporary duty assignment and assure him they weren't close to the quake epicenter. The application even provides travel order numbers and costs associated with the travel."

With more than 6,000 projects in progress at any given time, Huntsville Center leaders recognized a need for a tool enabling program managers, engineers and contractors to effectively and efficiently collaborate information.

Besides the travel application, the GIS team has built applications for the tool, known by the team as Common Operation Picture GIS, for the Facility Reduction Program, Energy Division and Ordnance and Explosives programs.

The COP GIS platform delivers geospatial capabilities by integrating applications, databases and location-based information to achieve situational awareness across programs, projects and applications through a common operation picture.

The team used ESRI software technologies to build the platform which is similar to any geographical information program available online.

By incorporating specific data, GIS technicians can build customer specific application tools that provide decision makers with "ground-level" tools to note problems and figure out solutions.

Plucker, a GIS technician, said the team's vision is to have all Center projects loaded into the enterprise GIS database. He said he believes getting the data added will build a more efficient work force with

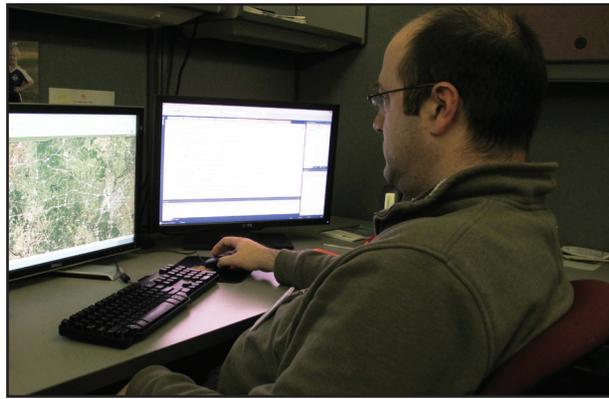


Photo by William S. Farrow

### Jay Plucker inputs data into the Common Operation Picture GIS platform.

the capacity to gather information not always shared easily.

For instance, if the engineers in Utility Monitoring and Control Systems are deciding which facilities on a military installation will benefit from metering, they can use the platform to see which facilities the Facility Reduction Program is scheduling for removal and thereby alleviate some of their time and effort spent analyzing and assessing those facilities' utility use," he said.

According to Plucker, data from other Department of Defense and government agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, allows the platform's architecture to grow and allows them to build very customer-specific applications.

"As more apps are built, the time and costs associated with building them reduces since each application eases the input of data because the other data is already available."

Plucker said one of the most

important concepts in creating applications is to build them on the KISS, or Keep It Simple Stupid, design principle.

"We build really simple, specific apps for customers and try to never reuse code or duplicate data," he said.

"Everyone gets caught up in the apps, but it's more about the data we have available to us,"

Plucker said. "With the right amount of data we can build the apps for Huntsville Center, USACE, the Army or other DoD agencies."

Plucker said the work they do is in accordance with USACE geospatial standards and strategy and Service Oriented Architecture principles based on sharing their work.

"A lot of useful data sets are out there and provided by other entities including CorpsMap and Army Mapper. So we strive to never recreate data or software that has already been developed. If available, we consume services provided by other USACE, DoD or government entities and if we have data that would be useful to other agencies we make that data available as a secure service."

Plucker said they are working with other USACE agencies to secure applications and services.

"We're adding more customized tools to our tool library and will make that library available to any valid USACE entity requesting the tools."

## RUCH

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solve social problems. That service may meet a tangible need, or it may meet a need of the spirit. On this day, Americans of every age and background celebrate Dr. King through service projects that strengthen communities, empower individuals, bridge barriers and create solutions."

Winter is officially here, and with it, the potential for hazardous driving conditions. Please take a moment to review the Occupant Emergency Plan, located on the Intranet. Remember that we do not necessarily follow actions taken by Redstone Arsenal. When we have inclement weather, an announcement will be posted on the

Huntsville Center home page [www.hnd.usace.army.mil](http://www.hnd.usace.army.mil) that tells you the Center's status. You can also listen to local TV and radio stations. If you feel you cannot make it safely to work, and the Center is open, please call your supervisor to request leave for the day.

I'm looking forward to a great 2013! Hope you are too.



# Act helps prevent Government Charge Card abuse

**By Rosa Cotto-Ramos  
Huntsville Center  
Government Purchase Card  
program coordinator**

**B**ased largely on recommendations made by the General Accounting Office, President Barack Obama signed into law the Government Charge Card Abuse Prevention Act of 2012 in October.

The legislation is aimed at preventing waste, fraud and abuse of government charge cards issued to federal employees.

The act requires the director of the Office of Management and Budget to review existing guidance for the use of purchase cards and convenience checks and prescribe additional necessary guidance for the implementation of safeguards and internal controls for such use.

To avoid program abuse, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville personnel must ensure proper GPC controls are maintained and followed in accordance with the regulation, policies and procedures.

At a minimum, management controls must ensure that records are kept of each holder of a purchase card and the applicable transaction limits:

- Each purchase card and convenience check holder is assigned an approving official.
- Card holder and approving official

perform a reconciliation of card charges with receipts and other supporting documentation and forward a summary report to a certifying official in a timely manner.

- Disputed charges are resolved in an appropriate manner and payments on purchase card accounts are made promptly to avoid interest penalties.
- Rebates and refunds earned by the use of such cards are reviewed for accuracy.
- Records of each purchase card transaction are retained in accordance with standard government policies on disposition of records.
- Perform periodic reviews to determine whether each purchase card holder has a need for such card.
- The agency provides appropriate training to purchase card holders and supervising officials.
- The agency has specific policies regarding the number of purchase cards issued, the authorized credit limits and the categories of employees eligible for purchase cards.
- Effective systems, techniques and technologies are used to prevent or identify illegal, improper or

erroneous purchases.

- Purchase cards of terminated or transferred employees are invalidated upon termination or transfer.
- Steps are taken to recover the cost of erroneous, improper or illegal purchases made with a purchase card or convenience check through salary offsets.

Further, the act requires agency heads to provide for appropriate adverse personnel actions, including dismissal, for employees who violate requirements for the use of purchase cards or convenience checks; and report to the OMB director on violations if the agency incurs more than \$10 million in purchase card spending annually.

Finally, the act directs Agency Inspectors General to report to the OMB director semiannually on violations of this Act and conduct periodic assessments and audits of purchase card or convenience check programs to identify and analyze risks of illegal, improper or erroneous uses of purchase cards or convenience checks.

For details on the Government Charge Card Abuse Prevention Act of 2012 (S. 300) access the S.300 - Government Charge Card Abuse Prevention Act of 2012/Congress.gov/Library of Congress.

For more information and details on the Center's GPC program, please email me at [rosa.i.cotto-ramos@usace.army](mailto:rosa.i.cotto-ramos@usace.army).

# Look to Internet, social media for inclement weather alerts, Center status

Huntsville, Ala., weather is usually pretty mild during the winter months, but there is still the chance of ice and snow.

When road conditions are hazardous, it is important that employees know where to find information. Huntsville Center has a policy in place that lets employees know what the Center's operating status is when these winter events occur.

The Center commander makes the decision regarding weather delays or closures and notifies the Public Affairs Office. PAO personnel then use many avenues to get the word out to employees. The first information gets posted to the Huntsville Center website: [www.hnd.usace.army.mil](http://www.hnd.usace.army.mil) and is posted to social media sites.

Additionally, delay or closure information will be sent to local radio and television stations and included in the Redstone Arsenal announcement.

"Huntsville Center employees need

## Huntsville Center social media sites

 <http://twitter.com/cehnc>

 <http://bit.ly/HNCfbPage>

to keep in mind that just because the Arsenal is delayed or closed, that doesn't necessarily mean it's the same for the Huntsville Center," said Col. Robert Ruch, Center commander.

"There are different factors that go into this decision for an organization that is not on the Arsenal. In the end safety of our employees will always be the driver."

But that doesn't mean that employees are required to come to work if they feel they cannot get to work safely.

"I don't want you to put yourself in danger. Employees who feel the roads where they live are too dangerous to get to work safely can decide to take

liberal leave or telework," Ruch said.

"In these situations, supervisors are encouraged to approve liberal leave. Employees can also telework, providing they have taken home their government laptop, they have work that can be done at home and they have their supervisor's approval to telework for the day."

Other ways to get the word out to employees are being explored, such as a toll-free telephone number for employees to call for information.

If you are unsure what to do during inclement weather, and cannot find the information you need, please call your supervisor.



## Toys for tots

**Col. Robert Ruch, right, Huntsville Center commander, delivers a toy to a representative from Kilo Battery, 2nd Battalion, 14th Marines, for the annual Toys for Tots toy drive. Contracting Directorate captured first place by collecting 67 toys.**

Photo by Jo Anita Miley



# Mission

## Focus: *Huntsville Center's Year in Review 2012*

It was another banner year for Huntsville Center. The Center obligated nearly \$1.8 billion in contract actions in 2012, which set a new high.

Reflecting back on 2012, there were many noteworthy achievements.

One of the biggest, most visible programs is Energy. Working with the Army Energy Initiatives Task Force, Huntsville Center issued a request for proposals for a \$7 billion Multiple Award Task Order Contract to procure reliable, locally generated, renewable and alternative energy through power purchase agreements.

The \$7 billion capacity would be expended for the purchase of energy over a period of 30 years or less from renewable energy plants that are constructed and operated by contractors using private sector financing. It's anticipate the evaluation of proposals for all technologies (solar, wind, biomass and geothermal) will be completed in early second quarter of FY13. Soon after that, staggered contract awards will begin and extend throughout the year for all four technologies.

In early second quarter, energy savings performance contracting task orders were issued for projects in New Mexico and Puerto Rico. The solar photovoltaic (PV) system installed at White Sands, N.M., is the largest in the Army. The PV system will help the installation cut energy use by 10,000,000 kilowatt hours and save \$805,000 annually. In Puerto Rico, wind power generation, solar PV systems and other energy conservation measures are being installed at Fort Buchanan and 11



File photos

**John Lushetsky, Army Energy Initiatives Task Force executive director, speaks about the Army meeting its renewable energy goals during a pre-proposal conference Aug. 22 at the Bob Jones Auditorium on Redstone Arsenal.**

Reserve centers.

The Energy Program also expanded into doing work for the U.S. Navy. The Navy's Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command Systems Center Pacific contacted Huntsville Center to acquire a unit to replace older systems and meet energy savings requirements over a 19-year term using an energy saving performance contract.

**Recycling in Afghanistan**

Huntsville Center's International Operations Division started working with partners to help bring recycling and reusing initiatives to Afghanistan. The environmental support contract with AECOM, a professional technical and management support services firm, established a recycling program which combines waste management with economic development and social

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**Afghanis working in a recycling plant in Anbar Province. The recycling program supports economic development surrounding recycling at U.S. military installations there.**

contribution in Afghanistan.

Project manager Bruce Railey, Huntsville Center IO division, said the program supports an economic development strategy by partnering with Afghanis to build sustainable Afghan businesses surrounding waste recycling that extends beyond U.S. military installations there and into local communities. He said besides typical waste recycling, the program also reduces the solid waste stream by incinerating large quantities of unsorted solid wastes at military facilities.

### Access Control Points

Testing of the largest active vehicle barrier system in the Army as of February 2012 completed a \$17.1 million project at Fort Belvoir, Va., to upgrade six access control points and prepare them for the Automated Installation Entry system. Pence Gate was a small part of a larger effort that included work accomplished as part of Base Realignment and Closure as well as the Access Control Point Equipment Program.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was tasked to field portable physical security equipment to all Army installations worldwide after 9/11.



**Leroy Gonzalez and Curtis Castle inspect a Projectile/Mortar Disassembly Machine robot in the Enhanced Reconfiguration Building inside of the Explosive Containment Room at the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant. The specially designed robots handle and transport munitions reducing human exposure to chemical agents. The Pueblo plant has been operational since the summer.**

After fielding portable equipment, the program was tasked to place permanent equipment at the ACPs in order to better manage traffic flow while maintaining required security levels.

### Chemical Demilitarization

Construction of the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant was completed and the operational testing phase started. The chemical destruction plant will destroy more

than 2,600 tons of stockpiled chemical munitions. Construction of the \$1.1 billion facility on the Pueblo Chemical Depot started in 2002 and was completed in summer 2012.

The only remaining facility under construction is the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant in Richmond, Ky.

However, the Chemical

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# REVIEW

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Demilitarization program has branched out to include working with foreign countries to build bio-threat hazard laboratories.

## Military Munitions

Huntsville Center geophysicists field tested innovative technology that will provide a better idea of the physical properties of buried metallic objects at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., in March.

John Nebelsick, chief of the Military Munitions Division, said operators of the system have a better understanding of what they are looking at below the surface and the instrument allows for the clearance of more land for the same amount of money.

“MetalMapper allows us to take measurements of buried metallic items and make very sound, scientific guesses as to what those items might be based on the measured parameters,” Nebelsick said.

## Change of command

Col. Robert Ruch took command of the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville during a traditional military ceremony July 26 at the University of Alabama in Huntsville’s Chan Auditorium. He replaced Col. Nello Tortora who had



Col. Robert Ruch addresses the audience after taking command of Huntsville Center July 26.



Matt Glover, Bob Selfridge, Deborah Edwards and Michelle Maxson train on the use of the MetalMapper at Redstone Arsenal, Ala.

been commander since 2009 and retired after 27 years of military service.

## International Operations

As word spread about International Operations’ success in destroying captured enemy ammunition and other unserviceable munitions in Iraq, the Army found IO’s services could be used in Afghanistan as well.

“We’ve performed mine clearance at Bagram Air Base to free up space for the base to expand its operations and now we’re assisting in environmental work in drawing down the mission

there,” Sargent said. “We’re here to support the Army. When the Army is calling us to help them, and if we can’t do the job ourselves, we’ll find somebody who can do the job for them.”

IO executes support missions for the Army and the Soldier in the field. Sargent said IO teams deploy to establish an in-country presence and provide contract project oversight through other Corps entities and/or contracting officer representative presence, as appropriate.



Huntsville Center’s International Operations Division oversaw many detonations of munitions in Iraq, like this operation there in 2006, which led to taking on destruction of munitions mission in the Afghanistan theater as well.

# Health Fair coincides with Scale Back efforts

By William S. Farrow  
Public Affairs Office

**M**arsha Russell, Huntsville Center's Life Center director, provided an opportunity for Center employees to receive information from health-based vendors from throughout the Tennessee Valley with a Health Fair in the Center Cafeteria Dec. 7.

More than 40 vendors set up displays to provide health-related information to Center employees.

The Health Fair was set to coincide with the kick-off of the Scale Back Alabama, a public awareness campaign hosted by Alabama's hospitals and the Alabama Department of Public Health.

Now in its seventh year, Scale Back Alabama is a statewide weight-loss contest that begins in January each year. The purpose of the 10-week contest is to help the state fight its challenge with obesity by encouraging Alabamians to "lose weight, to exercise and to have fun while doing it."

Registration and weigh-ins for the Center begin Jan. 22-25 in the

Life Center. The program is available for all Center employees to include contractors.

Russel said Scale Back Alabama is a great opportunity for people to team together and count on their teammates to help each other lose weight and reach their goals.

"It's a 10 week program with the minimum goal of 10 pounds lost per person. The team that loses 10 pounds

per person or more qualifies for a state-wide drawing for cash," she said.

Russell said Scale Back Alabama has often been the momentum needed to provide a great tool for a healthy life style change. She said she has seen the program change many lives.

"The difference between winners and losers is the winner gets up one more time, that's how it is with weight loss."



Top right, Terry Hamil (left), Center Contracting, took part in a mixed martial arts exhibition. Above, Jessica Torrick, Installation Support and Programs Management, and Nick Haas, CT, jump rope during a cross training demonstration. Right, Miguel Lang, CT, receives product information from a vendor.



Photos by William S. Farrow

## **Ethics Corner:**

# **Can I write a Letter of Appreciation to a government contractor employee?**

**By Clay Weisenberger  
Office of Counsel**

**D**oD Manual 1400.25 subchapter 415 states that it is DoD policy to not recognize private citizens or private entities that have a commercial or profit-making relationship with the department, unless the contribution is substantially beyond that specified or implied in the terms of the contract establishing the relationship, or the recognition is in the public interest.

If the individual contractor employee has performed exceptionally well or made a contribution that significantly exceeds the terms of the contract, the government may acknowledge that contribution by a letter to the individual's company. The letter must be coordinated with

the contracting officer who will send it to the contractor (not the contractor employee). The government contractor will then present it to the employee.

The contracting officer must ensure that the letter of appreciation does not conflict with any CPARS, CCASS or ACASS performance review information, and that the recognition cited does not exceed the scope of the contract.

This letter must be reviewed by the ethics counselor prior to sending out to ensure the language does not improperly imply endorsement of the contractor.

The content of the letter can make only simple factual statements, such as "the contractor's work satisfied the government's requirements." Discussing the quality of a particular

contractor's performance or statements commending the performance of a contractor is not permissible.

### **REMINDER: Leaving Huntsville Center and seeking employment with a non-federal entity?**

Please remember if you are leaving Huntsville Center to seek employment with a non-federal entity, restrictions could apply. You need to speak with the DAEO (Margaret Simmons) or Ethics Counsel (me) prior to seeking outside employment.

As always, if you have an ethics question, call me at (256) 895-1140 or email [clay.weisenberger@usace.army.mil](mailto:clay.weisenberger@usace.army.mil) *before* you act.

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