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Huntsville Center

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On the inside ...

National Zoo upgrades complete

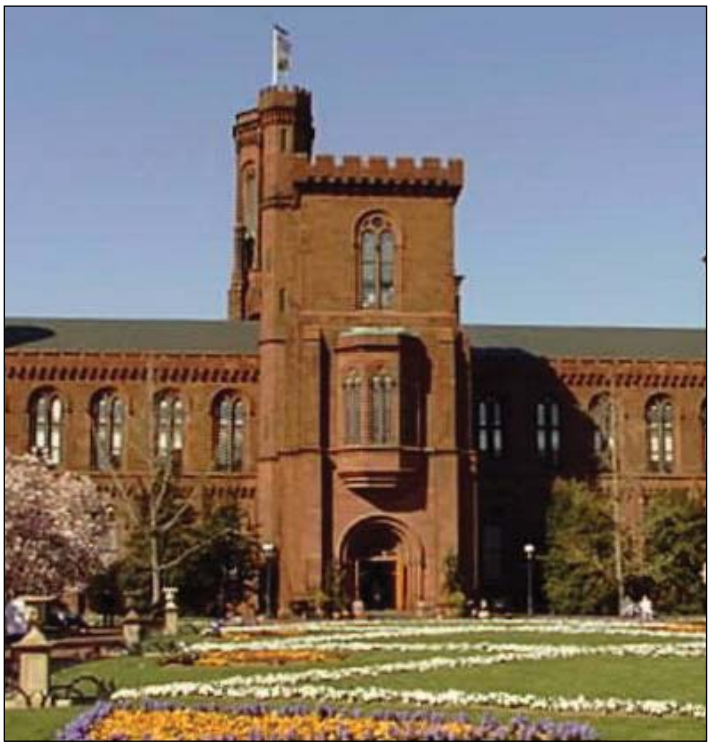
By Jo Anita Miley
Public Affairs Office

Security systems upgrades completed at the Smithsonian Institution's National Zoological Park in Washington, D.C., Dec. 19 bring the zoo into compliance with modern federal standards.

Huntsville Center Engineering Directorate's Electronic Security System Branch completed the renovations that were part of an ongoing federal requirement implemented in 1998.

The Smithsonian Institution, an independent trust instrumentality of the U. S., is the world's largest museum complex and encompasses 19 museums and the National Zoo.

Project engineer Daryl Britton, Huntsville Center ESS Branch, said although this is the first time Huntsville Center has performed work at the National Zoo, it is not the first time work has been done at the Smithsonian Institution.



Courtesy photo

The Smithsonian Institution is the world's largest museum complex and encompasses 19 museums and the National Zoo. Huntsville Center Engineering Directorate's Electronic Security Systems Branch has been working on the complexes' security systems upgrades since 1998.

He said the program supported projects at the Smithsonian Institution in 1998 and 2002.

Britton said ESS projects for the Smithsonian Institution were handled differently from most projects managed by Huntsville Center. Taking the appropriate security measures while working on the projects was very important. Gaining access to specific information about security upgrades on ESS projects is limited and not releasable to the public. One of the unique challenges presented to the team was performing surveys, installing systems

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Commander's thoughts

Col. Nello L. Tortora

Team,

Many of you will spend much of the next month preparing for the Command Strategic Review to be conducted April 9-10. This is a big deal for the Center. Maj. Gen. Merdith "Bo" Temple, acting commander, USACE, will be here along with several senior executive service members from headquarters. The CSR gives us a chance to tell our leaders about all the initiatives and actions we are doing to support the USACE Campaign Plan. It's a two-way discussion over the course of a day-and-a-half. We'll brief our part and get feedback.

While Maj. Gen. Temple is here we will have a farewell reception for him in the cafeteria. He will be retiring, and we thought it would be nice to give our folks a chance to wish him well. Maj. Gen. Temple has been a good friend and advocate of the Huntsville Center. A lot of our employees know him, and he knows a lot of our employees. The reception will be April 10 from 1-2 p.m.

I, too, will be retiring. I've set the date of my retirement and change of command ceremony for July 26. The new commander, Col. Robert J. Ruch, will be coming to the Center from Omaha District, Neb., where he has been the commander and district engineer since Sept. 3, 2009. Col. Ruch also commanded the Philadelphia District and will bring a great deal of experience and seasoned leadership to the Center.

In February the Access Control Points Program tested the largest active vehicle barrier in the Army to date at Pence Gate, Fort Belvoir, Va. Our ACP program has been installing improvements and infrastructure at Army installations worldwide. The program has completed 30 of 34 installations in the continental U.S.; 128 of 138 access control points have been upgraded. Shortly after 9-11, the Office of the Provost Marshal General contacted Huntsville Center about centrally managing the program to improve security at Army access control points.

I want to congratulate the Center's Energy Team. Feb. 24 we posted a draft request for proposal on the Federal Business Opportunities Website asking for comments on $7 billion in shared capacity contracts to procure reliable, locally generated renewable and alternative energy through power purchase agreements and other contractual equivalents. This is huge for the Center, and it was through the hard work of the Energy team that we were able to make this happen.

Congratulations also to the Special Emphasis Program Committee on taking first place in the Team Redstone African American History Month display contest! April Rafael-Adams received the award on behalf of the Huntsville Center. Great job! We partnered with Team Redstone for the observance conducted Feb. 15 in the Bob Jones Auditorium at the Sparkman Center. March is Women's History Month and we'll again partner with Team Redstone for the observance. More information will come out by e-mail as the event gets closer.

As always, thank you for everything you do to make Huntsville Center great.

Hails and farewells

Hail: **Alan Fearns,** Center Contracting; **Leah Burbank**, **Vickie Davis**, Installation Support and Programs Management; **Ramona Chestang**, **Joselina Pannell**, Engineering Directorate.

Farewell: **Duncan Juergenson**, Chemical Demilitarization Directorate; **Jae Steele**, CT; **Michelle Craft**, ED.

US Army Corps of Engineers

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BULLETIN

Commander..... *Col. Nello Tortora*
Chief, Public Affairs..... *Debra Valine*
Editor..... *William S. Farrow*

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The Bulletin asks:

"What significant event in women's history do you think has impacted women the most?"

"There are two significant events that are equally important that impact Women's History: the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution to be denied the right to vote based on sex. It was ratified on Aug. 18, 1920. The amendment was the culmination of the women's suffrage movement, led by Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady. In addition, the passing of the Equal Pay Act of 1963, which is a United States federal law amending the Fair Labor Standards Act, aimed at abolishing wage disparity based on sex. The Equal Pay Act requires that men and women in the same workplace, with substantially equal positions, be given equal pay for equal work."

Angela Morton
Chief, Equal Employment Opportunity Office

"I think the event in Women's History that has impacted women the most would be the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Act was signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson. More specifically, Title VII of the Act makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against any individual with respect to his or her compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. It prohibits discrimination by covered employers on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin. Title VII also prohibits discrimination against an individual because of his or her association with another individual of a particular race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. An employer cannot discriminate against a person because of his interracial association with another, such as by an interracial marriage. The scope of protection provided by Title VII also includes protection against a hostile work environment. It's a shame everyone is not treated equally. I think the act at least recognizes this problem and gives employees back their rights and protection."

Daniel Unsen
Center Contracting Directorate

Review the Occupant Emergency Plan

The Occupant Emergency Plan applies to all organizational elements of Huntsville Center. This plan establishes policies, responsibilities and procedures for emergency situations. Take a few minutes to review our Severe Weather and Tornado Alert Procedures on pages 7-8. If you have any questions regarding these procedures, please discuss them with your supervisor or area floor monitor. The plan can be accessed through the Intranet at: https://hnc-ws-intra.hnd.usace.army.mil/SL/OEP/OEP%20Final%202009.pdf

Employee Spotlight: Derek Beck

By Jo Anita Miley
Public Affairs Office

Where do you work and what is your job title? I work for the Engineering Directorate, Structures Branch. My job title is "structural engineer."

How long have you worked for the Corps? I have worked for the Corps seven years.

In your own words, what is your job? What do you do? The majority of my effort is in explosives safety and evaluation of blast effects on structures.

I perform design and review of structures subjected to accidental or intentional blast loads to ensure it meets specific criteria based on what is being protected within. The greatest majority of our customers are Army and Air Force organizations.

Which Campaign Plan goals and objectives apply to you? Goal 3: Delivering Effective, Resilient, Sustainable Solutions applies to my position. We help to develop and maintain critical infrastructure in support of the Armed Forces and the nation.

Beck

How do you see your job making a difference and contributing to the Corps' success? I see my job as making a significant difference in several ways. Our primary concern is protecting personnel and assets. We provide guidance on the approval process for blast facilities, which can help the funding organization save time and money. We make it a priority to provide a product that meets all the various requirements, yet is also efficient and meets the customer's needs.

What do you love about your job? I love the people I work with. The employees at Huntsville Center are great people. Additionally, I enjoy the wide variety of projects and locales that we encounter.

Any special moments/memories about your job you'd like to share? I began my career with the Corps in January 2005 immediately after graduating from college.

Six months later, I was in Fort Greely, Alaska, for a six-week construction rotation for the internship program. I performed structural reviews and provided construction quality assurance inspections for the construction of the National Missile Defense site. It rained a lot, but most days there was an unimpeded view of the Denali Range.

Alaska, being a majestic place and the scope of the project, made that a great experience.

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 on the Huntsville Center Web site monthly. 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.**

Photo by Jo Anita Miley

Winning at Redstone

Maj. Gen. James Rogers, U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command commander, presents Huntsville Center representative April Rafael-Adams, Engineering Directorate, with a certificate noting Huntsville Center for taking first place in the African American/Black History Month display case competition Feb. 15.

Structural engineer takes SAME award

By William S. Farrow
Public Affairs Office

The Society of American Military Engineers named Huntsville Center's Ryan Bowers the 2012 Young Engineer of the Year.

Bowers, a structural engineer within Huntsville Center's Engineering Directorate, specializes in blast effects and protective construction. Bowers began his preparation to become a structural engineer at Vanderbilt University emphasizing his studies at the master's level in protective construction to mitigate the effects of blast.

Bowers

"My graduate school research at Vanderbilt involved a new ultra-high strength concrete being developed by the U.S. Army Engineer Research & Development Center in Vicksburg, Miss., for construction of man-portable panels to be deployed in the field as protection for Soldiers from blast effects," Bowers said. "My role was the modeling of these panels in finite element analysis software under blast loading using the results of materials testing from ERDC."

Bowers said through connections the Vanderbilt faculty had with Huntsville Center, he became aware of the Center's need of an entry-level structural engineer with blast effects experience willing to train in the area of protective construction. Bowers, a 26-year-old Atlanta native, has been with the Center since 2009.

Jeff Coulston, chief of the Structures Branch, said Bowers has quickly become one of Huntsville Center's most competent engineers citing Bowers work on several projects related to the storage or testing of munitions.

Bowers said he was very surprised to win the award.

"Even though I have been working here more than two years, I know I have so much more to learn and experience," he said.

"Almost all of my work requires input from others at the Center and (winning the award) would not have been possible without assistance from my supervisor and co-workers in the structural branch."

ZOO

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and testing the installed systems while not disrupting the public from having access to the displays at the museums.

The ESS branch was careful to follow a strict regimen of security while completing the projects at the Smithsonian, since an estimated 40 million visitors each year pass through the security gates at this government organization, said Steve Willoughby, chief of the ESS Branch at the Center.

"These projects involve creating standards of protection that allow security (Smithsonian Police) to maintain a safe and secure environment for its patrons while permitting appropriate access to the Smithsonian complex of museums, galleries and exhibits," Willoughby said.

"My team can't discuss specifics about security upgrades to structures on the Smithsonian grounds (or any other ESS project for that matter) because the systems we put in place help protect visitors, staff and the property of the customer," he said.

"We must meet this requirement for all our customers."

Huntsville Center has completed work at the Smithsonian on schedule and within budget, according to Britton. His team is pleased to have made a contribution to such an important and challenging project.

Britton said the Smithsonian project has been a great success for the ESS branch.

Their team welcomes any future opportunity to do business with the Smithsonian again.

"Our team strives to foster long-standing relationships with our customers," Britton said. "We've worked on projects for the SI for more than 14 years, and would like to continue meeting their needs."

Huntsville Center became the Mandatory Center of Expertise for Electronic Security Systems in 1983.

The Center supports Headquarters, Army Corps of Engineers in criteria development for design, construction, procurement and evaluation of electronic security systems.

The Center offers its customers "cradle-to-grave" electronic security system technical services.

When requested, the Center will survey, design, procure, install, test, monitor and maintain unique electronic security systems worldwide.

Fort Belvoir's Pence Gate upgraded, ready for traffic

By Debra Valine
Public Affairs Office

Testing of the largest active vehicle barrier system in the Army to date will complete a $17.1 million project here to upgrade six access control points and prepare them for the Automated Installation Entry system that will be installed later this year. Testing occurred Feb. 21-25.

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.

Work included installing the infrastructure and equipment required to support AIE, a system that will be used to validate identification cards against national databases to ensure the person is authorized to be there.

The BRAC portion of the project widened roadways and installed barriers and additional ID check lanes. The ACPP project placed guard booths, generators, barriers and other equipment at 13 traffic ID check lanes.

"Pence ACP is unique because of its terrain and real estate constraints," said Amber Martin, the ACPP program manager at the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville.

"The hospital site and other facility sites were close to the ACP, so a unique barrier solution had to be developed to ensure Army standards were met."

The upgrades brought the ACPs up to Army standards. Guards will have a higher level of protection, and improved conditions will allow for more efficient processing of vehicles.

"The ACP is the first impression that employees and visitors have when entering the installation," Martin said.

"They are areas where visitors can be helped if they need directions and are where guards can assess potential issues with vehicles trying to gain access to the installation. ACPs are also the installation's first line of defense if there is an incident that the installation community needs to be protected against."

Partners in the project include Baltimore District, Corps of Engineers; Omaha District, Corps of Engineers; Huntsville Center, Corps of Engineers' Electronic Security Center of Expertise and ACPP; Fort Belvoir, Va.; Office of the Provost Marshal General; Product Manager – Force Protection Systems; and Johnson Controls, Inc.

"This project is important because ACPs are one of the tools that garrison commanders use to protect the people who protect us," Martin said.

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

To date, 30 of 34 installations in the U.S. and 36 of 36 overseas installations have received equipment upgrades to 128 of the 138 funded ACPs.

Photo by Jo Anita Miley

Involved in education

Huntsville Center's Rhonda Brown explains financial literacy, work place readiness and entrepreneurship with students at Huntsville's Holy Family Catholic School during "Junior Achievement-in-a-Day" Feb. 3. The Center's Darrell Davis and Jo Anita Miley also volunteered. Junior Achievement programs help students understand the world of economics and help prepare them for lifelong learning and achievement.

Blue Grass Pilot Plant earns prestigious safety award

By James Campbell
Public Affairs Office
and Stephanie Parrett
BGCAPP Public Affairs

The Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant is being built to safely and efficiently destroy a stockpile of chemical weapons currently in storage at the Blue Grass Army Depot, near Richmond, Ky., and the team working to build the plant has been awarded Star Status from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor.

BGCAPP honored its work force Jan. 18 during a recognition ceremony for achieving Voluntary Protection Program Star Status, one of the highest recognitions for safety practices awarded by OSHA.

More than 600 construction workers, government officials and community leaders attended the event at the BGCAPP construction site, as OSHA Region 4 Representative, Michelle Sotak, presented a plaque and the prestigious VPP Star flag to the work force.

Sotak commended the work force and the management team for their commitment to make BGCAPP one of the nation's safest construction projects.

"We have made a commitment to come to work each day believing that zero accidents is achievable," said Tom McKinney, project manager, systems contractor Bechtel Parsons. "This award is a testament to everyone's commitment and ownership of our safety and health program."

Courtesy photo

Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant workers place reinforcing steel on the Munitions Demilitarization Building Nov. 30 in preparation for a concrete placement. Once complete, it will be the plant's main processing building. The project earned Star Status from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor in January.

"We should all take great pride in sharing this accomplishment, as achieving Star Status is evidence of the strong support and commitment shared by everyone to protect the work force, the environment and the surrounding community," said Jeff Brubaker, site project manager.

Michael Todd, a union electrician, spoke of the project's robust safety culture. He said all workers should get involved in the safety program, partner with one another and share ideas on ways to continuously improve worker safety.

Several workers received awards for participating in the project's VPP Star team. The Star team is a voluntary, employee-based safety group that helped implement VPP and promotes the importance of establishing personal responsibility and ownership for a positive safety culture.

Safety is the number one priority during construction, said Terry Stroschein, Huntsville Center's resident engineer for the BGCAPP.

"We strive to continuously improve in this area with a zero accident philosophy," he said.

The BGCAPP project joins the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant, a sister site located at the U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot in Colorado, in obtaining this recognition from OSHA. The Pueblo team earned VPP Star Status certification in 2008 and was recently recertified under the program.

Once operational, the BGCAPP will destroy 523 tons of munitions containing blister and nerve agents. Currently, the pilot plant is under construction and work is progressing on a variety of facilities to support chemical demilitarization operations.

Huntsville Center is the Corps of Engineers' agent for facility design and facility construction of chemical demilitarization facilities.
The program manager for Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives is responsible for the disposal of the chemical weapons stockpile at Pueblo, Colo., and Blue Grass, Ky.

First chemical agent destruction neutralization plant close to completion

By Debra Valine
Public Affairs Office

In the desert near Pueblo, Colo., a chemical agent destruction plant that will destroy more than 2,600 tons of stockpiled chemical munitions is nearly complete.

Construction of the $1.1 billion facility on the Pueblo Chemical Depot started in 2002 and is expected to be complete in summer 2012.

The destruction of the chemical munitions was mandated by Public Law 99-145 and an international treaty by the Chemical Weapons Convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and their destruction.

The Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant is the eighth of nine chemical demilitarization facilities designed and built by the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville. The ninth facility is under construction in Richmond, Ky.

The first seven plants were designed and constructed and the stockpiled chemical weapons at each location were safely destroyed using incineration as the means for destroying the weapons.

In response to the public's concern about safe destruction of chemical weapons during operation of the incineration plants, the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives program asked Huntsville Center to design and build a chemical weapons destruction facility using a neutralization followed by bio-treatment process, rather than incineration.

Courtesy photo

The sun sets on the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant in Colorado.

Once construction is complete, the plant will go into the next phase that will be managed by ACWA for systemization and ultimately operation, destruction of chemical weapons and closure. The Pueblo Chemical Depot stores 2,611 tons of mustard agent, about 8 percent of the U.S. chemical weapons stockpile, in projectiles and cartridges.

One of the reasons the project has been successful is that all the partners are located in the same building: ACWA is the government program assigned to destroy the stockpile; Huntsville Center is the Corps of Engineers' agent for design and construction of chemical demilitarization facilities; The U.S. Army Field Support Command, Rock Island, Ill., is the contracting agency; and Bechtel is the system contractor.

According to resident engineer Lee Seeba, being collocated allows for frequent open and transparent communication on all aspects of the project.

He said when issues arise, they can be resolved quickly and efficiently, and that having all the partners in one place is unique for the Corps.

"The customer gets the Corps of Engineers' expertise and what we do well: assisting others in getting the construction accomplished," Seeba said.

"We are embedded into this program in a very unique way for the Corps. We will leave after construction and allow ACWA to operate the facility. It gives the

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government the best bang for the buck."

The Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant is a first-of-its-kind facility to destroy chemical weapons using neutralization followed by bio-treatment processes.

The facility incorporates a special cascade ventilation system to ensure clean air flow and detection in the unlikely event of a leak, specially designed robots for handling and transporting the munitions throughout the process to avoid human exposure to agent, a special flowable concrete used in the explosive containment rooms, and unique facility control systems with security monitoring to control the complex.

The facility design incorporates lessons learned from the previous plants, design, construction, processes and closure.

"We have been able to use lessons learned when designing this facility," said Steve Light, the program manager for the Huntsville Center. "For instance, rebar in the explosive containment rooms required us to come up with a new way to use concrete. Concrete could not flow well around the rebar because of the design, so we learned to use flowable concrete.

"Power reliability and redundancy requires that we have three individual power supplies that would allow us to safely shut down the plant if necessary," Light said.

"Lastly, we have very secure, controlled access with state-of-the art monitoring systems to ensure people have the right clearances and are supposed to be there."

With special permission from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the timeline for completion was expedited by a year. Even so, the project is meeting milestones and managing the funds.

Photo by Ken Young

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 will handle and transport munitions reducing human exposure to chemical agents.

"When I came on board six months ago, I realized I was walking into an extremely ambitious schedule with cost constraints through MILCON (military construction) authorizations," said Bruce Huenefeld, ACWA project manager.

"Those two had to be balanced to make the project successful.

"The Corps resident office has done a great job of meeting with the contractor to ensure we are meeting deadlines and not busting the budget," Huenefeld said.

"I am very pleased with what I have seen in the six months I have been here. Probably the reason this project is so successful is the open communication that comes from having integrated working space.

"This is a new way of working with the Corps that has been very good. Through my day-to-day interactions with the Corps of Engineers, the project has more than exceeded my expectations," he said.

Seeba sums up the importance of the project by saying, "We have 780,000 rounds of mustard munitions that will never be used. Think of how many lives that is. It makes you feel pretty good about it. There is also the expense. We are saving the country a lot of money in continuing to store the munitions and saving the world a lot of lives."

Center teams up with Navy to save energy

By James Campbell
Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Navy's Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command Systems Center Pacific has a new partner in saving energy, and in the space of just a year, they are looking at a reduction in overall energy and annual water consumption.

The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, awarded a $12 million Energy Savings Performance Contract for the SPAWAR unit in January, 2011, and with work completed in February, they are starting to reap the benefits, said Will Irby, project manager from the Center's Energy Division.

Located in San Diego, Calif., SPAWAR Systems Center Pacific is a research, development, test and evaluation laboratory for command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, or C4ISR.

Huntsville Center offered an opportunity, through ESPC, for the unit to replace older systems and meet energy savings requirements over a 19-year term, with the energy service company AECOM

Technical Services Inc., provided a way to have the up-front refit costs paid back over time by the energy savings. The total expected energy cost savings is $23 million during the term of the contract, Irby said.

Highlights of the work include lighting upgrades, water conservation measures, chilled water air conditioning upgrades, a heating and hot water retrofit, upgraded air handlers, rooftop and ground mount photovoltaic systems, and electronic control systems, Irby said.

Courtesy photo

Huntsville Center awarded a $12 million Energy Savings Performance Contract to save energy and funds spent on energy at the U.S. Navy's Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command Systems Center in San Diego, Calif.

Workers in the facility have noticed a more reliable and maintained air conditioning temperature and better controls in the lab spaces, said Randy Peacock, head of SPAWAR Systems Center Pacific Facilities Operations and Energy Manager.

SPAWAR Systems Center Pacific is a military campus consisting of 225 buildings with a combined workspace exceeding 3 million square feet, adding to the complexity of the challenge. Having someone replace or upgrade environmental systems and fixtures inside facilities doing sensitive work sounds like a challenge, but Peacock said they were pleasantly surprised.

"I was very impressed with the rapid response of the USACE staff on issues that arose during the contracting phase and construction phase of the project," Peacock said.

Another unique facet of the work was the fact that the ESPC customer was Navy – most ESPC work at Huntsville Center is done for Army customers.

"We'd like to do more work with the Navy. The relationship has been really good," said Irby.

"The speed with which this project was conceived, engineered and implemented is an example of how successful an ESPC can be when the site, the energy service company and the Huntsville team work together toward a common purpose," said Darcy Immerman, AECOM senior vice president, Energy.

He said projects like this help the nation move away from fossil fuel dependency and meet the requirements of the Energy Independence and Security Act.

"There was top to bottom acceptance and excitement within the command – that really helped us," said Anthony Roner, AECOM project manager and vice president, Energy Efficiency and Carbon Management.

An internal blog was created for the project so that employees knew the work schedules and what to expect. Roner said having this level of communication allowed the team to stay on schedule and complete the project while minimizing disruptions to the sensitive work at SPAWAR's labs.

AECOM was the prime contractor and performed energy audits, completed life-cycle cost analyses, identified renewable energy projects like solar photovoltaic and solar thermal, and designed and implemented facility-wide energy, renewable power and water conservation upgrades.

Center employees celebrate Engineer Week

By Jo Anita Miley
Public Affairs Office

Engineering students in Huntsville, Ala., visited the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, for an opportunity to discuss careers in engineering with professional engineers during Engineers Week Feb. 23.

National Engineers Week was started in 1951 by the National Society of Professional Engineers in conjunction with President George Washington's birthday. Washington is considered the nation's first engineer.

The purpose of National Engineers Week is to call attention to the contributions engineers make in society. It is also a time for engineers to emphasize the importance of mentoring the next generation of engineers.

To recognize Engineer Week at the Center, Engineering Directorate invited students from Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University's Changing Lanes Mentoring Program to participate in a mentoring opportunity.

Boyce Ross, director of Engineering at Huntsville Center, acted as host for the event. Engineering Directorate employees, Roderick Bridgeman, Jeff Coulston, Kimberly Edwards, Ray Hall, Betina Johnson, Bryant Marshburn, John Nevels, Terry Patton, April Rafael-Adams, Tony Torres and Roy Wright, spent the afternoon with Alabama A & M University students during two mentoring sessions: An Overview of Huntsville Center and Hands-On Mentoring. Topics included Corps of Engineers history, Huntsville Center history and business model, Huntsville Center programs, advances in the engineering field, education and training, and how to best approach a future at Huntsville Center.

Photo by James Campbell

Huntsville Center engineer Bryant Mashburn, left, talks shop with Alabama A&M student Michael Wallace, an aspiring mechanical engineer.

Lt. Col. William Burruss, deputy commander, Huntsville Center, gave the group a brief overview of Huntsville Center, and shared personal experiences from his engineering career.

Atidya Williams, work force development specialist in the Center's Business Management Office, provided the group information about the Co-op and Internship programs at Huntsville Center.

The students said they learned a lot during the mentoring activities. It will help them gain a better understanding of what engineers do.

"I participated in the event because I think this is a great opportunity to speak with someone who is actually working in the engineering field," said Michael Wallace, a freshman in the Changing Lanes program at Alabama A & M.

"I can learn a lot from my mentor, Bryant Marshburn."

Marshburn said he thinks that taking the time to mentor a student is the best way for any engineer to inspire future engineers. He will do all he can to guide his student's decisions to expand his career opportunities as an engineer.

"I like mentoring a student because when I look back on the professors and career counselors that guided me, I realize that they helped me make the decisions that developed my career opportunities," Marshburn said.

"I feel that it is time for me to give back," he said.

Ross said it was difficult to find time to organize an activity to celebrate National Engineers Week, but he felt it was significant to acknowledge Engineer Week.

"It is very important that we take the time to recognize those within our profession during Engineers Week," Ross said.

"I can't think of a better way to do this than have some of our best engineering professionals mentor future engineers. We'd like to do this more often."

Ethics Corner

Q and As regarding government rental cars

By Margaret Simmons and Lisa Gayman
Office of Counsel

Q: If there's damage to my rental car who's liable?
A: The rental car company is responsible for damages to the rental vehicle and any third party vehicle. If damages exceeds the contract liability limits, the government is financially responsible. Employees on official travel will not be held personally liable for damages except as noted:

1. Willful, wanton negligence on the part of the driver.
2. Obtaining the vehicle through fraud or misrepresentation or loss is caused intentionally by an authorized driver.
3. Operation of the vehicle by a driver under the influence of intoxicants or any prohibited drugs.
4. Use of the vehicle for illegal purposes.
5. Use of vehicle in pushing or towing another vehicle.
6. Use of the vehicle to carry passengers or property for hire.
7. Operation of the vehicle in live, artillery fire exercises or use in training for tactical maneuvers.
8. Operation of the vehicle in a test, race, or contest.
9. Operation of the vehicle by a person other than an authorized driver.
10. Operation across international boundaries unless specifically authorized at time of rental.
11. The vehicle is stolen and the renter cannot produce vehicle keys, unless a filed police report indicates keys were stolen through theft or robbery.
12. Operation of the vehicle off paved, graded, state or professionally maintained roads or driveways, except when the rental company has agreed to this in writing beforehand.

Q: I just caused damage to my rental car under one of the noted exceptions above – who's going to pay?
A: The rental car company bills Huntsville Center, not the renter. If it's determined the employee was not acting within the scope of official employment and declines to pay, the rental car company may seek reimbursement from the employee.

Q: I just received a bill in the mail from the rental car company for damages–what should I do?
A: Notify Office of Counsel and Logistics Management.

Q: Under the rental agreement do I have to be a certain age to rent a car?
A: Government employees on official business who are age 18 or older and have a valid driver's license may rent and operate vehicles.

Q: If my name is on the rental agreement, and a co-worker is also TDY with me, can they drive the vehicle I rented?
A: Yes, if properly licensed, on official TDY and acting within the scope of their employment duties.

For more information, call Lisa Gayman at 895-1107.

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED