

GIVING BUSINESS SMALL BUSINESS BIG FULL

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, U.S. ARMY ENGINEERING AND SUPPORT CENTER, HUNTSVILLE



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Commander's Thoughts

appy New Year! I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays. We had a very festive experience at the Center this season and my sincere thanks to all the folks who worked behind the scenes to make all the activities memorable. I hope everyone took some well-deserved time off to relax, reflect, and enjoy family.

I continue to be impressed with the incredible accomplishments of this great team at Huntsville Center.

The teamwork, devotion to the mission, support for one another, and support to our nation clearly distinguishes this Center as a great place

We had a tremendously successful end to FY19 with over \$2.2 billion in obligations with over 4,800 individual actions in support of national security and our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines serving worldwide. We followed that success with a great start to Fiscal Year 2020 and looks to be another great year for us.

I also want to thank everyone for their support in the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institutes' Organizational Climate Survey - a survey that allows us to assess the organization's strengths and weaknesses. Surveys are important to us all and I assure you that your responses are, and will remain, anonymous.

I also assure you that your feedback is very important. I will personally review the results to determine how to sustain our successes and to address your concerns. We plan to share this information in a collective, inclusive manner so that we can all learn from this effort, and pave the way for our organization's future.

In December, many of you participated in the walk-through of Section 1 at 475 Quality Circle.

Nathan Durham and other members of our furniture, interior design and logistics teams were in the area to facilitate the tour and answer questions. I'm very proud of the work they have all done and I hope you like the new office spaces many of you will be moving into.

Renovating the building is a process that takes time and coordination and I appreciate everyone's patience while we continue to provide you a first-rate facility for you to call your "work home."

Huntsville Center is a great team environment and I really appreciate how we look after one another. We have about a dozen folks enrolled in the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program requesting leave donations due to prolonged illness. Thank you for your continued support to this program, and if you have the opportunity to help, please think about donating.

In order for the Center to deliver on the large number of varied programs in its portfolio, it is vital that we continue to develop and invest in our people.

One of the investments that I am committed to is building the bench of future talent through leader development initiatives. Recently, the Corporate Board, Directors, and Human Capital Division reviewed the past offerings of the Huntsville Center Leadership Development Program, considered the developmental needs of the workforce, and worked to reinvigorate the LDP.

This year the LDP will expand to include a Level I for permanent



Col. Marvin Griffin

employees between the grades of GS-05 through GS-11.

This program will focus on personal development with a focus on "leading self" through virtual and classroom training and engaging with Center leadership.

For our permanent GS-11 through GS-13 employees, we will continue to execute a Level II program focusing on "Leading teams and self" and will build on the competencies necessary to lead others.

Teamwork is critical to our mission, in our operations as project delivery teams, and also in our support to external stakeholders and customers.

It is my hope that we utilize these programs to develop our future leaders and invest in our workforce.

Again, I want to thank each of you and let you know how very proud I am of to serve as your commander.



Courtesy photo

During the 2019 Society of American Military Engineers Federal Small Business Conference Excellence in Contracting Awards Program Nov. 21, 2019 in Dallas, Texas, Lt. Gen. Todd Semonite (left), commanding general of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and USACE Command Sgt. Maj. Bradley Houston (right) present Jeff Roberts, Huntsville Center contracting; Col. Marvin L. Griffin, Huntsville Center commander; Brandy Percell, Huntsville Center Office of Small Business Initiative; Colleen O'Keefe, Huntsville Center Contracting chief, and Kristina Freese, Huntsville Center Business Director, with three Top Dollar awards. The Center took 1st Place in Small Business (\$790 million), 1st Place in Small Disadvantaged Business (\$416 million) and 2nd Place in Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business (\$98.6 million.) Over the last decade, Huntsville Center contracts have allocated more than \$6 billion to small business for their services in supporting the Center's global mission.

Center's mission feeds \$6 billion to small business

By William S. Farrow Public Affairs Office

untsville Center has a longstanding history of utilizing small businesses as a valued source of skills supporting national security. Besides improving the economy, projects critical to the Center's mission are mostly completed using small business.

In fiscal 2019, the Center executed more than \$2 billion in contract actions, pushing the Army Corps of Engineers' Huntsville-based specialized technical support organization past the \$6 billion mark over the last 10 years.

Last year, Huntsville Center directed awards valued at more than \$789 million to small businesses. During the 2019 Society of American Military Engineers Federal Small Business Conference Excellence in Contracting Awards Program Nov. 21, 2019 in Dallas, Texas, the Center was awarded 1st Place in Small Business (\$790 million), 1st Place in Small Disadvantaged Business (\$416 million) and 2nd Place in Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business (\$98.6 million).

Rebecca Goodsell, Huntsville Center Office of Small Business chief, said there has been a steady increase in the amount of contract obligations going to small business, a result of a unique cultural shift among the engineers, project managers and contracting specialists providing unique solutions in support of national interest.

Goodsell said over the decade, the Center's leadership has pushed a policy focused on providing "maximum practicable" prime and subcontracting opportunities to small firms. The

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Photo by Stephen Baack

Task at hand

Performing intricate tasks quickly can be tough, but it's made all the more difficult while wearing dual-layer hazmat gloves. Volunteers became reacquainted with this challenge today during an eight-hour Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response, or HAZWOPER, refresher class, as they raced each other in assembling small mechanical contraptions. This exercise was only a small part of the HAZWOPER training, which was designed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to prepare emergency response and cleanup workers to clearly understand their roles in managing unexpected releases of hazardous substances so they can act quickly and respond in a safe manner during an emergency.

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focus directly impacts not only on the services Huntsville Center provides, but also the success of small businesses.

"Small businesses represent more than 30 million companies, employs more than half of all private sector employees and generate more than half of the nation's Gross Domestic Product," Goodsell said.

"It's the economic growth engine for America, providing jobs, innovation and competition in industry."

Although Huntsville Center's obligation rate is in excess of \$2 billion annually, Chip Marin III, Huntsville Center programs director, said the use of small business to execute thousands of task orders with an average cost at less than \$250,000 is critical to the Center's success.

Marin said lower dollar task order contracts are not necessarily conducive to large business operating procedures and business practices.

"However, they (lower-dollar contracts) are ideally suited to small business because their business procedures are geared towards smaller sized task orders and projects. Where large business is unable to compete, our small businesses are ideally suited to do so."

Marin said additionally, small business drives the economy of the nation.

"Small business employees are our neighbors, families, local merchants and the new start-up companies who are trying to carve out a living for themselves," he said.

"It is essential to our nation and economy that small business retain capability to execute and continue to contribute to our local communities. In many cities and towns across this great nation it is small business that remains the economic engine that sustains the community."



Photo by Stephen Baack

Brandy Wilkerson, a project manager with the Utility Energy Service Contracting program, greets an attendee of the 2019 Small Business Forum at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville, Ala., Oct. 24. The event gave hundreds of business representatives an opportunity to connect face to face with Huntsville Center program and project managers and acquisition professionals.

Small Business Forum attracts hundreds for day of networking

By Stephen Baack Public Affairs Office

he 2019 Small Business Forum attracted hundreds of representatives from businesses small and large to the Davidson Center for Space Exploration at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center to connect with professionals from the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, Oct. 24.

In the main hall beneath one of the only authentic Saturn V launch vehicles in the world, a gathering of Huntsville Center contracting officials and program and project managers, representing more than 40 programs, were on hand to meet with industry partners to answer questions and explain how the Center does business.

In the auditorium, Huntsville Center senior leaders provided guests an

overarching view of the Center's unique mission that covers five business portfolios (medical, base operations and facilities, energy, operational technology, and environmental), along with panel discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and a close look at the acquisition process.

These leaders included Col. Marvin L. Griffin, commander; Lt. Col. H. W. Hugh Darville, deputy commander; Albert "Chip" Marin III, programs director; Christina Freese, business director; Colleen O'Keefe, contracting director, along with the whole team from the Office of Small Business.

"Huntsville Center is all in today," Griffin told attendees at the event kickoff. "We've got a lot of key folks here, so take advantage of the opportunity."

Woven into Griffin's overview was

the Center's historical time line illustrating why the Center operates the way it does and how businesses play a key role.

"The common thread here is that it's constantly evolved over time as new needs arose, new requirements have come up in highly technical, very specialized areas," he said.

"Where it made sense, Huntsville Center picked up those missions with all the capabilities and technical expertise.

"We rely on industry as we develop those technical competencies," Griffin continued, "and the contract capabilities to make these services and capabilities work for our warfighters and our nation."

In fiscal 2019, Huntsville Center directed awards valued at more than \$791 million to small businesses with more than 2,420 contract actions.



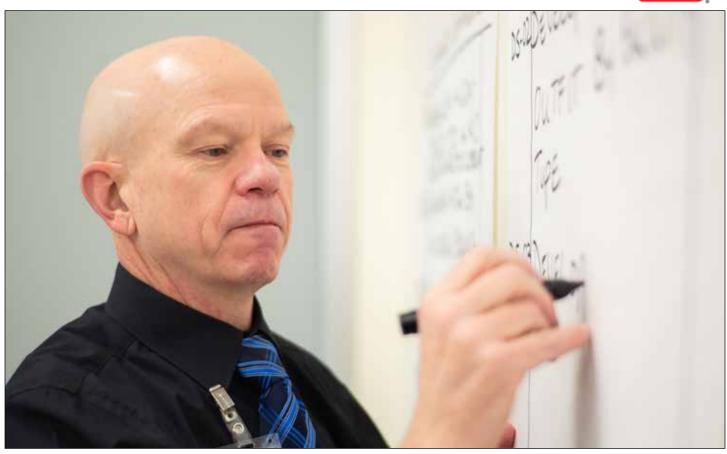


Photo by Stephen Baack

Randy Barber, a process improvement consultant who led a three-day value engineering workshop for the Furnishings Program, captures input from workshop participants at the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, Alabama, Nov. 5, 2019.

Furnishings Program team focuses on 'better, smarter, faster' at VE workshop

By Stephen Baack **Public Affairs Office**

group of Huntsville Center professionals took part in a value engineering workshop for the Furnishings Program Nov. 4-6 with the goal of improving processes, reducing costs and boosting value for stakeholders.

Randy Barber, an independent contractor who led the workshop, said "value" can mean different things to different people, so he frames it with one question: "How do we improve the return on investment?"

The Furnishings Program is part of Huntsville Center's Installation Support and Programs Management Directorate and procures furnishings for administrative, barracks, lodging and educational facilities at federal agencies throughout the world.

Their mission includes managing the delivery of products and can include project management, installation, quality assurance and interior design. Barber said the workshop was the perfect opportunity to look at the program's existing

process and ask questions like "How do we make the process better," "Why are we doing the things we do?" and "Is there a better way to do the things we do?"

The group of workshop participants, or VE Team, consisted of individuals with a range of program knowledge, technical experience and seniority, according to Stephanie Hardin, program manager with the Centralized Furnishings Branch.

"This mixture of members ensured that diversity was represented so that topics could be brainstormed with maximum discussion," Hardin said.

"That's exactly the goal," said Carlos Reis, project manager and value engineering officer with the Business Management Office who took part in the workshop.

"We want people with different views so we can come up with better solutions and better alternatives to solve problems to fit everybody's needs."

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Position Hazard Analysis reveals useful data

By Stephen Baack Public Affairs Office

s part of the Huntsville Center Safety and Occupational Health Office's recently developed SharePoint collaborative site, the interactive Position Hazard Analysis system is already revealing valuable safety data.

The purpose of the Position Hazard Analysis, or PHA, is to give employees a way to identify hazards associated with their jobs and learn about the controls they and their supervisors can implement to mitigate those hazards.

An example of a hazard would be the possibility of sustaining an injury due to lifting.

The controls would include knowing one's limitations, lifting objects using one's legs, and getting help from a coworker when lifting heavy objects.

The PHA requirement is nothing new, but Safety Manager Kyle Shireman said this "whole different approach" is giving the Safety Office fresh insights that could benefit employees.

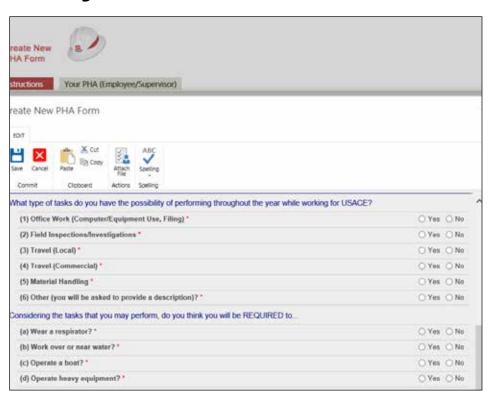
"Before, the process was that a supervisor would give you a PHA, and you reviewed and signed it," said Shireman.

"Now you answer questions and you tell us what you're doing versus us telling you what you're doing."

The new PHA is easy for both the employee and the supervisor, quickly providing useful information to the safety office, said Kellie Williams, Huntsville Center's chief of Safety and Occupational Health.

"There have been a couple of hiccups as we rolled it out, but overall the response has been very positive," she said. It simplifies the process and provides data back to us about anyone doing hazardous activities who might need training, medical surveillance or safety equipment."

Shireman said that, by listening to the employees, the PHA is already revealing valuable new information such



As part of the Huntsville Center Safety and Occupational Health Office's recently developed SharePoint collaborative site, the interactive Position Hazard Analysis system is already revealing valuable safety data.

as the need for additional training and equipment that employees previously did not know they needed.

"With our new automated process that allows the employees to tell us what they are exposed to, we can now tailor our training needs based on the input of the employee," Shireman said.

"With it being automated as well, we can effectively analyze and trend our data to help show any gaps in our programs, if any. It has been eye-opening since the birth of the program with the amount of information we have been able to gather.

"Given that information," he added, "we have already begun to revamp our programs to ensure we meet all regulations based on the hazards that are presented to our team."

The Safety Office has conducted three 10-hour Occupational Safety and Health Administration Construction Safety Class sessions this year and is getting ready to conduct another one in December.

"Training our employees on the hazards, and finding out the requirement from both the supervisor and employee is the next step," Shireman said.

"So, by doing the PHA this way, we've got the data. Now we can do the research, determine the need, and develop the training and program as required.

"It's been big," Shireman added.

"Now we can see across the whole Center who requires confined space training, who does this and who does that. And with that information we can then build our programs accordingly."

Williams and Shireman both said the new PHA format is attracting interest throughout the Corps.

"At least 10 districts have requested this information," Williams said.

"They want it, and now ACE-IT is requesting Headquarters to make this an enterprise standard."



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The workshop followed a six-phase job plan as outlined by SAVE International, an organization that establishes value engineering standards for the federal government: Information: Gathering information to better understand the program and process. "We wanted to understand how the process worked and how the different players fit into it," Barber said.

Function analysis: "That is really asking the question of, 'Why does the product, project or process exist? What's its main purpose?" he said. "Once you identify its main purpose, there are subsequent things that, functionally, you do that support that main purpose."

Creative: This is an opportunity to generate ideas about new or different ways to accomplish those functions. "In this case we had five functions we brainstormed upon and said, What are alternative ways to do the functional requirement we're trying to meet?' 'Let's look at what we do today, are we doing something that we shouldn't be doing or are we not doing something today that we should be doing? And if we're doing something today, is there a better, smarter, faster way to do it?" From this phase, the group generated 37 ideas, each written on a sticky note and posted to the wall. **Evaluation:** SAVE International defines this phase as a time to "synthesize ideas and concepts and select those that are feasible for development into specific value improvements." For this workshop, participants reduced the 37 ideas by roughly a third.

Development: "The development phase really is the opportunity to take the subset of these ideas and flesh out details about what the change might look like, how might it get implemented, and what the implications are of cost and resources being applied," Barber said.

Presentation: This is an opportunity to brief leaders on the results of the workshop. "My opinion is that this is not a decision-making opportunity; it's the time for decision-makers to understand what the thought process was. So, as they go back through and review and evaluate the work that was done by the VE Team, there is context associated with what was done. They can take context, put it with a black-and-white report and say, 'Is this something we should consider?""

"The open discussions provided thoroughly defined actions that will hopefully result in improving process and efficiencies," Hardin said.

Stand-out topics included the increased need for documenting programmatic processes, which Hardin said the PDTs would be responsible for developing. This would cover program templates and using rules of thumb for certain situations.

Another hot topic was process automation to free up resources for PDTs to focus their expertise in more design work and to grow product lines such as Army family housing and general and flag officer quarters.

Now, Hardin said, a dedicated team has been established to work through the final VE report and begin implementing improved and/or new processes.

She said she expects the majority of the accepted actions will be completed within a year, along with several long-term goals further out.

Sign here

Contractors installed signs at the U.S. Army **Engineering and Support** Center, Huntsville's main building at 475 Quality Circle Oct. 23. Huntsville Center relocated its main office building earlier this year and enhancement projects continue ensuring the facility meets the needs of the workforce.



Photo by Stephen Baack

Engineering Director Ross retires

hroughout his 36 year career, Boyce Ross demonstrated an exceptional technical ability and solid leadership resulting in the success of the Army and the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center.

From 2002 until his retirement in November, Ross served as the Director of Engineering, responsible for all engineering functions and missions of more than 40 programs exceeding \$2 billion annually.

He lead and managed more than 300 engineers and scientists for critical worldwide Army missions such as: the Range and Training Land Program, the Energy Savings Performance Contracting program, the Medical Repair and Renovation program, the Facility Repair and Renovation program, the Defense Logistics Agency Fuels program, various cost estimating software development programs, the Furniture program, various maintenance and service contracts, and Architectural Engineering Contracting.

Ross was also responsible for leading multiple mandatory and technical centers expertise for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers such as: the Medical Facilities Mandatory Center of Expertise, the Electronic Security System MCX, the Utility Monitoring and Control Systems MCX, the Industrial Control Systems Cybersecurity MCX, the Facilities Explosive Safety MCX, and the Heating Ventilation, and Air Conditioning Technical Center of Expertise.

While serving as the Director of Engineering, Ross also served for 120 days in a temporary Senior Executive Service position as the Director of Regional Business for the Mississippi Valley Division in 2006. During that time he provided core technical regional leadership for the Regional Business Center and the MSC's Civil Works program.

Additionally, he was selected multiple times from across the enterprise to



Photo by Stephen Baack

Albert "Chip" Marin III, Huntsville Center programs director, presents Boyce Ross, Huntsville Center engineering director with the Bronze Order of the de Fluery Medal during Ross' retirement ceremony.

lead several complex engineering and construction management efforts with the Department of Veterans Affairs as well as Department of Energy.

While studying for his Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering at the University of Kentucky in the early 1980s, Ross began his career as a Department of Army Structural Engineer intern.

Upon graduating and completing the internship program, he served in several design engineering positions at what was then designated Huntsville Division, developing a specialized expertise in explosive resistant design and the design of complex hazardous waste storage and destruction facilities.

In 1988, he became the lead engineer for the chemical stockpile disposal program. Four years later, he began serving as the Chief of the Design Management and Integration Branch within the Chemical Demilitarization Directorate where he applied his background to the design of

all chemical demilitarization facilities.

In 1995, Ross became the Branch Chief of HND's Technical Management Branch within the Systems Engineering Division where he was responsible for engineering and design support for three active construction sites and two operational chemical demilitarization facilities.

In 1997, Ross left the Corps of Engineers to become a site project manager for the Department of Army Program Manager for Chemical Demilitarization.

Ross was responsible for oversight of the construction, systemization, operation and closure of the \$1 billion Chemical Weapon Destruction Facility at Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

Ross returned to the Corps of Engineers in 2001 as the Chief of Cost Engineering Division at Huntsville Center before his appointment as the Director of Engineering. (Information compiled from staff reports and biography.)





Army veteran Keshon Smith, Marine Corps veteran Carrie Lewis and Army veteran Mitchelene BigMan, president and founder of Three members of the Native American Women Warriors render honors during a vocal performance of "The Star-Spangled Banner" at the National American Indian Heritage Month observance at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama, Nov. 13. The observance was organized by Huntsville Center's Equal Employment Opportunity office in coordination with Team Redstone and the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command. The Native American Women Warriors are an all-female group of Native American veterans who started as a color guard but have since grown and branched out as advocates for Native American women veterans in areas such as health, education and employment.

Huntsville Center celebrates Native Americans

By Stephen Baack **Public Affairs Office**

s part of National American Indian Heritage Month, guests from Sacred Way Sanctuary and the Native American Women Warriors took front and center Nov. 13 at Redstone Arsenal's Bob Jones Auditorium.

Dr. Yvette Running Horse Collin, co-founder of Sacred Way Sanctuary, served as keynote speaker during the observance, which was organized by Huntsville Center's Equal Employment Opportunity office in coordination with Team Redstone and U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command. Sacred Way Sanctuary is an education and research facility in Florence, Alabama, dedicated to preserving the Native American horse and other animals sacred to indigenous peoples of the Americas.

A substantial part of Collin's research is indigenous archaeology, but she frames her work as part of a living, breathing endeavor that holds relevance to the "contemporary experience of native peoples around the world" to promote action and change by "incorporating our traditional knowledge – our native ways of knowing – into the western world today."

Collin characterizes indigenous peoples as "keepers of knowledge" accumulated over tens of thousands of years. This includes not only indigenous peoples of the Americas, but throughout the world.

"A lot of times we think of them as people from a long

time ago, and what I want to talk about today is how we're very much here, and I really think we're going to be a very big part of the future," Collin said.

Also a big part of the event were the Native American Women Warriors, an all-female group of Native American veterans who fulfilled the role of color guard and who performed a tribal dance. Still, the group's appearance at the Redstone event showed only part of what NAWW does.

NAWW's president and founder is Mitchelene BigMan, a retired Army sergeant first class who founded the nonprofit association to advocate for Native American women veterans in areas such as health care, education and employment.

The group, which is based in Pueblo, Colorado, makes appearances at events around the country serving not only as color guards and cultural performers, but also as keynote and motivational speakers.

Lt. Col. H. W. Hugh Darville, deputy commander of Huntsville Center, emphasized the importance of staying connected to the knowledge and culture of Native Americans, as well as recognizing their lasting contributions to the U.S. Army and the nation.

"In any organization, any country, diversity gives you more strength," Darville said. "If we lose diversity in our culture, we also lose some different perspectives, different knowledge - so it's really not just remembering that; it's making sure that we're inclusive of all cultures and all perspectives that make up who we are - because that makes us all stronger."

Ethics Corner

Keeping mindful of interaction with retired federal employees ensures fitting relationships

By Melanie Braddock Office of Counsel

"Congratulations on your retirement, Bob! Wishing you and Betty nothing but happiness in your retirement years!"

s employees at the Huntsville Center, we have said these words a lot lately. And while we wish all of our former colleagues the best in the next endeavors, as government employees we have to make that transition in our minds as well from friend/co-worker/colleague to remember that these individuals are no longer government employees.

There is no intent for this to dampen your friendships or prevent you from spending time with former colleagues, but is a reminder that once someone leaves government service there are changes to what can be shared and where people can be, particularly if they now work for one of the many Center contractors.

First, we cannot share information about ongoing acquisitions with anyone who is not a part of the Board or an advisor to the board. Whether they are the former project manager for the program or even the former commander at Huntsville Center, we cannot share information about the evaluation process, who is evaluating, where we are in the process, how many offers were proposed, etc.

Second, we cannot discuss how well other projects are going and which, if any, contractors are having

issues. Although they may have been amazing at hearing all of the contractor woes in the past, we cannot share this information with non-government employees as this information is not public and should not be provided to non-government employees.

Third, we cannot bring them into the office and allow them to wander as they did when they were a government employee. We have to ensure they are not left alone in locations where conversations may be overheard or held around them that they should not be privy to hearing.

Lastly, we have to as always maintain our impartiality and not provide preferential treatment. The public trusts us to give everyone the same fair opportunity. To do that we have to treat all non-government employees the same.

So we need to ask ourselves how our actions with our former colleagues will be perceived by the public, especially if our former colleagues are now working for contractor.

Finally, feel free to have your former colleague over for dinner to celebrate their birthday, or congratulate your former employee on the engagement, but remember to think about what you discuss regarding work related matters.

As always, if there are ever any ethical concerns you may have, feel free to contact me at 256-895-7373 or send an email to:

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