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Sacramento District

The Prospector

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A person wearing a white protective suit, a white helmet, and a tan hat is climbing a wooden structure. The structure is made of horizontal wooden planks and has several colorful handholds (yellow, green, blue, and red) attached to it. A red and yellow rope is attached to the climber's harness and extends upwards. Another person in a white helmet is visible in the background, looking down at the climber.

**The Leadership Development
Program can help you
reach new heights**

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On the cover:

Brian Vierra of
the Regulatory
Division, climbs
the wall as part
of the Leadership
Development
Program's Tier I.



Photo by Mike Nevins

Features

12-15 Leadership Development:

We take a closer look at the various tiers of the LDP Program and hear from three people who are in it.

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The Way Ahead

With Col. Thomas C. Chapman



As FY08 comes to a close and all of us get ready to take on the challenges of the next year, I wanted to take some time to thank you for working so hard to make this a successful year. We had our challenges, but thanks to your dedication to serving our customers and each other – FY08 was a huge success! I never doubted that it would be, but I did wonder what it is that made us able to overcome some unique challenges to get us to where we are today.

I came to one conclusion: leadership.

In early September Colonel Tom Magness, Commander of the Los Angeles District, gave a presentation on leadership to our District. You will read more about that presentation in this issue of *Prospector*, but I was thinking about the tremendous leaders we have at all levels of the district and what great people we have working together to get our mission accomplished.

I concur with Col. Magness that we must be bold and think outside the box in order to get things done. Over the next months you will see us take on initiatives that will help reshape the Sacramento District into an even better place to work. If this fiscal year taught me anything it was that the common cliché about leaders being born is wrong.

Leaders are mentored, shaped and made and we must continue preparing those who will accept the baton of leading this district long after all of us leave.

To do that we must set aside the misconception that every person in the district is not meant to be a leader. As a military organization I think it's proper to consider the words of the youngest infantry officer to serve in the European theater during World War II.

Warren Bennis received the Purple Heart and Bronze Star for his service and after leaving the Army Bennis went on to become an academic who studied leadership. He used his experience in the military to observe and put forward principles that many of us use in our daily lives. His most memorable is one that is playing out on the battlefields of Iraq

and Afghanistan, military and civilian installations from here to Utah and Colorado and right here in Sacramento.

Bennis observed, "The most dangerous leadership myth is that leaders are born -- that there is a genetic factor to leadership. This myth asserts that people simply either have certain charismatic qualities or not. That's nonsense; in fact, the opposite is true. Leaders are made rather than born."

Sometimes it takes a guy who was knee deep in mud fighting the evils of the world a generation ago to make observations that remain true to this day. The myth that leaders are born is something we are overcoming in our district through formal programs like the Leadership Development Program and informally when a new employee, journeyman or 20-year-veteran of the Corps is taught something new.

I've had my own experiences in which I've seen people grow over time into very effective leaders. Many of you can also recount similar experiences. These experiences help each of us become better leaders, and they can also help us to actively participate in the development of new leaders in our own organization. Please be involved in leadership development and encourage others to do the same. Our district will continue to thrive according to the effectiveness of our leader development.

The effectiveness of our current leaders has been clearly evident this year. Everyone in the district has worked hard and I could not be more proud of the work you did. Whether you work in Sacramento, at one of our recreation areas or field offices or are deployed along with our troops fighting the War on Terror, you have shown that the idea that leaders are born is just wrong. I'm sure you will show that again this next year.

Keep doing what you're doing to make the Sacramento District the best district in the Corps of Engineers. I'm proud to lead you and make no mistake – I learn from you every single day.

District Commander: Col. Thomas C. Chapman

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A big 'Thank You' to all of our park staff

By Jonathan Friedman, Senior District Park Ranger

At the beginning of this season, we featured the parks in the Prospector to demonstrate how vital a resource they are to the nation. More than 370 million people recreate at USACE facilities each year. The economic benefits are staggering. \$13 billion are spent planning, traveling and staying at Corps facilities. In California alone, Corps facilities resulted in 14.5 million visits with \$281 million spent within 30 miles of each Project. I can't even begin to count the number of visitors that come out from Los Angeles and San Francisco just to water ski on our lakes. We get thousands of visitors from France, Spain, Germany, Japan, Australia and Italy who recognize the value our recreation offers. Imagine a \$30 annual pass gets you into every single day-use park of the Corps.

We had a great recreation season this year and the effort and support of the entire Natural Resources Management (NRM) Team was above and beyond what visitors expected, as usual. From October 2007 through July, 2008 our Maintenance and Ranger Teams provided service to 1.7 million people who spent 13 million visitor hours in our parks. Eighty percent of this visitation occurred during the recreation season, demanding employees to staff all weekends and holidays.

This year, our parks responded to nine fatalities. Our Maintenance staff provided outstanding service during these troubling times, working side-by-side with our local emergency responders and county sheriffs' deputies. Rangers were solid foundations with their support to victims' friends and families. It is a surreal, indescribable moment when tragedy strikes loved ones, especially during a trip that was supposed to generate only happy memories.

While supporting all of this recreational use, our Park Managers oversaw millions of dollars in flood risk management along with the Water Management team. Working side-by-side with water masters and irrigation districts, Tulare and Fresno Counties alone generated over \$6 billion in agricultural production. Almost every one of our Projects has a hydroelectric power plant associated with it and Park Managers work in concert with power producers to ensure peak demands are met during California's hottest days. This is testament to the value of the waters stored behind Terminus and Pine Flat Dams. Park Managers were essential in linking the clients, stakeholders, customers and service providers together to provide and store life giving waters to the San Joaquin / Sacramento Valley.

We should also take the time to consider our special volunteers, donating thousands of hard labor hours at our parks. Painting picnic tables, staffing fee booths, picking up litter, installing irrigation equipment, and greeting campers are just a very small example of the wonderful work volunteers selflessly give the District and the Country. Last year, 3,932 volunteers donated more than 66,000 hours of service at a value of nearly \$1.25 million in labor. This year we are expecting even more volunteers!

I want to personally thank the NRM staff for helping me get the word out concerning our significance and accomplishments. My attendance at the Recreation Leadership Advisory Team revealed one significant pattern. It was the Sacramento District that was always at the top of the list, in water safety efforts, in supporting and recognizing its NRM staff, in reporting incidents and mishaps, and in the quality way that we represent the US Army Corps of Engineers.



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SACRAMENTO ENGINEER DISTRICT
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS (USACE)
1325 J STREET
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District Engineer

To the Sacramento District Operations and Maintenance Teams:

Summer 2008 is coming to a close and I want to take this opportunity to say thank you and job well done! All of you should be especially proud of the superior work you provided the public and our district this year. As one season changes to another, you finally get an opportunity to rotate weekends off with your teammates and that means more quality time with your family and friends. All of us sometimes need to be reminded that there is more to life than work and for you that is especially important.

The hot weather and close proximity of our parks to urban areas make our lakes and rivers an ideal place for people from around the world to visit. In order for tens of thousands of people to camp, swim, boat or simply watch a summer sunset across a placid lake it takes hundreds of you to work to make that relaxation happen. Every weekend and every holiday all of you are there and while many of us at headquarters have the weekends off - O&M projects never close and the water never stops flowing.

Whether you are a Park Ranger, Administrative Assistant, Dam Operator or Maintenance Worker; part of the maintenance team, park manager or one of our many volunteers - it is your dedication to duty, selfless service and the serious way you handle your jobs that make things run smoothly at our facilities. With thousands of good times there are inevitable tragedies and this year we saw our unfortunate share. But, when tragedy strikes near any of our parks you show what it means to be part of the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Your devotion to the public is evident in good times and bad. Regardless of circumstance your demeanor and presence gave solace to victims' families and friends.

It is not said often enough, but I and the leaders of the district value your commitment and sacrifice. For all of you who work and support our Natural Resources Management program I want to tell you how much we all appreciate you and how proud I am to be the Commander of the best district in our Corps.

Essayons!

Thomas C. Chapman, P.E.
Colonel, U.S. Army
Commanding





Photo from Nick Figueroa

Nick Figueroa, Col. Martin and Mayor Joe Soto listen to Councilwoman Amy Burnett express her appreciation for the Corps' efforts in responding to the citizens of the community.

Sacramento District responds to hurricane recovery efforts

By Nick Figueroa, Pine Flat Lake

Several Sacramento District employees have been deployed to Houston, Texas to assist with the Commodities Mission. Quality Assurance (QA) volunteers are dispatched to designated areas around Houston to assist local government agencies in their efforts to distribute ice, water and MRE's to citizens that are without water or power. Many have met many political figures, from Council members to the Division Engineer of the Midwestern Division. The General has been to several sites overseeing operations and expressing his appreciation to all volunteers. Those that have been fortunate to meet him were greeted with a General's Coin. State and Federal Agency representatives have come from all over the U.S. to aid the relief efforts. Hundreds of trucks are dispatched everyday to nearly 30 Points Of Distribution. The Corps has played a major role in the recovery efforts and local residents are responding with great appreciation.

Nick Figueroa traveled to Houston, Texas to work as a Quality Assurance (QA) Volunteer for Commodities. He is now working as a QA for the Roofing Mission.

Kara Hellige named Regulator of the year

Kara Hellige, from the Sacramento District's Durango, Colorado office, received the 2008 Randy Snyder Regulator of the Year award during this year's Regulatory Conference in South Lake Tahoe, California. District Engineer Col. Thomas Chapman presented the award to Kara.



Photo by Tyler Stalker
Col. Thomas Chapman presents Kara Hellige with the 2008 Randy Snyder Regulator of the Year award.

Kara has worked for the Corps of Engineers in Regulatory for nearly 10 years. She started in the Chicago District and transferred to the Durango Regulatory Field Office in 2003. She is currently the Chief of the Durango Office, which services five counties in Southwestern Colorado and one county in Southeast Utah. On top of her duties as Office Chief, she has assisted SPK in their transition to a new national data base, called ORM, by volunteering to be Sacramento's liaison and is the South Pacific Division representative on the ORM Advisory Board. She is also the lead for the ORM Mitigation Project Delivery Team, whose purpose is to accurately account and record mitigation work.

The Regulator of the Year award is named after former Sacramento District employee Randy Snyder. Randy was a professional at easing Regulatory tensions between parties. It was said that Randy could take on the most contentious issue and at the end of the day, everybody would be having coffee together. Randy had worked for the Regulatory Division in Colorado for nearly 10 years when he was involved in a fatal car accident. To remember Randy, every year the Regulatory Division honors one person for their hard work and dedication to the division. Also, a letter is sent to Randy's wife to tell her about the person who receives this honor each year.

L.A. District Engineer Col. Thomas Magness gives his secrets to leadership success

By Tyler Stalker, Public Affairs

On Sept. 3, Col. Thomas Magness, Commander of the Los Angeles District, paid a visit to the Sacramento District. While he was here, he took some time out of his schedule to have a discussion about leadership with about 50 people.

"To be a successful leader, I think you have to strive for achievement in nine areas," Col. Magness said.

These nine areas are as follows.

First, accomplish your mission. This one's pretty self-explanatory. If you get your job done and you do it well, then you're probably accomplishing your mission.

Second, develop your leaders. Programs such as the Leadership Development Program are great. We should be making a two to five percent investment in training.

Third, cultivate a culture. Develop values and hold people accountable. If it's applicable, allow people to work from a more accessible duty location (teleworking) as long as they're getting the job done.

Fourth, focus on teamwork. One + one is greater than two. It's much easier and you'll have a better product if you work as a team.

Fifth, communicate proactively. Always be thinking "who else needs to know what I know?" Don't always wait for someone to come to you looking for information.

Sixth, learn continuously. We should always be learning and improving our processes. We achieve this through After Action Reports and constructive advice.

Seventh, promote big ideas. If something's broke, come up with the solution.

Eighth, have fun. Make work fun. If you don't, you'll be less effective in your job and you won't enjoy it.

Ninth, take care of people and their families. If you take care of your people, they will take care of you. People often just want to know that they matter.

If you can do these things with your office or team, then there's a good chance that your team will work more effectively and efficiently, said Col. Magness.

Col. Magness took a few questions before concluding his session. Afterwards, he continued to talk with individuals who had additional questions.



Photo by Tyler Stalker
Col. Thomas Magness speaks to Sacramento District employees about leadership on September 3.

Col. Magness's 7 B's to being a good leader

1. *Be Yourself*
2. *Be Positive*
3. *Be Mindful of Others*
4. *Be Situationally Aware*
5. *Be Fit (physically & mentally)*
6. *Be the Best*
7. *Be Going Somewhere*

Iraq, Afghanistan deployment can be rewarding

By David Killam, Public Affairs

Capt. Clay: Excellent way to get work experience

Captain Dave Clay recently returned from Afghanistan and is currently working in Military Construction.

In Afghanistan, Capt. Clay was a resident engineer and officer in charge of the Jalalabad Resident Office. He had a staff of three civilians and one senior non-commissioned officer, along with nine locally hired quality control technicians that he and his staff trained. Despite the small staff, Capt.



Captain Dave Clay

Clay's office got a lot done. They built, or were in the process of building: 32 district police headquarters, 1 brigade headquarters for Afghan border police, 3 battalion headquarters facilities, 12 company headquarters and 35 kilometers worth of roadway.

"We were primarily responsible for overseeing the execution of construction projects, ensuring that the customer is delivered a project that is on time, within budget and of the quality dictated by the construction contract," said Capt. Clay.

"Corps civilian employees were absolutely critical to the effort," said Capt. Clay. "Nowhere else could we have found the expertise and experience with Corps procedures that enabled us to use some of the inexperienced local hires to complete projects. Corps civilians had the experience and ability to mentor Afghani project engineers. Parallel with this was the ability of Corps employees to train Afghan Quality Control representatives in construction management."

And how does he view the Afghanistan experience?

"I see service in Afghanistan as an excellent opportunity for people to get experience that ordinarily might take much longer for them to acquire back in the U.S because of the pace and scale of construction operations with the Afghan Engineer District. It's an excellent way to directly support one

of our most critical missions and at the same time increase your advancement potential within the Corps and in the workforce, in general," Capt. Clay said. "Service in Afghanistan is not a camping trip – there are some hardships. But it's a great experience for anyone to have if he or she is willing to rise to the challenge," he added.

Phil Schmitt: Flexibility is key

Sacramento District's latest returnee from Iraq, Phil Schmitt stresses flexibility for anyone who wants to volunteer for service there. "You're dealing with military situations that can change very rapidly," says Phil. "It's very important to stay flexible to deal with all of the changes."

Phil served in Iraq from June of 2007 until July of 2008. At first, his motivation to serve was to acquire



Phil Schmitt in Iraq

additional expertise of his current job and in patriotism. But once he got there, he discovered that his focus was on "just doing the best job

possible." At District Headquarters, Phil works as a mechanical engineer. In Basrah, Iraq, he focused on the installation of mechanical systems in the Basrah Children's Cancer Hospital. His responsibilities included the installation of air conditioning, medical gas, plumbing, backup electrical power and fire protection systems.

One of the most impressive aspects of his job was working with Iraqi engineers.

"They were good people who took many risks to work for the Americans," Phil said. "They had to keep a very low profile for their and their family's safety."

Another item that impressed Phil were the living quarters; a trailer with a private bath and shower.

Despite some risks involved, Phil would absolutely serve again, but he'd rather deploy to a location he's never been to before.

Women's Equality Day goes "Beyond Wishful Thinking"

By Leia Sherer, EEO Specialist

In recognition of 2008 Women's Equality Day, the District's EEO Office and the Employee Council jointly sponsored a career development workshop, "Beyond Wishful Thinking". The ratification of the 19th constitutional amendment in 1920 granting women the right to vote is one of the greatest victories of the American Women's Movement. The challenge of women now is to take this hard won victory and turn it into personal and professional success. Strategies to help us achieve our personal goals and map the road to a successful career were the topics of this August 21 event.

Employee Council Chairperson, Monica Eichler opened up the afternoon with her introduction of Dr. Christine Altendorf, who in turn, introduced the workshop presenter, Christine Richards. Richards related how her life in a coal-mining area of England motivated her to look beyond a certain bleak future. Her five keys to success not only lead her to the United States, but also to a successful business and rewarding personal life. Later in the workshop, Richards invited Dr. Altendorf to share the story of her career and the choices of assignments she took along the way to becoming Sacramento's



Photo by Mike Nevins
Christine Richards was the featured presenter during this year's Women's Equality Day event on August 21. Dr. Christine Altendorf and Project Management's Linda Finley also took part in the workshop.

Deputy District Engineer for Programs and Project Management. The workshop concluded with closing statements from Linda Finley, Deputy, Programs and Project Management Division, reminding us of our potential for advancement here within the Sacramento District and elsewhere.

If you weren't able to attend the workshop, you may view this video on the Sacramento District Intranet page and go to Video SPK (under Resources). Accompanying materials from the workshop can be obtained by calling the EEO Office, 916-557-6907.

Corps breaks ground on West Sac project

On September 10, Col. Chapman met with community leaders of West Sacramento for a ground-breaking ceremony for the I Street Levee Improvement Project. The long-range goal of the project is to better protect the city of West Sacramento by reinforcing the I Street levee, and in future projects, other levees in the city, for up to a 200-year level of protection. The city is seeking reimbursement from the Corps for part of the project cost.

Speaking along with Col. Chapman were: West Sacramento Mayor Christopher Cabaldon; Council Member Bill Kristoff and Central Valley Flood Protection Board Member John Brown.

Other attendees from the Sacramento District, were Planning Chief Frank Piccola, Civil Works Chief Brandon Muncy and Project Manager Michelle Kuhl.



Photo by David Killam
District Engineer Col. Thomas Chapman addresses the audience during the groundbreaking ceremony for the I Street Levee Improvement Project.

District provides Archeology Field Technician training to Washoe Tribal Members

By Richard Perry, Environmental Resources Branch

In June, the Sacramento District provided an intensive, 36-hour training program in archeology survey techniques to eight members and employees of the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California in Gardnerville, Nevada. The purpose of the training was to train tribal members who either work for the Washoe Cultural Committee, or the Environmental Protection Department to be able to identify archeology sites and artifacts in the field.

Sacramento District Project Manager Phil Brozek, and District Archeologist Richard Perry conceived the course. The Washoe Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Darrel Cruz helped implement it. The funding came from a special fund that the Corps uses for projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin, and the authority for this type of program came under Section 203 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000. Section 203 gives the authorization for the Corps to provide natural and cultural resources assistance to Indian tribes.

Dr. Colin Busby of Basin Research Associates, Inc. (San Leandro) developed the curriculum and training with the assistance of Rod McLean, former Los Angeles District archeologist, now with LSA Associates in Carlsbad, California. Dr. Busby, with input from Rod and Richard developed a comprehensive five day course that was designed to take the participants through the laws and regulations that guide cultural resource management, compass and map reading,

artifact recognition, field recording and finally survey techniques. The class included two guest speakers, Jim Carter, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) archeologist from the Carson City District, and Caltrans Archeologist Mike Rondeau who gave an extended flint knapping demonstration.

Darrel arranged for us to meet at the Washoe Housing Authority conference room in Dresslerville. We needed a location to hold the field exercises, and Jim and Darrel found two nearby sites for us to use. Jim found a previously recorded site for us on BLM property right off Highway 395 close by the Dresslerville training location, and Darrel knew of an unrecorded site on nearby reservation property.

Very quickly, Colin developed a five-day agenda, comprehensive PowerPoint presentation, and found enough public domain articles, and information on artifact recognition to fill a three-inch binder. We encouraged the students to participate in an open forum format. The course participants readily engaged us with high quality questions and freely offered their own personal experiences. Our lectures were interspersed with anecdotes and our own observations that were gained over the course of our respective careers.

During introductions on Monday morning we learned from our course participants that almost all of them were keenly interested in keeping Washoe culture and traditions alive and wanted to pass the knowledge on to younger tribal members. Most of them had professional job related reasons for attending the class, but all of them expressed a general interest in archeology.

The Monday lectures were based on the various laws and regulations that we are obligated to work with, and some pertinent definitions. We covered the National Historic Preservation Act, the Archeological Resources Protection Act, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. To set the tone for one of the reasons that we are archeologists, Colin began with a slide with a quote from America's favorite pop culture archeologist, Indiana Jones. The quote said, "We are interested in the facts, not the truth".

The more practical aspects of archeology fieldwork were the main topic for Tuesday's lectures. Rod took the podium and lectured on topographic map reading, compass and GPS use, and reading and preparing site record forms. In the afternoon, Jim spoke on the role of the Bureau of Land Management in Nevada, and their rules and expectations for archeologists working on their property.



Photo from Richard Perry
Group photo of the of the course participants after receiving their certificates of completion.

On Wednesday morning, Mike Rondeau gave a very well-received flint knapping demonstration. He brought along his extensive toolkit as well as various previously manufactured tools that he used to show and explain the various elements of flaked tool technology and typology. The students were keenly interested in his demonstration and plied him with a steady stream of questions and observations.

We made our first field visit on Wednesday Afternoon. We drove a short distance to an unrecorded archeology site that Darrel knew about on Washoe Reservation property. Rod briefed everyone on what we planned on accomplishing in the field, and how we would achieve that goal.

On Thursday, we spent the entire day at the site that Jim set up for us. The hike up the to the site on the knoll was on a 20-degree slope on rocky terrain. This was beneficial because it provided the students a glimpse into the type of terrain they could end up surveying. They appreciated our requirement to wear good sturdy boots for the fieldwork. The

students were exposed to two elements of archeology fieldwork, surveying, and site recordation.

Friday morning was set aside to reflect on the week that was now coming to an end, and cover any thing that anybody may not have fully understood, or to address any new issues that may have come up. We recapped the week's events, and answered all their final questions. I mentioned that we all arrived on Monday as strangers and were leaving as friends on Friday. We exchanged feedback on the class and the content. We, the instructors, were very pleased with the level of enthusiasm we got, and the total interest in archeology that the Tribal members had. The students told us that they thought the course content was perfect for their various needs and interests. One student said that this was the most interesting thing he had done in years. After we were finished, two of students' told me that they would like to work with me sometime.

In one of the opening comments on the first day, I mentioned that between Colin, Rod and Richard, we have somewhere between 90 and 100 years combined experience in archeology. We were able to condense that somewhat into a 36-hour class. The students gained an appreciation of the complexity of what we do as archeologists, and the amount of training it took to get us where we are today. They also appreciated the fact that we came to Gardnerville, and taught them on their land.

We closed the class by passing out certificates of completion to everyone, and ended the morning with a photo session. In a display of appreciation for what we had done for the Tribe, Darrel presented each of us with custom beaded key chains. The week, clearly, was big success for the Washoe Tribe and the Corps of Engineers.



Photo from Richard Perry
Jim Carter, Bureau of Land Management gives a lecture during the training program.

Sacramento has two Planning Associates Program graduates

By Miki Fujitsubo, Planning Division

After a long, challenging year of over 20 weeks of coursework; traveling thousands of miles by air, land, and water; networking across the Corps MSC's and Districts; and surviving over 350 PowerPoint presentations, Mike Dietl and Miki Fujitsubo, both from Planning Division, successfully completed, along with nine other Corps planners, the year-long Planning Associates Program on 16 September 2008.

The Planning Associates Program (PA) goals are to broaden planners' competencies in solving complex water resources problems and challenges, and to strengthen their leadership talents. The PA curriculum is focused on team building, leadership training, experiential training in the Corps' Civil Works business functions, case studies, individual and group projects, instructional training and experiences, and many networking opportunities with leaders from the public and private sectors

The program was demanding to not only Mike and Miki, but their families, co-team members, chiefs, and Planning Division.



Photos from Miki Fujitsubo
2008 Planners Associates Program Graduates

Mike and Miki would like to thank all of them and all the PA program people involved for their support, and are ready to "go out and do good things for the Corps and Nation!"

"We will lead our generation of Corps planners in delivering sustainable water resource projects and services with integrity and creativity by learning from the past, adapting to change, and planning for the future..."



Planners Miki Fujitsubo and Mike Dietl

The program and coursework took Mike and Miki across the Nation and Corps mission areas, including:

12 Cities in 11 States

(Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., Miami, Fla., Phoenix, Ariz., Vicksburg, Miss., Alexandria, Vir., Walla Walla, Wash., Folsom, Calif., San Antonio, Tex., Huntington, W. Vir., Rock Island, Ill., Philadelphia, Penn., and Honolulu, Hawaii.)

18 Mission Areas

(Leadership, Communication, Team Building, Plan Formulation, Engineer and Research Development Center (ERDC), Deep Draft Navigation, Endangered Species Act, Hydropower, Water Supply, Recreation, Flood Risk Management, Watersheds, Planning Community of Practice, Inland Navigation, Ecosystem Restoration, Small Boat Harbors and Intergovernmental Affairs, Cultural Resources and Tribal Affairs and Hurricane Storm Damage)

- PA Class of 2008 Vision Statement

Regulatory conference gives guidance, boosts morale

By Eileen Imamura, Regulatory Division

For the final week of August, the Sacramento District Regulatory Division got together at South Lake Tahoe for a week of team building and informational workshops.

The Regulatory Division has eight separate office (including the two locations within Sacramento District Headquarters) that rarely ever see each other. You begin to understand a little bit more about the reason why when you think about the fact that its boundaries are from the east side of the California Coastal Range to the west side of the Rockies including Central and Northeastern California, all of Nevada, all of Utah, and Western Colorado. There are approximately 50 employees with residences in 4 different states and in one of 7 locations. The Office of the Division Chief includes the Division Chief, four branch chiefs, one Compliance Enforcement officer and two clerical staff members all located at District Headquarters. The Colorado West Branch has two offices, one in Grand Junction and the other in Durango, Colorado. The Nevada-Utah Branch has three offices; two in Utah, Bountiful and St. George and one in Reno, Nevada. The California North branch has two locations; one in Redding and one on the 9th floor of District Headquarters. The California South branch is located on the 14th floor of District Headquarters. Our jurisdictional area includes many



Photo by Mike Finan
A group of Regulatory Division team members get in a game of Volleyball after completed the workshops for the day.



Photo by Mike Finan
Members of the Regulatory Division socialize during the kick-off, which included food and drink, to the Regulatory Conference

different environmental communities including the arid west and the mountainous regions.

In the last few years, there have been many new laws, court decisions, a new database, personnel changes that have changed the way we do business and affected the stress level of employees. In order to accommodate easier travel from all the offices and an opportunity to get away from their everyday schedule, the Regulatory Division holds an annual conference in a central location. It gives us a chance to meet new faces, make sure that we are being consistent throughout the Division, as well as release some of the stress that has been built up throughout the year.

The topics for each session were determined by the employees and some were led by Regulatory Division employees. This year, our topics were: Working with the Press, FOIA Requests and Litigation Update, NEPA & the EIS, Compensatory Mitigation Rule and Mitigation Banking and South Pacific Division Regulatory Program Brief as well as typical Regulatory topics such as Working through a Jurisdictional Determination, NSPS Self-Assessments, Tahoe Basin – Issues/Projects including a field trip to a stream restoration site, HCPs and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Global Warming Issues, and instructions for using the new database.

The evenings were usually spent with people getting together and doing something fun like swimming, playing volleyball or playing horseshoes.

A closer look into the Sacramento District Leadership Development Program

The goal of the Sacramento District Leadership Development Program is to develop leaders at all levels, across all functional areas and career programs. To accomplish this, the LDP was designed in four tiers: participants will gain the most by starting in Tier I and progress sequentially through of the subsequent tiers. The program is also designed to meet the needs of prospective and current leaders at various stages of development. Access into the program through another tier is possible provided the prerequisites for that tier have been met.

Tier I

Offers a low-cost, low-commitment opportunity for individuals to “test the waters” of their leadership potential, while providing valuable communication and team-building training. Tier I expands participants self-awareness, enabling more rewarding professional and personal relationships and preparing them for more effective performance on teams and in workgroups.



Tier II

Helps participants understand their strengths and how to leverage them to improve performance and effectiveness within their work environment. It introduces the Army leadership doctrine, FM 22-100, which draws on the Army’s vast history and expertise in developing skilled, tested and character-based leaders. Tier II encourages individuals to take leadership roles within their teams and workgroups.



Tier III

Provides additional exploration of self-awareness and training on a suite of practical approaches, methods, and techniques, providing individuals with their own leadership toolbox.

Tier III provides a vastly expanded perspective through close regional participation with Tier III participants from other districts, and nationally through a week-long policy seminar in Washington, D.C. Tier III not only equips but challenges individuals to lead teams, workgroups or sections.

Tier IV

Entails extensive off-site training through selected Graduate Schools (on a case-by-case basis), one of the senior service schools, or resident graduate programs at a major university, such as Georgetown’s Government Affairs Institute. Tier IV equips leaders for roles of increasing scope and complexity.

Eligibility

All full-time Federal employees in good standing are eligible to take part in the LDP.

Funding

Participant’s labor, tuition and materials for all tiers of LDP are funded from the Consolidated Departmental Overhead (CDO).

For more information on the Leadership Development Program, visit the Sacramento District Intranet and click on the LDP Link.

LDP creates more networking opportunities

By Jonathan Friedman, Sr. District Park Ranger

After completing Tiers I and II, I was anxious to apply for Tier III to continue my leadership learning progress. Might as well strike while the iron is hot! Based on the success of Tier I, I knew that it would be a fun and enjoyable experience to go through the next available tiers.

Tier II was quite a different animal from Tier I. There were lots of opportunity to self-analyze strengths and weaknesses and to use the support of the class to improve both areas. Class participation was also beneficial in the fact that students presented to peers in an informal, comfortable atmosphere. I am hopeful that in Tier III, we will have some interaction with the senior leadership of the division.

I’m looking forward to the new opportunities for networking and exploring the USACE as a region and a national entity. It will be a positive experience to meet individuals from the Division and HQ and to finally put a name with a face. It will be interesting to hear and gain the perspectives of individuals who constantly view the Districts as a whole, as opposed to their individual parts.

The opportunity to travel is also exciting. With destinations such as the Presidio, Washington, D.C. and San Diego, this is a great time to explore other areas outside the District. It will be very educational to see how the Corps’ footprint works within other geographical areas.

Mentoring was a strong influence during the LDP process. It will be positive to seek new mentors outside of the district. Networking and interaction with outside offices provides new insight and perspective.

I hope to learn more detail of the budget process and how the budget is developed from HQ through the MSC’s to the individual projects. Experiencing some congressional activity will also be fun and very eye opening to see how part of the governmental process works.

I will expect a lot from the coordinators and instructors. The Tier III program is the chance to develop future leaders of the Corps. The same intensity and enthusiasm for the program from Tier I

Tier I Basics

Tier I consists of 28 hours of funded participation. An equivalent amount of self-study is required.

Includes one full day off-site, four three-hour facilitated discussions, one eight-hour web-based training course and lunches with District leadership.

Grade eligibility:
All Grades

Duration:
Six months

Participation Goal:
25 employees

will hopefully translate all the way through Tier III. A tremendous amount of resources are expended to support the Tier III students and I know we will make the most of it.

I see a long career ahead of me with the US Army Corps of Engineers. The opportunity to invest in my education and training now will pay dividends in my future. I love my position with the Corps, as it is truly unique. The USACE is the largest provider of recreation on public lands and very few people realize how important recreation is to the nation. As we work through our projects, I fully intend to hold the Natural Resources Management flag high and continue to spread the word on all the great things we do each day. I look forward to discussions that focus on how we work hand-in-hand as one team to reach our goals of Building and Operating Strong!

LDP improves leadership and managerial skills

By Cathy Wise, Sacramento Resident Office

The Leadership Development Program (LDP) Tier III is a rewarding program that requires a huge commitment of funds from the Corps (approximately \$35,000 per participant), and in turn a huge commitment on the part of the participants. Tier III equips emerging leaders with an assortment of skills, techniques, and practical tools to effectively lead teams and manage resources. The curriculum consists of approximately 400 hours of funded participation, including 5 weeks of off-site training and monthly facilitated on-site meetings, and 200+ hours of self-study. After graduation, participants will be given operational assignments to further refine and develop the skills and knowledge they have acquired. The Corps will benefit from the Leadership Development Program through its development of leaders who will have a direct impact on improving mission execution and it will create an atmosphere of advanced learning which will lead to higher retention. The Leadership Development Program will create an organization of leaders with improved management skills and expanded knowledge of regional issues, resulting in better public service.

Being selected to participate in LDP Tier III is both an honor and a privilege, and I am excited about what lies ahead in the upcoming year. I know it will be a demanding program, but feel that I am up for the challenge. There are four program modules to complete: 1) Personal / Managerial / Organizational Development; 2) Leadership Skills in Public Administration; 3) Organization Service / Application / Involvement; and 4) Corporate Vision and Strategies. Training for these course modules will be held at locations throughout the South Pacific Division such as San Francisco, Presidio of Monterey, Napa, Albuquerque, and San Diego. Additionally, there is a scheduled visit to our Corps Headquarters in Washington, D.C. where we will have an opportunity to observe the government in action first-hand and learn about the National Policy Process. To enhance the Corps regional team concept, our class will have the opportunity to work together to plan, develop, and implement a regional team project that benefits

Tier II Basics

Tier I consists of 56 hours of funded participation. An equivalent amount of self-study is required.

Includes one full day off-site, monthly facilitated meetings and lunches with District leadership.

Grade eligibility:
All Grades

Duration:
one year

Participation Goal:
10-15 employees

the South Pacific Region. LDP Tier III promises to offer exciting places to visit, interesting people to meet, and opportunities for increased knowledge.

My reasons for applying for this program and what I expect to personally get out of it are virtually one in the same. I view the Leadership Development Program as an opportunity to: increase my leadership and managerial skills; expand my knowledge of the Corps' mission and regional issues; improve my understanding of the role I play in the organization; develop networking relationships; enhance my opportunity for career advancement; and most importantly, apply what I learn in direct support of South Pacific Division's mission areas. I am willing to make the huge commitment of my time (both on-duty but mostly off-duty) to complete the program, because the potential return on investment is high for both me and the Corps. I believe this program will increase my ability to contribute to mission success, mold me into a more effective leader, and make me more competitive for advancement.

LDP creates opportunities for self-development

By David C. Serafini, Engineering Division

I am a Civil Engineer in the Soil Design Section of the Geotechnical and Environmental Engineering Branch. I have been with the Soil Design Section since January 2002. As a Professional Civil Engineer it is my duty to ensure public safety is held paramount. I enjoy knowing that I serve the public and its sponsors, and that I have the ability to assist on key and critical projects. My focus as an engineer with the Corps is on the geotechnical characterizations, seismic response analyses, and earthquake hazard evaluations of embankment dams and levees. I am one of the lead design engineers for the Success Dam Seismic Remediation Project.

I am excited to be part of the FY09-10 Regional Leadership Development Program (RLDP) Tier III Class. Leadership is a key quality in both my personal and professional environments. Good leadership skills are a key quality needed to be a valuable PDT member, and a good servant to our customers and sponsors. Though my experiences I have noticed that poor leadership and communications skills can convey delivered messages improperly. Thus, I feel that improving my leadership and communication skills will make me an improved and more effective team member, allowing me to convey thoughts and help lead communication.

I believe the South Pacific Region will benefit from the RLDP since it is an investment for our future. The RLDP allows leadership traits from our current leaders to be passed on to future emerging leaders. I believe this program allows for participants to better understand the leadership, management, and organization of the Corps at both Division and Headquarters.

I hope this program will give me the opportunity to find out more about myself, and will assist me in locating my weak points by getting me out of my comfort zone. Learning more about my weak points and myself will illustrate how and where I can make improvements. The program would also help me better prepare for presentations given at conferences and in front of technical boards. In addition, the LDP

Tier III Basics

Tier I consists of 400 hours of funded participation, including five weeks off-site.

Includes monthly facilitated meetings and 200+ hours of self-study.

Grade eligibility:
All Grades

Duration:
one year

Participation Goal:
4-6 employees

Tier IV Basics

Grade eligibility:
GS-12 or higher

Duration:
1-3 years

Participation Goal:
1-3 employees per year

program, especially the shadowing and mentoring possibilities, would help guide me in the exploration of my future career opportunities in the Corps.

From my experience with the Tier II leadership program (Class of 2006) I realize that the Tier III program is an opportunity I can not pass up. I understand that developing quality leadership traits and skills takes hard work, dedication, and being pushed out of my comfort zone. I know this program will help me become a better leader in my roles for the District and Division. The program will also offer me an outstanding opportunity to better understand management functions of the Corps. Finally the program will offer a great networking and team building opportunity with the emerging leaders of the Corps. I am looking forward to the RLDP, the dedication of my time, and the hard work needed to be a better leader. I hope that this program will help me further develop my leadership tools from the Tier II program and make me a more effective teammate for the District and the Division.

Sacramento, did you know...?

Environmental Design Section's **Bruce Van Etten** is one of the founders of the Poor Boys Car Club in Sacramento. The club is made up of 12 guys that love to rebuild/customize pre 1965 cars and trucks in the traditional hot rod style. A few years ago they decided to put on their own car show call Midnight Mass.



Midnight Mass celebrated its 5th year on July 26th and, as the club proudly points out, the 5th location. The show has grown so much each year that a new location had to be found for the following year. This year the show was moved to Cal Expo, on the huge west side parking lot, with plenty of room to grow.

Bruce's 38 years of experience in the Corps has helped him in securing contracts for venue locations, procuring sponsors for the show, and organizing this multi-faucet show. This year over 5,000 spectators got to see seven bands on two stages, 70 vendors selling their wares, and over 450 cars, trucks and motorcycles.

Midnight Mass has now become one of the "can't miss" shows in Northern California for the true hot rod aficionado. Aside from the obvious draw (a hotrod show at night in the middle of a hot Sacramento summer) there is another standout ... the price. Entry fee for a 'show' car is only \$10 and spectators get in for free. The show has never been a money maker, but because of the popularity of the show, the club was able to donate \$1,000 to the Scarlet Fever fund of another club member's daughter.

Future plans for this fun filled event are being worked on as this article is being written. Check back often to the Poor Boys Web site for more details on next years show. www.theoriginalpoorboys.com

Bryte Yard Maintenance Mechanic **Michael Guidry** is also a Mixed Martial Arts trainer at a facility in Antioch, Ca. The name of our center is Guila's Hawaii Kickboxing/Kajukenbo Academy. I'm pictured here with Actors Doug Anderson and Jimmy Smith. They did an episode on our system on the fightquest series for the discovery channel. I'll be cornering a fighter this weekend in Las Vegas. Also pictured is the Head Instructor of our school Sifu Dennis Guila and a senior student Chris Guila. We are currently holding a summer camp for out of school children. Last month I took part in an exhibition for the Contra Costa County Fair. What I spend most of my spare time involved in.

Pictured from left: Jimmy, Sifu, Doug, Me and Chris.



On June 21, 2008 at Davis High School, **Maryellen Mackenzie** and **Randy Born** of Engineering Division participated in the Relay for Life, a 24-hour walking and camping fund-raising event sponsored by the American Cancer Society (ACS). This was the 3rd consecutive year of Relay for this small but enthusiastic Team SEEC (Sacramento Engineers for Ending Cancer), who raised over \$2,500 for cancer research and other ACS programs.). Fellow SPK contract employee **LeRoy Pfaff** joined dozens of other cancer survivors on the opening "Survivor Lap" that officially started the event. Randy, team captain and reportedly wide awake during the entire event, hopes to recruit more team members and/or survivor participants from our SPK family next year! Team SEEC members for 2008, pictured from left to right, are Helen & Shelli Porterfield, Maryellen, Randy, and Jessica & Jon Porterfield (former SPK employee now with URS).



Lisa James, of HR, holding Wiley, one of her fosters. Lisa does cat adoptions at the Fair Oaks Petco every Saturday from noon to 4 p.m. She would like to be "put out of business," which will only happen if everyone spays and neuters their cats.



Valley Resident Office's **Moe Adams** joined the US Coast Guard Auxiliary in 2006 and assists with patrolling the river system during summer, escorting parades and providing rescue missions to boaters in need. The Coast Guard Auxiliary helped in the "Delta and Dawn" whale rescue by using vessels to create a 500-foot ring around them to protect them from the public boaters. They also had a booth at the state fair, where they let adults try on "beer goggles," which simulate what it would be like to be drunk and drive a boat and promote the use of lifejackets through education and a free lifejacket program.

Getting to know...SPK Employee Council

The Sacramento District Employee Council (EC) is an organization made up of non-supervisory employees who are interested in improving the work environment. The EC provides a forum for employees to voice their concerns or present new ideas to improve the workplace and acts as a conduit to the Executive Office. The EC consists of approximately 22 employees representing each Division and other small offices of the Sacramento District. We try to ensure employees who sometimes feel forgotten, such as our many field offices and student employees, are included on the Council. The District Leaders and CPAC support the EC by providing advisory members to the Council as well. COL Chapman, who often attends the monthly meetings, is extremely supportive of the EC. He credits the Council as one of the main reasons Sacramento District does not have a union like San Francisco or Los Angeles District. The EC keeps the lines of communication open and moving. With the help of the EC, the Districts leaders are made aware of what is going on in the minds of the employees and the employees get answers and often actions they are seeking after. The EC has been so successful because of the diversity of the members and the support our leaders have for this important organization.

This past year the Council has spearheaded initiatives and been directly involved with many events to promote the health, well-being, personal development, and social involvement of our employees. The EC sponsored "May is Bike Month" and encouraged employees to ride their bicycles to work by hosting a Cycling Safety Clinic and requesting improvements to workplace facilities such as the bike racks and restroom/showers in the garage. We worked closely with the EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) Office to sponsor special emphasis program events including the MG Johnson visit and diversity event and the "Beyond Wishful Thinking" workshop to promote personal development and commemorate Women's Equality Day. The EC has also focused on improvement and awareness of employee incentives including the Student Loan Repayment Program, flexible work schedules, and we have especially been advocating the return of the Fit-2-

Win program. The EC is looking for ways to improve morale and make life at work better.

The Employee Council can also take credit for running three important District programs: the Civilian Sponsorship Program (CSP), the New Employee Orientation (NEO), and the People's Choice Awards (PCA). This past fiscal year, we saw a lot of new faces as many employees joined the district. The EC updated the CSP handbook and is working hard to ensure that all new employees are assigned a Sponsor to help them become familiar with our District and the Sacramento, or local, area and help make their transition go smoothly. The Employee Council put on a total of five NEO's this fiscal year which allowed about 100 employees to meet our District Leaders and learn about the many aspects of the Sacramento District and the Corps as a whole. New employees are able to see where they fit in and are provided with a binder with all kinds of useful information about SPK including a rundown of each Division and helpful Points of Contact. Often the favorite part of the class is the afternoon fieldtrip where we take the new employees to visit a Corps project in the works, such as a levee repair or the Folsom Dam bridge and spillway. The EC also executes the annual PCA which provides an opportunity for all employees to recognize the outstanding work and attributes of their co-workers by nominating them for one of six awards. The PCA awardees are revealed at the annual District Holiday Party. These three programs depend on the efforts and dedication of the volunteer EC members.

If you are interested or want to find out more about any of the programs the EC is involved with, please visit our intranet website listed under "News." The EC posts useful information germane to workforce issues. You can also find out who is currently on the EC and read the latest meeting minutes. Since the EC representative's term is usually limited to two years, we are always looking for individuals who are interested in getting involved and making the work place a better place! Talk to any EC member about joining or volunteering to help with our programs.

Monica Eichler
Chair, Employee Council

Nature Education available to Valley youth

By Larry Baker, Lake Kaweah

The news media has been reporting that the youth of today has lost touch with nature and that video games take up much of their time. To reintroduce nature into the lives of youths in the San Joaquin Valley, the Sequoia Riverlands Trust has been providing nature walks at the Kaweah Oaks Preserve (KOP) since 2001.

Kaweah Oaks Preserve is approximately 8 miles from Visalia and 50 miles from Fresno. The preserve was purchased in 1982 by the Nature Conservancy and turned over to the Sequoia Riverlands Trust in 2001. To provide the nature walks the KOP recruits volunteers to lead the school groups from K-12. Having worked as a ranger at Lake Kaweah for over 20 years I volunteered to become one of their naturalists.

The field trip starts with an introduction to the area; how the preserve got its name, the natural and cultural history of the area, and plant and animal life. Being a new naturalist to the KOP, I accompany a veteran volunteer to learn the method he or she uses to get the message to the group. Outdoor games are part of the trip and the KOP offers over 12 games depending upon the age of the participants.

On September 4, 2008 all volunteer naturalists met at the preserve to hear and participate in a walk by Dr. Robert Urtecho, professor of environmental science at the College of the Sequoias. He also volunteers to give at least one KOP nature walk a month to a school group.

The six hours of training by Dr. Urtecho helped refine the interpretive skills of the beginning naturalist and reinforce skills already in practice by the inveterate volunteer. Such a program benefits the community school students with new knowledge of the wonders of nature and it provides satisfaction to the volunteer who knows this education can open a students mind to the beauty and importance of nature.



Photo from Larry Baker
Dr. Robert Urtecho hosts a nature walk for all the volunteer naturalists at Kaweah Oaks Preserve.

Emergency training at Black Butte

By Denise Hogan, Black Butte Lake

In an emergency, fast response is critical. That's why it's important that Enloe FlightCare is only fifteen minutes airtime travel away from Black Butte Lake.



It's also why on July 11, 2008, Black Butte staff watched as the Enloe helicopter touch down at the Observation Point parking lot to commence the day's Medical Response Orientation, exemplifying the park's commitment to provide the best possible visitor assistance services to the public.

The FlightCare pilot provided detailed landing zone requirements and shared information on weather conditions, site selection and preparation as well as non-verbal communication techniques that will assist in a safe landing. Safety in the immediate vicinity of the helicopter after landing was also an important discussion topic. The two person FlightCare medical team discussed the roles of Black Butte Lake's first responders in assisting with the patient transport preparation and loading.

As participants watched FlightCare disappear in the distance, they enthusiastically agreed that in the event of a medical emergency they will be better equipped to facilitate an efficient response. It could save a life.

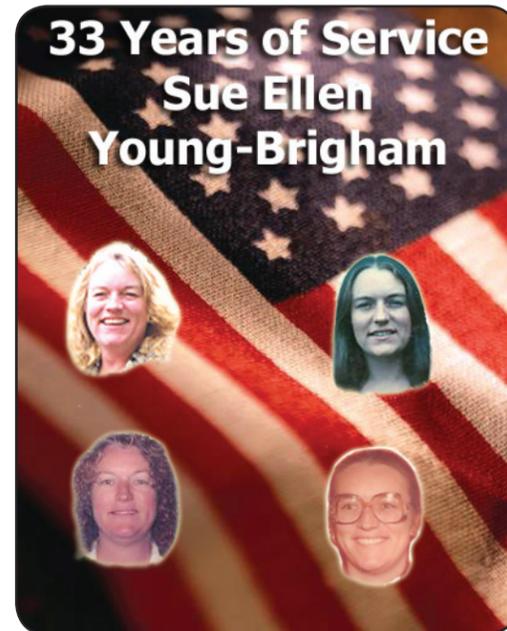
An interview with Sue Ellen Young-Brigham

By Terry Hershey, Con-Ops Division

How did you first begin your federal service career?

Believe it or not, I began my federal service career as a senior in High School in 1971. I was given special permission to take the typing portion of the Federal Service exam by my Typing teacher. My two older sisters worked for the Federal Government as clerk typists, but coming from Niagara Falls, New York, they both relocated to Washington, D.C. to get their 'foot in the door.' I was blessed to begin my career right there in Niagara Falls, NY working for the Selective Service System right after graduation. I worked there for three years and then I was RIF'd. Yes, a Reduction in Force, the draft ended along with the fighting in Vietnam and our troops were coming home. Numerous draft boards closed all across the country and many of us were looking for a new job. After collecting unemployment benefits for a while, I worked for the next couple of years at the Niagara Falls International Air Force Base. I began my career with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Buffalo District, in 1974 as a clerk typist in the typing pool.

Three years later, 1977, I enlisted in the U.S. Army and spent the next year and a half in Fort Hood, Texas and the last year and a half of my military career working in the Pentagon. I worked in the Counterterrorism Section of the Defense Intelligence Agency. All I can tell you about this position is that I was the person who answered the phone when President Jimmy Carter called the morning after the Iranian takeover of our Embassy. It gives me chills just thinking about it...



What were your first thoughts?

My thoughts at this point in my career were to get out of the Army. I completed my tour and returned to the Buffalo District, Corps of Engineers as the Secretary for the Chief of the Design Branch. In early 1984, I relocated from the Buffalo area to live with a sister in Atlanta, Georgia. I had the option to go to college on the G.I. Bill or work. I chose to do both for the next 8 years. I started out as a Secretary for the General Services Administration (GSA) and, after just six short months, I applied for and was selected for a GS-5/7/9/11 Realty Specialist position. My life changed overnight. I went from having a job to having a career. My areas of responsibility were Memphis, Tennessee and parts of Mississippi and Kentucky. After eight years with GSA, my 8 year old son Alex and I thought we might be happier back in western New York. WRONG! Within 3 months, we were back in Atlanta, Georgia, but instead of working, this time I returned to Georgia State University full time during the day.

In 1992, my daughter Vera was born and when she was two, I finally graduated with my B.S. in Psychology. I then accepted a Realty Clerk position, GS-5, with the East Everglades Real Estate Office out of Jacksonville District, with the field office located in South Miami. By mid 1995, we were packing our

belongings and moving again - this time to the West Coast. I had accepted a GS-9 Realty Specialist position at Fort Hunter Liggett. I managed their real property and the installation was approximately 165,000 acres. After about a year and a half in this position, I heard about the "new" position being advertised with the Corps at Piedra, California. It had the potential to be a GS-11 and that interested me very much. I couldn't believe it was taking me this long to get back to the grade I was when I left GSA back in 1992. I interviewed for the position, fell in love with the location, and when offered the position I jumped at it. This was 1997 and I can't believe I have been here 11-1/2 years. This is the longest I had stayed anywhere. No wonder - this is the best job anyone can ever dream of having. It was very hard for me to be humble when talking about my position and what I did and especially how much I got paid. It was all just so much fun - Inspecting boat marinas at three of my six lakes; renewing expiring licenses, permits, rights-of-way; managing agricultural leases; and meeting with Park Managers and offering assistance with their real estate needs to just name a few things I did since 1997.

What is your favorite memory?

My favorite memories about working with the Corps all have to do with people. A certain TDY trip with someone or a training class with someone else - it is the people that the Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District can be most proud of. I will miss so many people that I have come to know and love very dearly over the years. Some I am closer to than my own family. I come from a large family, I am the 10th of 12 children. I have been away from family since my early 20's. I am happy to say that I will remain in this area so I am able to keep the friends I have made over the years.

I must say though, that I enjoyed the three years I spent in the military, it worked for me in my life. No one could have ever convinced me that I was doing anything good for my life/career by joining the U.S. Army. But I have to tell you, not one thing that has happened to me in my life since then has NOT been connected somehow to those 3 years and 3 months I served my Country. I was awarded the

Good Conduct Medal which got quite a laugh from the 'audience' when announced. The thought of me and good conduct seemed somewhat of a misnomer. But seriously, from 6 crowns in my mouth, to the GI Bill for college and the VA home loans I have taken advantage over the years, I could go on and on and on. Especially the news, when I relocated out here to California, that disabled veterans have an entitlement to send their children to college for free. That is any state-run college or university, full tuition paid. At the time, I was a 10% non-compensatory disabled veteran but have since had my percentage increased to 20%, compensatory. Right now, my son is in his final year at Fresno State majoring in Electrical Engineering and plans on graduating May 2009. Hopefully, my 16 year old daughter will make the choice to take advantage of this awesome opportunity when her time comes two short years from now.

When do you retire?

My official last day will be Friday, September 26. My 55th birthday is September 23rd. I will be leaving Government Service with 33 -1/2 years. I feel especially blessed to request and Division approve my VSIP request for the \$25,000 buyout.

What do you plan on doing once you retire?

I'll be getting into a second career very soon. I feel I have at least 10 more years before I really retire! On October 12th of this year, my husband Ted and I will be celebrating our 7 year wedding anniversary. My husband was raised in this area which is the main reason we will remain here.

What advice would you give to others out there who are just beginning their careers?

Don't blink . . . You truly can't believe how fast the years go by. Enjoy it all, every day! Make that choice every day to be happy and I promise you will be.

Thinking outside the box for personnel actions

By Regina Gray, Utah Resident Office

After losing many employees due to retirements and PCS moves, the Utah Resident Office (URO), located at Hill AFB, has tried out an Intern Partnership with the Salt Lake City Veterans Affairs Office.

With an increased construction load and many vacant positions, the URO was asked to think outside the box to in order to draw in qualified replacements and speed up the hiring process. While individuals from the Sacramento District Interns Program helped to alleviate the immediate need, they did not necessarily provide a long-term solution. So, in order to help fit our needs, we began looking at other avenues as well. The URO Quality Assurance Supervisor, David M. Smeraldo, recalled an intern program that the Veteran Affairs offered to help Disabled Veterans. He discussed the idea with Resident Engineer Tim Willard and set up a meeting with Carl Harding, who is the Disable Veterans Rep.

Mr. Harding explained the only obligation to the Corps of Engineers was to provide the candidate on-the-job training, and provide monthly evaluations of the candidate's performance. The Veteran Affairs Office would provide the candidate a stipend to help defer the cost of living during the 3-6 month training period, and provide any equipment necessary for the candidate to perform their duty (in our case hard-toed boots). At any time the candidate did not meet our expectation, he could be released at no obligation



Photo from Regina Gray

Group photo of the Utah Resident Office staff.

to the Corps of Engineers. The ultimate goal and expectation being, if the candidate worked out, the Corps of Engineers would convert the employee from the Veteran Affairs placement program to a full time position with the Corps of Engineers. David and Tim presented the possibility of a Disabled Veteran Internship Program at no cost to the Corps to Construction Branch Chief Larry Smith, explaining that this program would be based on performance, with anticipation of direct hire to a full time position.

With Larry's approval and support, the proposal continued up the chain of command, where a nod to proceed and guidelines were given and interviews were set up. After meeting with Tim, David, and select staff, Anthony R. Joseph was selected as the first intern for the Corps through this program and started work full time in March 2008.

Anthony is a disabled veteran who served 2 years in the US Army, stationed at Camp Greaves, Korea, doing Infantry. After three months, Anthony proved himself to be an excellent choice and invaluable asset to the staff. Currently, he is working with Quality Assurance Rep, Douglas R. Bullock, on the Hydraulics Flight Control Facility and the Add Software Support Facility at Hill AFB. He assisted with projects at Dugway Proving Ground whenever asked and initiated the office recycling program for paper, plastic and cans.

This Partnership with the local VA has been a great venture on the part of the Corps' URO. It has proven to be an outstanding and very useful tool to assist another Federal Agency by placing disable veterans, and at the same time, meeting our own needs of finding good qualified employees.

The Utah Resident Office welcomes Anthony with much gratitude, continued high expectations, and a permanent position as a Construction Inspection Technician.



Anthony Joseph

Construction-Operations Leads the Way

By David Killam, Public Affairs

With a budget of approximately \$250 million and a staff of almost 300 people, Construction-Operations (Con-Ops) is the largest division in the Sacramento District. Led under the watchful eye of the affable Mike Mahoney, Con-Ops encompasses the Operations and Readiness Branch, which includes all of the district's dams, lakes, flood control projects, emergency operations and Federal Levee inspection and repair programs. Also included in Con-Ops is the Construction Branch and the Sacramento Area Office, which manage military and civil works construction.

One of the key members of the Con-Ops team is the Construction Representative. This person ensures that the construction job is done correctly.

Before any dirt is turned, the Construction Rep has to do a thorough inspection of the proposed construction site. The goal is to assure that contactors know exactly what they are bidding on. This saves money by preventing the need for expensive contract modifications to deal with unexpected conditions. The Rep must be alert for any potential obstacles that could impede the project.

"At some of our older military bases, you can almost count on encountering buried structures or utilities that have to be dealt with once construction starts," said Mike. "It's great if the post engineer alerts us to these problems, but sometimes there is no historical record to assist our effort."

Once the contract is awarded, a lot of preparatory work has to be done before construction begins including meeting with the contractor to ensure that they have a program in place to implement requirements that are stipulated in the contract. The contractor has to have effective programs for safety, environmental protection, construction quality and scheduling. Environmental requirements are increasingly an important part of any construction project. Endangered or threatened species must be protected – sometimes a construction schedule has to be adjusted to prevent any disruption to nesting birds or migrating fish.

The Rep and contractor also have to meet with local public officials and possibly local residents to talk about issues such as noise, dust, traffic conditions,

safety, emergency procedures, possible power outages, access to the work site, security measures and working hours. Maximum effort has to be made to keep the community informed.

"Sometimes a local community will prefer that we work longer hours so that we can be finished and out of the area earlier," Mike said.

Another key member of the team is the Quality Assurance (QA) representative. The QA Rep sits in meetings with the construction representative as the expectations for the construction are set. Corps quality management processes require contractors to plan and control the quality of work. Additionally, a preparatory inspection phase is conducted to ensure that contract submittals, materials and quality expectations are established. The QA Rep can determine at that time if the contractor is ready to commence with the next phase of work--construction start. The QA Rep and the contractor continue inspections throughout the project to ensure a high quality of work is maintained.

Unexpected events have a way of popping up. A few years ago, the Corps team was installing a slurry wall in a levee by the American River. Unexpectedly, a buried pipe in the levee caused weakness in the levee structure, resulting in the yards of nearby houses to be buried under a few inches of slurry. Thanks to the alert district team, the problem was corrected quickly.

Working with project partners and our customers, has become a big part of the process. No matter how well a contract has been written, frequent meetings with sponsors are necessary to smooth out operational difficulties or unexpected problems. Sometimes a sponsor's interpretation of a requirement may differ from that of the Corps of Engineers. And members of the public can also place unexpected demands on a project.

The final completion of the project and ribbon-cutting ceremony cannot occur until the Construction Rep ensures that everything that was in the project has been completed.

As the political campaigns move into high gear, it is once again important to remember that federal employees have certain limitations which apply to them regarding political activism.

Listed below are the revised and expanded rights as stated in the 1993 Hatch Reform Amendments for Federal employees to engage in the political process. The original Hatch Act was enacted in 1939 and was adopted to bar Federal employees from engaging in most forms of political activity. The 1993 version of the Hatch Act allows for Federal employees to engage in several facets of the political process that had formerly been prohibited. **Employees who intend to participate in the political process should seek the advice of Office of Counsel prior to commencing any political activity.**

As authorized by the Hatch Act, Federal civilian employees **may not** perform the following duties:

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) Use their official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election; | (9) Wear political buttons on duty; |
| (2) Run for the nomination or as a candidate for election to a partisan political office; | (10) Intimidate, threaten, command, or coerce a Federal employee to engage in or not to engage in political activity; |
| (3) Knowingly solicit, accept, or receive a political contribution or uncompensated volunteer service from a subordinate (an employee under the supervisory authority, control, or administrative direction of the other employee); | (11) Knowingly solicit or discourage the political activity of any person who has business with DoD, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. An employee may not knowingly solicit or discourage the participation in any political activity of any person who has an application for any compensation grant, contract, ruling, license, permit, or certificate pending before the employee's employing office; and b. An employee may not knowingly solicit or discourage the participation in any political activity of any person who is the subject of, or a participant in, an ongoing audit, investigation, or enforcement action being carried out by the employee's employing office; |
| (4) Make a political contribution to any "employer or employing authority" (this means any person in the supervisory chain or chain of command up to and including the authorized campaign committee of the President); | (12) Solicit political contributions from the general public; |
| (5) Engage in political activity while on duty; | (13) Personally solicit political contributions in a speech or keynote address given at a fundraiser; |
| (6) Engage in political activity while in any room or building occupied by Federal employees during duty hours; | (14) Allow his or her official title to be used in connections with fundraising activities. |
| (7) Engage in political activity while wearing a uniform or official insignia (to include military uniforms commonly worn by technicians); | |
| (8) Engage in political activity using a U.S. Government owned or leased vehicle; | |

Note: An employee or individual who violates the provisions of the Hatch Act can be removed from his position, and funds appropriated for the position from which removed thereafter may not be used to pay the employee or individual. If, however, the Merit System Protection Board finds by unanimous vote that the violation does not warrant removal, a penalty of not less than 30 days suspension without pay shall be imposed by direction of the Board.



Su doku Puzzle

The object is to fill all the blank squares with the correct numbers.

There are three rules to follow:

- Every row of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order.
- Every column of 9 numbers must include all digits through 9 any order.
- Every 3 by 3 subsection must include all digits 1 through 9.

5	2	8	1	9	7	4	3	6
4	8	2	1	9	7	6	3	5
3	4	6	2	8	1	5	7	9
1	9	3	4	6	2	8	1	5
6	1	9	3	4	6	2	8	1
7	6	1	9	3	4	6	2	8
3	5	4	6	2	8	1	5	7
9	2	8	1	5	7	6	3	4
2	1	9	3	4	6	2	8	1
4	8	3	2	7	9	5	1	6
5	7	6	3	8	1	9	4	2
1	9	5	7	6	2	4	8	3
8	3	2	4	9	5	7	6	1
6	4	7	8	1	3	2	5	9

Solution

	6			3		8	2	
3		4	6				9	
9	2		1					
2	1		5			3		
		3	2		9	5		
5		6		8	1		4	2
					2		8	3
	3				5	7		1
	4	7		1			5	

The Habit of Persistence, is the habit of victory.

- Hebert Kaufman

Top responses from Summer 2008 caption challenge



"DUDE...that sign says
"Violators will be prosecuted...";
not "Violators will be persecuted...!"

- Retiree Betty Cary

"Harry, ya cheap sucker!
I told ya you should of just gone ahead
and paid the day use fee!"

- Park Ranger Valerie McKay,
Lake Kaweah

What caption would you give this photo?

Send your caption to Prospector@usace.army.mil

The top caption(s) will be selected and printed in the Winter 2008 edition of The Prospector.

If you have a funny or interesting photograph, send it in and we may use it for an upcoming caption challenge.

“What *did* I do with that hammer?”



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