

ESSAYONS EXAMINER

FORT WORTH DISTRICT

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

Inside the issue:

Just One More!

Barry Osborne's 100th Fishing Record Milestone

2020 Project Manager of the Year

Stacy Gray Dishes on Her USACE Career

Ranger Training and Appreciation

Galveston District Hosts Annual Event

Master Planning in a Virtual Environment

Kadena Air Base: A Case Study

AND MORE!



Contents:

- 2. Command Corner
- 3. Just One More Record!
- 4. Project Manager of the Year
- 5. Friends of Lake O' the Pines Sign Cooperating Association Agreement
- 6. TPWD Hunter Education Partner of the Year
- 6. C.A.S.T for Kids Enriching Lives at Waco Lake
- 7. Galveston District Hosts Annual Ranger Training and Appreciation
- 9. Veterans Wrangle Gators at Piney-Woods Service Association's Annual Hunt
- 11. ECSO Infrastructure Assessment Program
- 13. Master Planning in a Virtual Environment
- 14. Office of Small Business Programs New Initiatives
- 15. Overcoming Fort Worth District Logistical Challenges
- 16. Fort Worth District PAO Deploys to Link Army Corps, FEMA Hurricane Ida efforts
- 17. Contracting Chief Wins Excellence in Contracting Award
- 18. Administrative Professionals Spotlight
- 16. Special Observances
- 21. Safety Corner: Enjoy a Safe and Healthy Fall Season
- 23. Please Wear It!
- 24. WE ARE HIRING!!!

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Cover Photo: Kayaker's enjoy Clear Springs Park at Fort Worth District's Wright Patman Lake on July 4, 2021. Photo by Park Ranger Lynlee Russell.



I am excited to see the Fort Worth District's quarterly newsletter being published again – I think it serves as a great tool to communicate in this virtual environment. October marks four months since I have taken the reins from Col. Ken Reed, and I continue to be impressed by the great things I see across the Fort Worth District.

For those of you involved in the fiscal year end closeout – you did a bang-up job. I am pleased to announce that the district awarded over 2,300 actions valued at approximately \$800M. This accomplishment, despite COVID challenges and prolonged telework, shows the abilities and teamwork of our Fort Worth Team. You should all be proud.

Moving forward into the next fiscal year, I expect this district to continue to be full of opportunity. With the President's American Jobs Plan looming, I believe that we will see our share of that work. I also expect that the virtual workplace will continue for some in the district - you have all proven that you can execute over the past year and a half, and I don't see any reason to change what is working.

Please continue to fight the good fight, take some well-earned vacation over the holidays, and let's deliver on the commitments that we make with our partners, bringing them a successful FY22, as we did in FY21.

ESSAYONS-
Colonel Jon Stover
 Commander



Team,

I would like to thank each of you for all your continued and outstanding work. In this premiere issue of our new SWF quarterly newsletter, my focus is on one of our District's and the entire Corp of Engineers top priorities - safety.

As you all know, safety is the cornerstone of our profession and is critical to our overall mission success. As professionals, we always seek to learn ways to improve ourselves and our people.

Over the next several weeks I challenge you to read and really understand CESOHMS – a methodology required by regulation and supported by USACE leadership to fully integrate safety and occupational health functions into all USACE business operations. That methodology enables our District to execute a safety management system and meet the Army's goal of modernizing safety and occupational health programs.

The CESOHMS graphic shows you the key areas of the methodology and in upcoming editions of the newsletter, we will look at exactly how the principles of CESOHMS are applied and executed.

Together we will move forward ensuring the safest work environment possible.

ESSAYONS-
Lt. Col. Roderick Forman
 Deputy Commander



SWF Teammates,

Every year I am awed by what you have accomplished as well as the way we immediately meet the challenge of the succeeding year. We have one of the most diverse work portfolios in USACE. You continue to take on complex and unique projects and programs every year and I have no doubt FY22 will follow suit.

I am excited about our potential this FY as we are looking at over a \$1B program again. This is after the last several years of record-breaking obligations.

As we leave FY21 and move into FY22, I challenge each of you in your daily routines to critically consider not just what has to be done, but how it could be done better. That may be in terms of better quality, faster delivery, or cost savings; or perhaps another aspect that improves the mission. Each of you is in a unique position of expertise for your job and work. I value your insights and suggestions, especially for ways we can improve.

I am truly humbled to be your DPM and thank every single one of my SWF Teammates.

ESSAYONS-
Mr. Eric Verwers
Deputy District Engineer for Programs and Project Management

Just one more record!

Story by: Clay Church - Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

100 and counting ..
When thinking of 100 this author is reminded of a song that was sung on a verily new YMCA bus that was apetally named the White Shark due to being painted white and a movie making the rounds called Jaws. I was in my youth and the song was a countdown song that from memory was an adult beverage in bottles that where on the wall and got past around. If you have ever heard, I am sure the melody is in your head now! However, the 100 and counting is now going forward and belongs to Barry Osborn a Regulatory Project Manager in the Fort Worth District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. His 100 is a record, a fishing state record and the 100 itself is a record with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Over a decade ago, Barry Osborn wondered if he could gain enough knowledge to achieve fishing records on many of the abundant species found in Texas. He did not know that his enthusiasm for fishing would lead him to the history books. As many aspects of life were impacted by COVID 19 so was Osborn receiving certification of the record. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department had to delay the certification process due to the pandemic and his August 2020 catch was certified in June this year. "It only took me six years to catch a walleye in Texas, and I had to drive 12 hours round trip to Lake Meredith to get it, but if all my pending official state records get approved this will be number 100," said Osborn in August last year. I have no idea when TPWD will get back in the office, approve the records, and send me the certificates, but I will let you know if I hear something."

Finally in May of this year he did hear that TPWD was able to get the process going once again. "I have been told that I will be getting my last state record certificates soon. This really is a pretty amazing achievement. Nobody else in history have received Texas official state record certificates in the triple digits. I would like to use my achievement as a way to show other anglers the great species of fish diversity that we have in Texas, as well as a way to show that if I can catch that many, then any

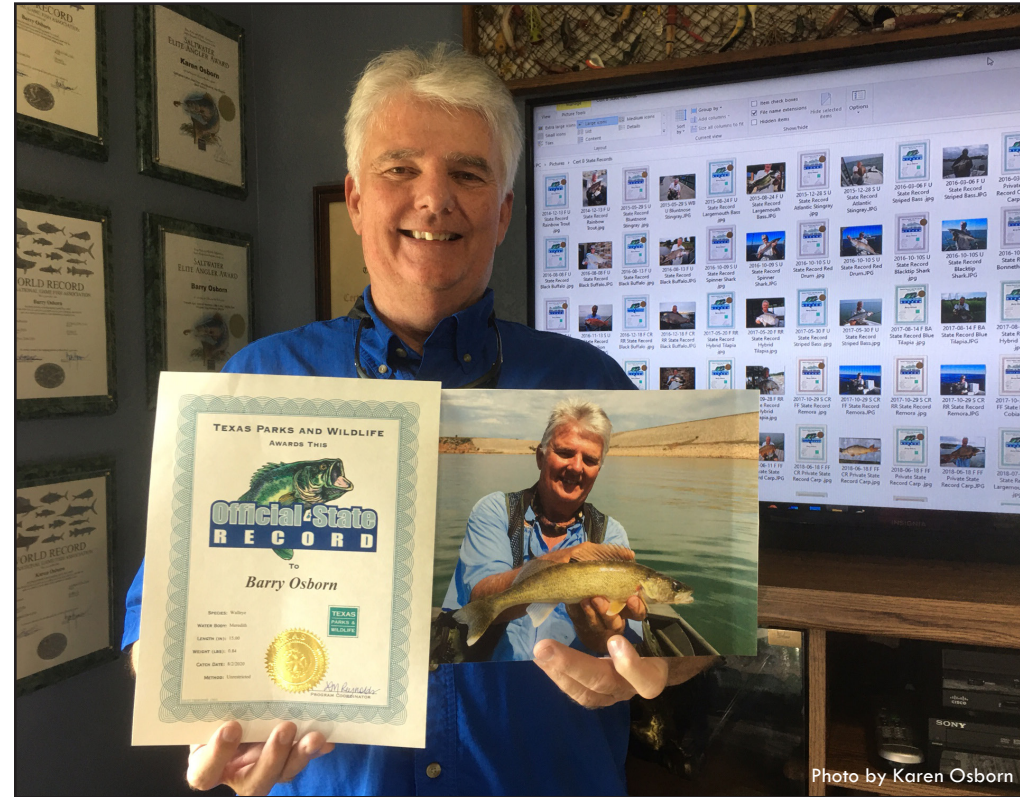


Photo by Karen Osborn

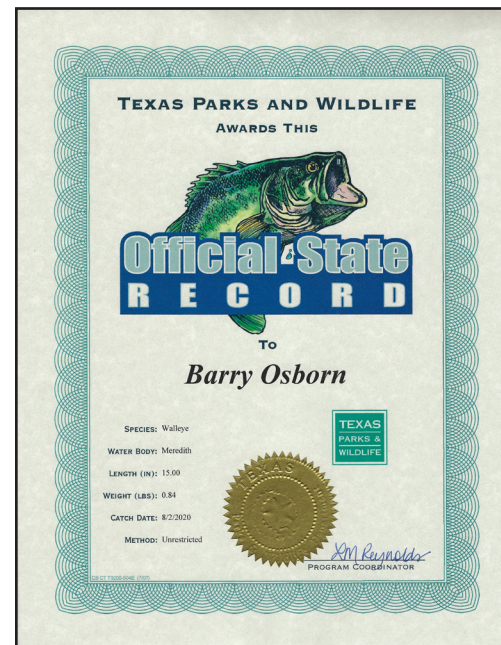
angler should be able to get a record on their own," Osborn said in an email.

Osborn, who grew up in Arlington, Texas went on to say "An analysis of my 100 state records provided some interesting data. A record fish was caught in every month of the year, but over 60% of the fish were caught in October (29%), August (18%), and June (13%). The records were achieved evenly between saltwater (51%) and freshwater (49%). Records were achieved with rod and reel, fly rod, Plnor (pole and line), handline, and bow. Both weight records and length (catch and release records) were documented. Forty-nine different species were caught. The average weight of the fish is nine pounds and the average length is 25 inches. Bow fishing represented 7% of the records. Rod and reel represented 13%, fly fishing 28%, and other method categories represented 52%. Fish were caught with bait 59% of the time, lures 10% and 31% with a fly."

If catching and documenting his achievements were not enough, Osborn took the time and effort to put his experiences and knowledge together so others may try their hand at a record by authoring a book titled The Art of

Fishing for Records, which serves as a unique communication avenue, introducing the public to different fish record methods, as well as maintaining public interest in sportsfishing.

As of this writing Osborn now has 102 Texas official state records, with 4 more pending, so that 100 song will need to be revised with a new stanza to keep up with his fishing records!



Project Manager of the Year

Stacy Gray dishes on her USACE career

Story by: Ed Rivera - Southwestern Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

From joining the Fort Worth District in 2001 as an economist to being selected as the 2020 Project Manager of the Year, Stacy Gray, recounts her journey with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Growing up, Gray wanted to become a veterinarian, but Marine Biology won "I love animals," she said. "But in the end, common sense prevailed. I felt like I'd come home and cry every day over the animals I couldn't help and had to put to sleep or watch die on my table."

Born and raised in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, Gray began college interested in pursuing Marine Biology, but "the first semester of chemistry cured that notion," she said. "I decided to switch to a business management degree and just work for a company where I could vicariously interact with marine life."

Once in the College of Business she learned that economics was just "common sense with silly names" and switched yet again because the average starting salary for an economist was better than the average starting salary for someone with a management degree.

Gray joined the Fort Worth District in 2001 as an economist right after completing her master's degree. She worked as an economist on both Civil Works and Military Master Planning teams, which eventually lead her to become a lead planner in the Military Master Planning field.

"During that time, I also began working on my project and program management skills, and architectural and engineering contracting skills as the single point of contact in USACE for Air Force Material Command's privatization and enhanced use lease program, and Naval Surface Warfare Center's master planning program," she said.

After a brief stint in the private sector from 2006 to 2008 as a master planner, Gray returned to USACE and focused on Civil Works Planning, which in 2013 led to her current role managing Dam Safety related projects such as Issue Evaluation Studies, Dam Safety Modifications, and Reallocation studies.

Although recognized as 2020 Project Man-

ager of the Year for her work and leadership on several high-profile projects to include the Lewisville Dam Safety Modification, her most influential assignment was the few years she spent in Military Master Planning. Gray said, the work their team did for Intelligence and Security Command right before and for a few years after 9/11, Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, and 4th Infantry Division, then at Fort Hood, was most influential.

"I can't pin it to one particular project, but all the changes and deployments that started with 9/11, and the way the country came together in the face of a threat...that was when I knew public service was my calling," she said. "Seeing how we could implement change to make our Soldiers' workplaces better, more efficient, and their living spaces more comfortable to improve their quality of life was very rewarding. That has carried into my current role as the Non-Routine Dam Safety Program Manager. Knowing that we are reducing the risk to the people who live and work downstream of our dams and thereby improving their quality

of life is a big part of what keeps our teams focused on the mission no matter what obstacles are put in our path."

According to Gray, when she accepted the job as an economist back in 2001, she never expected to be responsible for planning, execution and close-out of nine-figure projects that drew the attention of Congress, or a virtual team that includes more than 100 people nationally.

"The versatility of a career with the Corps of Engineers is something I never understood until I began moving about within the organization. There are not many places with so many opportunities to do something new and different while working for the same company or agency," said Gray. "From economics, to military master planning, to civil works planning, to program and project management, to dam safety... with each step I have received the gift of learning new things, meeting new people, and broadening my understanding of our organization, the world we live in, and the other cultures we share it with."



Photo by Andre Mayeaux

Friends of Lake O' the Pines Sign Cooperating Association Agreement

Story and photo by: Trevor Welsh - Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District's Lake O' the Pines staff reached a milestone with the Friends of Lake O' the Pines Association August 5, 2021, with the signing of the long-awaited Cooperating Association Agreement.

Getting its start as early as Fall 2018, This agreement between the lake staff and the association sets a precedent as the first of its kind in the district. One main purpose of the association is to assist the Corps in its interpretive, scientific, and conservation programs while ensuring, improving and developing recreational opportunities such as hike and bike trails, and other opportunities to improve environmental and recreational enjoyment of Lake O' the Pines. This agreement gives the association the authority to assist the Corps in its presentation to the public of the natural, cultural, historical and project related features of Lake O' the Pines through programs, exhibits and materials.

"This partnership has been wildly beneficial already," said Tim Macallister, Fort Worth District Operations Chief. "With the help of this incredible Friends Group, we can provide a better recreation experience to our visitors. Another major benefit I see is the ability to bridge the gap between the Corps and the public. We can double our efforts of getting water safety, sober boating, and responsible recreation messages out to keep our guests safe while they are enjoying everything Lake O'

the Pines has to offer."

Even before the agreement was finalized, the Friends Group took the initiative of developing a disc golf course at Lakeside Park. According to their website, the 18-hole disc golf course is nearing completion.

"The Lakeside disc golf course idea was born in one of our initial interest meetings about 2 years ago," said Becky Rockwell, President of Friends of Lake O' the Pines. "Lakeside was the perfect area to use because of its day use status and available space. The course has been designed and built primarily with volunteer labor with keeping professional caliber course design in mind. The baskets were purchased by the Corps of Engineers through their America the Beautiful Fund – sourced by America the Beautiful pass sales, which offers their agency designated funds for projects such as this.

When it comes to the development of the agreement, Ricky Maxey, Lake O' the Pines Park Ranger, took the lead.

"I took a tool kit template that was developed by The Corps Foundation and wrote the first draft to fit our association," Maxey said. "That first draft was sent to our Friends Group, our Lake Manager and our Operations Project Manager for comments. After another draft and an in-person meeting, it was then sent to Jennifer Linde."

Jennifer Linde, Natural Resource Specialist with the district's Operations Division took

that draft through Office of Counsel for comments and to iron out all the details. She sent that draft to the Operations Division and District Commander's office for approval.

"One main benefit of having a cooperating association agreement, is that cooperating associations, which are 501 (c) (3) non-profit organizations, can conduct fundraising activities and apply for grants that USACE, as a federal agency, may not be able to apply for and use those funds for projects that benefit the lake recreation and environmental stewardship programs," Linde said. "These agreements are also a good way to build and maintain positive relationships with local communities. I'm hoping, now that we have one agreement, that we can use this as a template for other lakes to enter into similar agreements with local groups."

Ricky says everyone in the process played important roles in development of the document, including the officers of the Friends Group.

"The development of the Cooperating Association Agreement was truly a group effort," Ricky said. "Our Friends Group is a highly motivated group of individuals, and I see great things coming to Lake O' the Pines from this effort."

The Friends Group aims to host a multitude of activities that benefit the community economically by attracting more destination visitors to the area.

"Friends of Lake O' the Pines will greatly benefit from the cooperating agreement by gaining the ability to host more activities and events on lake property that involve raising much needed operating funds," Rockwell said. "We are gaining the ability to operate with a broader scope independently and in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to help educate, improve, and even expose the public to the outdoors along with the fun personal and family experiences it can provide. In these interesting times where budget cuts for recreational resources keep getting larger, we feel this is more important than ever."



TPWD Hunter Education Partner of the Year



Photo by Patty Spiller

Monica Bickerstaff, North Texas Hunter Education Specialist with Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) awarded the Fort Worth District with the "2019 Hunter Education Partner of the Year" at the Hunter Education Awards hosted at the Waco Wetlands August 19, 2021. Waco Lake Park Ranger Taylor Christian and Whitney Lake Park Ranger Jarod Briscoe accepted the award on behalf of the Fort Worth District. The award reflects the great partnerships with TPWD and the City of Irving Police Athletic League and their substantial efforts in supporting youth and women's hunting events at Waco and Whitney Lakes in 2019. The Fort Worth District looks forward to continued partnering opportunities with these great partners in the coming years.

C.A.S.T for Kids Enriching Lives at Waco Lake



Photos by Andre Moyadux

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District's Waco Lake Staff hosted children, their families and caretakers, and professional anglers for the Haley's Heroes CAST for Kids Foundation event Saturday July 24, 2021 at Airport Beach Park.

As with each year of CAST for Kids Waco, the foundation invites professional sport fish-

ermen to take part in the event. The Waco Lake event is the only C.A.S.T. event in the country that has a Pro Am fishing tournament tied to it.

C.A.S.T. (Catch A Special Thrill) for Kids events bring children with special needs and their caretakers together with community volunteers for a day of fishing they may not otherwise experience.



Galveston District Hosts Annual Ranger Training and Appreciation

Story by: Carlos Gomez - Galveston District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

The Galveston District hosted an annual refresher training and appreciation event for Southwestern Division's district Park Rangers July 13-15, 2021.

Policy requires all USACE Rangers to receive eight hours of training annually on a variety of topics such as self-defense, de-escalation techniques, tactical communications, policy, and cultural demographics.

The week's events kicked off with an award ceremony for Fort Worth District's Rangers with the crowning of each region's "Ranger of the Year." USACE Fort Worth District Commander Col. Jonathan Stover was on hand to announce the winners and the recipient of the district's "Ranger of the Year."

Honored were:

- Jewel Hale, named Capital Region's "Ranger of the Year."
- Jerod Briscoe, earning the Three Rivers Region's "Ranger of the Year" award.
- Lyndy Black, earning accolades as the Trinity Region's "Ranger of the Year."
- Bryan Heffernan, named the Piney Woods Region's "Ranger of the Year."

• Heffernan also earned USACE Fort Worth District's "Ranger of the Year" award.

After the awards ceremony, Fort Worth Dis-



Photo by Trevor Welsh

trict's Park Ranger Refresher Project Delivery Team led the 60-plus Rangers in attendance through three days of vital training planned down to the last minute.

"The goal is to create a hands-on Ranger training workshop," said Adam Tarplee, who chairs the Park Ranger Refresher Project Delivery Team at the Fort Worth District. As one of the instructors, Tarplee and his team designed the training to be as interactive as

possible. "It's definitely better than training by PowerPoint," he said.

The refresher training also includes simulations of potentially dangerous, real-world scenarios Park Rangers have and might encounter. They include dealing with unauthorized hunting, unauthorized possession of firearms, and encountering illegal drugs and narcotics on federal recreational grounds.

Moreover, the annual training provides Rangers an opportunity to have fun while learning in a controlled environment, said Cassy Hill, a Fort Worth District Ranger working out of Belton Lake. "It's a safe space to train for not-so-safe situations," she said.

Holding joint training also allows both Fort Worth and Galveston Rangers to meet their required training while building relationships across the districts, said Steve Perrin, a Lead Ranger at Fort Worth's Lavon Lake site.

The event presents an opportunity for Rangers from other areas to compare their notes and share best practices, said Patty Spiller, a Ranger with Fort Worth's Three Rivers Region. "It's a great opportunity to network with fellow Rangers," she said. "There's a lot of knowledge out there [among the community] that's helped



Photo by Carlos Gomez

me out a lot over the years."

Part of the training involved educational briefings in outdoor settings ranging a variety of topics, including wildlife management, navigation, water safety, wildlife habitat appraisal procedures, and maintenance.

A lot of new Rangers also got the chance to see just what their job entails.

"This opens their eyes to the reality of what we face," said David McCann, a Park Ranger at Fort Worth's Capital Region. "It's good for them to experience this in a controlled environment."

The rangers also had some fun and a chance to socialize in a more relaxed setting when they participated in a softball game and a fishing tournament.

The week of training culminated with a "Ranger

Challenge." Rangers were split up into groups, according to their region, and tested on their physical capabilities and skills unique to their job.

The annual training and

appreciation originated in the Fort Worth District as a way for the district commander to recognize the important work the Rangers do and establish a "Park Ranger of the Year"

award. Over the years, these

events were combined with training to make it an all-inclusive event for USACE Rangers across districts.



Photo by Carlos Gomez



Veterans Wrangle Gators at Pineywoods Service Association's Annual Hunt

Story and photos by: Trevor Welsh - Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

The Pineywoods Service Association (PWSA), with cooperation from Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Fort Worth District's Town Bluff Project staff, hosted their Annual Veteran Alligator Hunt at Walnut Ridge Unit, Martin Dies Jr. State Park on B. A. Steinhagen Lake, affectionately known as "Dam B," Sept. 9-12.

TPWD has been hosting a public alligator hunt since the mid-1990s at the lake. They worked with the Town Bluff Project office to provide four tags for Veterans to use starting in 2012, in addition to the normal adult and youth tags they have been making available for the last 25 years.

According to Town Bluff Project Manager Floyd Boyett, the purpose of the hunt is to honor the veterans, give them a fun event where they can see that folks appreciate what they have done for the country, create a time where they can visit with other vets in similar circumstances, and of course help manage the resource.

"I am not a vet, so it gives me a chance to say thanks," Boyett said. "I get to contribute my presence in an official capacity as lake manager, work with the sponsors and volunteers, cooperate with TPWD Wildlife and State Park folks, etcetera. But mostly I do it because it's fun. I get to scout throughout the year, then drive an airboat around watching the guys

have a great experience. Makes the job more fulfilling and gives me something to look forward to throughout the year."

This year's Veterans include James Garrigus, Staff Sergeant, U.S. Air Force; Daniel Juracek, Specialist, U.S. Army; Mike Harper, Sergeant, U.S. Marine Corps; and David Sadler, Petty Officer 2nd Class, U.S. Navy.

Juracek, who is a Fort Worth District teammate, and who has been involved with the hunt for 10 years as the safety specialist, says he enjoys meeting fellow Veterans and the thrill of the hunt.

"The camaraderie during this weekend is unforgettable, no matter what branch of service you served in, that feeling of family always rises to the top," Juracek said. "I really appreciate everything the volunteers do for this hunt. The hunt was great, but receiving my custom engraved Army Bible from the Pineywoods Service Association was very much appreciated."

To prepare for this hunt, multiple people went out to various areas of the lake and rivers to scout alligators. As the event got closer final scouting was done in the evening when alligators are most active. Then the "best" locations were determined.

Bryan Heffernan, Natural Resources Specialist/Park Ranger at Town Bluff Project, and a U.S. Marine Corps Veteran, who has been involved with this hunt for five years, including two years ago when he was selected as a hunt-



er, was a guide this year in one of the air boats. This role included helping two Veterans set up their hook and line sets, as well as making sure they knew how to handle the line if an alligator was on and how to dispatch it.

"There is a lot of coordination with all parties involved with the hunt including the Piney Woods Service Association, who selected the Veterans and provided food and activities; and Texas Parks and Wildlife, who graciously donated campsites for volunteers, cabins for the hunters and use of the dining hall for the duration of the event," Heffernan said. "It is very rewarding to be able to be a part of allowing Veterans who may not have an opportunity to hunt alligators, get a chance. It also means a lot to me to be able to hang out and talk with the Veterans about our shared experiences which is not something that happens a lot."

The weekend of camaraderie and hunting started Friday afternoon. Veterans, lake staff, PWSA, and other volunteers spent time getting to know each other over a dinner provided and prepared by PWSA. After another meal provided by PWSA Saturday morning, the hunters and volunteers gathered for a safety brief and instructional session presented by TPWD. After the safety brief, the hunt officially began!

Four airboats left the state park in search of the perfect places to hang their sets: a chick-

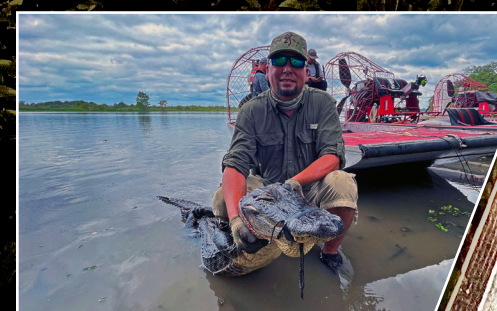
en leg quarter placed on a four-inch hook, attached to 300-pound test line leader and nylon rope, tied to a Cypress tree, and suspended about 10 inches over the water on a cane pole.

As the midday sun was high above the lake affectionately known as "Dam B," Veteran hunters, their guides and the air boat captains sped across the glassy water, busy canvassing the shoreline and sloughs of the lake, and setting hook and line sets for the Annual Veteran Alligator Hunt.

These sets would remain in place until 6pm when the hunters would go check for possible catches. None were caught Saturday evening. The evening ended with another meal provided by PWSA and more camaraderie.

After another early-morning PWSA breakfast, the crews hit the water again at 9am. None were caught yet. The Veterans and their guides reset the lines to place them closer to the water for a higher chance of hooking a gator. The crews made their way back to shore. At about 11am, they went out again teeming with anticipation of catching an alligator; and they were successful!

The excitement was on as the crews pulled on the lines to reveal large green bodies rolling and thrashing in the water. After fighting the gators for some time, then getting them close to the boat and safely dispatching them, they taped their mouths shut and arms behind their backs, then finally pulled them in the air boats.



Two Veteran's caught alligators: Mike Harper with a female that was 8 feet 1 inch long and weighed in at 108 pounds; and David Sadler with a female that was 7 feet 6 inches and 76 pounds.

After being measured, weight and tagged by TPWD, the Veterans and their teams spent the rest of Sunday evening cleaning the gators to harvest their skin and meat.

SprayCo, who provided three of the four airboats used, is contracted by Lower Neches Valley Authority (LNVA) to apply aquatic herbicide via airboat at Town Bluff and Sam Rayburn Lakes under a memorandum of understanding between USACE, LNVA and TPWD to manage invasive aquatic vegetation.

"Since SprayCo spends so much time on the lake as LNVA's contractor and sees the gators during the year, they recently have volunteered their airboats and operators as the hunt boats for the event," Boyett said.

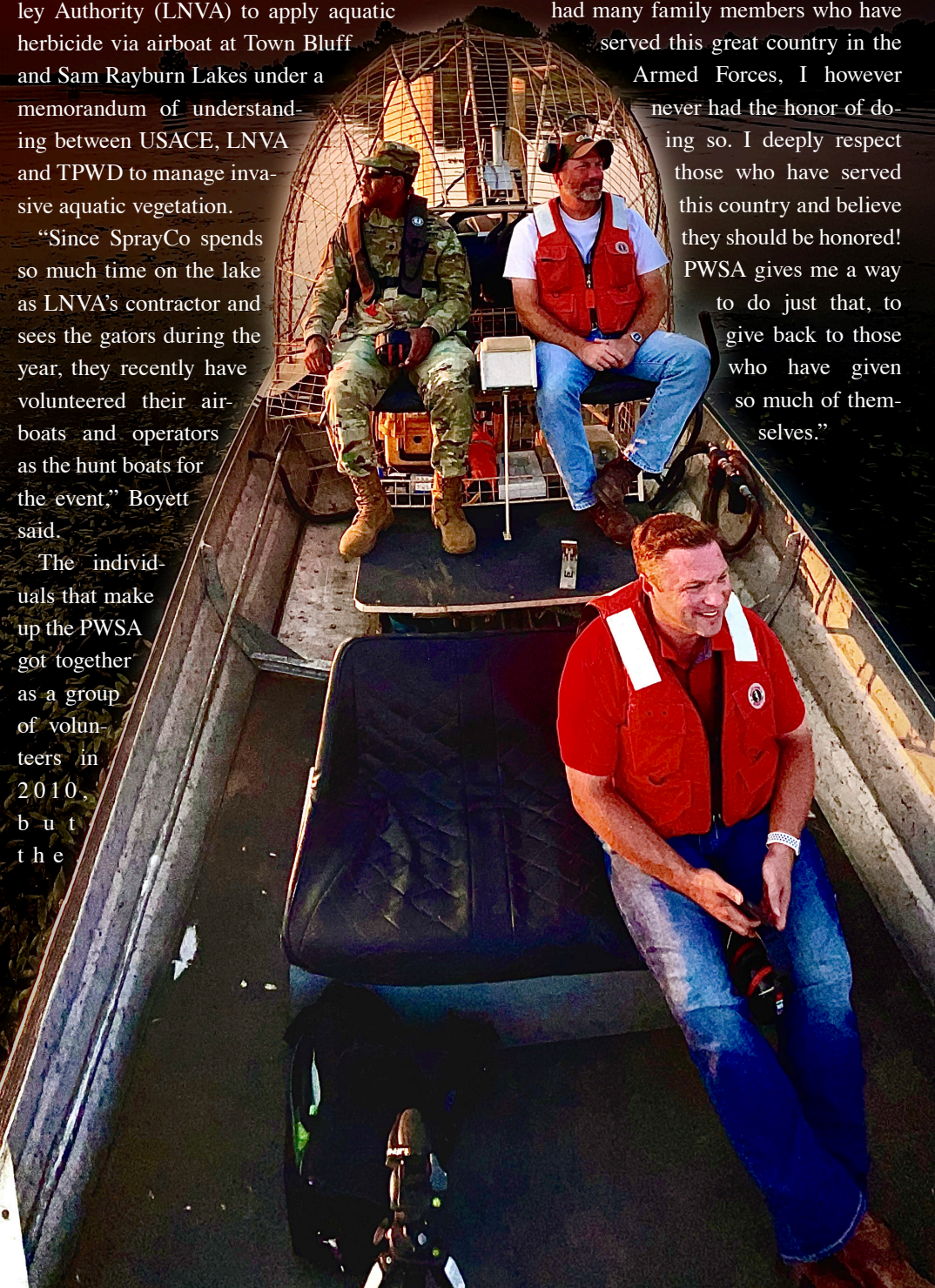
The individuals that make up the PWSA got together as a group of volunteers in 2010, but the

PWSA did not officially form until 2016.

Mitchell W. Holland, local business owner and President of PWSA, says he became tired of watching other organizations taking 50-70 percent of everything for themselves, and decided to start a 501c3 non-profit organization.

"None of our board members receive any compensation for what we do; 100 percent of everything goes back to our nations hero's," Mitch said. "As long as I am apart of PWSA you have my word it will stay that way. I have had many family members who have

served this great country in the Armed Forces, I however never had the honor of doing so. I deeply respect those who have served this country and believe they should be honored! PWSA gives me a way to do just that, to give back to those who have given so much of themselves."



Engineering & Construction Support Office

Infrastructure Assessment Program

Story by: Kevin Craig, P.E., Assistant to the Director, ECSO Asset Management
Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Since 2011, the ECSO Infrastructure Assessment Branch (IAB) has managed the execution of a worldwide Real Property Asset Management and Infrastructure Assessment Program. This program has included inventory and validation of over 20,000 real property assets, preparation of over 14,000 real property attestation memos, completion of almost 400 million (M) square feet (SF) of infrastructure / facility condition assessments (FCAs), development of 350 preliminary project work packages, completion of ASHRAE Level II Energy Audits and Sustainable Federal Building (SFB) assessments of over 75M SF, and performance of space use studies for 63M SF of facilities.

The program was initiated through a partnership with the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) for assessments of assets at installations around the world. This partnership remains strong and is currently implementing a third five-year cycle of assessments. In addition to DLA, the program has accomplished similar

work for the Air Force Civil Engineer Support Agency (AFCEA) / Air Force Civil Engineer Center (AFCEC), USACE Logistics Activity Center (ULAC), USACE Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC), the Joint Interoperability Test Command (JITC), and individual installations (Barksdale AFB and Joint Base San Antonio).

The ECSO-IAB serves as the Program Management Office and works closely with the Standardization and Sustainability Branch (SSB) in the Engineering & Construction (E&C) Division as the resource provider. Over the last 10 years, the program has utilized almost 800 USACE resources from 40 Districts, nine Major Subordinate Commands (MSCs), one Center, and one Laboratory. In addition, the services of multiple Architect-Engineer (AE) firms have been acquired in order to ensure timely completion of the mission.

The primary FCA effort includes onsite inventory and condition assessments utilizing

the BUILDER™ Sustainment Management System (SMS), developed by ERDC's Construction Engineering Research Laboratory (CERL). In September 2013, the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) issued a memorandum mandating facility condition assessments on a 5-year cycle, and the use of a SMS, such as BUILDER™, for all Department of Defense (DoD) agencies. The Fort Worth District (SWF) has trained over 200 enterprise USACE employees on the use of the BUILDER™ SMS tool.

During this cycle, a phased SRM approach was initiated for DLA. Phase 1 consists of conducting FCAs, preparing detailed inventory and inspection reports, and developing five-year work action scenarios that provided DLA with long-term planning support in forecasting the need for repair and replacement of facility components. Phase 2 involves the development of Work Packages, supporting the transition from Project Planning to Project Program-



Photos by Jonathan Celone

ming. In this phase, multi-disciplinary architectural-engineering teams returned to the installations (typically within 60-120 days of Phase 1) to validate BUILDER™-forecasted deficiencies, add 'emergent' requirements or Command priorities identified by on-site facility managers, and compile information into preliminary project descriptions. These Work Packages included standardized concept Statements of Work (~ 15-30% SoW), abbreviated specifications, architectural drawings, site plans and photos, a Facility Inventory Record, and a Current Working Estimate (CWE). The Small Projects Wizard, another program developed by ERDC-CERL, was used extensively in Phase 2. A total of 293 Work Packages were prepared between 2018-2020, at an average cost of less than \$10,000 per package and identified almost \$250 million worth of potential SRM projects. Phase 3 includes actual project design and construction efforts by DLA-selected execution agents. A recommended contract clause requires contractors to utilize and update the Facility Inventory Record (included in the Work Packages) upon project completion,

which provides data for BUILDER™ updates and facilitates accuracy of BUILDER™ projections between assessment cycles.

In conducting the various ECSO-IAB missions, a variety of execution models have been developed and scaled to meet each respective partner's scope requirements, schedule constraints, and funding limitations (e.g., no-year funding versus one-year funding). These scaled solutions have varied in services provided and types of resources used (in-house versus contractor), but each model supports the concept of having 'one door to the Corps' for our partners, providing a centralized program integrator responsible for consistency and transparency across geographic boundaries and resource types in completing the mission.

In June 2021, a Phase 1 FCA effort was completed at the ERDC Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory (CRREL) in Hanover, NH. The assessment included 20 assets with 327,716 SF and was completed in one week with an in-house USACE team from Fort Worth and Vicksburg Districts. A comprehensive report providing multiple BUILD-

ER™-generated reports has been prepared and reviewed by ERDC staff, with a final report expected. The report shows projections of work actions that can be expected over the next five years based on the age, current condition and life expectancy of all building system components.

A more recent Phase 1 FCA mission was completed between 23 August and 3 September at DLA's Defense Supply Center in Richmond, VA. This large installation is one of DLA's host sites and includes assets for multiple DLA Major Subordinate Commands (MSCs). A total of 78 buildings were assessed, including over 4.2M SF. In addition, 51 paved areas (763,580 SY), three fenced areas, and 83 various site elements were assessed. A total of eight AE assessment teams were utilized in order to complete the onsite assessments within a two-week period.

Phase 2 Work Packages are currently being finalized for DLA Norfolk SDA and Naval Weapons Station (NWS) Yorktown in VA, and DLA Philadelphia. A total of 12 Work Packages are being developed.

Master Planning in a Virtual Environment

Kadena Air Base: A Case Study

Story and photos by: Nathan Reyor, Regional Planning And Environmental Center
Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

The Southwestern Regional Planning and Environmental Center (RPEC), Master Planning Branch is conducting an ongoing comprehensive Master Planning effort at Kadena Air Base (AB), Okinawa, Japan.

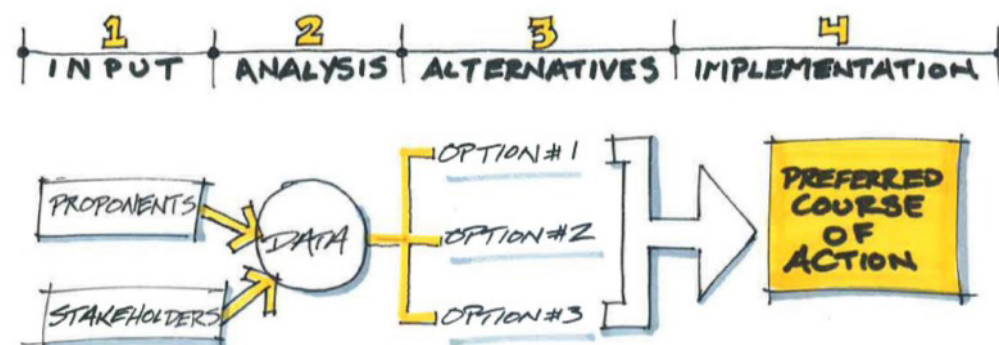
The mission of the 18th Wing at Kadena AB is to “deliver decisive air and cyberspace capabilities, any time, in support of U.S. interests, the defense of Japan, and peace and stability throughout the Indo-Pacific. We accomplish this mission through innovative, ready, resilient Airmen; strong relationships with allies and partners; and a world-class strategic forward base.”

The comprehensive Master Planning effort will support Kadena AB’s vision of maintaining a world-class strategic forward base and allow for future mission growth and flexibility in development.

Part of the planning effort at Kadena AB includes multiple district plans. District plans provide a framework for accomplishing, strengthening, and supporting current and future missions at Kadena AB.

The comprehensive planning process is to conduct in-person planning workshops with installation stakeholders to collect and analyze data, develop planning alternatives, and select a preferred Course of Action. The resulting preferred alternative identifies the implementation plan by assigning the projects as short, mid or long range.

The planning process allows for the detailed, comprehensive, long-range planning,



instead of using a piecemeal approach to develop a district through individual projects. By avoiding incremental development and focusing on district planning, the connectivity of the base is enhanced, valuable real estate is not lost through inefficient development, and construction funds are saved through efficient construction execution.

A District Plan will be utilized by Installation Commanders and other key officials to facilitate decision making of all land use, developmental, and construction activities within the planning district.

Typically, the planning workshop is conducted in-person; however, due to travel restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic, we have had to adapt to a virtual environment. Virtual planning workshops have benefits and shortfalls.

Benefits of the virtual environment: ability to engage various stakeholders in different locations simultaneously, allows for greater flexibility in workshop schedule, ability to change and present data in a live environment.

Shortfalls of the virtual environment: connectivity/technology issues across different users, high level of support needed from installation points of contact to support and setup workshops and gather data, harder to engage participants and keep participants engaged, loss of the human connection and collaboration between stakeholders.

We capitalized on the benefits of virtual workshops using Microsoft Teams and WebEx collaboration tools. Virtual platform preference and connectivity differs amongst stake-

holders and should be tested prior to the workshop. Graphic development was accomplished using SketchUp and PowerPoint. The software mirrors what would be done in an in-person workshop. Live changes to site plans and facilities can be completed in real time to help develop the District Plan courses of action.

We mitigated the shortfalls by reaching out early and often and kept multiple chains of communication (email, chat, phone) open for comments and questions.

To keep stakeholders engaged we try to make the workshop as collaborative and interactive as possible. This included multiple smaller breakout sessions and scheduled individual meeting times with Subject Matter Experts. Surveys and questionnaires were also sent out to stakeholders prior to the workshop to obtain data and start engaging stakeholders on the planning process.

After the conclusion of the workshop, all the data, drawings, site plans, and Courses of Action are refined offline to develop a professional graphic that is displayed in the District Plan report. Some follow up with stakeholders may be necessary to refine and present a Preferred Course of Action as well as close any data gaps.

As we move forward, I believe that the virtual option is here to stay, although a hybrid approach is needed. Human connections and the ability to bring various stakeholders together bring great value to the Master Plans. In the future, I foresee shortened in-person workshops while conducting data collection and interviews virtually.

Office of Small Business Programs Champions New and Innovative Initiatives

From the Office of Small Business Programs, Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



The Fort Worth District fully supports the government’s policy of placing a fair proportion of our contracts with qualified small, small disadvantaged, women-owned, veteran-owned, service-disabled veteran owned, Historically Underutilized Business Zone, and Historically Black College and Universities/Minority Institutions. We consider small business to be the heart of the U.S. economy and a very vital part of the Corps’ procurement process. A Deputy has been appointed to the Office of Small Business Programs for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Southwestern District. They have been assigned to the Fort Worth District. Their role is to “aid, counsel, assist and protect, insofar as is possible, the interests of small business concerns in order to preserve free competitive enterprise, to ensure that a fair proportion of the total purchases and contracts or subcontracts for property and services for the Government be placed with small business enterprises.”

That role is filled by Carolyn Staten and she has retooled the Small Business website by working with team members from the District’s Information Technology Office and

Public Affairs Office.

With Staten, the team gathered information and produced an improved and substantially more user-friendly Small Business website. The retooled site provides excellent outreach to customers, within and outside the District, providing market research information, and an opportunity to meet with Fort Worth District team members.

Additionally, the site now provides upcoming projects, upcoming events and Networking/upload capabilities, online appointment scheduling, and opportunities to interact directly with Staten.

To support the online appointments, Ms. Staten also created a board consisting of the Director of Contracting, Program & Project Manager, a Small Business Administration representative and Staten.

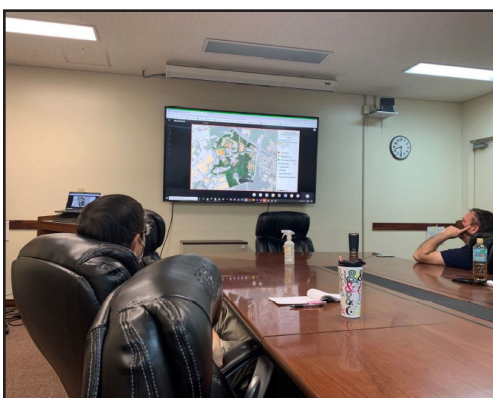
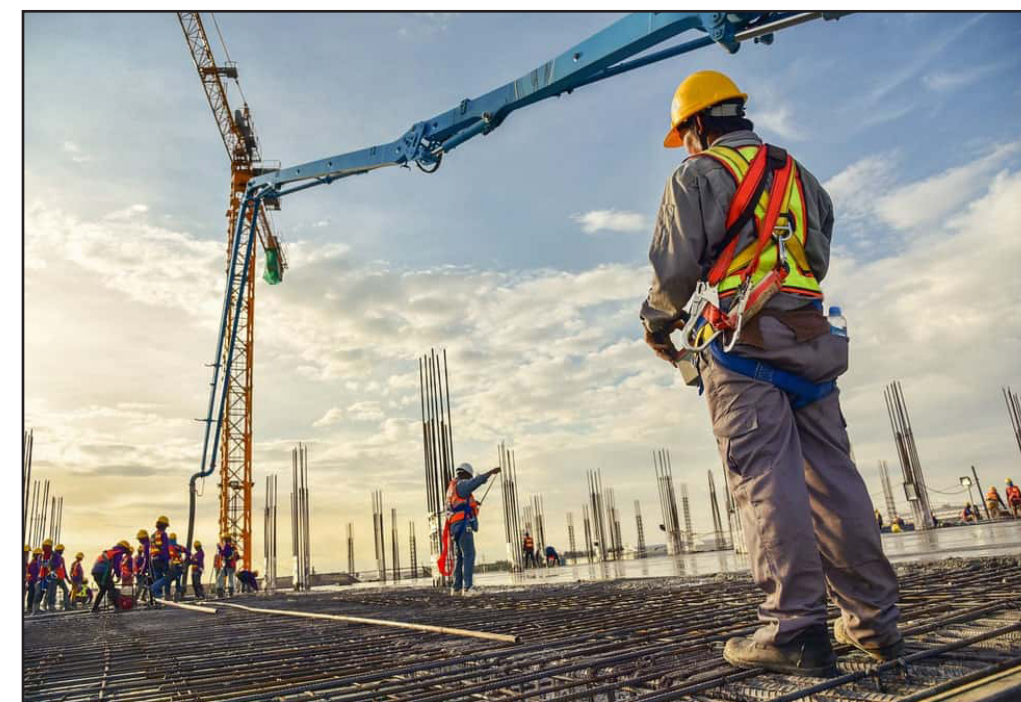
The board provides assurance that the Fort Worth District is seeing capabilities, listening, well represented by expert team members, and reinforcing that SWF is interested in doing business with the Small Business Community. Staten also goes the extra mile by consistently offering direction and guidance to help firms prepare for their presentations to Fort Worth



District committee members.

The retooled website system was approved, accepted, and implemented by the Headquarters Office of Small Business Programs, Washington, D.C. for use throughout the Corp. Staten and the Fort Worth District Small Business Program has been lauded and recognized at the USACE HQ level for its impact and her continued work to ensure the program reaches firms and customers nationally.

Visit the website at <https://www.swf.usace.army.mil/Business-With-Us/Office-of-Small-Business-Programs/>



Overcoming Fort Worth District Logistical Challenges

Story by: John Davis, General Supply Specialist
Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



The Fort Worth District Logistics Team strives to provide above excellent service to our customers. As a team we work together thru strict timelines, sudden changes, and many other obstacles that are presented to us. Each member of the SWF team is cross trained in the other logistics functions, ensuring that we can always provide seamless support to the District.

In the beginning of February 2021, the Deputy Commander presented a challenge to our office. We were challenged to complete 100 percent property inventoried by June 11, 2021, the date of our Change of Command. Although we had everything scheduled to be completed by the end of the Fiscal Year, we took on this challenge and as of May 26, 2021, we are certain to meet this challenge as well. In addition, we had multiple offices closing and/or moving, which put more of a workload and large task on us. Even though the workload stretched us to the seams, we continued to provide excellent service to every customer. Again, with teamwork and cross trained employees, we have been able to show a seamless process to our Command.

Since January of 2021, SWF had three project sites closing and another two being transferred to the Albuquerque District. Due to the short timeline, a Logistics team member travelled to Laredo, Fort Bliss Medical Office and Dyess

AFB to assist with their closure. As each closing office turned in property, we worked with other Lake and Project Offices to repurpose the property to save Government money and to support the Green Initiative. With the Fort Bliss Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office being closed, due to COVID-19, Property drove a moving truck to Fort Bliss, performed property inventory and returned with excess equipment that was generated from the Hospital project closure. Upon return, Property personnel handed the truck over to our Facility Manager, who drove to Texarkana to drop off this excess property to UNICOR. This was another part of our team effort and ability to work together supporting our customer is truly a vital portion of our mission.

The big focus on Property did not take away from Facilities and Fleet either, as the workload in those areas was still high as well. Facilities had multiple build outs in the District Federal Building, to include temporarily moving the secure CAC room while the old office was renovated. Our Facility Manager was able to temporarily borrow space in another secure area, to make sure we were still in compliance with all laws and regulations. The Fleet Manager worked to move GSA vehicles from the closed offices and with GSA to transfer the vehicles from the White Sands Missile Range

and Fort Wingate Offices to the Albuquerque District Logistics Office; all done seamlessly.

SWF Logistics continues to push forward, there is always more work that needs to be done with PC refresh and daily deliveries of computers and monitors, transporting excess property to UNICOR, participated in Emergency Management Flood Meetings and ensured the District Sandbag Machines was mechanically ready to deploy if requested. The great State of Texas had a large amount of rainfall within a short spell where Logistics was called upon to deliver sandbags to the Hords Creek Lake Office; this was done within a day of the request being received. SWF has 4 team members, within the office, that are on the Logistics Planning and Response Teams and 1 of these individuals is also a primary for the District Sandbag Machine. All of this, while we are still operating in a COVID-19 environment and continue to stand prepared to face any challenge, either by command or the weather, the SWF Logistics Office will always push for excellence.

As we transition into the time of year when a disaster is most likely, our team is still ready to support at home or away; continuing to support our District with professionalism, dedication, and pride. We are all proud to part of the SWF Logistics team and SWF family!



Fort Worth District PAO deploys to link Army Corps, FEMA Hurricane Ida recovery efforts

Story by: Bobby Petty, Public Affairs Officer, Border Infrastructure Project Management Office
Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

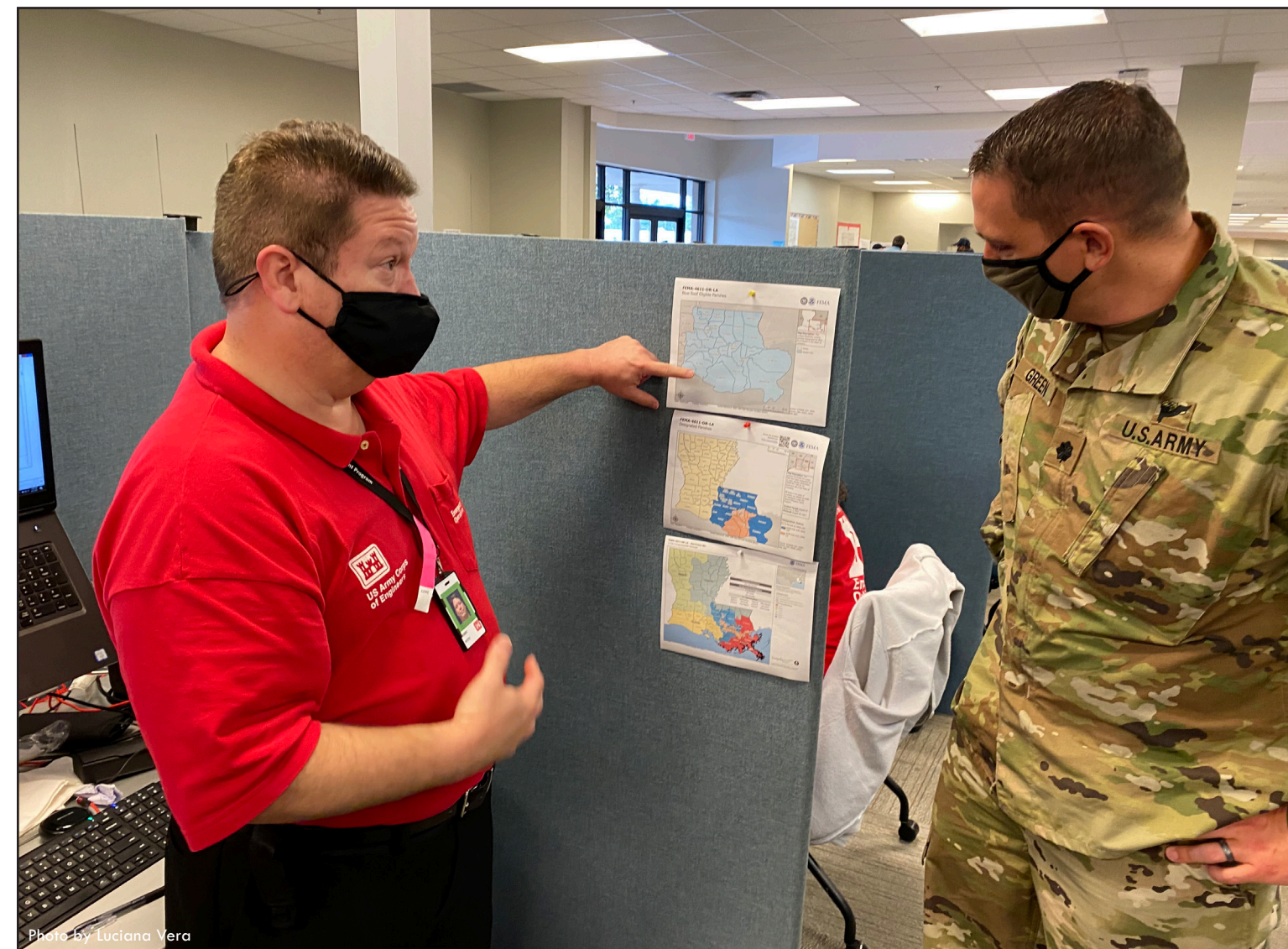


Photo by Luciana Vera

As Fort Worth District's ongoing support assisting Hurricane Ida survivors in completes its first full month, Bobby Petty has been there since the beginning acting as a conduit of information between FEMA and USACE.

Deployed as a member of the Hurricane Ida Response Team since Sept. 1, Petty normally works as the Border Infrastructure - Program Management Office's public affairs officer at Fort Worth District. But for Hurricane Ida recovery efforts, he's the USACE-FEMA public affairs liaison, a vital link in informing the public about assistance USACE can deliver.

"Nearly every federal agency works with FEMA to help folks in a disaster get back on

their feet," Petty said. "The Army Corps' role in Hurricane Ida recovery efforts, as with nearly all national disasters, aligns with our daily mission of applying engineering solutions to public works and infrastructure. But syncing, coordinating and amplifying the messaging to the public about the engineering solutions we can offer following a disaster – that's where I come in."

Before joining USACE in 2018, Petty served as a public information officer with the U.S. Small Business Administration. In that role, too, he worked closely with FEMA and local officials to assist the public following Hurricane Harvey. He's currently enrolled in FE-

MA's flagship public communication course, the year-long Master Public Information Officer Program, so filling the USACE-FEMA public affairs niche is a good fit.

"Because disasters and emergencies can happen anywhere, it's critical to have first responders who can translate and coordinate between the 'alphabet agencies' to get assistance those who need it," said Petty. "The complexity and dynamics of working with folks in different areas of the country is always a challenge, kind of like piecing together a puzzle. Just as every disaster is different, so are the local officials we interact with and the residents we help."

Fort Worth District Contracting Chief Wins 2021 Excellence in Contracting Award



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District is proud to announce one of our own was selected as the Excellence in Contracting, Manager of the Year 2021. The Southwestern Division is one of the busiest execution Districts in the United States Army Corps of Engineers. Mr. Gerard Henry contributions are many. Specifically, he was called to simultaneously serve in the capacity of three major leadership roles when he was selected (by tem-

porary promotion) as the Fort Worth District Chief of Contracting, while also maintaining duties as the Deputy and Business Operations Manager of the Year 2021. The Southwestern Division is one of the busiest execution Districts in the United States Army Corps of Engineers. Mr. Gerard Henry contributions are many. Specifically, he was called to simultaneously serve in the capacity of three major leadership roles when he was selected (by tem-

In addition, Mr. Henry supervised and directly supported the execution and obligation of

over 2,500 actions, valued over \$2 Billion—the second highest across the enterprise. Project locations included Texas, Louisiana, and New Mexico in support of major program assignments relating to Border Infrastructure, military installations and parks and lake offices in the state of Texas. Of the most notable projects with high-level Department of Defense interest and oversight included the \$4 billion eastern multiple award task order contract to support the southern border of the United States, the \$90 Million Fort Hood Job Order Contract supporting Installation Infrastructure, the \$7.5 Million Dallas-Fort Worth Columbarium to support the Veteran Affairs National Cemeteries, the \$6 Million Dallas Floodway to support the DFW Trinity River Floodway Program, the \$24 Million Fort Bliss Airfield repair to support large military aircrafts for combat, the \$8.1 Million Fort Polk Tactical Equipment Maintenance Facility to support the combat readiness for deployed troops and a multitude of environmental acquisitions under cooperative agreements and grants.

Mr. Henry's leadership, agility, and rapid response during difficult times ensured high visibility projects remained on track to be awarded on time and on budget. Overall, Mr. Henry sets a standard of excellence in the Fort Worth District by and was able to execute an extensive diverse and complex portfolio of project requirements across Texas, Louisiana, and New Mexico. Mr. Henry's stellar performance and rapid response in less-than-ideal contracting conditions sets him apart from his peers. Mr. Henry demonstrated not only his unwavering dedication but his ability to respond with flexibility and innovation in the face of the Global Pandemic. As a result of Mr. Henry's demonstrated leadership, the district is one of the largest and most vital missions to the State of Texas and across the enterprise. It is Mr. Henry's demonstrated leadership and acquisition expertise that makes him truly worthy of the Manager of the Year Award.

Congratulations on a job well done to one of the Fort Worth District's finest, Mr. Gerard Henry!!

Administrative Professionals Spotlight

This section is to highlight our district's amazing Administrative Professionals and their behind-the-scenes work to keep our organization on track and performing exceptional.

Our first spotlight this issue is Sharon Bruscatto. Sharon is an Administrative Support Assistant for Civil and Structural Engineering Section. She has been with the Corps of Engineers since December of 2019.

She says, "I felt like I was in the Willy Wonka Factory of our country's infrastructure! I am proud and honored to be a part of it."

Before she came to the district, she worked as an Administrative Assistant with John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth and as a Realtor with United Real Estate Dallas.

She says her typical workday consists of providing support to her team with temporary duty traveling, time and attendance, reimbursements, training, and problem solving regarding administrative needs. And in her spare time, she travels and still works in the real estate market.

When asked who she would be for a day and why, she said, "I would be Meghan Markle or Michelle Obama because I would like to travel the world, motivating and helping others."

Interesting facts about Sharon that her colleagues might not know, "I've sang opera in England with the Norwich Operatic Society, I've traveled 22 different countries and I've been a realtor for seven years."

In closing, Sharon says, "Do what you love today because you never know about tomorrow."

Thank you, Sharon, for all you do!



Our second spotlight Sonia Sams, Administrative Support Assistant for Water Resources Branch. She has been with the Corps for three years.

She says, "When I started working here, I was amazed about how much work the Corps does that directly effects out everyday lives, especially in our branch; the work we do to prevent flooding and reduce risks from natural disasters."

Before she came to the district, she studied at Strayer University Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration/Human Resources.

"I was able to start here as a student trainee, due to my enrollment in school," she said. "I also have extensive experience in the banking industry. I have worked in credit unions for over seven years in positions ranging from mortgaging servicing rights, branch supervisor, and staff accountant."

She says every day at work is fun and different supporting a branch chief, 2 section chiefs and about 25 engineers.

"My job is to take care of my branch. Whether it is time, travel, supplies, onboarding employees, scheduling meetings, and so much more, I never know what the day will bring until I open my email. With so much to do creating calendar notifications is essential to staying organized. Making sure my engineers are taken care of is a priority for me."

In her spare time, she loves to travel and spend time with her family. She is married to her husband of 11 years, and they have two boys ages eight and six.

When asked who she would like to be for a day and why, she said, "I can't think of someone else I would rather be. Maybe someone else in my family to get a better perspective on how I could make their lives better."

Interesting facts about Sonia that her colleagues might not know is that she LOVES scary movies but not bugs, "I am terrified of ALL bugs. When they get to close things can get dramatic."

In closing, Sonia says, "Don't be afraid to make mistakes, but if those mistakes can be prevented by asking questions, well, don't be afraid to ask questions."

Thank you, Sonia, for all you do!



Women's Equality Day



The right to vote, the cornerstone of democracy, belongs to all citizens — but this wasn't always the case.

To claim their voice, women began agitating for the right to vote in the early 19th century. In the U.S., decisions about who could vote were left up to the states. The 19th Amendment, ratified in 1920, ensures voting rights for everyone regardless of gender. Today, Women's Equality Day celebrates the achievements of women's rights activists and reminds us of the unique daily struggles that women face.

This year's theme is "Valiant Women of the Vote: Refusing to be Silenced."

Women's Equality Day commemorates the passage of women's suffrage in the U.S. and reminds us of the hurdles overcome by the heroic women who faced violence and discrimination

to propel the women's movement forward.

In the early 19th century, American women, who generally couldn't inherit property and made half of a man's wages in any available jobs, began organizing to demand political rights and representation.

By the early 1900s, Finland, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom had legalized voting for women as the movement continued to sweep across the world. In the U.S., the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was first introduced in 1878, but it failed to gain traction. It wasn't until women's involvement in the World War I effort made their contributions painfully obvious that women's suffrage finally gained enough support. Women's rights groups pointed out the hypocrisy of fighting for democracy in Europe while denying it to half of the Amer-

ican citizens at home.

Because a Constitutional amendment requires approval from two-thirds of the states, 36 of them had to ratify the 19th Amendment before its passage. The deciding vote in the Tennessee legislature came from Harry T. Burn, a young state representative whose mother's plea to support the amendment became a deciding factor in his vote (which he switched at the last minute).

Women aren't done fighting for equal rights. Today, the wage gap between men and women still impacts women's economic power, and gender-based discrimination still plagues workplaces and business transactions.

To remind us of the struggles of the past, present, and future, Congress designated August 26 as Women's Equality Day in 1971.

DOD Celebrates National Hispanic Heritage Month

Story by: David Vergun - Department of Defense News

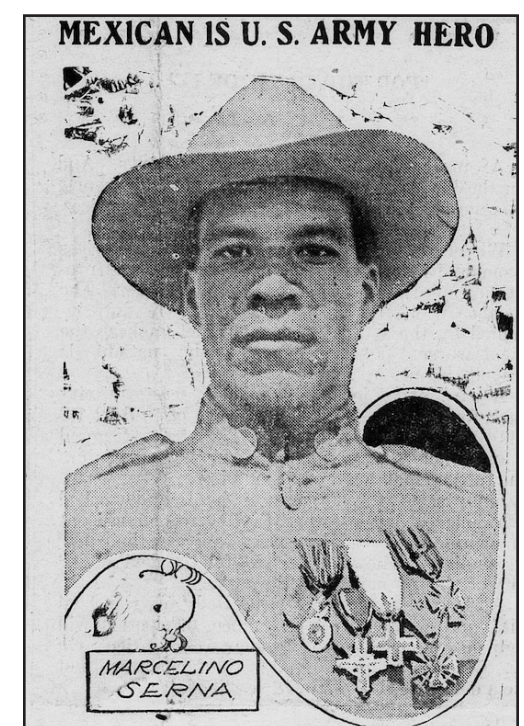
The nation celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month, Sept. 15 to Oct. 15.

It's a time to reflect on the contributions and sacrifices Hispanics have made to the United States, not just in the military, but in all walks of life.

A significant number of Hispanics have served in all the nation's wars.

Sixty-one service members of Hispanic or Latino heritage have been awarded the Medal of Honor, the highest medal for valor. Two were sailors, 13 Marines and 46 soldiers.

Their stories of heroism are many. Here are two.



Marcelino Serna emigrated from Mexico to Texas in 1916. Although he was a Mexican citizen, he enlisted in the U.S. Army when World War I started April 1917. His request to enlist was granted and he was later shipped with other soldiers to the battlefields of France. Serna's unit, Company B, 355th Infantry Regiment, 89th Division, was engaged in heavy fighting in the Meuse-Argonne region, Sept. 12, 1918.

During that day, Serna, a private, wounded a German sniper with his Enfield rifle and then advanced to an enemy trench where he threw three grenades, resulting in the death of 26 enemy and the capture of 24.

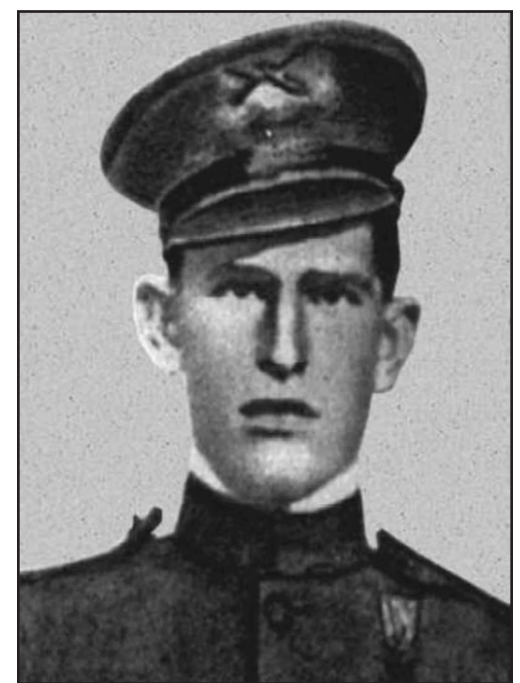
On Nov. 7, 1918, Serna was wounded in both of his legs by sniper fire. Fighting ended four days later on Nov. 11, when the armistice was declared.

During his recovery, Army Gen. John J. Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Forces, pinned a Distinguished Service Cross to his uniform. He was the first Hispanic American to receive the DSC, the second highest medal for valor.

Ferdinand Foch, the supreme commander of the allied forces, awarded Serna the French Croix de Guerre for bravery.

In 1924, Serna became a U.S. citizen and settled in El Paso, where he died in 1992 at the age of 95.

On Sept. 29, 2016, the United States designated the Customs and Border Protection Port of Entry at Tornillo, Texas, as the "Marcelino Serna Port of Entry."



Army Pvt. David B. Barkley Cantu, also served in the 89th Division in France during World War I and was Hispanic.

On Nov. 9, 1918, he and another soldier volunteered to swim across the Meuse River near Pouilly-sur-Meuse to get behind German lines and gather information about troop strength. On his return trip, he got cramps while swimming and drowned. The other soldier made it back to his unit and provided the commander

with the intelligence the two had gathered.

For his bravery, Cantu was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor. Also, France awarded him the Croix de Guerre, and Italy the Croce al Merito di Guerra.

National Hispanic Heritage Month:

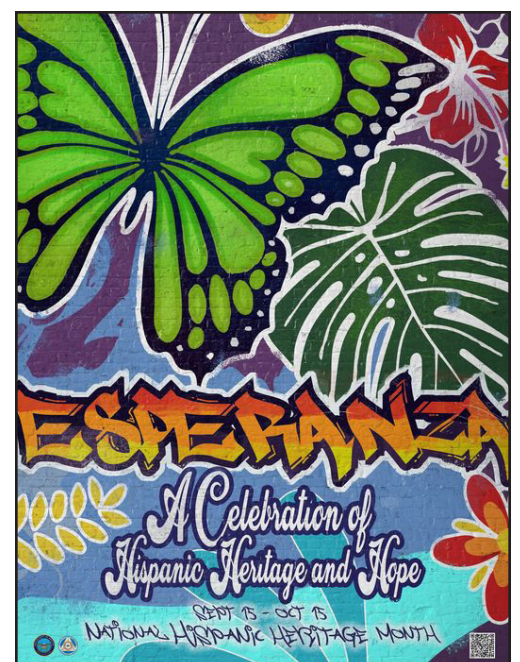
Hispanic Heritage Month began as Hispanic Heritage Week in 1968 when President Lyndon Johnson signed the observance into law.

National Hispanic Heritage Month was first proclaimed by President George H. W. Bush in 1989.

The Sept. 15 start of the heritage month is significant because it is the anniversary of independence for the Latin American countries of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on Sept. 16 and Sept. 18, respectively. Also, Columbus Day or Día de la Raza, which is Oct. 12, falls within this 30 day period.

Those who claim to be Latino or Hispanic make up 17.6% of the active duty force, numbering 235,972 as of July 2021, according to the Defense Manpower Data Center.

The 2020 U.S. Census Bureau report indicated that Hispanics or Latinos make up 18.7% of the total U.S. population, 62.1 million in 2020. The Hispanic or Latino population grew 23% between 2010 and 2020, according to the Census Bureau.



National Disability Employment Awareness



The Fort Worth District is proud to support National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) during October.

NDEAM aims to educate about disability employment issues and celebrate the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. Throughout the month, we'll be engaging in a variety of activities to educate our team on disability employment issues and the role they play in fostering a disability-friendly work culture.

The history of National Disability Employment Awareness Month traces back to 1945 when Congress enacted a law declaring the first week in October each year "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. In 1988, Congress expanded the week

to a month and changed the name.

This year, the Office of Disability Employment Policy in the Department of Labor celebrates 20 years of helping advance opportunity for workers with disabilities across the Nation. As part of its mission, the agency remains at the forefront of emerging challenges in the workplace, such as developing comprehensive resources to ensure that workers grappling with the long-term effects of COVID-19 have access to the rights and resources they are due under disability law — including flexibilities, tools, and accommodations in the workplace.

Despite the progress our Nation has made in recent decades, people with disabilities are still too often marginalized and denied access to the American dream. Americans with disabilities, particularly women and people of color, have faced long-standing gaps in employment, advancement, and income. The COVID-19

pandemic has compounded these inequities, as people with disabilities have faced heightened risks — particularly the disproportionate share of people with disabilities employed in the hardest-hit industries.

This year's theme, "America's Recovery: Powered by Inclusion," reflects the importance of ensuring that people with disabilities have full access to employment and community involvement during the national recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. "Our national recovery from the pandemic cannot be completed without the inclusion of all Americans, in particular people with disabilities," said U.S. Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh. "Their contributions have historically been vital to our nation's success and are more important today than ever. We must build an economy that fully includes the talent and drive of those with disabilities."

Cybersecurity Awareness



CYBERSECURITY...

What is it?

The Army Cybersecurity Awareness Campaign is a year-long, 24/7 enduring effort to promote awareness and cybersecurity best practices by Soldiers, Civilians, contractors, and families.

The campaign aligns with messages from the National Cybersecurity Awareness Month led by the Department of Homeland Security, and the DOD chief information officer directed Cybersecurity Awareness Month. This year's theme is "Do Your Part. Be Cyber Smart."

This campaign supports four key areas:

- *Nation's cybersecurity ecosystem*
- *Tackling cybersecurity together*
- *Strengthening the workforce*
- *Securing infrastructure from cyber threats*

The campaign is designed to highlight and provide protective solutions to cyber threats that may compromise mission readiness.

What has the Army done/is doing?

The Army continuously works to understand cyber threats, vulnerabilities, and their impact on Soldier and mission readiness, while build-

ing and deploying a preeminent cyber force. The Cybersecurity Awareness Campaign works to provide the most relevant and critical information and tactics to counter threats and simultaneously recruit, develop, train and retain high quality Soldiers and civilians.

Cybersecurity remains a vital part of operational effectiveness and must become a part of the Army's DNA - from readiness to reform to modernization efforts.

What continued efforts does the Army have planned?

Army Cybersecurity Awareness campaign will continue to provide opportunities for increased awareness and training in cybersecurity policies and best practices. The information and guidance will provide the Army community with the knowledge to protect mobile devices, networks at home and at work, and personal information from individuals and methods attempting to do harm.

It remains the responsibility of everyone — Soldiers, civilians, contractors, and family members — to remain vigilant in their cyber habits to maintain the most secure, up-to-date software, and behaviors.

As the Army looks to the future, cybersecurity will be a key component of all modernization efforts. Each new technology, system, and weapons platform will incorporate cybersecurity to guarantee system integrity and ensure overmatch in future conflicts. Commanders will encourage these considerations in mission planning and support resources for cybersecurity training, guidance, and policy.

Why is this important to the Army?

Cybersecurity ensures the Army is ready to fight and win in all domains. Achieving superiority in the physical domains depends on securing critical infrastructure like networks, systems, and information from adversaries. As technology reaches into all aspects of work and homes, commanders and individuals must be vigilant and accountable, and incorporate cybersecurity best practices into their everyday lives, and into every device.

Each one of us needs to do our part to make sure that our online lives are kept safe. That's what Cybersecurity Awareness Month is all about! Visit the following website for more information: <https://staysafeonline.org/cybersecurity-awareness-month>

Safety Corner: Enjoy a Safe and Healthy Fall Season

From the National Safety Council Website

What You Can Do to Avoid the Flu

Fever, headache, fatigue, dry cough, sore throat, stuffy nose, nausea: If these symptoms hit, you may have been bitten by the flu bug.

Who is Most Vulnerable?

People over age 65 are at a greater risk for flu-related illness and death, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Children younger than 5 also are at high risk.

An Epidemic Every Year

Flu season occurs in the fall and winter, peaking between late November and early March, and it's an epidemic every year. The makeup of flu viruses can change from year to year, making it difficult to predict. Flu spreads through droplets when people sneeze or cough, and on surfaces. People are contagious one day before symptoms appear and up to a week after. When you don't feel well, it's best to take care of yourself and co-workers by staying home. And don't go back to work (or school) for at least 24 hours after a fever is gone.

You Can Stay Healthy

CDC recommends everyone older than 6 months get a flu vaccine as soon as the vaccine becomes available; October is the ideal time to get vaccinated, but it's never too late.

- If you don't like needles, ask your doctor if a nasal flu spray is available



- Avoid being around sick people if possible
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer
- Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing, preferably with the inside of your arm rather than your hand
- Avoid touching your face
- Disinfect contaminated surfaces.

Death Rate From Flu is Hard to Calculate

It is difficult to calculate the number of flu

deaths annually, according to the CDC. States are not required to report flu deaths, not everyone who dies with flu symptoms is tested for flu, and the virus can cause death when other health conditions are present. About 5% to 20% of people in the U.S. get the flu each year. Flu-related deaths range from about 12,000 to 56,000 a year, depending on the severity of the outbreak.

The Most Dangerous Time to Drive

As we 'Fall Back' to Shorter Days, Take Extra Care on the Road

Shorter days, fatigue, compromised night vision, rush hour and impaired drivers are some of the risks we face when driving at night. These risks become especially pronounced moving into the weekend, with fatal crashes peaking on Saturday nights, according to NSC analysis of NHTSA data.

What should you do to combat darkness?

- Aim your headlights correctly, and make sure they're clean
- Dim your dashboard
- Look away from oncoming lights
- If you wear glasses, make sure they're anti-reflective
- Clean the windshield to eliminate streaks
- Slow down to compensate for limited visibility and reduced stopping time.



Equal Employment Opportunity

Getting Unconscious Bias into Consciousness

Story by: Neldia Watson, Chief, Equal Employment Opportunity Division
Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



We each make thousands of decisions every day, many of which are informed by implicit, or unconscious, biases; preconceived ideas we have formed over our lifetimes because of our past experiences.

We are unaware of our unconscious biases. Studies show that we often subconsciously hold prejudicial opinions toward certain people and groups of people based on demographics such as gender, age, and ethnicity. Factors like a job candidate's hometown or college alma mater may be sources of detrimental notions.

Unconscious biases, which can unintentionally affect hiring decisions in the workplace, can be the cause of big problems. Unconscious bias in the hiring process, or even the appearance of that bias – puts employers at risk of claims of discrimination.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits employers from intentional employment discrimination based on sex, race, color, national origin, or religion. Similarly, the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act offer

job-related protections for others. The law also prohibits employers from making decisions that have a disparate impact on members of a protected class. This can occur when, despite best intentions, a seemingly neutral rule or practice proves to adversely affect protected groups.

Supervisors and managers should make unconscious bias a part of our consciousness.

These steps will help to curb unconscious bias – and limit our organization's liabilities:

- Talk about it. Along with diversity training, you should provide managers and employees with training that helps them understand unconscious bias, acknowledge that we all have it, and recognize the ways it can manifest in the workplace.

- Educate managers about their own biases using the Harvard University Implicit Association Test, the best-known tool for measuring one's own unconscious bias. Research shows that people can take steps to mitigate the impact of unconscious bias on their organizational decision-making when they become aware

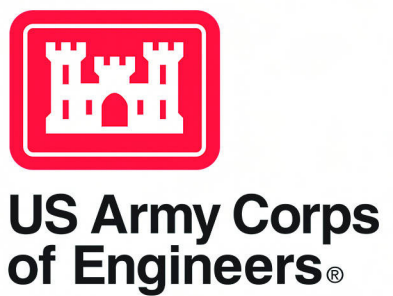
of that bias. Use objective, fact-based hiring techniques. Establish objective criteria and clear, consistent interviewing and decision-making procedures. Structured interviews, in which all candidates are asked the same questions, reduce bias that may show up in free-flowing interviews.

- Maintain accountability of hiring managers and supervisors with periodic evaluations of their hiring decisions and the employee performance interviews they conduct. These assessments will help you pinpoint areas where unconscious bias could be affecting hiring and employee management. Once these individuals have the right tools, they will be able to recognize biases and ensure that unfair or illegal motivations, even unconscious ones, do not impact hiring, job advancement or compensation decisions.

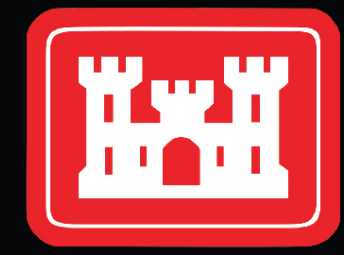
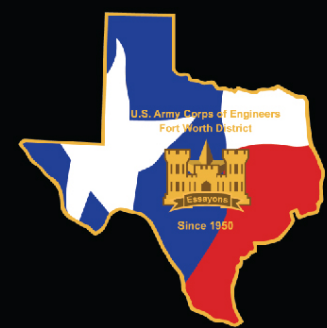
While it may be impossible to eliminate unconscious biases, taking these outlined conscious measures can help minimize the effects of implicit prejudice in our workplace.

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
FORT WORTH DISTRICT

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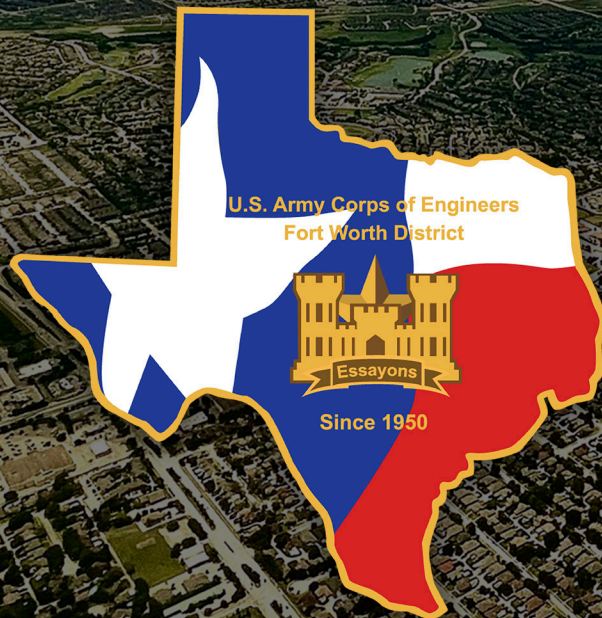


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