



Federal Executive Board *Minnesota*

The 33rd Annual Civil Servant of the Year Awards Program

*The Best In
The Business*

**Federal Employees
of the Year**

Awards

2010

The 33rd Annual
Civil Servant of the Year Awards Program

The Best In The Business

**Federal Employees
of the Year**

2010

Awards

*Printing Courtesy of
Veterans Affairs Regional Office*





The Federal Executive Board Minnesota

Policy Board Fiscal Year 2010

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Tom Melius
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Captain Steven DiNobile
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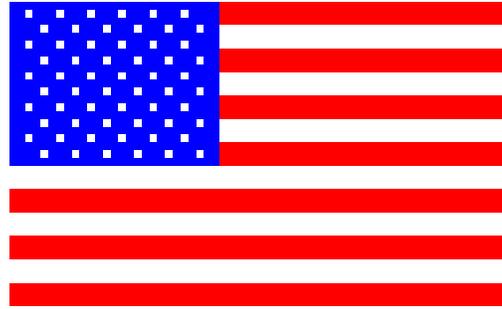
Robert DeWitt
Department of State - Minneapolis Passport Center

Judge Diane Townsend-Anderson
Social Security Administration

Derrell Turner
DOT - Federal Highway Administration

TBD
Food and Drug Administration

Diane Rosen
DOI - Bureau of Indian Affairs



Federal Employees of the Year Awards Program

This program honors outstanding Minnesota Federal employees who have demonstrated exceptional performance and dedication as a public servant during Fiscal Year 2009. It also honors Federal employees who have rendered voluntary time and service to the community in which they live.

We should all be proud of the many contributions to American society that the following individuals have performed in service to the Citizens of the United States of America.



Federal Executive Board Minnesota

presents the

2010 FINALISTS

for the
**Federal Employees of the Year
Awards**





Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Department of Agriculture

Amy Dolan
Financial Technician
Agricultural Research Service, St. Paul, Minnesota



Ms. Amy Dolan is the Financial Technician for the St. Paul Location, where she manages 23 management accounts which include soft funds totaling over \$9 million dollars. With the implementation of two new programs within ARS in the past year and another one on the way, Amy has met the challenge head on. Another duty Amy has played a huge role at the Location is travel coordinator. Amy has stepped in multiple times to take care of issues or complete necessary travel orders for visitors and employees. In the absence of her Supervisor, she has been designated the role of Acting Administrative Officer, and is capable of handling administrative duties for the employees. Ms. Dolan is truly an asset to the Location and very deserving of this award!

Larry Winkelman
IT Specialist (Customer Support)
Agricultural Research Service



Mr. Larry Winkelman has served as a church elder and treasurer, helping decide where funds might be given, such as the Food Shelf, Crisis Pregnancy Center and community events. Mr. Winkelman annually provides an Excel Spreadsheet for Physical Education teachers to track their students' "miles" program. The program summarizes and totals data, saving the department many hours of manual calculations. Mr. Winkelman restored and maintains wetland and native grass acres. He constructed and annually maintains wood duck/merganser houses and winter wildlife feeders. He serves as the laboratory's Environmental Officer, coordinating lab recycling and greening efforts. He also promotes recycling to friends and family, especially at group gatherings. Larry mentored a family that was in a financial crisis to help them get out of debt.

Nathan Johnson
Contract Specialist
Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service



Nathan Johnson is the lead Contracting Officer on all media and advertising efforts for USDA APHIS efforts to educate the public about invasive species that pose a threat to our agriculture system. In this capacity, he has excelled at establishing innovative acquisition strategies to include the use of reverse quotations, resulting in high value, quality proposals and targeted awards in excess of \$7.7 million to Woman Owned Small Businesses, single handedly meeting APHIS' social-economic goal for this category. Nathan also is the contracting officer for the eradication and containment effort of the invasive Asian Long horned Beetle. He has negotiated complex multimillion dollar /multi-year contracts to support tree climbing surveys and trunk injection insecticide treatments for out breaks in New York and Massachusetts. Nathan is constantly complemented by both contractors and Government personnel on his quick, efficient, and superb solutions to all inquires and problems.

Elizabeth Johnson-Groth
Financial Management Analyst
Animal & Plant Health Inspection Specialist



Liz has been a dedicated employee of APHIS since 1991. In fiscal year 2009 Liz single-handedly reviewed and wrote administrative reports for more than 230 employee and tort claims, including adjudicating each claim under \$2,500. She researched and documented claims against the government in order to limit the government's liability. Liz is highly respected by both her co-workers and her customers. Liz is also active in the community. She has chaired or cochaired the biggest fund-raiser, an annual marathon, for her children's school with approximately 300 participants for the past four years. This event raises an average of \$32,000.00 for the school. Additionally, Liz is a parent booster for Cross Country and Track programs.



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Ida Kwok

**Administrative Support Assistant
Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service**

Recently, USDA implemented a new time and attendance and a travel system, resulting in confusion and frustration for HR employees. In 2009 Ida took the initiative to understand the new systems and create procedural instructions to reduce the burden for the employees she serviced. Additionally, Ida's pleasant attitude and strong organizational skills have allowed her to manage additional workload for the past several months effortlessly and has never missed a step in servicing her customers. She is appreciated by all 100 employees for whom she single-handedly provides administrative support. She works tirelessly to ensure everyone's administrative needs are met, without asking for anything in return. Ida is truly a valued employee and invaluable asset to our Human Resources office.



James Norrix

**Fleet and Equipment Specialist
Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service**

This year we had 2 huge additional buying activities for vehicles. The Special Budget Clearing Vehicle Buy spent a total of \$2,650,000.00 on green vehicles in a period of 4 weeks. The other giant buy was the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act purchase of 315 vehicles totaling \$5,188,000.00, which were purchased in the span of 3 weeks. Both of these extraordinary vehicle buys were tasked to Jim. After the purchases were completed, Jim needed to input them into our database, issue & send license plates, issue fleet cards, coordinate with programs, and get the old replacement vehicles to GSA points of collection for sale. Jim's efforts were extraordinary and made at a time of other pressing concerns. Jim's professionalism and customer service are an example to all.



Roger Clapp

**Area Specialist
Rural Development**

Roger Clapp has worked for USDA Rural Development for approximately 20 years. In the fall of 2000, Roger was promoted to the position of Area Specialist working in USDA's Community Programs Area for Northeast, Minnesota. Roger has been very instrumental in the past several years in providing Community program assistance to many of our American Indian Bands in the Northeast. Specifically Roger has assisted the Leech Lake Band in securing financing for their water system and several loans and grants to the Leech Lake Tribal College. In addition, Roger has worked very closely with the Bois Forte Band in securing financing for their sewer system and fire/rescue equipment. Roger's work has contributed to both Rural Development meeting its objectives in serving underserved groups and the Bands themselves being able to grow their communities in a positive fashion. Roger has represented USDA Rural Development in a very positive manner with the American Indian Bands of Northeast Minnesota.



Mary Snyder

**Human Resource Specialist
Rural Development**

Mary has served the employees of Rural Development in an outstanding manner. Mary has served the Federal Government for over 33 years. She has provided excellent customer service as Human Resources Manager to the staff of USDA Rural Development. Mary has an excellent work ethic, pays attention to detail, and is reliable and dependable. Mary has always provided timely advice to all employees with regards to a variety of issues including hiring, benefits, retirement, special emphasis programs, and also provides quality advice regarding employee rights and responsibilities. Mary ensures the agency follows the proper procedural regulations when hiring, paying attention to any special emphasis groups including veterans and minorities. Mary is truly one of the most dedicated employees on staff at the USDA Rural Development.

Department of Agriculture



Civil Servant of the Year Awards

Department of Agriculture

Jeff Hauer
Human Resources Specialist
USDA Food Safety Inspection Service



Jeff Hauer is soaring. The embodiment of conscientiousness, generosity, and kindness, he is an exemplary team player. Mr. Hauer brings to the table superb ideas for the betterment of process and circumstances alike; gifts wonderfully complimented by his initiative and drive to see a collective vision to fruition. Astute and empathic, he is often the first to offer a helping hand, gladly doing absolutely whatever is needed for the good of the team. He embraces challenges, capitalizes upon the learning opportunities and swiftly develops solutions. Despite substantive obstacles having presented personally or professionally, Mr. Hauer retains an optimism and motivation that is contagious. Concurrently humble and articulate, he is both a relationship builder and innovator. Cumulatively his commitment to servitude sets the standard of excellence.

Jim Axell
Visual Information Specialist
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service



Jim Axell is a Visual information Specialist with the USDA-NRCS in St. Paul, Minnesota. He is an exemplary employee with an extraordinary work effort! Jim is a highly motivated member of the public affairs team and consistently provides exceptional customer service to both the internal and external customers. Perhaps Jim's most important attribute is that he always responds to others in a cheerful, friendly manner and gives people the feelings that their issues are the most important. His "can-do" attitude is truly an inspiration to those he works with.

Gary Larson
District Conservationist
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service



Gary is a valued employee that does a great job of leading and managing the NRCS operations in Houston County. Mr. Larson continues to assist flood victims with erosion problems resulting from 2 Presidential Declared Disaster Events in 2007 and 2008. He directly provided the local agency leadership to direct both financial and engineering assistance to stabilize eroded banks from these storms that saved 10 private homes and businesses from tumbling down these same eroded banks into the river or flood plain below. "NRCS is the only local, state, or federal agency that delivered what they said they would after the storm," this according to the Mayor of Kokah. Gary continues to work diligently to address agricultural flood and erosion damages and assisted USDA invest another \$500,000 in 2009 to address these issues, while at the same time coordinating dedicated State of Minnesota dollars to repair flood damages through the conservation partnership. Gary is looked upon by local farmers and local units of government as the expert in addressing erosion and water quality issues across the landscape of Houston County. Gary is a devoted father and family man who has assisted with cub scouts as a den leader and has coached youth baseball.



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Carole Smith
 Tax Specialist
 Internal Revenue Service

Carole Smith’s dedication to public service has been exemplified by her career with the IRS, expertise in tax law and 13 years as a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance coordinator. Carole spends many hours each filing season educating volunteer tax preparers on the new tax law changes. Her enthusiasm to ensure low-income and elderly taxpayers have a free and accurate tax return filed is an immeasurable asset to the IRS and the community. On her own time, Carole goes above and beyond to assist taxpayers who have unusual circumstances and ensures they get accurate information and superior customer service. In addition to her dedication to the IRS and to the public, Carole still finds time to work in her neighborhood, church, and to care for an elderly family member. She is an inspiration to all who know and work with her.



Mitzi Steenberg
 Technical Assistant
 Internal Revenue Service

Mitzi Steenberg has been a rock to her engineering team during a time of great transition. She helped keep the group running while the manager was on assignment. She performs valuable research with specialized computer software, serving both her team and other departments in the agency. Mitzi chaired the Family Readiness Group, which supports military families during deployment. She planned events to prepare the soldiers and families for deployment and arranged for tax assistance during the filing season. She taught Girl Scouts about the troops in Iraq and arranged for their visit to the National Guard Army Base and a Black Hawk helicopter tour! All it takes is a “please, can you help?” And she is there. Mitzi is an example of a public servant who deserves recognition for her contributions at work and in the community.



Michelle Kielas
 Paralegal Specialist
 Department of Housing and Urban Development

Ms. Michelle Kielas is described at HUD as “Paralegal Specialist Extraordinary”. She provides thorough, timely, and complete legal reviews, research and support to three attorneys. She is always willing to take on other assignments and to assist other employees in the accomplishment of duties. Michelle, in her role as a coordinator for Government on Display at the Mall of America, assumes full responsibility for constructing the HUD display, scheduling staff and often staffing the booth herself, and serving as security for the event. She is a frequent volunteer in support of the community. She is an intake interviewer for the homeless at Project Homeless Connect and is always a volunteer for the Minnesota Special Olympic. Michelle exhibits an extraordinary commitment to HUD’s mission as her professional and community activities go beyond her official duties and serve as an example of the best of public service.



Paul Woxland
 Director of Multi-Family Housing
 Department of Housing and Urban Development

Paul Woxland, US HUD Director of Multi-Family Housing has spent the majority of his HUD career dedicated to developing and managing affordable multifamily housing. As an excellent leader he is capable of balancing the interests of his divisions and those of staff, lenders and developers. He makes difficult decisions on a daily basis with great thought and character to further the mission of the department. His sense of humor, mixed with his calm leadership style provides for a less stressful work environment even in uncertain and extremely busy times. HUD and its partners are fortunate to have such a talented, progressive leader, as are the recipients of affordable, safe and healthy housing.

Departments of The Treasury | Housing & Urban Development



Civil Servant of the Year Awards

Department of Defense



Kristin Borntrager
Supervisory Financial Analyst
Department of the Air Force - 934th Airlift Wing



As Supervisory Financial Analyst for the 934th Airlift Wing, Ms. Borntrager distinguished herself as an extremely effective steward of financial resources and was responsible for managing over \$65 million in appropriated funding for fiscal year 2009. Under her leadership, the budget section meticulously maintained accounting records for numerous separate and distinct appropriations ensuring accurate funds obligation and availability status. Her efforts were key to a successful fiscal year closeout for the wing. Kristin’s depth of understanding in government accounting systems has established her as an expert throughout the Air Force Reserve Command. She is a strong mentor for her employees and never tires of providing the guidance they need to be successful in their jobs. Kristin is a valuable employee and an exceptional Civil Servant.

Darcee Copus-Sabart
Supervisor, Contract Specialist
Department of the Air Force - 934th Airlift Wing



Darcee is an extremely talented Contracting Officer. As a direct result of her professional skills, the 934th Airlift Wing awarded \$4.5 million in contracts with another \$17 million pending assignment for fiscal year 2009. This current budget outpaces fiscal year 2008 by 125%. Darcee has extensive technical knowledge. She is the “go to person” for all local contracting issues and is known as one of the best Contracting Officers within the Air Force Reserve. Darcee is an exceptional manager. Faced with personnel shortages and strict time lines, she consistently delivers an outstanding product and service. Darcee’s contribution to the Air Force Mission is significant. The operational status of the base remains proficient due to her hard work and dedication.

Peter DeSanctis
Instrument & Flight Control Supervisor
Department of the Air Force - 934th Airlift Wing



Mr. Desanctis performed brilliantly as Maintenance Group Quality Assurance inspector. He skillfully managed 28 Technical Order accounts and the Time Compliance Technical Order program. He has conducted numerous Personnel Evaluations, Quality Verification Inspections and Special Inspections ensuring unit was compliant with Air Force directives. Peter was temporarily selected as Avionics Communications and Navigations supervisor during the Wing’s deployment to Iraq. At home station his instrumental management skills directly contributed to the unit maintaining the best C-130 aircraft Mission Capable rate in the Air Force Reserve Command during this period all the while still performing his Quality Assurance duties. Peter serves as Vice Commander for American Legion Post 121, River Falls, Wisconsin and organizes a variety of charity events to include construction of a Veterans Memorial.

Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Mark Himmer

**Chief, Career Enhancement
Department of the Air Force - 934th Airlift Wing**

Mark is the #1 go-to person in the unit; always gets it done right the first time, in half the time; most proactive member. Has unmatched ability and professionalism under pressure. Extreme diligence and consistent management of Career Enhancement programs ensured the strongest section in the MPF. Mark receives unending kudos from unit commanders regarding his performance, professionalism, efficiency and guidance. He is called upon to work outside his primary duty to bolster other sections in MPF; fits in anywhere to get job done and understands the 'big picture'. Coordinated and manages commuter van pool for 9 commuters; saves average of \$300/person/month in fuel. For past 3 years Mark has opened home to foster children, 1 baby and family of 5 children.



Haroon Pasha

**General Engineer/Program Integrator
Defense Contract Management Agency - Twin Cities**

Mr. Haroon Pasha has been an outstanding DCMA Twin Cities employee for 26 years. During 2009, Haroon distinguished himself through exceptional performance as Property Specialist deployed in support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM to Kuwait from 23 January to 21 October. He was instrumental in supporting two property transitions between contractors for 70,000+ line items worth over \$98M at 10 Army Camps. He investigated 235+ lost, damaged or destroyed items ensuring a viable corrective action plan that resulted in a positive trend in the contractor's property control system. His ability to speak several languages, including Urdu and Punjabi, was instrumental in his ability to deal with third country nationals and he was often used as a translator above and beyond his assigned duties.



Adan Sylva

**Lead Quality Assurance Specialist
Defense Contract Management Agency - Twin Cities**

Mr. Adan Sylva has been an exceptional DCMA Twin Cities employee for 26 years. In 2009, he distinguished himself through exceptional performance and leadership as senior quality assurance specialist (QAS) for a team covering 400+ contractors across 8 states. With 9 of 17 QASs having less than 2 years DCMA experience, Adan created a detailed, comprehensive on-the-job training package to ensure consistent, effective and timely training. During 2009, 6 QASs were certified to accept critical/complex parts, reducing the burden on other QASs who had been traveling extensive miles to accept product in the interim. Advising the buying office and contractor, Adan was instrumental in the reduction of safety critical F-18 holdback bar defects. Rejects were reduced from 35% to under 5% on 5000+ inspections conducted.

Department of Defense



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Department of Defense

Shannon Bauer

**Deputy Public Affairs Officer and Media Specialist
Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District**



**US Army Corps
of Engineers.**

Shannon Bauer constantly and consistently made sure the people living in the Red River basin were told what the Army Corps of Engineers were doing to protect their lives and property during the 2009 flood fight. She directed her public affairs team in Fargo for 64 days, spread over three tours of duty, to get the word out to media in Minnesota and North Dakota and around the world. Aside from her full-time Corps job, Shannon serves her country as an Air Force Reserve senior NCO during wartime about 40-45 days and nights annually. Shannon still finds time to mentor young people as a member of the Civil Air Patrol. Shannon Bauer is always serving the American public, on-duty and off-duty.

Tim Bertschi

**Supervisory Program Manager
Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District**



**US Army Corps
of Engineers.**

Early in 2009, the Red River basin was known to have a high potential for flooding. Tim help lead pre-flood workshops for communities in the basin, ensured Corps resources were propositioned, and coordinated assignment of personnel. As flooding began, blizzard conditions challenged flood-fight efforts. Response efforts were further complicated when the National Weather Service raised second crest predictions by 2 feet. Under Tim's leadership, contractors and Corps staff met this challenge and were able to raise levees. More than 30 communities reached major flood stage. Under Tim's oversight and his tireless hours of service, no community had major damage. Initial estimates indicate over \$2.99 billion dollars in damages were avoided in the basin as a result of the successful 2009 flood-fighting efforts led by Tim.

Michael Leshar

**Civil Engineer
Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District**



**US Army Corps
of Engineers.**

During 2009 Mike was an integral part of the successful flood fight for Fargo-Moorhead and provided technical leadership for the design of a project to provide robust and implementable long-term flood protection for the approximately 200,000 residents of these communities. Mike has more than 30 years of experience and is well respected by his team members and throughout the Red River basin. In 2009 his knowledgeable and respectful contribution to numerous meetings with stakeholders was a major reason the Fargo-Moorhead study stayed on schedule and has been well received. Throughout 2009, Mike would mentor, assist, and care for his fellow team members to ensure they were able to develop the best technical information for this study and for the rest of their careers.



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



**US Army Corps
of Engineers.**

Thomas Novak

**Park Manager
Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District**

Throughout 2009, Tom exemplified standards and values are associated with the ideal civil servant. He led work activities using volunteers to accomplish backlogged projects within a recreation area and partnered with the Friends of Pool 9 Mississippi River Group to conduct a successful cleanup in the vicinity of Blackhawk Park. Due to potential shortfalls in funding, a permanent ranger position remained vacant, requiring Tom to pick up the workload, which he did in a professional and selfless manner. For years Tom has been "community minded" and 2009 was no different. His service in a community church and school and his active participation as treasurer of a nonprofit fundraising organization are actions that truly represent a good civil servant!



Mark Lamb

**Individual Protective Equipment NCOIC
Minnesota Air National Guard - 133rd Logistics
Readiness Squadron**

Mark's accomplishment aided immeasurably in the success of Individual Protective Equipment Section of the Logistics Readiness Squadron. He was instrumental in the roll out of Training Business Area establishing Master Task Lists and Master Training Plans for the Asset Management Flight. He established a deployed logistics training program to ensure his subordinates were worldwide deployable. Due to Mark's knowledge and leadership ability he was selected to lead a four Airman tasking to Al Udeid Air Base Qatar. Served as the NCOIC of Centralized Intermediate Repair Facility (CIRF) Supply managing over 1800 line items and maintained a 99% inventory accuracy rate. At home station he led the building, inspecting and issuance of 724 mobility bags to 133rd personnel deploying to 17 different countries with zero discrepancies.

Department of Defense



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Department of Defense

Ryan Blazevic

**148th Fighter Wing
Minnesota Air National Guard**



Lt. Blazevic has been invaluable to the Wing in both his job performance and community involvement insofar as volunteerism. He has given, and continues to give, vast amounts of his personal time to organizations such as; The Boy Scouts of America, The Special Olympics, American Red Cross as well as an active volunteer at St. Michaels Catholic School. Lt. Blazevic has spearheaded the “Recycle Minnesota” Recycling Association of Minnesota program here at the 148th Fighter Wing. This program is reducing plastic and glass that would end up in landfills. This program also involves the use of mentally challenged adults to broaden their horizons and enrich their experiences.

Nicole Marie Martland

**Information Security Specialist & acting State Security Manager
MN Air National Guard- Intelligence & Security Directorate**



She distinguished herself by meticulously reviewing over 12 separate regulations that led to critical identification of state procedural deficiencies in information and personnel security. She processes security clearances for over 50 units with approximately 1500 personnel. She makes unbiased, judicious decisions regarding security clearances that comply with legal regulations. Her conduct presents the organization in a favorable and ethical manner allowing for the trust of all clients. Her work load increased 23.5% in FY 09. Despite losing one person from her team, she has taken on two additional duties. She selflessly seeks to identify and correct problems that affect others and recommends viable solutions. She trained 100 security managers fostering improved processing of security packets, effective management of personnel security programs and increased soldier readiness.

Cassie McCane

**Family Programs Assistant
MN Air National Guard-Deployment Cycle Support**



Cassie McCane is the 2009 Civil Servant of the Year. Cassie is responsible for contracting actions for the Minnesota National Guard’s Deployment Cycle Support Branch. She has played a vital role in the successful planning and execution of the nationally renowned Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Program. During 2009, Cassie coordinated contracting for 27 Yellow Ribbon training events, attended by more than 10,000 MNARNG Soldiers and family members, as well as over 1,000 United States Marine Corp Reserve Marines and families. Her direct influence in venue, menu, and lodging selection led to a 99% positive feedback rating in these categories from event attendees. Her attention to detail, professionalism, and ability to plan outstanding events is without peer. Cassie’s actions have made Minnesota the national leader for Yellow Ribbon training.

Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Christopher Irvin

**Personnel Specialist First Class
Navy Operational Support Center, Minneapolis**

Petty Officer Irvin is the backbone of the Manpower Department for a large Navy Operational Support Center of 22 Reserve Units comprised of 750 Drilling Reservists and 26 Full Time Staff members. He continually seeks out demanding jobs and consistently performs them at the level of the next higher pay grade. His professional demeanor and superior customer service skills are what makes this Sailor stand out above his peers. He continually strives to improve, not only his working environment, but his fellow co-workers through mentorship and training. Under his guidance, the Manpower Department has significantly increased their productivity level, as well as their professionalism. He is genuinely most deserving of the recognition afforded by his selection as CY 2009 Minnesota Civil Servant of the Year.



Brian Loxtercamp

**Gas Turbine Systems Technician First Class
Navy Operational Support Center, Minneapolis**

Petty Officer Loxtercamp consistently displayed the highest standards of personal dedication in the performance of his duties with the Navy Reserve. His exceptional skills and initiative were critical to the numerous successes of his Reserve Unit. His leadership and management resulted in maintaining the mobilization readiness of 76 Reserve Sailors. He also ensured the personal and professional development of his subordinates. His personal mentorship led to the promotions of 12 Sailors and award recognition of 5 Sailors in his charge. He is also very involved with the Patriot Guard, honoring fallen service members and orchestrating military homecomings. Petty Officer Loxtercamp is truly a motivated Sailor who is most deserving of the recognition afforded by his selection as CY 2009 Minnesota Civil Servant of the Year.



Robert Malewcki

**Supply Technician
Naval Reserve Officer's Training Corps, Univ. of Minnesota**

Robert Malewcki's performance as the University of Minnesota NROTC Supply Technician has been outstanding. He expertly managed state and federal budgets totaling \$1.4M and completed FY09 with a 99.9% obligation rate. A national inspection team reviewed his uniform, property and instructional material inventories and found them in perfect order with 100% accountability. His programs were cited as the best the team had seen to date. During a Fleet Supply Center inspection, his financial records and accounting practices received a top rating further illustrating his meticulous attention to detail. An active member of the American Legion and VFW, he participated in numerous events in support of his community, and he also coached youth baseball and basketball positively impacting Minnesota's young men and women.

Department of Defense



Civil Servant of the Year Awards

Department of the Interior

Mervel Harris

**Acting Suprv. Legal Administrative Specialist
Bureau of Indian Affairs**



In 2009, Mr. Harris has been the consummate team player and contributed to the leadership success of the Agency in a time of transition. He spent most of 2009 Acting in two critical leadership roles and performed a detail to Central Office to lead a successful project. He accomplished all this while maintaining his base program. Mr. Harris served as Acting Deputy Regional Director, leading 6 diverse and complex programs. He severed as Acting Supervisory Legal Administrative Specialist, leading a highly visible probate program during a critical period as they addressed historic levels of case backlog. Between Acting roles, he supported Central Office to accomplishment a special project. Mr. Harris' willingness to step-up was key to the success of the Region in 2009.

Dan Dearborn

**Zone Fire Management Officer
Fish and Wildlife Service**



During the record setting flood events of the spring of 2009 in the Red River and its tributaries, the Fish and Wildlife Service was asked by local, State, and other emergency management officials for experienced airboat operators and crews. Airboats were needed to help evacuate homes, and protect property in the communities surrounding Fargo. Dan Dearborn, who has extensive incident command experience in the prescribed and wildfire suppression, was asked to coordinate the boat crew assembly and response efforts to support FEMA. He assumed incident command and directed the assembly and deployment of 22 experienced airboat operators, mechanics, and team leaders. For approximately six weeks airboat crews helped evacuate people and helped with relief and protection efforts. He fulfilled these duties skillfully and professionally bringing credit to Federal Service.

Jeffrey Gosse

**Fish and Wildlife Biologist – Regional Energy Coordinator
Fish and Wildlife Service**



Jeff Gosse sustained the highest level of professionalism and leadership throughout 2009 in his position as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Midwest Regional Energy Coordinator. Jeff helped coordinate selection of projects to protect migratory bird habitat in four states as part of a \$4 million conservation plan required by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, which was initiated by Jeff the previous year, for a major natural gas pipeline project. Jeff developed a \$1 million multi-years proposal under the Administration's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to identify important migratory bird areas in the Great Lakes to facilitate environmentally sensitive siting of wind projects. Jeff contributed to a national effort to develop wind project guidelines being developed by a Federal Advisory Committee

Ronald Wencil

**Geospatial Liaison
U.S. Geological Survey**



Ronald Wencil is the U. S. Geological Survey's Geospatial Liaison for Minnesota. He works with many of Federal, state and local agencies as well as academia and business. While his job involves gathering requirements for the National Mapping Program, he supports collaborative efforts among agencies. He represents the USGS on the Minnesota Statewide Geospatial Advisory Council, cochairs that Council's Digital Elevation Committee and participates in numerous technical coordination groups. Ron is often the lead person for USGS exhibits and displays, including the annual FEB Government on Display Expo. He coordinates the USGS exhibit and presents at the annual Minnesota GIS Conference. Ron is the "go to" guy for many map-related inquiries and always responds to information requests in a thorough and professional way.

Civil Servant of the Year Awards



James Husaby

Hydrologist
National Weather Service- NRCFC

Jim Husaby is a tremendous asset to the North Central River Forecast Center. Jim's "service above self work ethic" is ever-present. In many cases the past year Jim has adjusted his schedule, staying past his tour of duty, worked unscheduled weekends, sacrificing his family life to meet the NWS mission. Jim is the consummate team player who excels both as a leader and follower. Jim continuously strives for improvement, readily volunteers solving problems, seeking new challenges, and learning new skills, no matter how challenging, or mundane. Jim represents the NWS in a professional manner. Jim's great attitude rubs off on the rest of the staff. Countless staff and NWS customers have forwarded kudos regarding his positive attitude, customer focused approach, professionalism and high quality work.



James Richardson

Senior Meteorologist
National Weather Service- WFO

James Richardson provides excellent leadership to the NWS staff. Jim is a fantastic asset for the office in many ways. He is an outstanding forecaster, continually learning and applying new techniques. His attitude is great, not engaging in negative thinking. He stays calm under pressure, and is a great mentor to new employees. He furthers hydrometeorologic knowledge and outreach by teaching scouts how to analyze a weather map, providing weather safety information at Fire Department Open Houses, and promoting NWS services at the Mall of America, and state fair booths. He is one of the main players in planning the Skywarn Recognition Day with Amateur Radio and is very active in the recruitment of storm spotters, and improving communications and procedures, all benefiting the NWS.



Terrence Beltz

Information Management / Marketing Specialist
Federal Highway Administration

Terrence Beltz should be recognized for his contributions to Division Office accomplishments and team spirit. Terrence has contributed greatly to organizational accomplishments this year. Terrence developed and completed the Division Office webpage, compiled the Division Office Accomplishments Report and developed the 2010 Unit Plan. Always willing to assume additional responsibilities, he is a team player. Terrence was invaluable in updating, revising and organizing the Professional Development Program information for use at the Transportation Career Fair. It was through his innovation and creativity that the information was presented and displayed in a professional and attractive manner. He has shown leadership in providing training for new employees. Terrence has been active in initiatives to improve the office environment through his work on the Awards Committee and Division Leadership Team.

Departments of the Commerce | Transportation



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Department of the Transportation

Kathleen Karsten
Air Traffic Control Specialist
Federal Aviation Administration



In addition to performing the tasks associated with her position as an Air Traffic Controller, Kathie volunteered to take on extra assignments that ultimately helped the Agency achieve its mission. Kathie spent many hours coordinating aviation-related activities. She recruited volunteers and helped set up speaking engagements and career fairs. She served as the facility Internship Program Coordinator soliciting, interviewing, and helping set up program objectives. Kathie also volunteered to support the Annual Government on Display Exhibit (GODE) held at the Mall of America. Kathie stepped up to support this effort in the face of numerous unresolved issues. Kathie's contributions to this effort resulted in a successful GODE attended by more than 300,000. Kathie also volunteers with the Girl Scouts, school and at her church.

Kandice Krull
Environmental Protections Specialist
Federal Aviation Administration



Kandice improved the environmental process required for all Federal airport grant projects. She developed and conducted environmental workshops for state aviation personnel, airport owners and consultants. These workshops provided an avenue to interact with customers and help them gain a greater understanding of the environmental process. This enhanced document submission and reduced environmental review times. Collaborating with colleagues, she developed a region-wide condensed environmental process for smaller projects that is less cumbersome while upholding requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, which also reduced costs associated with environmental documents. Finally, the FAA's grant funding increased 40% due to passing of the Federal economic recovery program. Kandice provided timely environmental reviews for airport projects and allowed the FAA to meet stringent deadlines associated with this funding.

Joseph Potter
Southeast Minnesota System Support Center Manager
Federal Aviation Administration



Joe Potter is the manager of the Southeast Minnesota System Support Center which spans a third of Minnesota and a third of Wisconsin, the largest SSC in the Minneapolis District. His dedication to his work and his employees is evident every day he reports to work and many of his days off yet he still finds time to promote the FAA to the general public. He participates in Government on Display, Aviation Career Education and the Traffic Situation Display during holiday periods as appropriate. His active participation in these areas is done mostly during his time off of work. He is one of the strongest and most effective Federal Aviation advocates the Minneapolis District has and he wears the honor of serving the public proudly.

Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Robin Schroeder
Air Traffic Control Specialist
Federal Aviation Administration

Robin Schroeder deserves recognition as Civil Servant of the Year. She has demonstrated technical expertise, effective communications, a professional demeanor, and the ability to influence others. Robin strives to keep the lines of communication open with controllers, management officials, and members of other organizations. This open communications results in resolving issues at the lowest level with the least impact to operations and maximum benefit to all. Robin does not shy away from conflict; she constructively and professionally addresses controversial issues, seeking resolution in the best interest of all involved. Her willingness to solve problems encourages others and promotes teamwork. Robin's efforts to improve the workplace are not restricted to her primary duties as a controller; rather her focus remains on the facility as a whole.



William Szydlo
Air Traffic Control Specialist
Federal Aviation Administration

Bill, a Minneapolis Center air traffic controller since 1985 and adjunct faculty member at Inver Hills Community College the past 18 years, has designed and taught curriculum for four different air traffic courses. He serves as an aviation education advisor to MNDOT. Bill has been involved with IHCC Aviation Advisory Committee, Minnesota Post Secondary Aviation Educators Committee, and Rice County Restorative Justice Program mediating criminal/victim reconciliations. Bill serves on the Cannon Valley Regional Orchestra Board of Directors. As Northfield Youth Baseball Association President, he developed a program that advanced appropriate, supportive, and community based values for youth and adults. This program was recognized by the Healthy Community Initiative, in magazines and newspapers, interviews on NPR, featured on ABC TV, and presentations at NCAA youth conferences.



Debra Johnson
Wage Hour Investigator
Wage and Hour Division

During her second year Investigator Johnson completed investigations of exceptionally high quality, beyond what would be expected of someone with considerably more experience. She is very thorough and correctly applies the law. Her case files and reports are very clear, well organized and timely completed. She expertly interviews employees and employers, who at times are uncooperative, to obtain necessary information. Investigator Johnson very enthusiastically takes on more challenging assignments and thrives on learning and applying new laws and methods. She readily assumed the duties of coordinating investigator for an initiative of many locations of a nationwide corporation. This has all been done while working alone in a one person field station which covers a large area of northern MN.

Departments of Transportation | Labor



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Department of Veterans Affairs

Cindy Gerdes
Supervisory Program Specialist
VA Debt Management Center



Ms. Gerdes excels at her job accepting each new challenge as an opportunity to grow and learn. Her dedication and drive are reflected in her daily interactions with employees and managers. She never shies away from the difficult tasks and takes great pride in sharing her knowledge and assisting others in doing their jobs better and more efficiently. Her determination, along with her professional and leadership skills, makes her a valued and trusted employee who more than deserves the title of Civil Servant of the Year.

Amanda Tepfer
Veterans Service Representative
VA St. Paul Regional Office



As a Veterans Service Representative at the St. Paul VA Regional Office, Ms. Amanda (Mandy) Tepfer has mentored three co-workers, volunteered at the Minnesota Women’s Veterans Summit, and served on the VA Needy Family Committee raising funds for needy veterans.

In her community, Ms. Tepfer is the Assistant Director of the Family Support Group, Minnesota National Guard, First Battalion, 151st Field Artillery. In this role, she directs fund raising events and a resource network of support services for families who have a Guard member deployed to Iraq. Funds are used to send packages to deployed soldiers monthly. The resource network identifies services families may need including military and veterans benefits. Quarterly events are held for family members, with a “Coming Home” event planned for June 2010 Ms. Tepfer devotes her career and community time to serving veterans and their families.

Gary Stroshane
Accounts Receivable Technician
VA St. Paul Regional Office



Gary Stroshane provides exceptional service to our veterans. As an Accounts Receivable Technician at the St. Paul VA Regional Office for over twenty-nine years, Gary works tirelessly for veterans advocating for their rights. Gary annually completes hundreds of complex multi-year audits of compensation and pension payments and makes it a point to keep the veteran informed of the status of these audits. Annually, Gary accurately processes thousands of Check Tracers, Limited Payability payments, Month of Death payments, and State Cemetery Payments. Gary’s superior interpersonal skills, patience, and unequalled subject matter expertise has made him the “Go-to” person for VA employees. Mr. Gary Stroshane is a superior Federal Employee and pillar of the St. Paul VA Regional Office’s Support Services Division.

Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Anna Motzko

**Loan Technician
VA St. Paul Regional Office**

Anna Motzko is a Loan Technician at the VA St. Paul Regional Loan Center. She is an extremely dedicated employee who exhibits exceptional leadership skills and a high level of professionalism. In addition to being a committed VA employee, Anna is also very involved with the community. Since 2007, Anna has been a wish granter for the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Minnesota. She is responsible for specific children's wishes and serves as the main point of contact for families throughout the entire wish process. More recently, Anna was given the opportunity to take on a leadership role with the foundation, and she is now also training new wish granters. Anna's commitment to serving others is very evident through her government service and extensive volunteer work.



Mark Angell

**Engineering Technician
Minneapolis Medical Center**

Mark was dedicated to improving patient care through critical facility upgrades. She designed and constructed medical equipment room for Biomedical Engineering Service that became VISN standard. Mr. Angell managed complex replacement of 1100-ton chiller at Energy Center. The \$1,075,848 project was completed on time and under budget. He completed critical air conditioning project in computer server room to ensure that overheating issues were resolved and that there was 100% redundancy. Mr. Angell trained 3 new project managers in a section with only 5 personnel. He has been the bedrock for the section and ensured we met obligation and project goals. In total he completed six projects totaling \$7,960,000 including \$3,500,000 3T MRI installation and \$1,900,000 Hematology-Oncology renovation. He was routinely assigned most difficult projects and completes them with patients in mind!



Danyell Deckard

**Senior Radiologic Technologist-Fluoroscopy
Minneapolis Medical Center**

Danyell is in charge of the fluoroscopy area in Imaging at the VA Medical Center. She manages workflow, and provides direction and education to those technologists, students and residents in that area. She sets high standards for herself and passes that on to all she works with by her daily commitment to quality and patient care. She is highly respected by her coworkers, sought out by the students and appreciated by management and her patients. Because of her outstanding leadership, she was asked to consult in workflow issues in other areas of the Imaging dept. Her feedback and input has been invaluable.

Department of Veterans Affairs



Civil Servant of the Year Awards

Department of Veterans Affairs



Darleen Dewaay
Program Support Assistant
Minneapolis Medical Center



Darlene accomplishes a vast amount of administrative work every day to ensure that everything runs smoothly in the Medicine office. She is extremely accurate in everything she does. She is able to multi-task and does everything proficiently. She is courteous, respectful and is always willing to help others. She is the recorder of the Quality Management Council and is actively involved in the smooth operation of this committee. Darlene is involved in developing a new on-call schedule for the entire VA. She was coauthor of the instructions and also gave classes to the clerical support of the VA. She is a true team player and is always willing to learn new things.

Renee Forte
Lead Human Resources Assistant
Minneapolis Medical Center



Renee Forte's leadership, technical knowledge and attention to detail is truly superb and we are very fortunate to have her. With several new e-initiatives bestowed on our office within the past year, she has spent countless hours identifying and resolving system glitches, keeping the entire staff abreast of updates and new revelations as they occur. She is working with the frustrations of running a new payroll system simultaneously with the old with innumerable interface problems. She resolves these problems to ensure employees get paid and their records reflect accuracy. Renee has been instrumental in setting up electronic exit clearance system, conversion to E-OPF, WebHR system for electronic 52's and vacancy tracking/reporting. There are not adequate words to describe her selfless sharing and tireless assistance.

Chris Johnson
Radiology Technologist, Cardiac Catheterization Lab
Minneapolis Medical Center



Mr. Johnson provides outstanding service in his role in Cardiology in a number of ways, approaching all of his duties in a highly conscientious manner. He demonstrates excellent skills in both the technical and interpersonal aspects of his role. In addition to his duties in the cath lab, Mr. Johnson also contributes to the facility by teaching radiation physics in our radiology program, and radiation safety to other departments in the hospital. He has earned advanced certifications in his field, and was among the first to take a newly developed certification in electrophysiology.

In the community Mr. Johnson volunteers for the Big Brothers organization, and has trained in community ham radio operation. Mr. Johnson embodies the spirit of the Civil Servant of the Year Award.

Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Michael Kahler
Prosthetic Technician
Minneapolis Medical Center

Twin brothers, veterans both, are nominated jointly for Civil Servant of the Year 2010 in recognition of their dedication and outstanding service to VAMC patients presenting with wheelchair/mobility needs. They are admired by fellow employees, patients and families alike on the basis of their knowledge, work ethic, service delivery and patience. They have high professional standards and conduct themselves in a pleasant, courteous, and willing manner. Additionally, the Kahlers' are long time volunteers to the PVA Wheelchair Games held each summer at VA campuses across the United States. Their efforts keep the athletes in completion as they "Go for the Gold". This recognition is well deserved as the Kahler brothers are certainly valuable and much deserving Civil Servants.



Patrick Kahler
Prosthetic Technician
Minneapolis Medical Center

Twin brothers, veterans both, are nominated jointly for Civil Servant of the Year 2010 in recognition of their dedication and outstanding service to VAMC patients presenting with wheelchair/mobility needs. They are admired by fellow employees, patients and families alike on the basis of their knowledge, work ethic, service delivery and patience. They have high professional standards and conduct themselves in a pleasant, courteous, and willing manner. Additionally, the Kahlers' are long time volunteers to the PVA Wheelchair Games held each summer at VA campuses across the United States. Their efforts keep the athletes in completion as they "Go for the Gold". This recognition is well deserved as the Kahler brothers are certainly valuable and much deserving Civil Servants.



John Kangas
Housekeeping, Supervisor
Minneapolis Medical Center

John Kangas has shown superior performance in his duties as a housekeeping supervisor during FY09. His teacher-like qualities and patient-focused approach to cleaning describe his supervisory approach. His work with numerous Veterans Industries patients shows his commitment to the VA mission and his relentless work on finding the best way to provide a sanitary facility are noticed among his peers. In FY09 John had several projects he headed up including the installation of coreless toilet paper dispensers throughout the medical center, which has a direct reduction in waste and improves our green image. Throughout his work one can see distinguished work and superior performance

Department of Veterans Affairs



Civil Servant of the Year Awards

Department of Veterans Affairs

Endia Porter

**Administrative Officer, Education Service Line
Minneapolis Medical Center**



Endia Porter, a former Navy Corpsman stationed in North Carolina and Okinawa, is Administrative Assistant for Education Service. Endia efficiently manages many administrative functions, always meeting deadlines for reports. She manages approximately \$4-5 million of medical residency funding. Recently Endia evaluated a new system for residency payments. While performing audits, she discovered and corrected discrepancies, with her careful work resulting in substantial savings for the VA. Endia manages the non-nursing employee tuition programs, advertising the program to employees and ensuring that they are reimbursed as quickly as possible. Endia volunteered at the 2009 Paint-a-Thon and regularly assists an elderly woman with errands. She is currently completing her M.A. in Management. Colleagues value her effectiveness, integrity and humor.

Deb Smith-Wagner

**Extended Care & Rehab Social Work Supervisor
Minneapolis Medical Center**



Deb Smith Wagner is an excellent, supportive, hands on supervisor, one who is always willing to help. She's willing to step in on any difficult case and provide guidance. She supervises a large number of social workers, though always makes time for each of us as needed. She prioritizes her work to support the staff under her, never making us feel rushed or hurried. She goes the extra mile to make her staff feel supported and appreciated. She is a strong leader as well, never being afraid to speak out to support her staff as difficult case situations arise.

Deb is the kind of supervisor that employees always hope to have.. As a new social worker to the VA, I consider Deb a wonderful role model for my work within the VA.

Julie Stout

**Contracting Officer
Minneapolis Medical Center**



Dedicated contracting officer, always taking the "extra step" necessary to ensure the procurement needs of the MVAMC are met. Knowledge and understanding of the acquisition life cycle is unmatched, which makes her an incredible mentor to her co-workers and the programs she supports. She is highly motivated and consistently provides exceptional customer service to both internal and external customers. A true professional, team player, always willing to accept the most difficult tasks and additional work to help. Without hesitation, Julie volunteered to serve as the primary Contracting Officer for Recovery Act Projects while also maintaining her assigned workload of 200 active contracts. Julie's professionalism and positive attitude has enabled the MVAMC to successfully award much needed improvements to better serve out American Heroes.

Julie Tomaska

**Health Science Specialist
Minneapolis Medical Center**



Julie Tomaska continually demonstrates excellence with work tailored to the Veteran population in her civilian, military, and federal employee roles. As a civilian, she designed, implemented and currently directs two independent studies for the MN Air National Guard looking at the reintegration process as well as child behavior and family adaptability across the deployment cycle. Julie is a veteran of the OIF and a current member of the MN Air National Guard where she volunteers as a Unit Victim Advocate. She also works in her VA position on a VA-CSP Alzheimer's study where she identifies and utilizes resources for the study sites, Coordinating Center and, ultimately, our Veteran population. She has benchmarked the design of innovative materials for study staff, patients and caregivers.



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Katie Baas
Consumer Safety Technician
Food and Drug Administration

Katie Baas is a Consumer Safety Technician for the Food and Drug Administration. She provides support to approximately 100 employees that include Investigators and Supervisors which is an increase of approximately 40% from 2008. She generates and distributes several reports for use in work planning and achieving program goals. She also logs in all audit checks for the Investigations Branch. Katie also took on many duties of a position that was vacant the entire year of 2009. At the end of 2009 she took on a mentor role and provided training to new support staff. She always treats supervisors and peers respectfully and always work with a good attitude which fosters a pleasant work environment.



Catherine Leonard
Legal Instrument Examiner
Food and Drug Administration

Ms. Leonard is the heart of the MIN-DO Compliance Branch and its effective and efficient operations. Ms. Leonard's quiet competence and professionalism allow the branch to concentrate solely on compliance efforts that will protect the public. Without her we could still move forward but slowly and with a tremendous waste of time and effort. Ms. Leonard does the work of at least two people; handling the majority of correspondence leaving the district, tracking cases, fielding industry calls or locating important files. She coordinated the move to temporary offices on her own initiative to assure the rest of us could quickly return to our work. Ms. Leonard is as close to an indispensable civil servant as you will ever meet.



Warren LaPlante
Port Security Specialist
DHS - U.S. Coast Guard
Marine Safety Unit, Duluth

Mr. LaPlante has performed at exceptional levels throughout this period. Of particular achievement was his work with the Port Security Grant Program, where he guided the Duluth/Superior port area to obtain FEMA's Group II designation. Utilizing his superb communication skills, he obtained port-wide consensus to develop prioritized strategic initiatives for the next five years. Additionally, Mr. LaPlante, with less than one week notice, received, solicited for, and critiqued submissions for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant program; yielding approval for two projects totaling nearly \$500,000 and adding precious jobs to an area still recovering from record shutdowns in cargo exports. Due to Mr. LaPlante's phenomenal efforts, the twin ports' Area Maritime Security Committee was selected for the Minnesota Homeland Security and Emergency Management Award of Excellence for Outstanding Partnership; a positive reflection of this Command and our area stakeholders. Mr. LaPlante overall quality of work is unimpeachable.



Sandra Trianoski
Secretary
DHS - U.S. Coast Guard
Marine Safety Unit, Duluth

Demonstrating exemplary performance, Ms. Trianoski has continuously taken on added responsibility despite an already demanding workload. Utilizing exceptional logistical talent, she volunteered to coordinate and direct all aspects of a high profile memorial service and medal presentation commemorating the death of a Coast Guardsmen killed during a rescue attempt of three teenagers in Duluth, MN 40 years ago. Specifically, she put together a detailed program, designed, sent and tracked invitations; assisted family members of the deceased with travel and lodging; found an appropriate venue and procured funding. This event transpired into recognition at the National level as this Coast Guardsman's name will be added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington DC in May 2010. Valued for her writing expertise and insight into the various safety and security missions of Marine Safety Unit Duluth, she accepted the challenge to produce five recurring monthly reports to Coast Guard senior leadership. As the initial contact with the public, Ms. Trianoski's customer-centric attitude serves as a model of professionalism and is a positive reflection on the Command and the Coast Guard.

Departments of Health and Human Services | Homeland Security



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Department of Homeland Security

Ronald Kortz
Lead Transportation Security Officer
DHS - Transportation Security Administration



**Transportation
Security
Administration**

Ronald Kortz has provided exemplary leadership to the Minneapolis St. Paul International Airport as a Lead Transportation Security Officer working in the baggage department. Ron created an innovative method to track and account for millions of pieces of baggage transiting the MSP Airport. The result is a more efficient process and an enhanced security posture. LTSO Kortz was also recognized as the Firefighter of the Year in Becker, Minnesota. His comments while accepting the award speaks to his servant mentality – “being a firefighter allows me to be a person who can provide assistance to and help people, and that is very rewarding.” Ronald Kortz’ contributions and accomplishments in leadership and community make his well deserving of this award.

Thomas Boraas
Expert Coordination Center Officer
DHS - Transportation Security Administration



**Transportation
Security
Administration**

We recognize Thomas Boraas for his contribution and operational support to DHS HN1 Regional Coordination Team (RCT). Thomas was integral to the success of the team by creating comprehensive, daily, weekly, and situational updates for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Regional Coordination Team C and the Regional Team Leadership during the recent 2009 – 2010 H1N1 pandemic response . His personal efforts in researching, compiling, formatting and distributing these comprehensive briefings met requirements at all senior and executive levels for immediate notification and response actions. ECCO Thomas Boraas consistently provides immediate, outstanding administrative support for all levels of federal leadership. Not only is he a master of administrative and professional skills within his agency, but as a uniformed federal civil servant, he also demonstrates outstanding customer service and support.

Jessica Nielson
Supervisory Transportation Security Inspector
DHS - Transportation Security Administration



**Transportation
Security
Administration**

Jessica Nielson serves as a Supervisory Transportation Security Inspector for the TSA. In this capacity, she has inspired her team of Inspectors to achieve excellence in aviation security programs. Ms. Nielson is a tremendous leader who demonstrates the ability to partner with other Federal Government Agencies in order to get our mission accomplished. She has partnered with other DHS and local entities in programs such as the Visible Intermodal Response Program and Playbook activities, organizing team efforts to serve as a deterrent against terrorism to the aviation sector. Ms. Nielson is recognized as an individual who can pull a team together quickly to mitigate a threat with little or no guidance. She is truly deserving of this recognition.

Richard Hanson
Supervisory Transportation Security Officer
DHS - Transportation Security Administration



**Transportation
Security
Administration**

Richard Hanson has been the driving force in the development of the Transportation Security Administration’s safety program at Minneapolis St. Paul International Airport. Through his involvement the safety program has expanded from four individuals to a Safety Action Team of twenty dedicated safety officers. Richard is a champion of safety and is dedicated to ensuring all Officers operate under a culture where safety is vitally important. He ensures that safety information is distributed to all officers and also regularly attends work area shift briefings to discuss safety policies and procedures. Richard was also instrumental in the development and implementation our safety awards program. Richard’s commitment to the safety of his fellow TSA officers’ has played a significant part in the ongoing success of our safety program.

Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Kit Khammoungkhoun
Management & Information Analyst
DHS - Customs and Border Protection

Kit is a critical team member of the Personnel Systems Development team at the Minneapolis Hiring Center (MHC). Throughout his time at MHC, both as a contractor and as a Federal employee, Kit has shown a dedication to his work and a commitment to our Customs and Border Protection (CBP) mission. Kit is the only software engineer at MHC, without which our Personnel Systems Development team would not be able to do the many programming changes that the human resource staff requests of our automated application tracking system, which manages thousands of applications. Kit writes all of the stored procedures for MHC's tracking system as well as taking care of any technically complicated SQL programming. Kit has always helped the various branches within MHC and its employees and has always done so with a positive attitude. Moreover, Kit has always come through for the employees at MHC in times of high stress and short deadlines and has been one of the main reasons that MHC has met so many project deadlines.



Desiree Larson
Human Resources Specialist/Contracting Officers Technical Rep
DHS - Customs and Border Protection

Desiree is the Contracting Officer Technical Rep (COTR) for the Minneapolis Hiring Center (MHC). Due in part to her diligence working with the contractors for our medical, fitness and drug test contracts, MHC was able to meet the hiring goals mandated by the President. Desiree reviewed all invoices, ensuring there were no errors and then ensuring that there was enough money budgeted for each contract. Desiree has earned the respect of those that work with her, this includes not only fellow employees at the hiring center but also the employees of the contract companies we work with, employees from the CBP Headquarters office, as well as other DHS Agencies. Outside of work, Desiree also gives generously of her time. Thanksgiving was spent participating in The Walk to End Hunger. She also volunteered at a local restaurant preparing Thanksgiving meals for families in need. On Christmas Eve day you may find her delivering baskets of food and gifts around the Twin Cities to HIV/AIDS families for the Aliveness Project. Also, she regularly donates blood.



Davis Onken
Customs and Border Protection Officer
DHS - Customs and Border Protection

Officer Davis Onken has been a magnificent resource to Customs and Border Protection in 2009. Davis has over 37 years of government service and is often sought out to provide guidance to fellow co-workers, and also to the international trade community. Davis is the first to arrive and the last to leave work giving immeasurable hours to achieve the mission objectives of Customs and Border Protection. Davis's enthusiasm and productivity along with his organizational skills, knowledge and experience are beyond measure within Customs and Border Protection. Davis truly personifies what it means to be a Customs and Border Protection Officer and also a shining example of what it means to be a public servant.

Department of Homeland Security



Civil Servant of the Year Awards

Departments of Homeland Security | Justice

Gary Thomsen
Chief Agriculture Specialist
DHS - Customs and Border Protection



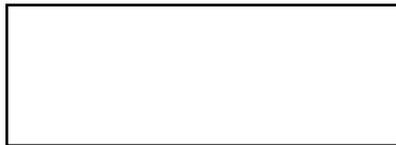
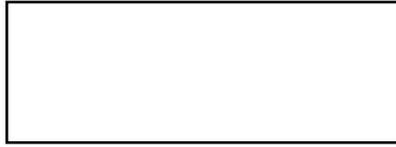
Gina Tuccelli
Secretary for the Special Agent In Charge
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives



Patricia Zepeda
Secretary for the Assistant Special Agent In Charge
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives







FD-36



FBI



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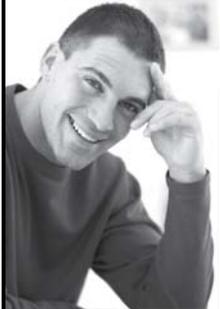
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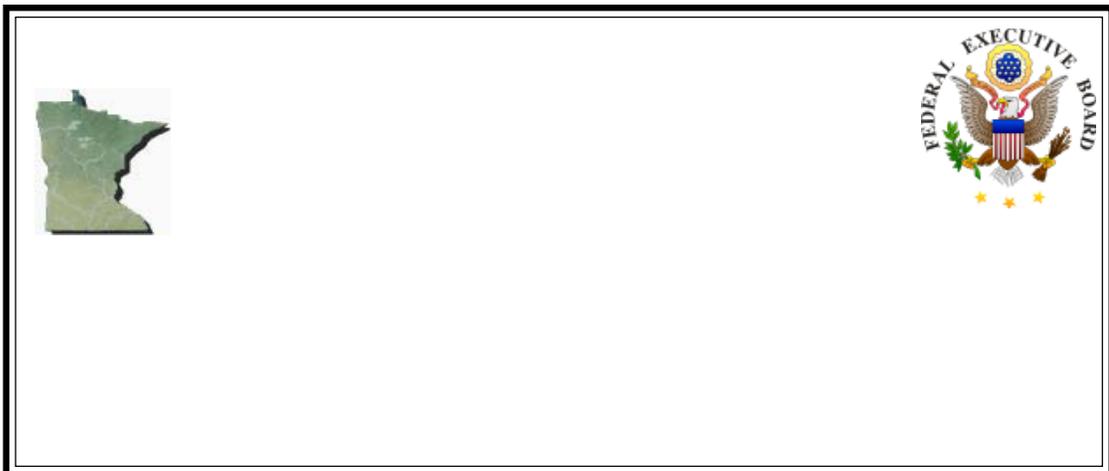


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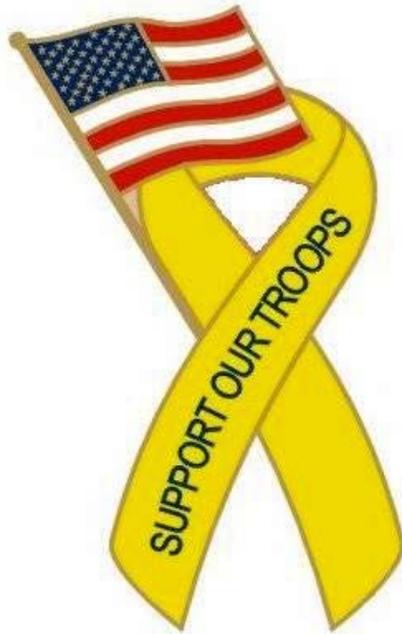
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USA



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73





Federal Executive Board *Minnesota*

The 33rd Annual

Civil Servant of the Year Awards Program

*The Best In
The Business*

**Federal Employees
of the Year**

Awards

2010

The 33rd Annual
Civil Servant of the Year Awards Program

The Best In The Business

**Federal Employees
of the Year**

2010

Awards

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The Federal Executive Board Minnesota

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Nancy Libersky
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Dexter Sidney
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Steven Kleinglass
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Kenneth Kasprisin
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Jeff Stoner
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USDA - Grain Inspection Services

Pat Culhane
General Services Administration

Anthony Williams
U.S. Postal Service, Northland District

Barry Chait
DHS- Immigration and Customs Enforcement

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DOJ - Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

Tom Melius
DOI - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Captain Steven DiNobile
U.S. Navy ROTC Detachment

Captain Kevin Hempel
U.S. Navy Operational Support Center

Paul Labovitz
DOI - National Park Service

Pat Culhane
General Services Administration

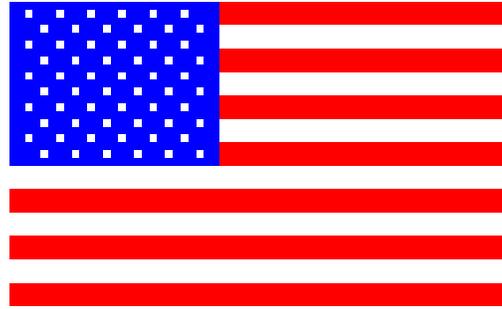
Robert DeWitt
Department of State - Minneapolis Passport Center

Judge Diane Townsend-Anderson
Social Security Administration

Derrell Turner
DOT - Federal Highway Administration

TBD
Food and Drug Administration

Diane Rosen
DOI - Bureau of Indian Affairs



Federal Employees of the Year Awards Program

This program honors outstanding Minnesota Federal employees who have demonstrated exceptional performance and dedication as a public servant during Fiscal Year 2009. It also honors Federal employees who have rendered voluntary time and service to the community in which they live.

We should all be proud of the many contributions to American society that the following individuals have performed in service to the Citizens of the United States of America.



Federal Executive Board Minnesota

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2010 FINALISTS

for the
**Federal Employees of the Year
Awards**





Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Department of Agriculture

Amy Dolan
Financial Technician
Agricultural Research Service, St. Paul, Minnesota



Ms. Amy Dolan is the Financial Technician for the St. Paul Location, where she manages 23 management accounts which include soft funds totaling over \$9 million dollars. With the implementation of two new programs within ARS in the past year and another one on the way, Amy has met the challenge head on. Another duty Amy has played a huge role at the Location is travel coordinator. Amy has stepped in multiple times to take care of issues or complete necessary travel orders for visitors and employees. In the absence of her Supervisor, she has been designated the role of Acting Administrative Officer, and is capable of handling administrative duties for the employees. Ms. Dolan is truly an asset to the Location and very deserving of this award!

Larry Winkelman
IT Specialist (Customer Support)
Agricultural Research Service



Mr. Larry Winkelman has served as a church elder and treasurer, helping decide where funds might be given, such as the Food Shelf, Crisis Pregnancy Center and community events. Mr. Winkelman annually provides an Excel Spreadsheet for Physical Education teachers to track their students' "miles" program. The program summarizes and totals data, saving the department many hours of manual calculations. Mr. Winkelman restored and maintains wetland and native grass acres. He constructed and annually maintains wood duck/merganser houses and winter wildlife feeders. He serves as the laboratory's Environmental Officer, coordinating lab recycling and greening efforts. He also promotes recycling to friends and family, especially at group gatherings. Larry mentored a family that was in a financial crisis to help them get out of debt.

Nathan Johnson
Contract Specialist
Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service



Nathan Johnson is the lead Contracting Officer on all media and advertising efforts for USDA APHIS efforts to educate the public about invasive species that pose a threat to our agriculture system. In this capacity, he has excelled at establishing innovative acquisition strategies to include the use of reverse quotations, resulting in high value, quality proposals and targeted awards in excess of \$7.7 million to Woman Owned Small Businesses, single handedly meeting APHIS' social-economic goal for this category. Nathan also is the contracting officer for the eradication and containment effort of the invasive Asian Long horned Beetle. He has negotiated complex multimillion dollar /multi-year contracts to support tree climbing surveys and trunk injection insecticide treatments for out breaks in New York and Massachusetts. Nathan is constantly complemented by both contractors and Government personnel on his quick, efficient, and superb solutions to all inquires and problems.

Elizabeth Johnson-Groth
Financial Management Analyst
Animal & Plant Health Inspection Specialist



Liz has been a dedicated employee of APHIS since 1991. In fiscal year 2009 Liz single-handedly reviewed and wrote administrative reports for more than 230 employee and tort claims, including adjudicating each claim under \$2,500. She researched and documented claims against the government in order to limit the government's liability. Liz is highly respected by both her co-workers and her customers. Liz is also active in the community. She has chaired or cochaired the biggest fund-raiser, an annual marathon, for her children's school with approximately 300 participants for the past four years. This event raises an average of \$32,000.00 for the school. Additionally, Liz is a parent booster for Cross Country and Track programs.



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Ida Kwok

**Administrative Support Assistant
Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service**

Recently, USDA implemented a new time and attendance and a travel system, resulting in confusion and frustration for HR employees. In 2009 Ida took the initiative to understand the new systems and create procedural instructions to reduce the burden for the employees she serviced. Additionally, Ida's pleasant attitude and strong organizational skills have allowed her to manage additional workload for the past several months effortlessly and has never missed a step in servicing her customers. She is appreciated by all 100 employees for whom she single-handedly provides administrative support. She works tirelessly to ensure everyone's administrative needs are met, without asking for anything in return. Ida is truly a valued employee and invaluable asset to our Human Resources office.



James Norrix

**Fleet and Equipment Specialist
Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service**

This year we had 2 huge additional buying activities for vehicles. The Special Budget Clearing Vehicle Buy spent a total of \$2,650,000.00 on green vehicles in a period of 4 weeks. The other giant buy was the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act purchase of 315 vehicles totaling \$5,188,000.00, which were purchased in the span of 3 weeks. Both of these extraordinary vehicle buys were tasked to Jim. After the purchases were completed, Jim needed to input them into our database, issue & send license plates, issue fleet cards, coordinate with programs, and get the old replacement vehicles to GSA points of collection for sale. Jim's efforts were extraordinary and made at a time of other pressing concerns. Jim's professionalism and customer service are an example to all.



Roger Clapp

**Area Specialist
Rural Development**

Roger Clapp has worked for USDA Rural Development for approximately 20 years. In the fall of 2000, Roger was promoted to the position of Area Specialist working in USDA's Community Programs Area for Northeast, Minnesota. Roger has been very instrumental in the past several years in providing Community program assistance to many of our American Indian Bands in the Northeast. Specifically Roger has assisted the Leech Lake Band in securing financing for their water system and several loans and grants to the Leech Lake Tribal College. In addition, Roger has worked very closely with the Bois Forte Band in securing financing for their sewer system and fire/rescue equipment. Roger's work has contributed to both Rural Development meeting its objectives in serving underserved groups and the Bands themselves being able to grow their communities in a positive fashion. Roger has represented USDA Rural Development in a very positive manner with the American Indian Bands of Northeast Minnesota.



Mary Snyder

**Human Resource Specialist
Rural Development**

Mary has served the employees of Rural Development in an outstanding manner. Mary has served the Federal Government for over 33 years. She has provided excellent customer service as Human Resources Manager to the staff of USDA Rural Development. Mary has an excellent work ethic, pays attention to detail, and is reliable and dependable. Mary has always provided timely advice to all employees with regards to a variety of issues including hiring, benefits, retirement, special emphasis programs, and also provides quality advice regarding employee rights and responsibilities. Mary ensures the agency follows the proper procedural regulations when hiring, paying attention to any special emphasis groups including veterans and minorities. Mary is truly one of the most dedicated employees on staff at the USDA Rural Development.

Department of Agriculture



Civil Servant of the Year Awards

Department of Agriculture

Jeff Hauer
Human Resources Specialist
USDA Food Safety Inspection Service



Jeff Hauer is soaring. The embodiment of conscientiousness, generosity, and kindness, he is an exemplary team player. Mr. Hauer brings to the table superb ideas for the betterment of process and circumstances alike; gifts wonderfully complimented by his initiative and drive to see a collective vision to fruition. Astute and empathic, he is often the first to offer a helping hand, gladly doing absolutely whatever is needed for the good of the team. He embraces challenges, capitalizes upon the learning opportunities and swiftly develops solutions. Despite substantive obstacles having presented personally or professionally, Mr. Hauer retains an optimism and motivation that is contagious. Concurrently humble and articulate, he is both a relationship builder and innovator. Cumulatively his commitment to servitude sets the standard of excellence.

Jim Axell
Visual Information Specialist
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service



Jim Axell is a Visual information Specialist with the USDA-NRCS in St. Paul, Minnesota. He is an exemplary employee with an extraordinary work effort! Jim is a highly motivated member of the public affairs team and consistently provides exceptional customer service to both the internal and external customers. Perhaps Jim's most important attribute is that he always responds to others in a cheerful, friendly manner and gives people the feelings that their issues are the most important. His "can-do" attitude is truly an inspiration to those he works with.

Gary Larson
District Conservationist
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service



Gary is a valued employee that does a great job of leading and managing the NRCS operations in Houston County. Mr. Larson continues to assist flood victims with erosion problems resulting from 2 Presidential Declared Disaster Events in 2007 and 2008. He directly provided the local agency leadership to direct both financial and engineering assistance to stabilize eroded banks from these storms that saved 10 private homes and businesses from tumbling down these same eroded banks into the river or flood plain below. "NRCS is the only local, state, or federal agency that delivered what they said they would after the storm," this according to the Mayor of Kokah. Gary continues to work diligently to address agricultural flood and erosion damages and assisted USDA invest another \$500,000 in 2009 to address these issues, while at the same time coordinating dedicated State of Minnesota dollars to repair flood damages through the conservation partnership. Gary is looked upon by local farmers and local units of government as the expert in addressing erosion and water quality issues across the landscape of Houston County. Gary is a devoted father and family man who has assisted with cub scouts as a den leader and has coached youth baseball.



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Carole Smith
 Tax Specialist
 Internal Revenue Service

Carole Smith’s dedication to public service has been exemplified by her career with the IRS, expertise in tax law and 13 years as a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance coordinator. Carole spends many hours each filing season educating volunteer tax preparers on the new tax law changes. Her enthusiasm to ensure low-income and elderly taxpayers have a free and accurate tax return filed is an immeasurable asset to the IRS and the community. On her own time, Carole goes above and beyond to assist taxpayers who have unusual circumstances and ensures they get accurate information and superior customer service. In addition to her dedication to the IRS and to the public, Carole still finds time to work in her neighborhood, church, and to care for an elderly family member. She is an inspiration to all who know and work with her.



Mitzi Steenberg
 Technical Assistant
 Internal Revenue Service

Mitzi Steenberg has been a rock to her engineering team during a time of great transition. She helped keep the group running while the manager was on assignment. She performs valuable research with specialized computer software, serving both her team and other departments in the agency. Mitzi chaired the Family Readiness Group, which supports military families during deployment. She planned events to prepare the soldiers and families for deployment and arranged for tax assistance during the filing season. She taught Girl Scouts about the troops in Iraq and arranged for their visit to the National Guard Army Base and a Black Hawk helicopter tour! All it takes is a “please, can you help?” And she is there. Mitzi is an example of a public servant who deserves recognition for her contributions at work and in the community.



Michelle Kielas
 Paralegal Specialist
 Department of Housing and Urban Development

Ms. Michelle Kielas is described at HUD as “Paralegal Specialist Extraordinary”. She provides thorough, timely, and complete legal reviews, research and support to three attorneys. She is always willing to take on other assignments and to assist other employees in the accomplishment of duties. Michelle, in her role as a coordinator for Government on Display at the Mall of America, assumes full responsibility for constructing the HUD display, scheduling staff and often staffing the booth herself, and serving as security for the event. She is a frequent volunteer in support of the community. She is an intake interviewer for the homeless at Project Homeless Connect and is always a volunteer for the Minnesota Special Olympic. Michelle exhibits an extraordinary commitment to HUD’s mission as her professional and community activities go beyond her official duties and serve as an example of the best of public service.



Paul Woxland
 Director of Multi-Family Housing
 Department of Housing and Urban Development

Paul Woxland, US HUD Director of Multi-Family Housing has spent the majority of his HUD career dedicated to developing and managing affordable multifamily housing. As an excellent leader he is capable of balancing the interests of his divisions and those of staff, lenders and developers. He makes difficult decisions on a daily basis with great thought and character to further the mission of the department. His sense of humor, mixed with his calm leadership style provides for a less stressful work environment even in uncertain and extremely busy times. HUD and its partners are fortunate to have such a talented, progressive leader, as are the recipients of affordable, safe and healthy housing.

Departments of The Treasury | Housing & Urban Development



Civil Servant of the Year Awards

Department of Defense



Kristin Borntrager
Supervisory Financial Analyst
Department of the Air Force - 934th Airlift Wing



As Supervisory Financial Analyst for the 934th Airlift Wing, Ms. Borntrager distinguished herself as an extremely effective steward of financial resources and was responsible for managing over \$65 million in appropriated funding for fiscal year 2009. Under her leadership, the budget section meticulously maintained accounting records for numerous separate and distinct appropriations ensuring accurate funds obligation and availability status. Her efforts were key to a successful fiscal year closeout for the wing. Kristin’s depth of understanding in government accounting systems has established her as an expert throughout the Air Force Reserve Command. She is a strong mentor for her employees and never tires of providing the guidance they need to be successful in their jobs. Kristin is a valuable employee and an exceptional Civil Servant.

Darcee Copus-Sabart
Supervisor, Contract Specialist
Department of the Air Force - 934th Airlift Wing



Darcee is an extremely talented Contracting Officer. As a direct result of her professional skills, the 934th Airlift Wing awarded \$4.5 million in contracts with another \$17 million pending assignment for fiscal year 2009. This current budget outpaces fiscal year 2008 by 125%. Darcee has extensive technical knowledge. She is the “go to person” for all local contracting issues and is known as one of the best Contracting Officers within the Air Force Reserve. Darcee is an exceptional manager. Faced with personnel shortages and strict time lines, she consistently delivers an outstanding product and service. Darcee’s contribution to the Air Force Mission is significant. The operational status of the base remains proficient due to her hard work and dedication.

Peter DeSanctis
Instrument & Flight Control Supervisor
Department of the Air Force - 934th Airlift Wing



Mr. Desanctis performed brilliantly as Maintenance Group Quality Assurance inspector. He skillfully managed 28 Technical Order accounts and the Time Compliance Technical Order program. He has conducted numerous Personnel Evaluations, Quality Verification Inspections and Special Inspections ensuring unit was compliant with Air Force directives. Peter was temporarily selected as Avionics Communications and Navigations supervisor during the Wing’s deployment to Iraq. At home station his instrumental management skills directly contributed to the unit maintaining the best C-130 aircraft Mission Capable rate in the Air Force Reserve Command during this period all the while still performing his Quality Assurance duties. Peter serves as Vice Commander for American Legion Post 121, River Falls, Wisconsin and organizes a variety of charity events to include construction of a Veterans Memorial.

Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Mark Himmer

**Chief, Career Enhancement
Department of the Air Force - 934th Airlift Wing**

Mark is the #1 go-to person in the unit; always gets it done right the first time, in half the time; most proactive member. Has unmatched ability and professionalism under pressure. Extreme diligence and consistent management of Career Enhancement programs ensured the strongest section in the MPF. Mark receives unending kudos from unit commanders regarding his performance, professionalism, efficiency and guidance. He is called upon to work outside his primary duty to bolster other sections in MPF; fits in anywhere to get job done and understands the 'big picture'. Coordinated and manages commuter van pool for 9 commuters; saves average of \$300/person/month in fuel. For past 3 years Mark has opened home to foster children, 1 baby and family of 5 children.



Haroon Pasha

**General Engineer/Program Integrator
Defense Contract Management Agency - Twin Cities**

Mr. Haroon Pasha has been an outstanding DCMA Twin Cities employee for 26 years. During 2009, Haroon distinguished himself through exceptional performance as Property Specialist deployed in support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM to Kuwait from 23 January to 21 October. He was instrumental in supporting two property transitions between contractors for 70,000+ line items worth over \$98M at 10 Army Camps. He investigated 235+ lost, damaged or destroyed items ensuring a viable corrective action plan that resulted in a positive trend in the contractor's property control system. His ability to speak several languages, including Urdu and Punjabi, was instrumental in his ability to deal with third country nationals and he was often used as a translator above and beyond his assigned duties.



Adan Sylva

**Lead Quality Assurance Specialist
Defense Contract Management Agency - Twin Cities**

Mr. Adan Sylva has been an exceptional DCMA Twin Cities employee for 26 years. In 2009, he distinguished himself through exceptional performance and leadership as senior quality assurance specialist (QAS) for a team covering 400+ contractors across 8 states. With 9 of 17 QASs having less than 2 years DCMA experience, Adan created a detailed, comprehensive on-the-job training package to ensure consistent, effective and timely training. During 2009, 6 QASs were certified to accept critical/complex parts, reducing the burden on other QASs who had been traveling extensive miles to accept product in the interim. Advising the buying office and contractor, Adan was instrumental in the reduction of safety critical F-18 holdback bar defects. Rejects were reduced from 35% to under 5% on 5000+ inspections conducted.

Department of Defense



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Department of Defense

Shannon Bauer

**Deputy Public Affairs Officer and Media Specialist
Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District**



**US Army Corps
of Engineers.**

Shannon Bauer constantly and consistently made sure the people living in the Red River basin were told what the Army Corps of Engineers were doing to protect their lives and property during the 2009 flood fight. She directed her public affairs team in Fargo for 64 days, spread over three tours of duty, to get the word out to media in Minnesota and North Dakota and around the world. Aside from her full-time Corps job, Shannon serves her country as an Air Force Reserve senior NCO during wartime about 40-45 days and nights annually. Shannon still finds time to mentor young people as a member of the Civil Air Patrol. Shannon Bauer is always serving the American public, on-duty and off-duty.

Tim Bertschi

**Supervisory Program Manager
Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District**



**US Army Corps
of Engineers.**

Early in 2009, the Red River basin was known to have a high potential for flooding. Tim help lead pre-flood workshops for communities in the basin, ensured Corps resources were propositioned, and coordinated assignment of personnel. As flooding began, blizzard conditions challenged flood-fight efforts. Response efforts were further complicated when the National Weather Service raised second crest predictions by 2 feet. Under Tim's leadership, contractors and Corps staff met this challenge and were able to raise levees. More than 30 communities reached major flood stage. Under Tim's oversight and his tireless hours of service, no community had major damage. Initial estimates indicate over \$2.99 billion dollars in damages were avoided in the basin as a result of the successful 2009 flood-fighting efforts led by Tim.

Michael Leshar

**Civil Engineer
Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District**



**US Army Corps
of Engineers.**

During 2009 Mike was an integral part of the successful flood fight for Fargo-Moorhead and provided technical leadership for the design of a project to provide robust and implementable long-term flood protection for the approximately 200,000 residents of these communities. Mike has more than 30 years of experience and is well respected by his team members and throughout the Red River basin. In 2009 his knowledgeable and respectful contribution to numerous meetings with stakeholders was a major reason the Fargo-Moorhead study stayed on schedule and has been well received. Throughout 2009, Mike would mentor, assist, and care for his fellow team members to ensure they were able to develop the best technical information for this study and for the rest of their careers.



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



**US Army Corps
of Engineers.**

Thomas Novak

**Park Manager
Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District**

Throughout 2009, Tom exemplified standards and values are associated with the ideal civil servant. He led work activities using volunteers to accomplish backlogged projects within a recreation area and partnered with the Friends of Pool 9 Mississippi River Group to conduct a successful cleanup in the vicinity of Blackhawk Park. Due to potential shortfalls in funding, a permanent ranger position remained vacant, requiring Tom to pick up the workload, which he did in a professional and selfless manner. For years Tom has been "community minded" and 2009 was no different. His service in a community church and school and his active participation as treasurer of a nonprofit fundraising organization are actions that truly represent a good civil servant!



Mark Lamb

**Individual Protective Equipment NCOIC
Minnesota Air National Guard - 133rd Logistics
Readiness Squadron**

Mark's accomplishment aided immeasurably in the success of Individual Protective Equipment Section of the Logistics Readiness Squadron. He was instrumental in the roll out of Training Business Area establishing Master Task Lists and Master Training Plans for the Asset Management Flight. He established a deployed logistics training program to ensure his subordinates were worldwide deployable. Due to Mark's knowledge and leadership ability he was selected to lead a four Airman tasking to Al Udeid Air Base Qatar. Served as the NCOIC of Centralized Intermediate Repair Facility (CIRF) Supply managing over 1800 line items and maintained a 99% inventory accuracy rate. At home station he led the building, inspecting and issuance of 724 mobility bags to 133rd personnel deploying to 17 different countries with zero discrepancies.

Department of Defense



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Department of Defense

Ryan Blazevic
148th Fighter Wing
Minnesota Air National Guard



Lt. Blazevic has been invaluable to the Wing in both his job performance and community involvement insofar as volunteerism. He has given, and continues to give, vast amounts of his personal time to organizations such as; The Boy Scouts of America, The Special Olympics, American Red Cross as well as an active volunteer at St. Michaels Catholic School. Lt. Blazevic has spearheaded the “Recycle Minnesota” Recycling Association of Minnesota program here at the 148th Fighter Wing. This program is reducing plastic and glass that would end up in landfills. This program also involves the use of mentally challenged adults to broaden their horizons and enrich their experiences.

Nicole Marie Martland
Information Security Specialist & acting State Security Manager
MN Air National Guard- Intelligence & Security Directorate



She distinguished herself by meticulously reviewing over 12 separate regulations that led to critical identification of state procedural deficiencies in information and personnel security. She processes security clearances for over 50 units with approximately 1500 personnel. She makes unbiased, judicious decisions regarding security clearances that comply with legal regulations. Her conduct presents the organization in a favorable and ethical manner allowing for the trust of all clients. Her work load increased 23.5% in FY 09. Despite losing one person from her team, she has taken on two additional duties. She selflessly seeks to identify and correct problems that affect others and recommends viable solutions. She trained 100 security managers fostering improved processing of security packets, effective management of personnel security programs and increased soldier readiness.

Cassie McCane
Family Programs Assistant
MN Air National Guard-Deployment Cycle Support



Cassie McCane is the 2009 Civil Servant of the Year. Cassie is responsible for contracting actions for the Minnesota National Guard’s Deployment Cycle Support Branch. She has played a vital role in the successful planning and execution of the nationally renowned Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Program. During 2009, Cassie coordinated contracting for 27 Yellow Ribbon training events, attended by more than 10,000 MNARNG Soldiers and family members, as well as over 1,000 United States Marine Corp Reserve Marines and families. Her direct influence in venue, menu, and lodging selection led to a 99% positive feedback rating in these categories from event attendees. Her attention to detail, professionalism, and ability to plan outstanding events is without peer. Cassie’s actions have made Minnesota the national leader for Yellow Ribbon training.

Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Christopher Irvin

**Personnel Specialist First Class
Navy Operational Support Center, Minneapolis**

Petty Officer Irvin is the backbone of the Manpower Department for a large Navy Operational Support Center of 22 Reserve Units comprised of 750 Drilling Reservists and 26 Full Time Staff members. He continually seeks out demanding jobs and consistently performs them at the level of the next higher pay grade. His professional demeanor and superior customer service skills are what makes this Sailor stand out above his peers. He continually strives to improve, not only his working environment, but his fellow co-workers through mentorship and training. Under his guidance, the Manpower Department has significantly increased their productivity level, as well as their professionalism. He is genuinely most deserving of the recognition afforded by his selection as CY 2009 Minnesota Civil Servant of the Year.



Brian Loxtercamp

**Gas Turbine Systems Technician First Class
Navy Operational Support Center, Minneapolis**

Petty Officer Loxtercamp consistently displayed the highest standards of personal dedication in the performance of his duties with the Navy Reserve. His exceptional skills and initiative were critical to the numerous successes of his Reserve Unit. His leadership and management resulted in maintaining the mobilization readiness of 76 Reserve Sailors. He also ensured the personal and professional development of his subordinates. His personal mentorship led to the promotions of 12 Sailors and award recognition of 5 Sailors in his charge. He is also very involved with the Patriot Guard, honoring fallen service members and orchestrating military homecomings. Petty Officer Loxtercamp is truly a motivated Sailor who is most deserving of the recognition afforded by his selection as CY 2009 Minnesota Civil Servant of the Year.



Robert Malewcki

**Supply Technician
Naval Reserve Officer's Training Corps, Univ. of Minnesota**

Robert Malewcki's performance as the University of Minnesota NROTC Supply Technician has been outstanding. He expertly managed state and federal budgets totaling \$1.4M and completed FY09 with a 99.9% obligation rate. A national inspection team reviewed his uniform, property and instructional material inventories and found them in perfect order with 100% accountability. His programs were cited as the best the team had seen to date. During a Fleet Supply Center inspection, his financial records and accounting practices received a top rating further illustrating his meticulous attention to detail. An active member of the American Legion and VFW, he participated in numerous events in support of his community, and he also coached youth baseball and basketball positively impacting Minnesota's young men and women.

Department of Defense



Civil Servant of the Year Awards

Department of the Interior

Mervel Harris

Acting Suprv. Legal Administrative Specialist
Bureau of Indian Affairs



In 2009, Mr. Harris has been the consummate team player and contributed to the leadership success of the Agency in a time of transition. He spent most of 2009 Acting in two critical leadership roles and performed a detail to Central Office to lead a successful project. He accomplished all this while maintaining his base program. Mr. Harris served as Acting Deputy Regional Director, leading 6 diverse and complex programs. He severed as Acting Supervisory Legal Administrative Specialist, leading a highly visible probate program during a critical period as they addressed historic levels of case backlog. Between Acting roles, he supported Central Office to accomplishment a special project. Mr. Harris' willingness to step-up was key to the success of the Region in 2009.

Dan Dearborn

Zone Fire Management Officer
Fish and Wildlife Service



During the record setting flood events of the spring of 2009 in the Red River and its tributaries, the Fish and Wildlife Service was asked by local, State, and other emergency management officials for experienced airboat operators and crews. Airboats were needed to help evacuate homes, and protect property in the communities surrounding Fargo. Dan Dearborn, who has extensive incident command experience in the prescribed and wildfire suppression, was asked to coordinate the boat crew assembly and response efforts to support FEMA. He assumed incident command and directed the assembly and deployment of 22 experienced airboat operators, mechanics, and team leaders. For approximately six weeks airboat crews helped evacuate people and helped with relief and protection efforts. He fulfilled these duties skillfully and professionally bringing credit to Federal Service.

Jeffrey Gosse

Fish and Wildlife Biologist – Regional Energy Coordinator
Fish and Wildlife Service



Jeff Gosse sustained the highest level of professionalism and leadership throughout 2009 in his position as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Midwest Regional Energy Coordinator. Jeff helped coordinate selection of projects to protect migratory bird habitat in four states as part of a \$4 million conservation plan required by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, which was initiated by Jeff the previous year, for a major natural gas pipeline project. Jeff developed a \$1 million multi-years proposal under the Administration's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to identify important migratory bird areas in the Great Lakes to facilitate environmentally sensitive siting of wind projects. Jeff contributed to a national effort to develop wind project guidelines being developed by a Federal Advisory Committee

Ronald Wencil

Geospatial Liaison
U.S. Geological Survey



Ronald Wencil is the U. S. Geological Survey's Geospatial Liaison for Minnesota. He works with many of Federal, state and local agencies as well as academia and business. While his job involves gathering requirements for the National Mapping Program, he supports collaborative efforts among agencies. He represents the USGS on the Minnesota Statewide Geospatial Advisory Council, cochairs that Council's Digital Elevation Committee and participates in numerous technical coordination groups. Ron is often the lead person for USGS exhibits and displays, including the annual FEB Government on Display Expo. He coordinates the USGS exhibit and presents at the annual Minnesota GIS Conference. Ron is the "go to" guy for many map-related inquiries and always responds to information requests in a thorough and professional way.

Civil Servant of the Year Awards



James Husaby

Hydrologist
National Weather Service- NRCFC

Jim Husaby is a tremendous asset to the North Central River Forecast Center. Jim's "service above self work ethic" is ever-present. In many cases the past year Jim has adjusted his schedule, staying past his tour of duty, worked unscheduled weekends, sacrificing his family life to meet the NWS mission. Jim is the consummate team player who excels both as a leader and follower. Jim continuously strives for improvement, readily volunteers solving problems, seeking new challenges, and learning new skills, no matter how challenging, or mundane. Jim represents the NWS in a professional manner. Jim's great attitude rubs off on the rest of the staff. Countless staff and NWS customers have forwarded kudos regarding his positive attitude, customer focused approach, professionalism and high quality work.



James Richardson

Senior Meteorologist
National Weather Service- WFO

James Richardson provides excellent leadership to the NWS staff. Jim is a fantastic asset for the office in many ways. He is an outstanding forecaster, continually learning and applying new techniques. His attitude is great, not engaging in negative thinking. He stays calm under pressure, and is a great mentor to new employees. He furthers hydrometeorologic knowledge and outreach by teaching scouts how to analyze a weather map, providing weather safety information at Fire Department Open Houses, and promoting NWS services at the Mall of America, and state fair booths. He is one of the main players in planning the Skywarn Recognition Day with Amateur Radio and is very active in the recruitment of storm spotters, and improving communications and procedures, all benefiting the NWS.



Terrence Beltz

Information Management / Marketing Specialist
Federal Highway Administration

Terrence Beltz should be recognized for his contributions to Division Office accomplishments and team spirit. Terrence has contributed greatly to organizational accomplishments this year. Terrence developed and completed the Division Office webpage, compiled the Division Office Accomplishments Report and developed the 2010 Unit Plan. Always willing to assume additional responsibilities, he is a team player. Terrence was invaluable in updating, revising and organizing the Professional Development Program information for use at the Transportation Career Fair. It was through his innovation and creativity that the information was presented and displayed in a professional and attractive manner. He has shown leadership in providing training for new employees. Terrence has been active in initiatives to improve the office environment through his work on the Awards Committee and Division Leadership Team.

Departments of the Commerce | Transportation



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Kathleen Karsten
 Air Traffic Control Specialist
 Federal Aviation Administration



In addition to performing the tasks associated with her position as an Air Traffic Controller, Kathie volunteered to take on extra assignments that ultimately helped the Agency achieve its mission. Kathie spent many hours coordinating aviation-related activities. She recruited volunteers and helped set up speaking engagements and career fairs. She served as the facility Internship Program Coordinator soliciting, interviewing, and helping set up program objectives. Kathie also volunteered to support the Annual Government on Display Exhibit (GODE) held at the Mall of America. Kathie stepped up to support this effort in the face of numerous unresolved issues. Kathie's contributions to this effort resulted in a successful GODE attended by more than 300,000. Kathie also volunteers with the Girl Scouts, school and at her church.

Kandice Krull
 Environmental Protections Specialist
 Federal Aviation Administration



Kandice improved the environmental process required for all Federal airport grant projects. She developed and conducted environmental workshops for state aviation personnel, airport owners and consultants. These workshops provided an avenue to interact with customers and help them gain a greater understanding of the environmental process. This enhanced document submission and reduced environmental review times. Collaborating with colleagues, she developed a region-wide condensed environmental process for smaller projects that is less cumbersome while upholding requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, which also reduced costs associated with environmental documents. Finally, the FAA's grant funding increased 40% due to passing of the Federal economic recovery program. Kandice provided timely environmental reviews for airport projects and allowed the FAA to meet stringent deadlines associated with this funding.

Joseph Potter
 Southeast Minnesota System Support Center Manager
 Federal Aviation Administration



Joe Potter is the manager of the Southeast Minnesota System Support Center which spans a third of Minnesota and a third of Wisconsin, the largest SSC in the Minneapolis District. His dedication to his work and his employees is evident every day he reports to work and many of his days off yet he still finds time to promote the FAA to the general public. He participates in Government on Display, Aviation Career Education and the Traffic Situation Display during holiday periods as appropriate. His active participation in these areas is done mostly during his time off of work. He is one of the strongest and most effective Federal Aviation advocates the Minneapolis District has and he wears the honor of serving the public proudly.

Department of the Transportation

Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Robin Schroeder
Air Traffic Control Specialist
Federal Aviation Administration

Robin Schroeder deserves recognition as Civil Servant of the Year. She has demonstrated technical expertise, effective communications, a professional demeanor, and the ability to influence others. Robin strives to keep the lines of communication open with controllers, management officials, and members of other organizations. This open communications results in resolving issues at the lowest level with the least impact to operations and maximum benefit to all. Robin does not shy away from conflict; she constructively and professionally addresses controversial issues, seeking resolution in the best interest of all involved. Her willingness to solve problems encourages others and promotes teamwork. Robin's efforts to improve the workplace are not restricted to her primary duties as a controller; rather her focus remains on the facility as a whole.



William Szydlo
Air Traffic Control Specialist
Federal Aviation Administration

Bill, a Minneapolis Center air traffic controller since 1985 and adjunct faculty member at Inver Hills Community College the past 18 years, has designed and taught curriculum for four different air traffic courses. He serves as an aviation education advisor to MNDOT. Bill has been involved with IHCC Aviation Advisory Committee, Minnesota Post Secondary Aviation Educators Committee, and Rice County Restorative Justice Program mediating criminal/victim reconciliations. Bill serves on the Cannon Valley Regional Orchestra Board of Directors. As Northfield Youth Baseball Association President, he developed a program that advanced appropriate, supportive, and community based values for youth and adults. This program was recognized by the Healthy Community Initiative, in magazines and newspapers, interviews on NPR, featured on ABC TV, and presentations at NCAA youth conferences.



Debra Johnson
Wage Hour Investigator
Wage and Hour Division

During her second year Investigator Johnson completed investigations of exceptionally high quality, beyond what would be expected of someone with considerably more experience. She is very thorough and correctly applies the law. Her case files and reports are very clear, well organized and timely completed. She expertly interviews employees and employers, who at times are uncooperative, to obtain necessary information. Investigator Johnson very enthusiastically takes on more challenging assignments and thrives on learning and applying new laws and methods. She readily assumed the duties of coordinating investigator for an initiative of many locations of a nationwide corporation. This has all been done while working alone in a one person field station which covers a large area of northern MN.

Departments of Transportation | Labor



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Department of Veterans Affairs

Cindy Gerdes
Supervisory Program Specialist
VA Debt Management Center



Ms. Gerdes excels at her job accepting each new challenge as an opportunity to grow and learn. Her dedication and drive are reflected in her daily interactions with employees and managers. She never shies away from the difficult tasks and takes great pride in sharing her knowledge and assisting others in doing their jobs better and more efficiently. Her determination, along with her professional and leadership skills, makes her a valued and trusted employee who more than deserves the title of Civil Servant of the Year.

Amanda Tepfer
Veterans Service Representative
VA St. Paul Regional Office



As a Veterans Service Representative at the St. Paul VA Regional Office, Ms. Amanda (Mandy) Tepfer has mentored three co-workers, volunteered at the Minnesota Women’s Veterans Summit, and served on the VA Needy Family Committee raising funds for needy veterans.

In her community, Ms. Tepfer is the Assistant Director of the Family Support Group, Minnesota National Guard, First Battalion, 151st Field Artillery. In this role, she directs fund raising events and a resource network of support services for families who have a Guard member deployed to Iraq. Funds are used to send packages to deployed soldiers monthly. The resource network identifies services families may need including military and veterans benefits. Quarterly events are held for family members, with a “Coming Home” event planned for June 2010 Ms. Tepfer devotes her career and community time to serving veterans and their families.

Gary Stroshane
Accounts Receivable Technician
VA St. Paul Regional Office



Gary Stroshane provides exceptional service to our veterans. As an Accounts Receivable Technician at the St. Paul VA Regional Office for over twenty-nine years, Gary works tirelessly for veterans advocating for their rights. Gary annually completes hundreds of complex multi-year audits of compensation and pension payments and makes it a point to keep the veteran informed of the status of these audits. Annually, Gary accurately processes thousands of Check Tracers, Limited Payability payments, Month of Death payments, and State Cemetery Payments. Gary’s superior interpersonal skills, patience, and unequalled subject matter expertise has made him the “Go-to” person for VA employees. Mr. Gary Stroshane is a superior Federal Employee and pillar of the St. Paul VA Regional Office’s Support Services Division.

Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Anna Motzko

**Loan Technician
VA St. Paul Regional Office**

Anna Motzko is a Loan Technician at the VA St. Paul Regional Loan Center. She is an extremely dedicated employee who exhibits exceptional leadership skills and a high level of professionalism. In addition to being a committed VA employee, Anna is also very involved with the community. Since 2007, Anna has been a wish granter for the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Minnesota. She is responsible for specific children's wishes and serves as the main point of contact for families throughout the entire wish process. More recently, Anna was given the opportunity to take on a leadership role with the foundation, and she is now also training new wish granters. Anna's commitment to serving others is very evident through her government service and extensive volunteer work.



Mark Angell

**Engineering Technician
Minneapolis Medical Center**

Mark was dedicated to improving patient care through critical facility upgrades. She designed and constructed medical equipment room for Biomedical Engineering Service that became VISN standard. Mr. Angell managed complex replacement of 1100-ton chiller at Energy Center. The \$1,075,848 project was completed on time and under budget. He completed critical air conditioning project in computer server room to ensure that overheating issues were resolved and that there was 100% redundancy. Mr. Angell trained 3 new project managers in a section with only 5 personnel. He has been the bedrock for the section and ensured we met obligation and project goals. In total he completed six projects totaling \$7,960,000 including \$3,500,000 3T MRI installation and \$1,900,000 Hematology-Oncology renovation. He was routinely assigned most difficult projects and completes them with patients in mind!



Danyell Deckard

**Senior Radiologic Technologist-Fluoroscopy
Minneapolis Medical Center**

Danyell is in charge of the fluoroscopy area in Imaging at the VA Medical Center. She manages workflow, and provides direction and education to those technologists, students and residents in that area. She sets high standards for herself and passes that on to all she works with by her daily commitment to quality and patient care. She is highly respected by her coworkers, sought out by the students and appreciated by management and her patients. Because of her outstanding leadership, she was asked to consult in workflow issues in other areas of the Imaging dept. Her feedback and input has been invaluable.

Department of Veterans Affairs



Civil Servant of the Year Awards

Department of Veterans Affairs



Darleen Dewaay
Program Support Assistant
Minneapolis Medical Center



Darlene accomplishes a vast amount of administrative work every day to ensure that everything runs smoothly in the Medicine office. She is extremely accurate in everything she does. She is able to multi-task and does everything proficiently. She is courteous, respectful and is always willing to help others. She is the recorder of the Quality Management Council and is actively involved in the smooth operation of this committee. Darlene is involved in developing a new on-call schedule for the entire VA. She was coauthor of the instructions and also gave classes to the clerical support of the VA. She is a true team player and is always willing to learn new things.

Renee Forte
Lead Human Resources Assistant
Minneapolis Medical Center



Renee Forte's leadership, technical knowledge and attention to detail is truly superb and we are very fortunate to have her. With several new e-initiatives bestowed on our office within the past year, she has spent countless hours identifying and resolving system glitches, keeping the entire staff abreast of updates and new revelations as they occur. She is working with the frustrations of running a new payroll system simultaneously with the old with innumerable interface problems. She resolves these problems to ensure employees get paid and their records reflect accuracy. Renee has been instrumental in setting up electronic exit clearance system, conversion to E-OPF, WebHR system for electronic 52's and vacancy tracking/reporting. There are not adequate words to describe her selfless sharing and tireless assistance.

Chris Johnson
Radiology Technologist, Cardiac Catheterization Lab
Minneapolis Medical Center



Mr. Johnson provides outstanding service in his role in Cardiology in a number of ways, approaching all of his duties in a highly conscientious manner. He demonstrates excellent skills in both the technical and interpersonal aspects of his role. In addition to his duties in the cath lab, Mr. Johnson also contributes to the facility by teaching radiation physics in our radiology program, and radiation safety to other departments in the hospital. He has earned advanced certifications in his field, and was among the first to take a newly developed certification in electrophysiology.

In the community Mr. Johnson volunteers for the Big Brothers organization, and has trained in community ham radio operation. Mr. Johnson embodies the spirit of the Civil Servant of the Year Award.

Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Michael Kahler
Prosthetic Technician
Minneapolis Medical Center

Twin brothers, veterans both, are nominated jointly for Civil Servant of the Year 2010 in recognition of their dedication and outstanding service to VAMC patients presenting with wheelchair/mobility needs. They are admired by fellow employees, patients and families alike on the basis of their knowledge, work ethic, service delivery and patience. They have high professional standards and conduct themselves in a pleasant, courteous, and willing manner. Additionally, the Kahlers' are long time volunteers to the PVA Wheelchair Games held each summer at VA campuses across the United States. Their efforts keep the athletes in completion as they "Go for the Gold". This recognition is well deserved as the Kahler brothers are certainly valuable and much deserving Civil Servants.



Patrick Kahler
Prosthetic Technician
Minneapolis Medical Center

Twin brothers, veterans both, are nominated jointly for Civil Servant of the Year 2010 in recognition of their dedication and outstanding service to VAMC patients presenting with wheelchair/mobility needs. They are admired by fellow employees, patients and families alike on the basis of their knowledge, work ethic, service delivery and patience. They have high professional standards and conduct themselves in a pleasant, courteous, and willing manner. Additionally, the Kahlers' are long time volunteers to the PVA Wheelchair Games held each summer at VA campuses across the United States. Their efforts keep the athletes in completion as they "Go for the Gold". This recognition is well deserved as the Kahler brothers are certainly valuable and much deserving Civil Servants.



John Kangas
Housekeeping, Supervisor
Minneapolis Medical Center

John Kangas has shown superior performance in his duties as a housekeeping supervisor during FY09. His teacher-like qualities and patient-focused approach to cleaning describe his supervisory approach. His work with numerous Veterans Industries patients shows his commitment to the VA mission and his relentless work on finding the best way to provide a sanitary facility are noticed among his peers. In FY09 John had several projects he headed up including the installation of coreless toilet paper dispensers throughout the medical center, which has a direct reduction in waste and improves our green image. Throughout his work one can see distinguished work and superior performance

Department of Veterans Affairs



Civil Servant of the Year Awards

Department of Veterans Affairs

Endia Porter

**Administrative Officer, Education Service Line
Minneapolis Medical Center**



Endia Porter, a former Navy Corpsman stationed in North Carolina and Okinawa, is Administrative Assistant for Education Service. Endia efficiently manages many administrative functions, always meeting deadlines for reports. She manages approximately \$4-5 million of medical residency funding. Recently Endia evaluated a new system for residency payments. While performing audits, she discovered and corrected discrepancies, with her careful work resulting in substantial savings for the VA. Endia manages the non-nursing employee tuition programs, advertising the program to employees and ensuring that they are reimbursed as quickly as possible. Endia volunteered at the 2009 Paint-a-Thon and regularly assists an elderly woman with errands. She is currently completing her M.A. in Management. Colleagues value her effectiveness, integrity and humor.

Deb Smith-Wagner

**Extended Care & Rehab Social Work Supervisor
Minneapolis Medical Center**



Deb Smith Wagner is an excellent, supportive, hands on supervisor, one who is always willing to help. She's willing to step in on any difficult case and provide guidance. She supervises a large number of social workers, though always makes time for each of us as needed. She prioritizes her work to support the staff under her, never making us feel rushed or hurried. She goes the extra mile to make her staff feel supported and appreciated. She is a strong leader as well, never being afraid to speak out to support her staff as difficult case situations arise.

Deb is the kind of supervisor that employees always hope to have.. As a new social worker to the VA, I consider Deb a wonderful role model for my work within the VA.

Julie Stout

**Contracting Officer
Minneapolis Medical Center**



Dedicated contracting officer, always taking the "extra step" necessary to ensure the procurement needs of the MVAMC are met. Knowledge and understanding of the acquisition life cycle is unmatched, which makes her an incredible mentor to her co-workers and the programs she supports. She is highly motivated and consistently provides exceptional customer service to both internal and external customers. A true professional, team player, always willing to accept the most difficult tasks and additional work to help. Without hesitation, Julie volunteered to serve as the primary Contracting Officer for Recovery Act Projects while also maintaining her assigned workload of 200 active contracts. Julie's professionalism and positive attitude has enabled the MVAMC to successfully award much needed improvements to better serve out American Heroes.

Julie Tomaska

**Health Science Specialist
Minneapolis Medical Center**



Julie Tomaska continually demonstrates excellence with work tailored to the Veteran population in her civilian, military, and federal employee roles. As a civilian, she designed, implemented and currently directs two independent studies for the MN Air National Guard looking at the reintegration process as well as child behavior and family adaptability across the deployment cycle. Julie is a veteran of the OIF and a current member of the MN Air National Guard where she volunteers as a Unit Victim Advocate. She also works in her VA position on a VA-CSP Alzheimer's study where she identifies and utilizes resources for the study sites, Coordinating Center and, ultimately, our Veteran population. She has benchmarked the design of innovative materials for study staff, patients and caregivers.



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Katie Baas
Consumer Safety Technician
Food and Drug Administration

Katie Baas is a Consumer Safety Technician for the Food and Drug Administration. She provides support to approximately 100 employees that include Investigators and Supervisors which is an increase of approximately 40% from 2008. She generates and distributes several reports for use in work planning and achieving program goals. She also logs in all audit checks for the Investigations Branch. Katie also took on many duties of a position that was vacant the entire year of 2009. At the end of 2009 she took on a mentor role and provided training to new support staff. She always treats supervisors and peers respectfully and always work with a good attitude which fosters a pleasant work environment.



Catherine Leonard
Legal Instrument Examiner
Food and Drug Administration

Ms. Leonard is the heart of the MIN-DO Compliance Branch and its effective and efficient operations. Ms. Leonard's quiet competence and professionalism allow the branch to concentrate solely on compliance efforts that will protect the public. Without her we could still move forward but slowly and with a tremendous waste of time and effort. Ms. Leonard does the work of at least two people; handling the majority of correspondence leaving the district, tracking cases, fielding industry calls or locating important files. She coordinated the move to temporary offices on her own initiative to assure the rest of us could quickly return to our work. Ms. Leonard is as close to an indispensable civil servant as you will ever meet.



Warren LaPlante
Port Security Specialist
DHS - U.S. Coast Guard
Marine Safety Unit, Duluth

Mr. LaPlante has performed at exceptional levels throughout this period. Of particular achievement was his work with the Port Security Grant Program, where he guided the Duluth/Superior port area to obtain FEMA's Group II designation. Utilizing his superb communication skills, he obtained port-wide consensus to develop prioritized strategic initiatives for the next five years. Additionally, Mr. LaPlante, with less than one week notice, received, solicited for, and critiqued submissions for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant program; yielding approval for two projects totaling nearly \$500,000 and adding precious jobs to an area still recovering from record shutdowns in cargo exports. Due to Mr. LaPlante's phenomenal efforts, the twin ports' Area Maritime Security Committee was selected for the Minnesota Homeland Security and Emergency Management Award of Excellence for Outstanding Partnership; a positive reflection of this Command and our area stakeholders. Mr. LaPlante overall quality of work is unimpeachable.



Sandra Trianoski
Secretary
DHS - U.S. Coast Guard
Marine Safety Unit, Duluth

Demonstrating exemplary performance, Ms. Trianoski has continuously taken on added responsibility despite an already demanding workload. Utilizing exceptional logistical talent, she volunteered to coordinate and direct all aspects of a high profile memorial service and medal presentation commemorating the death of a Coast Guardsmen killed during a rescue attempt of three teenagers in Duluth, MN 40 years ago. Specifically, she put together a detailed program, designed, sent and tracked invitations; assisted family members of the deceased with travel and lodging; found an appropriate venue and procured funding. This event transpired into recognition at the National level as this Coast Guardsman's name will be added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington DC in May 2010. Valued for her writing expertise and insight into the various safety and security missions of Marine Safety Unit Duluth, she accepted the challenge to produce five recurring monthly reports to Coast Guard senior leadership. As the initial contact with the public, Ms. Trianoski's customer-centric attitude serves as a model of professionalism and is a positive reflection on the Command and the Coast Guard.

Departments of Health and Human Services | Homeland Security



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Department of Homeland Security

Ronald Kortz
Lead Transportation Security Officer
DHS - Transportation Security Administration



Transportation
Security
Administration

Ronald Kortz has provided exemplary leadership to the Minneapolis St. Paul International Airport as a Lead Transportation Security Officer working in the baggage department. Ron created an innovative method to track and account for millions of pieces of baggage transiting the MSP Airport. The result is a more efficient process and an enhanced security posture. LTSO Kortz was also recognized as the Firefighter of the Year in Becker, Minnesota. His comments while accepting the award speaks to his servant mentality – “being a firefighter allows me to be a person who can provide assistance to and help people, and that is very rewarding.” Ronald Kortz’ contributions and accomplishments in leadership and community make his well deserving of this award.

Thomas Boraas
Expert Coordination Center Officer
DHS - Transportation Security Administration



Transportation
Security
Administration

We recognize Thomas Boraas for his contribution and operational support to DHS HN1 Regional Coordination Team (RCT). Thomas was integral to the success of the team by creating comprehensive, daily, weekly, and situational updates for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Regional Coordination Team C and the Regional Team Leadership during the recent 2009 – 2010 H1N1 pandemic response . His personal efforts in researching, compiling, formatting and distributing these comprehensive briefings met requirements at all senior and executive levels for immediate notification and response actions. ECCO Thomas Boraas consistently provides immediate, outstanding administrative support for all levels of federal leadership. Not only is he a master of administrative and professional skills within his agency, but as a uniformed federal civil servant, he also demonstrates outstanding customer service and support.

Jessica Nielson
Supervisory Transportation Security Inspector
DHS - Transportation Security Administration



Transportation
Security
Administration

Jessica Nielson serves as a Supervisory Transportation Security Inspector for the TSA. In this capacity, she has inspired her team of Inspectors to achieve excellence in aviation security programs. Ms. Nielson is a tremendous leader who demonstrates the ability to partner with other Federal Government Agencies in order to get our mission accomplished. She has partnered with other DHS and local entities in programs such as the Visible Intermodal Response Program and Playbook activities, organizing team efforts to serve as a deterrent against terrorism to the aviation sector. Ms. Nielson is recognized as an individual who can pull a team together quickly to mitigate a threat with little or no guidance. She is truly deserving of this recognition.

Richard Hanson
Supervisory Transportation Security Officer
DHS - Transportation Security Administration



Transportation
Security
Administration

Richard Hanson has been the driving force in the development of the Transportation Security Administration’s safety program at Minneapolis St. Paul International Airport. Through his involvement the safety program has expanded from four individuals to a Safety Action Team of twenty dedicated safety officers. Richard is a champion of safety and is dedicated to ensuring all Officers operate under a culture where safety is vitally important. He ensures that safety information is distributed to all officers and also regularly attends work area shift briefings to discuss safety policies and procedures. Richard was also instrumental in the development and implementation our safety awards program. Richard’s commitment to the safety of his fellow TSA officers’ has played a significant part in the ongoing success of our safety program.

Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Kit Khammoungkhoun
Management & Information Analyst
DHS - Customs and Border Protection

Kit is a critical team member of the Personnel Systems Development team at the Minneapolis Hiring Center (MHC). Throughout his time at MHC, both as a contractor and as a Federal employee, Kit has shown a dedication to his work and a commitment to our Customs and Border Protection (CBP) mission. Kit is the only software engineer at MHC, without which our Personnel Systems Development team would not be able to do the many programming changes that the human resource staff requests of our automated application tracking system, which manages thousands of applications. Kit writes all of the stored procedures for MHC's tracking system as well as taking care of any technically complicated SQL programming. Kit has always helped the various branches within MHC and its employees and has always done so with a positive attitude. Moreover, Kit has always come through for the employees at MHC in times of high stress and short deadlines and has been one of the main reasons that MHC has met so many project deadlines.



Desiree Larson
Human Resources Specialist/Contracting Officers Technical Rep
DHS - Customs and Border Protection

Desiree is the Contracting Officer Technical Rep (COTR) for the Minneapolis Hiring Center (MHC). Due in part to her diligence working with the contractors for our medical, fitness and drug test contracts, MHC was able to meet the hiring goals mandated by the President. Desiree reviewed all invoices, ensuring there were no errors and then ensuring that there was enough money budgeted for each contract. Desiree has earned the respect of those that work with her, this includes not only fellow employees at the hiring center but also the employees of the contract companies we work with, employees from the CBP Headquarters office, as well as other DHS Agencies. Outside of work, Desiree also gives generously of her time. Thanksgiving was spent participating in The Walk to End Hunger. She also volunteered at a local restaurant preparing Thanksgiving meals for families in need. On Christmas Eve day you may find her delivering baskets of food and gifts around the Twin Cities to HIV/AIDS families for the Aliveness Project. Also, she regularly donates blood.



Davis Onken
Customs and Border Protection Officer
DHS - Customs and Border Protection

Officer Davis Onken has been a magnificent resource to Customs and Border Protection in 2009. Davis has over 37 years of government service and is often sought out to provide guidance to fellow co-workers, and also to the international trade community. Davis is the first to arrive and the last to leave work giving immeasurable hours to achieve the mission objectives of Customs and Border Protection. Davis's enthusiasm and productivity along with his organizational skills, knowledge and experience are beyond measure within Customs and Border Protection. Davis truly personifies what it means to be a Customs and Border Protection Officer and also a shining example of what it means to be a public servant.

Department of Homeland Security



Civil Servant of the Year Awards

Departments of Homeland Security | Justice

Gary Thomsen
Chief Agriculture Specialist
DHS - Customs and Border Protection



Chief Agriculture Specialist Gary Thomsen has over thirty years of dedicated service to the government. Chief Thomsen leads the Area Port Overtime Office for the Area Port of Minneapolis and has successfully provided budget oversight and ensured adequate staffing for all processes, while being challenged to cut and adjust schedules and staffing based on changing budgetary and operational priorities. He provides an outstanding example of leadership and works diligently to efficiently manage agency resources, and work with all agency managers and the union to identify and resolve issues in a fair and effective manner. His diligence has resulted in the ability of the Area Port of Minneapolis to remain within its fiscal budget for the last three fiscal years and accomplish the agency mission.

Gina Tuccelli
Secretary for the Special Agent In Charge
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives



Gina Tuccelli has been an employee of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) since May 2008. In her short time with ATF, Ms. Tuccelli has transformed her position and has taken on numerous projects and responsibilities. Within the past six months, the St. Paul Field Division has gone through several changes, including retirements and position reassignments. During this time, Ms. Tuccelli has stepped forward and voluntarily taken on some of the duties of those positions. Ms. Tuccelli is not only a hard worker and an asset to ATF. But she brings a great attitude and optimism to the office.

Patricia Zepeda
Secretary for the Assistant Special Agent In Charge
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives



Patricia Zepeda has been an employee of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) since January 2006. Since starting with ATF, Ms. Zepeda has served in various roles. Ms. Zepeda has taken on administrative support for an additional supervisor, and her duties have expanded to include financial record keeping and other administrative duties. Within the past six month, the St. Paul Field Division has gone through several changes, including retirements and position reassignments. During this time, Ms. Zepeda has stepped forward and voluntarily taken on some of the duties of those positions. Ms. Zepeda is not only a hard worker and an asset to ATF. But she brings a great attitude and optimism to the office.

Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Denise Anderson

**Supplemental Security Income Claims Representative
Social Security Administration
Marshall, MN**

Denise Anderson has worked to achieve Agency goals in a reliable and cooperative manner. She provides superb technical advice and guidance to staff members on Social Security policy and procedures. She is the ultimate “team player” always willing to stop what she is doing to assist another employee. Her kind, caring, and compassionate approach to her job, her fellow employees, and the public she serves reflects favorably on the Social Security Administration. She provides exceptional stewardship of the Social Security program as evident in the hundreds of accurate benefit reviews she completed in 2009 and thousands in her career ensuring not only correct payments to beneficiaries but also proper accountability of Social Security funds to Congress and the American taxpayer.



Mark Horgen

**ADO Supervisor
Social Security Administration
Stillwater, MN**

Mark Horgen has been an outstanding federal employee for the past thirty-five years. He is recognized for his dedication to excellence in all positions he has held with the Social Security Administration. He has been a leader in the agency’s mission to become fully electronic. This included involvement with all stages of this process. He was instrumental in the instruction and monitoring of the electronic file for our field offices. In addition, he has been an area organizer and promoter of our internet marketing campaign. Through his efforts our area leads the Chicago region. Mark’s professionalism, leadership, and hard work have earned him the reputation as an outstanding public servant.



Scott Hurt

**Computer Assistant
Social Security Administration
Minneapolis, MN**

Scott Hurt, the Hearing Office Systems Administrator for Minneapolis ODAR, performs his job in an outstanding manner. Scott’s knowledge of hardware and infrastructure functions is unparalleled. He has rare people skills which allow him to interact with all stakeholders. He provides support in person and on the phone, is always polite and considerate, and never fails to correct the problem that is occurring in the office or offsite. Scott provides support for 12 Administrative Law Judges, and 60+ support staff. Minneapolis has 6 hearing rooms, 2 permanent remote sites, and 4 temporary remote sites, and four video conferencing units. He manages the entire systems hardware for Minneapolis ODAR. Scott is an outstanding employee and is well deserving of the Civil Servant of the Year Award.



Laura Kennedy

**Claims Representative
Social Security Administration
Saint Paul, MN**

Laura Kennedy has been an outstanding federal employee for the past twenty-two years. She is recognized for her dedication to serving our unique and diverse public, with empathy, dignity and efficiency. Ms. Kennedy contributes a great deal to her unit. She is flexible and eager to take on new tasks, putting the needs of the public before her own. She has an understanding of agency goals and can relay that understanding to the concept of balanced public service. She maintains a positive attitude and strives to improve our customer’s experience. Laura Kennedy works hard for each and every client she has contact with.

Independent Federal Agencies



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Emily Lenz-Seiser
 Claims Representative
 Social Security Administration
 Minneapolis, MN



Emily Lenz-Seiser, a Claims Representative for the Social Security Administration, is an outstanding public servant. Each day she works with the public to ensure that they receive courteous, accurate and timely service. She is approachable and generous with her peers. Emily cares about her community, and coordinates the Meals on Wheels volunteers for the office. We are proud to honor Emily Lenz-Seiser as the Minneapolis Social Security Administration's Civil Servant of the Year.

Gerard Loehrer
 Claims Representative
 Social Security Administration
 St. Cloud, MN



Mr. Loehrer is a Claims Representative and an "Outstanding Public Servant". He has been with the Federal Government for over 30 years and has never wavered in his enthusiasm towards public service. Mr. Loehrer Specializes in Supplemental Security Income programs, assisting low income, needs based clients. His ability to explain our rules and regulations in an easy to understand style while treating each client with dignity and respect is above reproach. Mr. Loehrer, while maintaining his own workload, volunteered to assist in processing a high profile, time sensitive workload, thus allowing us to reach agency goals. Not only does he serve the American public with honor, he even makes time to assist coworkers. He is a tenacious, proficient "Senior CR" and exemplifies Outstanding Public Service!

Mary Parsons
 Claims Representative
 Social Security Administration
 Edina, MN



Congratulations to Mary Parsons, the Edina Social Security Office selection for Civil Servant of the year. Mrs. Parsons has over 20 years of dedicated service with the Social Security Administration. She is very professional in her daily experiences with the public and highly respected by her peers for the excellent attitude she brings to the job. Given the complexities and challenges required to be a Claims Representative in the Title 16 program we appreciate the positive approach and the way she treats her peers and the public. It is with pleasure that we recognize Mrs. Parsons for this award. Congratulations and Thanks Mary.

Harold Vetter
 Generalist Claims Representative
 Social Security Administration
 Rochester, MN



Harold Vetter has consistently provided exceptional leadership and professionalism throughout his 31 year career. He exemplifies professionalism, courtesy and integrity. He is a well respected leader among his peers as well as the community. Harold is a positive and highly productive role model. He is always the first person to volunteer to take extra work assignments to help his peers in a quiet manner without seeking recognition. During employee absences he regularly volunteers to keep their work current to prevent backlogs from occurring. When co workers are overwhelmed he relieves pressure by sharing his sense of humor to keep them focused on service to the public through teamwork.

Independent Federal Agencies

Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Maribel Parshall
Program Support Assistant
Small Business Administration

Maribel Parshall represents the Small Business Administration (SBA) at the Business Planning Center in Saint Paul with enthusiasm and skill. She extends her professionalism and friendliness to the clients at the Center by helping them access business plan programs and providing hands-on assistance with computer problems. Her knowledge of SBA programs enhances her aid to budding entrepreneurs as she provides information about SBA programs, business start-ups, and writing business plans. In addition, her bilingual skills help the Minnesota District Office provide service to our Spanish-speaking clients.



Jeff Kostelecky
Associate FCA Examiner
Farm Credit Administration

Jeff Kostelecky is nominated for this award to honor his many years of federal service as an associate examiner at the Farm Credit Administration (FCA) and as a former auditor for the USDA Packers and Stockyards Division. Over the years at FCA, Jeff provided consistent, reliable, and professional service to others. He is a valued source of technical expertise, particularly in the areas of auditing, accounting, internal controls, and database analysis. Jeff also successfully served as a credit examiner on numerous institution assignments. He was instrumental in developing database queries and reports used by others to monitor financial institutions. Jeff has performed numerous quality assurance reviews of written reports produced by the Office of Examination. Jeff recently completed his 36th year of Federal Civil Service.



Jaime Ammerman
Maintenance Support Clerk
Postal Service, St. Paul, MN

Jaime Ammerman has worked for the Postal Service in St. Paul, MN for over 9 years. As a Maintenance Support Clerk, she handles the scheduling, planning, controlling and reporting of maintenance activities. Jaime has dedicated herself to the Cub/Boy Scouts for the past 5 years. She was highly trained as a Cub Scout Den Leader specializing in working with scouts who have special needs. Jaime has led her den in fundraising projects and assembling gift boxes for Operation Christmas Child. Now that her son has transitioned to a Boy Scout Troop, Jaime is taking classes to be a Boy Scout Leader. Her excellence and attention to details is an asset both for the Postal Service and the community in which she volunteers.



Brian Bremseth
Postmaster
Postal Service

Brian and his wife Tamie have volunteered to lead the Family Readiness Group (FRG) for the 1-151 FA BN while their soldiers were on a 1 yr combat tour. As a Veteran and member of the MNARNG I can attest to the importance and dedication of community members who step up to the challenge of supporting families of deployed soldiers. Please visit the website Brian helped put together for more info on their FRG. <http://www.151family.info/>

Independent Federal Agencies | Postal Service



Civil Servant of the Year Awards



Postal Service

Joyce Falkenstein
Facility Specialist
Postal Service



Joyce Falkenstein is a committed volunteer at the Courage Center. Her time at the Courage Center involves regularly working with individuals with physical challenges, especially during their big fund raising events. Her commitment comes from the heart and her true desire to contribute her time and attention to the truly unique individuals that she has the opportunity to assist. The Courage Center specializes in rehabilitation services for people with brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, stroke, chronic pain, autism or disabilities experienced since birth. Joyce exemplifies the qualities of a human being that bring a true spirit of caring and love to everyone she meets.

Richard McGillivray
Manager, Customer Service
Postal Service



Rick assumed the Acting Manager's position at Riverview Station, in July 2009. Since then, through hard work and daily perseverance, Rick has improved service, efficiencies and the overall culture of Riverview Station. Under Rick's leadership, Riverview Station continues to improve each and every week. In his spare time, Rick is Chief Warrant Officer 4 and the commander of UG-60 Blackhawk helicopters for the Minnesota Army National Guard. He is one of a handful of individuals who are both, state and federally certified for fire and rescue missions. He has served as a pilot flying rescue missions in Minnesota and North Dakota during flooding in 2009 in the Red River Valley. Also, he has provided assistance during fires throughout the state of Minnesota in 2009

Greg Westerberg
City Carrier
Postal Service



City carrier Greg Westerberg, LT COL in the Army Reserve 3rd Brigade 75th Division, deployed for his 2nd tour of duty in a row in Iraq. He was assigned to Financial Control and Management for his assigned duties. Upon his return in August of 2009 he assumed his delivery duties. As part of the Army Reserve he was not initially required to deploy with his unit but, opted to join the men and women he had under his direct supervision not once but twice. In the course of his daily assignments he performs at an exemplary level finding new ways to efficiently deliver his assignment. His upbeat attitude and dedication to his customers on a primarily business section of Rice St is an example to all who he works with. Furthermore, he contributes on other assignments when his own assignment falls below set hours. Greg also contributes to the success of the Customer Connect program soliciting businesses on his route.

Civil Servant of the Year Awards



We wish to acknowledge the contributions of the following people and organizations without whose help this year's awards program would not have been possible



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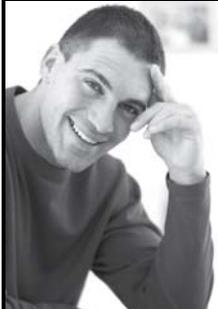
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Civil Servant of the Year

Award Plaques: John Sorenson, Skylane Bowling

Color Guard: 934th Airlift Wing, U.S. Air Force Reserve

Award Program Location: Sheraton Hotel and Tower, Bloomington, Minnesota

Master of Ceremonies: Chester Slipek, Chair, Federal Executive Board

Keynote Speaker: General John W. Vessey, Jr., Retired

**Program and
Poster Design:** Federal Executive Board Staff

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Print Shop

Acknowledgments



Receipt

33rd Federal Civil Servant Luncheon

May 7, 2010

Sheraton Bloomington, Bloomington, MN

\$20.00



Federal Executive Board of Minnesota



Chester Slipek, Chair
Raymond W. Morris, Executive Director
Alyssa Poucher, Assistant Director



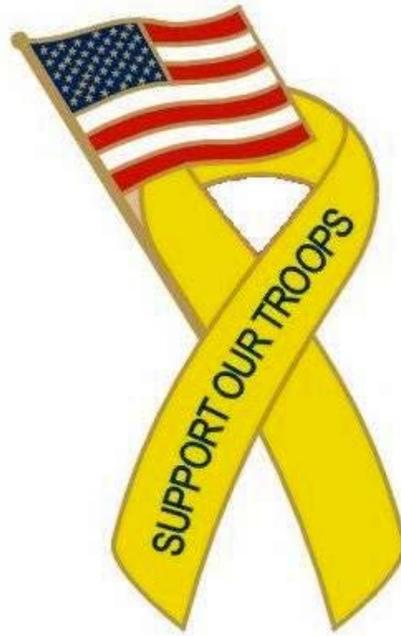
Suite 510, Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building, 1 Federal Drive
 Saint Paul, Minnesota 55111-4008
 Phone (612) 713-7200 Fax (612) 713-7203

e-mail: Ray_Morris@nbc.gov or Alyssa_Poucher@nbc.gov
On The Web at www.feb.gov

The 33rd Annual

Civil Servant of the Year Awards Program

Awards



2010

