

THE 35TH ANNUAL
CIVIL SERVANT



OF THE YEAR
AWARDS

2012

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THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD OF MINNESOTA PRESENTS

THE 35TH ANNUAL
CIVIL SERVANT OF THE YEAR AWARDS
PROGRAM

CONTENTS:	ABOUT THE AWARDS	4
	FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD	5
	FINALISTS SECTION (ALPHABETICAL BY AGENCY)	7
	SPONSORS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	31
	INDEX OF FINALISTS (ALPHABETICAL BY LAST NAME)	36

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ABOUT THE AWARDS

THIS PROGRAM HONORS OUTSTANDING MINNESOTAN
FEDERAL EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE DEMONSTRATED
EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE AND DEDICATION
AS PUBLIC SERVANTS DURING CALENDAR YEAR 2011,
BOTH IN THE WORKPLACE AND IN THE COMMUNITY.

WE SHOULD ALL BE PROUD OF THE MANY CONTRIBU-
TIONS TO AMERICAN SOCIETY THAT THESE INDIVIDUALS
HAVE PERFORMED IN SERVICE TO THE CITIZENS OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

MINNESOTA

PRESENTS THE



2012

FINALISTS

FOR THE

FEDERAL CIVIL SERVANT OF THE
YEAR AWARDS



Julie Ault

Administrative Assistant

148th Fighter Wing/Operations
Group

The dedication of MSgt Julie Ault is unparalleled and unprecedented. She holds the recognition of being the focal point for the 148th Honor Guard. Under her direction, this base team provides military honors at funerals for our Wing members. It is also the primary entity during Wing formations to provide a respectful way to display homage to the 148th Airmen. She ensures the Honor Guard members practice their movements to be in the utmost precision, coordinates to fill program needs, and Honor Guard requests. Acts as the liaison between wing and Grand Forks Honor Guard, our Wing's active duty affiliate. She completes all these tasks on a voluntary basis. MSgt Julie Ault is truly deserving of being the 148th Federal Civil Servant of the Year.



Jason Lee

Property Book Assistant

Army National Guard

SPC Lee's ability to work with minimal supervision has directly contributed to the success of the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade(CAB) section. SPC Lee's effective ability to disseminate information clearly and organized tasks helped tremendously in completion of 11 USPFO property book reconciliations that effectively lowered 34th CAB on hand excess property by 1.13%. He created a States Transfer of Property(STOP) spreadsheet that tracks all of the equipment movements that saves numerous of hours of research. The STOPs spreadsheet illustrates his meticulous attention to detail. He has shown himself to be invaluable to the property book office. His efforts to take care of soldiers from the 34th CAB and ensures they were logistically prepared is a testament to his professionalism as a soldier.



Dan Bednarek

Community Relations Officer

Army National Guard
Camp Ripley Visitors Bureau

Dan is a consummate professional, but one project in 2011 is most noteworthy. This project was a Welcome Home Ceremony for Vietnam Veterans on September 18, 2011. Welcome Home ceremonies today are common place, but no ceremonies were held for Vietnam veterans. Mr. Bednarek and his team conducted a Welcome Home ceremony for 300 Vietnam veterans. These veterans were greeted by a crowd of 1,800 people as they rode on busses to the parade area at Camp Ripley. Unloading their busses they received a heroes' fanfare courtesy the 34th Infantry Division Band. After they were seated they received a much over-due thank-you from civic leaders and citizens alike. None of this would have happened had it not been for Dan's vision, leadership, and execution.



Cassandra Q. Carter

Office Services Assistant

934th Airlift Wing

Ms. Carter distinguished herself by providing superior customer service to the 934th Maintenance Group. Cassandra provided orders requests for the group numbering over 300 personnel. She validated travel vouchers, ensuring accuracy and proper documentation to the Wing finance office for pay purposes. Ms. Carter manages 3 databases to ensure all personnel performance ratings were reviewed, validated and loaded into the VPC-GR database. Cassandra expeditiously processed 78 individual orders requests for the group combat deployment in a span of only 5 working days. She spearheaded the unit paperless conversion by revamping 9 file plan accounts and correcting previous discrepant errors prior to a unit inspection. Ms. Carter performed all these actions while the support staff office manning was fifty percent due to position vacancies



Steven Lavey

Supervisor General Engineer

934th Airlift Wing

Mr. Lavey is an outstanding project engineer. He led a \$6.7M project to demolish 12,000 SF central heating plant and install high efficient systems, reducing energy costs >5%. This decentralization reduced our base-wide "Potential to Emit", eliminating requirement for a state permit. In addition, Greenhouse Gas CO2 equivalent potential was reduced by 37,365 tons/year and SO2 emissions were down >120 tons/year! Steve was the driving force in the Wing's Energy Reduction efforts, exceeding the federally mandated energy reduction goal of 3%/year! This effort has saved \$150,000+ and reduced energy usage 39% when compared to the baseline. Steve also directed a \$1.4M partner project with Minnesota ANG to improve Aircraft Fueling Operations by combining complex fuel testing operations in a single facility; mission efficiency increased 25%.



Jennifer Murphy

Electronic Integrated Systems Inspector

934th Airlift Wing

Ms. Murphy is extremely knowledgeable in all aspects of Electronic Integrated Systems Repair and Inspection processes. She was chosen as technical advisor to Real-Time-In-Cockpit aircraft modification team ensuring seamless operations and positive relations with contract engineering teams. Jen facilitated the paperless technical data conversion, leading the Air Force towards cost savings in "Green" initiatives. She revamped Product Improvement and Deficiency Reporting processes to ensure quality assets within the supply chain. With 125% turnover in the past year, Jen kept work-center continuity, taking on 25% additional workload, ensuring seamless operations. As organization publication manager, she re-authored 100% of local instructions achieving compliance. She enrolled in a career-broadening course outside her primary duty, expanding overall mission knowledge, and volunteered to serve as Environmental Safety Occupational Health monitor.



Kirby D. Schueler

Chief, 934 LRS Transportation Flight

934th Airlift Wing

As Chief of the Performance Management Office, 934th Airlift Wing, Kirby D. Schueler has truly demonstrated outstanding performance by leading the effort for HQ AFRC to visit and re-engineer the 934th Base Operating Support (BOS) organization. He justified to wing leadership and headquarters to source eleven approved civilian positions plus submit a required Organizational Change Request (OCR) resulting in jobs gained, processes improved. He strongly advocated, researched and developed a comprehensive briefing, outlining new wing structure—entire wing leadership sold. Galvanized and re-energized the Quality Assurance Enforcement office, outlined new goals and expectations, delinquent BOS deliverable data reduced by 60%. Mr. Schueler was also appointed the Wing Deputy Exercise Evaluation Team Chief which had an immediate and positive impact on inspection process improvement and communication.



US Army Corps of Engineers®

James B. Mosner

Chief, Civil-Site Section

Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District

As Chief of the Civil-Site & Surveys Section, Jim Mosner is a model of leadership, enthusiasm, and work ethos. His dedication to his staff, quality, and mission is infectious. Jim oversees the Quality Management initiative in the district, which requires outstanding leadership and organizational skills and the ability to work on 20 things at once. Most importantly, Jim exemplifies the 'caring boss.' He makes it a priority to know his employees and regularly organizes social events for fun and staff recognition. Jim is actively involved in the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) as a Fellow, and Minnesota Federation of Engineering, Science, and Technology Societies (MFESTS). His enthusiasm to develop young professionals is evident and sends a very positive message about the Corps of Engineers.



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

Aaron M. Snyder

Supervisory Program Manager

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

Aaron led a large and diverse project team from 2008 through 2011 for the Fargo-Moorhead Metro Flood Risk Reduction Study. Aaron's efforts included extensive partnering with local, state and federal agencies; project resolution on significant procedural, policy and technical issues; coordination with elected officials at all levels of government; and leading a large study team with multiple partners, employees and contractors. Public opportunities to participate and comment on this project have been extensive. Aaron demonstrated exceptional creativity, innovation, and determination. The approved plan will have annual benefits of \$180 million and reduce the impact of flooding on 200,000 people in the Fargo-Moorhead region. Completion of this complex study with its significant technical, political and institutional challenges in a 3-year time frame is unprecedented.



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

Annette Vogel

Program Analyst

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

Work hard...Pray hard...Serve all! Annette Vogel used those three powerful tenets in 2011 to exemplify excellence in service as a budget Program Analyst specialist, wise mentor, caring co-worker, and a trusted friend in her work and home community. Annette created and managed her construction branch's \$4.4 million internal budget to perfection while facilitating over \$100 million in contractor payments. Outside of work, Annette poured her servant's heart into the community by mentoring young at-risk women, serving in her church, and showing compassion to the elderly through volunteer work to senior facilities throughout the Twin Cities. Anxious to serve her community to even greater depths, Annette attained a Masters degree in Community Ministry Leadership and now serves as Reverend Vogel in her church and community!



Martin Cassellius

Fuels Specialist

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Mr. Cassellius is an exceptional Hazard Fuels program manager. His tireless promotion of the program is demonstrated by annually exceeding work targets, capturing yearend funding for additional treatment acres, in the way in which he gathers partners and collaborators to support the program. It is only through partnerships and collaboration that the Bureau is able to accomplish the treatment acres with our limited staff and dispersed service area. Further, the increased treatment acres have significantly decreased the acreage of destructive wildfires within the Tribal land urban interface. His exemplary work ethic extends to the quality of his project planning and accomplishment documentation. All fuels projects meet or exceed national standards and build the scientific database ensuring continuous improvement for the Midwest Hazard Fuels program.



Joe Mortzheim

Inventory Specialist

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Mr. Mortzheim is the sole Forest Biometrician/Statistician in the BIA and has worked tirelessly to implement new and more efficient data collection methods, data analysis, and data storage for Forest inventory. His work has attracted the attention of the national office and is expected to serve as the model for a new system that will bring Mr. Mortzheim's high data quality standards to all the forested lands in Indian Country. Without Mr. Mortzheim's high standards to provide a sound baseline inventory, the Bureau could not make statistically confident forest management decisions. In addition, the challenges facing forest management from global climate change would be much more difficult to model, and ultimately address.



Carl Hardzinski

G.I.S. Specialist

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Mr. Hardzinski has made a remarkable contribution to the digital mapping systems in the Midwest over his career. Mr. Hardzinski took the GIS function as an ancillary duty in 1985. He grew the program at the Region starting in 1988 as GIS evolved from a crude mapping tool to the multifaceted decision support tool that it is today. Mr. Hardzinski maintains the GIS infrastructure, gathers digital information from all sources, and integrates that information into our system, trains Bureau staff and Tribal staff to ensure that they have the most current capability and he has done all that with a positive, can-do attitude.



Therese Reilly

Forest Development Forester

BIA, Great Lakes Agency

As Forest Development Forester, Therese was able to update 14,751 acres of stand records in the Operations Inventory database. This is used daily by foresters, as well as other offices such as OST, for such things as land appraisals and undivided interest acquisitions. She worked with Tribes to get 7 acres of tree planting, 720 acres regenerated through timber harvesting, and 736 acres of timber stand improvement done. All of the forest development work was completed through cooperation with six Tribes via PL-93-638 contracts. Therese also assisted with the Agency's timber sale program which allowed the Agency to harvest 13.4 million board feet of timber in FY11, which was valued at 1.1 million dollars. She has provided support to the Agency as one of our Freedom of Information Act coordinators and worked on ten FOIA cases for the Agency. Therese has been a superb assets to the Great Lakes Agency.



Sherry Duval

Intelligence Specialist

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives

Sherry Duval has faithfully served the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) for over 34 years. Her Career includes Industry Operations Investigator, Public Information Officer, Recruiter, and currently serves as Intelligence Specialist. Ms. Duval has been instrumental in organizing major law enforcement operation command posts and is well respected not only by ATF, but by other Federal, State, and Local law enforcement agencies. She is the longest serving employee in the St. Paul Field Division and has become the primary resource for every facet of our Agency. Her knowledge, dedication and experience are unsurpassed and invaluable. Ms. Duval is planning to retire in 2012 and will be greatly missed. The entire St. Paul Field Division wishes her a long and well-deserved retirement.



Nancy Lair

Investigative Analyst

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives

Investigative Analyst Lair has been an exceptional addition to the ATF's St. Paul Industry Operations office. Since joining ATF, IA Lair has proven herself invaluable to the office. She demonstrates initiative, and actively seeks to increase her responsibilities in an effort to improve the productivity and effectiveness of the office. IA Lair is dedicated to the organizational goals and the critical mission of ATF. She has undertaken numerous projects resulting in outstanding improvements of the efficiency in achieving the ATF mission. IA Lair consistently demonstrates exceptional diplomacy when interacting with all people and displays a tremendously positive attitude that resonates throughout the office. IA Lair possesses many valued personal traits and consistently displays a pleasant, cheerful disposition. Thank you Nancy.



Anthony Nicoli

Investigative Analyst

Food and Drug Administration

Anthony "Tony" Nicoli, Special Assistant to the Director of Investigations Branch, has excelled during the 2011 year in providing critical communication in regards to the Investigations Branch's workplan, work products, and training. Tony creates and organizes a monthly newsletter for the Branch that discusses work products, provides training information, and fosters communication within the Branch. Tony established procedures and methods to track training history, equipment, and equipment calibration making the Branch more efficient in its operations. He is the "go to" person for information related to assignments, deadlines, and training. Tony facilitates Consumer Safety Technician meetings which includes providing training, development, and new work tools along with discussion of workload. Tony's organizational skills and leadership facilitating communication was instrumental to Investigations Branch operations during 2011.



Jason Lundgren

Mission Support Specialist

Customs & Border Protection

Jason Lundgren, budget specialist, was one of two designated leads for the Minneapolis Hiring Center's (MHC) office move to Norman Pointe II. The "Office Move" involved 150 employees and supporting equipment and infrastructure both owned and leased. He showed Leadership and professionalism in coordinating MHC management, employees and vendors in preparation, execution and post-move corrections. Jason also monitored timelines and communicated with external clients and customers of MHC regarding impact of move. Jason's contribution was special because as a budget specialist Jason stepped outside his defined role and performed excellently at tasks with minimal direction. This was a significant responsibility for over 6 months, all while Jason maintained his regular budget duties. Overall, Jason exhibited exemplary leadership, professionalism and diligence.



Nina Miller

Mission Support Specialist

Customs & Border Protection

Nina Miller leads the administrative staff for our office of 100+ personnel. In 2011, she also led a little project called "Office Move" and it couldn't have been in better hands! Nina determined what needed to be accomplished and when. She coordinated activities within the office and with the many vendors involved and she oversaw the entire physical move from start to finish. Thanks to Nina's efficient and unflappable leadership, we walked out of the Whipple Federal Building on July 1st and sat down at our new workstations in Norman Pointe II on July 5th with minimal disruption to operations. Nina demonstrates outstanding leadership skills every day in the professional way she works with her staff and colleagues. She exemplifies excellence in civil service.



Scott Fretheim

Functional Application Specialist

DCMA Twin Cities

Mr. Scott Fretheim, Functional Application Specialist with Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA), is responsible for executing several software systems supporting 6,600 contracts worth \$32B. Mr. Fretheim distinguished himself as a leader within the Electronic Document Workflow (EDW) Software Community. Utilizing his extensive knowledge and insight, he discovered database errors causing thousands of contracts across the DoD to bypass proper review by Quality Assurance personnel. Mr. Fretheim influenced DCMA HQ to implement a stop gap solution, allowing time for EDW developers to install a long term fix. "For the want of a horseshoe nail...the war was lost.". Scott found one of those nails--far-reaching impact from his phenomenal contribution.



Dale Hoeft

Program Integrator

DCMA Twin Cities

Mr. Hoeft is a Program Integrator (PI) with Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA). He is responsible for three critical weapons programs, which the Army is relying on to win the current fight. As the Program Support Team Leader, Dale ensures all technical and contractual activities align to achieve total compliance. Mr. Hoeft adeptly met the demands of frequent Flag Officer interface on his high visibility programs, focusing the contractor on the Army's highest priorities. He personally oversaw shipments of urgent in-theater weapon needs, ensuring correct packaging and shipment data to guarantee weapons and ammunition were received to meet special mission needs. Over the last year, Mr. Hoeft displayed unparalleled professionalism and dedication to the War Fighter



Jody E. Kuoppala

Management and Program Assistant

Federal Aviation Administration

Jody Kuoppala is a selfless person who inspires others to support the community. Through Jody's leadership, persistence, organization, passion and genuineness, she has had a positive influence in several charitable opportunities. She was captain of the FAA American Cancer Society Relay for Life team and co-lead for the Cancer Society Daffodil Days. Jody identified a military family to sponsor during the holidays and rallied incredible support from the community and co-workers. The effort raised donations of \$2,300, furniture, bicycles, toys, gift cards and all the Christmas trimmings. She maintains outstanding work performance for four workgroups, including managing a multi-million dollar budget and provides back up support to the District Manager. Jody is an amazing humanitarian who just keeps giving. She is a true inspiration



Deb Melchert

Aviation Safety Assistant

Federal Aviation Administration,
MSP FSDO

Deb is an extraordinary person and valuable asset to the FAA and Federal Government. She has taken the lead role and shown strong leadership abilities including Government On Display Co-Chairperson, Aero Committee, education and career programs for Minneapolis schools, Boy Scouts, and Health and Safety Committees. Deb manages volunteers for several committees within the FSDO. Deb willingly does it all because she genuinely cares about people that are impacted by her efforts. She donates countless hours to these tasks, showing strong leadership and initiative, while expertly managing these projects. She seeks collaboration while finding solutions that benefit all. She is confident yet willing to listen. She shows appreciation to others and leads by example! Deb is definitely the "Go To Person" if you want success.



Charles Miller

Frontline Manager

Federal Aviation Administration

Chuck Miller, Front Line Manager at the Minneapolis Air Traffic Control Tower, has exemplified the character of a leader in his display of integrity, vision, direction, and self-motivation. Members of the management team and the controller work force are inspired and motivated by Chuck's direct influence. He values employees for their contributions and provides opportunities to create solutions. Chuck serves as an influential mentor to interns, controllers, managers and surrounding facilities, demonstrating a strong work ethic and caring demeanor. Chuck's communication and listening skills are superior. His leadership has notably contributed to the outstanding cooperative environment of Minneapolis Tower. In addition to his significant professional contributions, Chuck volunteers much of his spare time at his church and places strong emphasis on family values.



John Orr

Support Specialist

Federal Aviation Administration

John Orr may work as an Air Traffic employee at the Minneapolis ARTCC, but he truly supports the facility as a whole. John really demonstrates how all lines of business can pull together to work as a team for the benefit of all. No matter what the task, John looks for the “how it can be done,” and he doesn’t worry about whose job it is to do it. If it needs to happen, John will pull together the players and make it happen. We have accomplished so much within our organization with minimum cost, yet great efficiency because of John’s can do spirit and energy. The Minneapolis ARTCC facility, both Air Traffic and Technical Operations offers sincere thanks to John for his dedicated service.



Jerrad Robinson

Frontline Manager

Federal Aviation Administration

Mr. Robinson served as the SUPCOM Chair for Minneapolis Center representing the Frontline Supervisors’ Team. Jerrad is highly regarded among his peers, his employees, and upper management for his dedication, expertise, and professionalism. He successfully created a vision, raised performance to a higher standard and directed accomplishment of organizational goals/objectives. His leadership and guidance has had a significant impact on the upcoming implementation of En Route Automation Modernization (ERAM) and the new QA/QC procedures.

Jerrad consistently demonstrates the caring and commitment that is critical for our organization to fulfill our mission. It is through the positive efforts and leadership of people like Jerrad that we will ensure that the FAA continues to be the best at what we do.



Dennis Wieber

Systems Specialist

Federal Aviation Administration

Mr. Dennis Wieber is an Environmental ATSS within the Minneapolis ARTCC District located in Farmington, Minnesota. Dennis, and his peers work behind the scenes to ensure environmental services are provided to the National Airspace System which supports the safe and efficient movement of air traffic. Dennis’ mastery of the ARTCC Environmental Systems, (heartbeat of the facility), his inherent leadership, and extreme dedication has allowed for very critical projects and activities to occur flawlessly, with no interruption to air traffic services. The environmental systems he maintains are crucial to the operation of the building, and can be extremely dangerous to work on. Dennis ensures that risks to his peers and the NAS are identified and mitigated. We offer sincere thanks for Dennis’ outstanding dedication and performance.



Brian Besch

HUD Criminal Investigator

Department of Housing and Urban Development

Mr. Besch has spent 21 years in the OIG Division dedicated to investigating illegal mortgage lending practices and other inappropriate practices. As an outstanding Criminal Investigator he spends his time investigating and documenting bank fraud, falsified documents, and addressing the ever increasing mortgage default rates in North and South Dakota, Wisconsin and Minnesota. Mr. Besch leads an investigative team of three in the Minneapolis HUD Office. He works closely with the five HUD Divisions seeking input from the Division staff to determine possible fraud. Over the last year, Mr. Besch’s dedication and determination has successfully brought six cases to trial. Mr. Besch’s unmatched professionalism under pressure shows how one man can assist in rebuilding the mortgage industry one bad mortgage apple at a time.



Amy Schwarz

Attorney Advisor

Department of Housing and Urban
Development

Amy provides exceptional legal representation to HUD’s Divisions in the Minneapolis Field Office, with her special expertise being the closings for the Office of Healthcare and Multifamily Housing. Her expertise has been recognized by HUD through her inclusion in the National process improvement meetings. She represents HUD on the Federal Executive Board’s Diversity Council, volunteers in HUD’s participation in the Twin Cities’ Project Homeless Connect, Government on Display, Union activities, HUD’s CFC, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. food drive. Amy still finds time to be an active member of the Minnesota Women Lawyer’s Mentor’s Committee and an active alumna of Hamline School of Law. Amy exhibits an extraordinary commitment to HUD’s mission and serves as an example of the best of public service.



Karen Brehmer

Stakeholder Liason

Internal Revenue Service

Karen Brehmer has been an IRS employee for more than 20 years. She has worked at the Walk-in office assisting taxpayers, as a Revenue Officer enforcing our Collection laws while working with the public to educate them on their responsibilities and recently as a Stakeholder Liaison in the Small Business Self Employed Division. In whatever she does, she brings her passion for doing a job well and her enthusiasm to accomplish whatever tasks are given to her.

Karen has established relationships in the community with Limited Proficiency groups, women and minority groups and professional partners. Karen has taught Sunday school at her church for 8 years, served as confirmation group leader, and organized summertime mission trips for children at her church. Karen exemplifies the meaning of Civil Servant.



Karen L. Hubertus

Senior Team Coordinator

Internal Revenue Service

Karen’s 25 year career has evolved to her current responsibility as Senior Team Coordinator for a large company tax examination. Along with her own examination cases and duties, she coordinates a team of 10 agents and two outside experts and keeps keeping information flowing between her team and taxpayers to meet planned milestone dates.

She is a strong technical team player who has worked with: an electronic filing team troubleshooting new forms; a high profile team identifying Industry Trends; an Industry Issue Resolution team that published useful guidance which reduced government expenses and gave taxpayers clearer guidance to follow. Karen has worked for 16 years with Volunteer Income Tax Assistance assisting elderly and low income individuals with tax returns.



Kristin Timmons

Attorney

Internal Revenue Service

Kristin Timmons served as Chairwoman for the Lymphoma Research Foundation annual fundraiser, responsible for events in February 2011 and 2012. Each event required months of planning and raised over \$120,000, representing a 40% increase over the preceding years. Kristin’s leadership brings out generosity in people. The key to her success is her great team-building skills. She not only raises money for LRF, but all who participate in planning, executing and attending the events leave with a sense of joy. Kristin brings these same qualities to her work. Representing the IRS, Kristin is often able to settle cases by guiding petitioners so they understand the details and conclusions in their tax cases. Kristin brings her outstanding skills and abilities to her work daily, and shares these same fine qualities with her community.



Ross Carlyon

Hydrometeorological Technician

NOAA/NWS

Ross Carlyon provided exemplary service in furthering our data collection and outreach; ultimately enhancing NOAA's NWS mission. His can do attitude and tireless efforts ensure the best possible data are available for public use. He has a selfless approach toward visiting dozens of NWS volunteer weather observers. He travels anywhere we need him to fix equipment, no questions asked. He doesn't stop working until the problem is solved, even if on his own time. There are numerous cases where he worked under harsh conditions gathering information that was vital for hazardous weather forecasts and warnings. His efforts increased our confidence in the multitude of hazardous warnings we issue for the protection of life and property. Ross has even delivered appreciation awards to volunteers who were hospitalized.



Robert A. Malewicky

Supply Technician

NROTC -U of M

Robert Malewicky's performance as the University of Minnesota NROTC Supply Technician was outstanding. He expertly managed state and federal budgets totaling \$1.3M and completed FY11 with a 99.9% obligation rate. He completed ADP, Uniform, Minor Property and Instructional inventories with 100% accuracy and accountability. He collected, shipped and tracked the results for hundreds of urinalysis samples with 100% accountability and zero discrepancies. He is the liaison with the university facilities management department for all three ROTC programs (Navy/Marine Corps, Army and Air Force) and coordinated all maintenance actions for the Armory building. He participated in numerous American Legion and VFW events in support of his community to include speaking at grade schools on Veterans Day. He coached youth baseball, positively impacting young men and women.



Teresa Graziano

Senior Special Agent

Office of Personnel Management,
Federal Investigative Services

Teri Graziano's exemplary community leadership, inspiring devotion to duty and investigative prowess epitomized the highest standards of Civil Service. Teri proactively sought ways to help over 3000 people in need after the horrible floods in the North Dakota and Minnesota River Valleys. She singlehandedly spearheaded a statewide OPM donation effort that was praised by local and national support agencies for those who lost their homes and belongings during the floods in 2011. Additionally, Teri was critical in supporting international operations in Europe and Asia in 2011, leveraging her investigative acumen to enhance operations world wide. Her contributions far exceed that required and have positively impacted thousands of people in need, international operations, and OPM's national security program.



Stephan Patnode

Senior Special Agent

Office of Personnel Management,
Federal Investigative Services

Awarded for exceptional meritorious service as Senior Special Agent, Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Federal Investigative Services (FIS), from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011. During this period, Mr. Steve Patnode's exemplary leadership, inspiring devotion to duty and administrative prowess epitomized the highest standards of Civil Service. Steve proactively brought forward innovative ideas that increased productivity by 33%, decreased costs, and are now emulated region wide. Additionally, Steve was critical in supporting international operations in Europe twice in the last year, leveraging his investigative acumen to enhance operations world wide. His contributions far exceed that required and have positively impacted the region, international operations, and OPM's national security program. Superior performance of duties as typified above highlight the culmination of 30 years of honorable and dedicated civil service to our nation.



Holly Littlefield

Passport Specialist

Minneapolis Passport Agency, U.S.
Department of State

Holly Littlefield has repeatedly demonstrated her leadership and team spirit at the Minneapolis Passport Agency. She was an original “pioneer” employee, transferring from the National Passport Center to help open up the Agency in 2009. Her achievements have been recognized by Agency management and her peers with several awards. Her fraud detection skills prevented several non-citizens from receiving passports. She is consistently the Agency’s fastest adjudicator with the lowest error rate. For her public relations skills she won the Agency’s “Best Customer Service” award. Holly created the children’s activity passport the Agency uses in public outreach events. The passport helped win the Agency a special award from the FEB. She contributes regularly to CFC and has raised \$3,000+ for the March of Dimes since 2003.



Pamela Katorosz

Legal Assistant

Social Security-Office of Disability
and Adjudication Review

Pam Katorosz does an outstanding job of preparing cases for Social Security Administrative Law Judge Hearings. In 2011, she prepared over 300 files, sorting and identifying medical evidence, requesting additional development, identifying key procedural issues and summarizing that information for each case. Her efforts ensure that all files are ready for hearing and claimants are committed to appear. The quality of her work is recognized by everyone. She has embraced a new responsibility requiring note taking in hearings and produces complete and accurate notes of those proceedings. She willingly provides assistance and direction to peers and is always ready to accept additional assignments. Pam’s work is invaluable to the public, as well as the Administration, and we are pleased to nominate her for this honor.



Shondra Dickson

Management Support Specialist

Social Security Administration

We’re nominating Ms. Dickson for her excellent commitment to her community. This past fall Shondra coordinated CFC for our office which resulted in 3 awards, she is a mentor and on the scholarship committee for Minneapolis North High School and a mentor for Macalester College Students as part of the Host Family Program. Ms. Dickson has dedicated herself to be a positive influence in a variety of ways that benefit her community.



Pamela Farrington

Technical Expert

Social Security Administration

Pamela Farrington has been an outstanding federal employee for the past seventeen years. She is recognized for her dedication to serving our unique and diverse public, with empathy, dignity and efficiency. She has an understanding of agency goals and can relay that understanding to the concept of balanced public service. Ms. Farrington is an outstanding Program Technical Expert and contributes a great deal to the District Operations. She is flexible, effective and eager to take on new tasks, putting the needs of the public before her own. She maintains a positive attitude and strives to improve our customer’s experience in receiving a stellar and quality public service.



Maria Herr

Claims Representative

Social Security Administration

Maria Herr is a Claims Representative for the Brooklyn Center Social Security Office where she exemplified herself in 2011 and will continue as member of the Retirement, Survivors, and Disability team. Maria provides exceptional service while working in the Continuing Disability Review unit. Through her attention to detail and compassion shown to her clients, Maria has ensured timely and accurate processing of her workloads. She is an integral resource to her colleagues for complicated cases regarding work issues, critical payments, overpayments, Medicare, and representative payee issues. She provides the highest level of service within the field office by assisting with phone duties, taking extra appointments when the office is short-staffed, and assisting management in working critical caseloads.



Araceli Navarro

Contact Representative

Social Security Administration

Araceli Navarro is a shining example of what we all strive to be as public servants. As a Contact Representative with the Social Security Administration, Araceli is continuously on the front lines of public service, assisting Social Security applicants and beneficiaries with their questions and problems. In our current economic climate, demand for SSA's services has increased, and the need for stellar public service is great. Araceli approaches each interaction with patience, empathy, and competence. Araceli uses her bilingual skills each day to bring SSA services to both English and Spanish speakers. In 2011, Araceli took on several additional responsibilities, including sharing her skills as a mentor, and providing courtesy training to the staff. Araceli is an excellent public face for SSA, and is very deserving of the Civil Servant of the Year award.



Lou Ann O'Connor

Claims Representative

Social Security Administration

Lou Ann O'Connor has been a dedicated employee of the Social Security Administration for over 33 years. In her years of service to the federal government, she has always exemplified what it is to be an outstanding public servant. Currently while processing her own claims representative workload, Lou Ann also maintains the internet appeals for the entire St. Cloud, MN office. On top of that, she voluntarily assists her co-workers in everything from taking on additional appointments to distributing unassociated mail. Along with being a valuable team member, Lou Ann regularly receives glowing feedback from claimants for the kind and efficient manner with which she helps the public. Lou Ann O'Connor truly represents the attributes of "Civil Servant of the Year."



Bev Peterson

Claims Representative

Social Security Administration

Bev Peterson's energetic attitude to providing quality public service is evidenced by the praise she receives from those she serves. She has a reputation for being polite and professional in her relationships with co-workers and other government agencies. Her insight and positive approach toward workloads and in support of the mission of the Agency has benefited the Social Security Administration and the people we serve. Since Bev Peterson handles her own duties in a timely and accurate manner, she has made a habit of volunteering to help with time sensitive workloads for other Minnesota Social Security offices. This dedication and attentiveness has helped the Marshall field office achieve and most often exceed its public service goals.



Vannesa Reth

Generalist Claims Representative

Social Security Administration

Vannesa is a very dedicated federal employee who provides quality customer service to the people she serves as a Generalist Claims Representative at the Social Security Administration. She has a positive attitude and is a team player. Vannesa always volunteers to help out her co-workers in taking on extra workloads. Vannesa has been on the forefront in handling the Medicare Part D workload for the Rochester area. Her leadership in this vital workload is invaluable. She also has taken on other specialized workloads while maintaining a full unit, and informally provides mentoring to newer employees. Vannesa also provides a service to the area and the region through her bilingual skills as a Cambodian translator. We are proud to have Vannesa represent the Rochester District as the Civil Servant of the Year.



Jamie Slack

Claims Representative

Social Security Administration

Jamie was selected and continues to serve as the chair for the Advisory Council for Employees with Disabilities (ACED) Minnesota Chapter from 02/2011 to the present. Jamie's role involves educating and bringing awareness to the concerns of persons with disabilities to all areas of the state.



John Short

Area Systems Coordinator

Social Security Administration

John Short has shown outstanding leadership as an Area Systems Coordinator and has gained the respect of his office staff, the Area Directors Office and offices throughout the Midwest. He provides system support and automation training for both the Minneapolis field office and the Twin Cities Social Security Card Center, where there are 66 employees. He is responsible for maintaining the Agencies Intranet homepages in Minnesota. John is the "go to" person for the ASCs throughout the area and his expertise in all aspects of his job is shared with everyone. The Social Security Administration's level of public service is enhanced by his efforts.



Richard Wolff

District Manager

Social Security Administration

Rick demonstrates the true qualities of a leader and civil servant, both in his role at work as a manager of a Social Security field office and through his volunteer work. He leads by example with his professionalism and compassion for people. He is on the St. Louis County Leadership Council which is working to end homelessness. Rick is also on the Board of Directors for the Salvation Army and the NE MN Habitat for Humanity. He serves on the Hibbing Chemical Health Advisory Committee which develops programs to address chemical use by children in the local community. Rick is also a Kiwanis member and participates in various fundraising activities for youth, and as a member of the Rotary he gives presentations on leadership. His public service extends well beyond the work week.



Xong Xiong

Enumeration Specialist

Social Security Administration

Xong is a dedicated public servant and believes in providing the best quality of service. The Twin City Social Security Card Center serves 400-500 people per day and she often stays late to help serve visitors remaining after the office closes. She is always volunteering for extra duty and willing to share her wealth of knowledge with her co-workers. She is a great asset to the Twin City Social Security Card Center.



Nancy Cutaia

Coordination Center Officer

Transportation Security Administration

Nancy is a vital part of the success at the TSA and demonstrates her commitment every day. Nancy is a leader in the Minnesota Employee Council, as well as a member of the MSP Procedures team. She routinely volunteers to assist Security Operations, provide above and beyond service and support in the operations center, and puts herself in an active role to improve all aspects of the TSA in Minnesota. Nancy is a natural leader and understands the concept of helping every department to make us collectively successful. She is consistently called upon to provide her expertise in screening operations, workplace challenges, and operation center initiatives because she is a collaborator and great problem solver. Nancy is a major contributor to our model workplace and follows the core initiatives of the Conflict Management Program at TSA



Adam Dagsgard

Program Analyst

Transportation Security Administration

Adam achieved excellence by multitasking this year and performing exceptionally well during a major payroll transition to the electronic time and attendance system (eTAS). He managed dual payroll systems during the transition and ensured that all employees were paid correctly and on time. Adam frequently managed unexpected and competing priorities regarding personnel and payroll accounting. The transition to eTAS was the smoothest and quickest completed by any airport to date in the Nation. In addition, Adam excelled in problem solving by anticipating potential problems as they related to the potential furloughs and unemployment cases. He generated alternatives and presented multiple courses of action for leadership.



Timothy Spaude

Lead Transportation Security Officer

Transportation Security Administration

The Transportation Security Administration would like to nominate Tim Spaude for Civil Servant of the Year. Tim always puts his best foot forward in representing the TSA. Tim has received the most customer compliments for 2011 out of all MN TSA employees. The passenger comments regularly reflect words such as "professional, friendly, enthusiastic, efficient, respectful, and welcoming". He has also been called the "Customer Service Star" by a passenger who observed Tim assisting an elderly woman through the screening process. Tim is a reflection of TSA core values and dedication to our nation's security mission.



Justin Zoss

Transportation Security Inspector

Transportation Security Administration

Justin Zoss is a Transportation Security Inspector for the State of Minnesota and has served our agency honorably. During the last year, Mr. Zoss has participated in several initiatives with nation-wide implications, in addition to his contributions to the State of Minnesota. He serves as the Lead Inspector for the Aviation Screening Assessment Program which involves coordination with many different entities and is critical to the overall success of screening detection. He also has a critical role in the General Aviation community, where he serves as the subject matter expert for aviation security for the Minnesota Council of Airports. Mr. Zoss is the ultimate team player, and is deeply respected by industry partners and his peers. He demonstrates a great work ethic, and willingness to contribute to the overall success of the agency.



Daniel Daly

Supervisory Hydrologic Technician

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

Daniel Daly manages USGS water-data activities for the Mounds View Office. Dan is the agency nominee based on leadership, concern for safety, outreach, and community involvement. Dan is an active leader who willingly shares his experience and knowledge. He frequently helps staff from other agencies with technical support that promotes USGS expertise and visibility. Dan spends long days to ensure that stream flow data are accurate and timely. He considers the mission of the USGS ahead of his personal needs by volunteering for many field projects. Dan is dedicated to safety by serving as the Collateral Safety Officer for the office. Dan frequently volunteers to help with outreach activities and is active in the community with scouting and youth sports.



Kristi Johnson

Senior Import Specialist

U.S. Customs and Border Protection

As a Senior Import Specialist, Kristi Johnson's achievements in the area of commercial trade enforcement have been outstanding. During the past fiscal year, Kristi's trade enforcement actions have resulted in penalty referrals in excess of \$8.6 million. The violations detected concerned the evasion of antidumping duties, circumvention of import quotas, and the misclassification of imported goods to avoid the payment of duties. The enforcement of import trade laws and regulations is critical to the protection of U.S. industry as well as revenue collection for the U.S. government. Last year Customs & Border Protection collected an estimated \$37.2 billion in revenue. Kristi consistently leads the Port of Minneapolis in trade enforcement actions and deserves recognition for her exemplary efforts.



Jody Ritter

Mission Support Specialist, Team Leader

U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Jody Ritter deserves recognition for the outstanding job she does as the Mission Support Specialist -Team Leader for the Area Service Port of Minneapolis, as well as other ports that fall under her assigned area of responsibility. She has become the "go-to person" for so many different areas – such as payroll, personnel actions, recruitment, employee benefits, supplies, office services, building facilities, equipment, employee leave, travel, and budget. She assumes these varied challenges and responsibilities with a "can-do" attitude and if she doesn't readily know the answer, she will find it. Jody's contributions are an invaluable piece in supporting port personnel in fulfilling the overall mission of U. S. Customs and Border Protection – securing our nation's borders and protecting U.S. industry.



Carlos Sosa

Regional Manager, International Trade Program

U.S. Small Business Administration

Carlos' big smile, warm personality and professionalism permeates the District Office and infuses it with the energy and excitement needed to accomplish our international program goals.

Carlos took over the International Trade programs of the District Office in May 2011. His sense of responsibility ensures that the District Office is well represented to Minnesota lenders, resource partners, and the small business community. Carlos increased opportunities and awareness for small business owners to export their products or services abroad. He has been instrumental in supporting the National Export Initiative in order to double exports within the next 5 years. Carlos assumes responsibility to get out accurate and timely information about the significance of the global marketplace. Thanks to the hard work of Carlos, our office shines as a beacon to all SBA offices.



James Robson

Building Equipment Mechanic

United States Postal Service

Jim has been working with Physical and Cognitive impaired athletes for 17 years. In 1995 he started a Special Olympics Team in the Northern suburbs of Minneapolis, in 1997 along with two other coaches Jim started TOPSoccer an outreach program for soccer and is a program of US Youth Soccer. After being the Minnesota Chair for TOPSoccer for 15 years Jim received the volunteer position as Regional Chair over seeing 14 States in the Midwest, requiring many hours of his own time and extensive traveling.

Jim is an exceptional employee with the Postal Service. He was monumental in setting up our Lock Out Tag Out Safety program in our new facility here in Eagan MN. He has a near perfect attendance record and has been with the Postal Service for over 15 years.



Lauren Leaf

Postmaster

United States Postal Service

Lauren is active in her community by offering hospice care (wash clothes, cook and general care). She brings homemade food and treats to residents of local assisted living home. She volunteers her time to take shut-ins on trips (such as MOA). She donates homemade food for funerals and Red Cross blood drives. She coordinates local community program to pack and send care packages to Military overseas. Lauren is known as "The Answer Person" to local postmasters. She takes the initiative to offer assistance to new OIC's. She is a very valuable and knowledgeable asset to the postal service.



Paul Peters

City Letter Carrier

United States Postal Service

Paul Peters is a very generous person in daily giving of his time and energy. Working in a small office, he is always pitching in to do what is necessary to get the job done: going above and beyond. Paul organizes the annual NALC Food Drive in May and arranges for the collected food to be dropped at the local food shelf. During the summer, Paul shares his love of fishing by taking kids from the Hastings area fishing. Paul also organizes an annual golf tournament that raises money for Spinal Muscular Atrophy, and that money is donated to an afflicted individual. This past Thanksgiving, Paul arranged for the local grocery store to prepare a holiday meal for the residents at an assisted living facility.



Terry Mertins

Postmaster

United States Postal Service

Terry Mertins has been a local leader and active with the community in the town of West Concord. She has been active with Elementary School, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Ladies Auxiliary, the Legion and local community. Through Terry's leadership hundreds of packages have been sent to troops each year; at Valentines Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Halloween, Christmas and in March a special event of the Girl Scouts sending cookies. The troops are so thankful they send thank you notes. Terry posts the notes for all to see. Terry also takes part in providing meals each week to families having suffered health crisis in the community. Terry is a great role model to her community and remembers those individuals from the local communities that are serving our country.



Mary Mikula

Postmaster

United States Postal Service

Mary Mikula, was on a mission to help get the town of Sand Creek on the map and she has definitely done just that. She is creative with her revenue generation ideas always involving the community and promoting stamps, products, services in fun ways. Mary believes in leading by example. She sends out at least one priority care package to someone, somewhere each week. She writes to military members of family, friends, and community members. She rises to every challenge presented to her with a smile and can do attitude. She believes in and lives a GREEN lifestyle. She established and runs the Postal Clothing Closet which redistributes slightly used postal clothing to employees throughout the United States. Mary helps make the Sand Creek community and the world a better place.



Brian Hogge

Field Operations Team Leader

US DOT/ Federal Highway Administration

Brian has worked aggressively to position the office for the 21st century. He has sought out new technology, for use by the field staff, to make their time as productive as possible. He has converted several office forms into electronic format for ease of use. He has promoted the use of electronic document storage as the offices primary file system, while purging and reorganizing the office's paper files. Brian has led the development of Standard Operating Procedures for the office, ensuring that both new and old employees have a quick, clear reference for how things are done, thereby ensuring consistency for our customers. Brian is truly committed to making government as efficient as possible by using all the tools available.



William Stein

Safety Engineer

US DOT/ Federal Highway Administration

As the Division's Safety Engineer, Will has worked tirelessly to strengthen the Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) organization in Minnesota. TZD has been central to reducing deaths on Minnesota's highways to their lowest level since WWII. Will has worked in partnership with MnDOT to apply innovative solutions to address severe crash problems at rural expressway intersections. Solutions include the use of active warning signs and alternative intersection designs. He has worked with MnDOT to expand their range of design options, including the use of road diets to make streets more bicycle and pedestrian friendly and roundabouts to improve intersection safety. Will has worked with both County and State officials in the development of Transition Plans to make streets and sidewalks compliant with the Americans with Disability Act.



Linda Kucera

Management Analyst

US Fish and Wildlife Service

Ms. Linda Kucera serves as the executive assistant for the National Wildlife Refuge System leadership team in the Midwest Regional Office. She manages information and work flow, and assigns and tracks reports, correspondence, and controlled information requests. She is the epitome of a professional, always cheerful, always understanding, and always in control of the information flow. In 2011 she served as the executive assistant to the Regional Director on many occasions, fulfilling those duties with confidence and cheer. In addition to her regular duties, Linda used her facilitation skills by facilitating several complex national meetings. In 2011 she proved to be a vital asset to the Fish and Wildlife Service's Midwest Region, and kept an orderly work flow even through a stressful office move.



Ken J. Kuznia

Fiscal Grants Officer

US Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Division

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's civil servants protect not only the Nations' natural resources but also its' financial resources. Much of the conservation work the Service undertakes is through financial assistance to States and other organizations. This requires the civil servant be knowledgeable of both conservation and financial programs; show leadership; and be trusted by their client groups. Ken J. Kuznia, from the USFWS provides this leadership and professionalism. Ken, oversees the financial administration of the Service's grants in the Midwest Region. His knowledge of conservation and the federal financial requirements have earned him a national reputation as the go-to expert. His counsel is sought by his grantees; peers; staff; and other Federal financial and audit professionals at a Regional and National level.



Carol Connor

Human Resources Specialist

USDA, Food Safety and Inspection Service

Carol consistently provides exemplary mission support. She has become very proficient in her new position as Classification Specialist in a short amount of time. She consistently supports the annual performance plan objectives by exceeding customer service standards in responding to inquiries, completed the first job analysis on multiple complex scientific positions, and resolved critical errors in staffing, circuit, and realignment issues in several districts. She made significant contributions by partnering to finish the Agency's emergency plan, is an active Safety & Wellness Committee member providing wellness exercises to staff and led the Feds Feed Families initiative. Carol maintained exemplary performance during the past year while providing care for a family member who underwent a bone marrow transfusion. Carol has made a difference.



Mary Magnuson

Human Resources Assistant/Lead Processor

USDA, Food Safety and Inspection Service

Mary Magnuson exemplifies the true spirit of public service and customer service alike. She is conscientious in the performance of her duties, always cognizant of the bigger picture. She consistently treats her supervisor, teammates, internal and external customers as if they are her only priority. Ms. Magnuson's contributions this year have been significant, including participating in Department-level workgroups analyzing how to move USDA forward. Mary also excelled at serving as a Lead in her position, training others, and taking on multiple special projects. Mary sets a superb example for other civil servants and truly deserves this recognition.



Katherine A. Malloy

Human Resources Specialist

USDA, Food Safety and Inspection Service

Ms. Katherine A. Malloy is being nominated for her outstanding professionalism, leadership and commitment to maintaining a Model Workers' Compensation Program for the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service. In 2011 Kathie was instrumental in returning close to 30 injured workers back to the workforce in one capacity or another through the use of the Agencies Work Hardening and Alternative Duty Programs. Kathie developed outstanding relationships with our injured work force as well as the staff within the Department of Labor which is critical to the success of the program. Her effective use of the return to work approaches not only helps employees work while still recuperating, protecting their earning power; it also demonstrates how dedicated and committed Ms. Malloy is to meeting the missions of the Agency.



Michelle Schmid

Supervisory Financial Management Analyst

USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Michelle Schmid is a role model for leaders in civil service; a change agent keenly attuned to customer needs. In a normal year, she oversees 1,179 agreements totaling \$317M. With limited additional manpower, her team added support for Foreign Agricultural Service, and implemented a major Financial System conversion. As "Change Management Lead" for MRP, Michelle launched a website, edited "Newsflash" articles, initiated WebEx training accommodating up to 1,500 employees, and Aglearn training for 940 users. Michelle is recognized as an expert, regularly coordinating with program managers and union representatives. She teamed with Trust Fund Managers to create requirements and approve Functional/Technical Designs. Through a myriad of tasks, Michelle keeps customer service at the forefront and is truly worthy to be honored as "Civil servant of the Year".



Tom Lewis

Personnel Security Specialist

USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Tom Lewis consistently delivers quality service as a flexible, proactive, and fully engaged Personnel Security Specialist and volunteer first responder. He exceeds customer needs with a can-do attitude. Tom championed a 500 investigation backlog elimination and helped avert a near lockout of over 100,000 LincPass credentials representing 29 USDA agencies. Tom is a natural collaborator and team builder leveraging talents of his staff and HR to help save \$240,000 by refining clearance requirements. In his supervisor's absence, Tom handles complex issues, earning widespread praise. Tom's also very active in the community. As a 20 year Army vet himself, Tom advocates for Veteran Hiring initiatives, actively supporting Veteran's Employment Services. He embodies the spirit of civil service and is the perfect candidate for Civil Servant of the Year.



Randall Kiehne

Purchasing Agent

USDA-Agricultural Research Service

Mr. Randy Kiehne has been the Purchasing Agent for the USDA-ARS since May of 2005. Besides keeping up on Location purchasing and maintaining the property, Randy has been instrumental the past two years with ARRA Projects for the Cereal Disease Laboratory. Randy was and is a key player on the projects and the maintaining of the facilities. The projects included updating and the modernization of our facilities with new boilers and greenhouse controls, as well as advanced metering. After showing off his skills in taking care of small repair projects, Randy is the first person the employees look to when equipment needs to be repaired, if doors don't close correctly or the building becomes too warm or cool, depending on the season. The location is very fortunate to have the skills along with his sense of humor working for us.



Jana Rinke

Chemist

USDA-Agricultural Research Service

Long ago, Native Americans recognized that maize was an important component of their food supply; they valued it to the point that the word "maize" literally means "that which sustains life." Coming full circle, restoring "Indian corn" in the local food system may be a solution for healthy diets, ecosystems and local economies. Most indigenous maize has been lost, along with the knowledge needed to grow, improve and store seed for future generations. Ms. Rinke conducted a 2-year experiment to evaluate Indian corn varieties in collaboration with the White Earth Reservation. The nutritional value and adaptation to local climate are among the best traits available in these varieties. Ms. Rinke will continue in-depth evaluation of these varieties for the public good.



Rodney Jackson

Area Director

USDA-Rural Development

Rod began his Rural Development career in 1987 and is currently the Area Director for east central Minnesota. Rod has always demonstrated exceptional leadership, professional skills, and teamwork; and he has ably served Rural Development and the people of rural Minnesota in many capacities. Most recently, Rod served in 2011 as Acting Multi-Family Housing (MFH) Program Director while continuing his duties as an Area Director. He oversaw Minnesota's portfolio of 575 MFH properties and made important management changes to improve operations and reenergize staff. Playing these dual roles was a daunting challenge that Rod met with a willingness to tackle problems head-on, excellent communication, long hours, and a great sense of humor. His USDA peers and rural Minnesotans are lucky to have him.



Sidney Bell

Chief of Material Management

Minneapolis VA Health Care System

Sidney Bell exemplifies the core values of the Minneapolis VHAHCS. He works with integrity, he is committed to providing the best care available to Veterans, and he is always polite, professional, and pleasant. He is an advocate both for our patients and care givers, he is respectful in all his interactions with those who work with him, and the outcome is excellent customer service. His leadership played a critical role in the success of ordering & distribution of new mattresses for the entire hospital. Sid is always willing to go the extra mile to assist in the procurement of needed items to provide the best care we can for our veterans. As a veteran himself, he knows the importance of the part he plays.



Marci Collins

Interior Designer

Minneapolis VA Health Care System

Facilities engineering workhorse! She provides interior design on every major construction project and singlehandedly managed 13 projects totaling \$4.1+ million in FY11. She was lead project manager for re-design of Twin Ports Outpatient Clinic and a critical team member on the Northwest Metro Outpatient Clinic project. She remediated asbestos and lead-based paint in 10 buildings and led the \$4 million project to design of a new variable acuity ward based on best practices. She spearheaded the design and construction of the 6,000 square foot prosthetics renovation project, and the dental clinic renovation that added six exam/surgical rooms. She serves on a national board that publishes interior design standards for VA.



Heather Cseresznye

Fee Unit Team Lead

Minneapolis VA Health Care System

Heather's leadership played a critical role in the success of the non-VA Fee department in FY11. The department began FY11 by paying 90.6% claims in 30 days or less but improved to 96.7% by year's end. Backlogged claims went from 7,739 (24.9% end of month inventory) to 877 (3.6% end of month inventory) by year's end. She was able to accomplish this primarily through setting productivity standards to monitor the performance of all fee clerks. The standards were developed jointly with AFGE and implemented on October 1, 2010. This resulted in cost savings of over \$112,000 in reduced overtime. These significant accomplishments improved customer satisfaction, decreased interest payments by 80%, and provided employees with clear and attainable objectives and a continuous feedback.



Beth Frederick

Chief, Sterile Processing Services

Minneapolis VA Health Care System

Beth has accomplished tremendous achievements in the Sterile Processing Services area. Starting the year with a deficit of 30% in staffing, she initiated creative recruiting techniques to attract qualified individuals, and develop relationships with the local schools. These initiatives brought her staff to 100%, and demonstrated several months with zero turn over. Her all employee survey results were superior, showing not only tremendous improvement from previous year's satisfaction among staff, but topping out in 37 of 38 categories. The Sterile Processing Service has instituted numerous plans for safe, effective and timely processing of thousands of instruments with a defect rate of less than 1%. Continuous improvements and training, back up procedures, and early interventions have led to a premier service meeting the needs of a large referral hospital.



Ted Johnson

Staff Nurse

Minneapolis VA Health Care System

Ted provides exceptional service as a registered nurse in the cardiology department. His thorough knowledge of nursing demonstrates his skills by assisting Interventional Cardiologists during Percutaneous Angioplasty procedures. His calm nature during stressful situations embodies the highest standards enabling him to be a key player during emergency situations. He continues to work closely with the Cardiology staff to provide excellent care to our veterans during interventional and angioplasty procedures ensuring all safety measures are met. Ted is caring, compassionate and a sharing individual who always puts the safety of his Patients ahead of anything else. He is always volunteering to help others when the need arises, and is known for his generosity by donating bakery goods for the Volunteers within the hospital during the holiday seasons.



Michael Reckard

Caregiver Support Coordinator

Minneapolis VA Health Care System

In 2011 Mr. Reckard became the Caregiver Support Coordinator; he has been an intricate part in developing the Caregiver Support Program. One noteworthy contribution this past year was his hard work and dedication in putting together the Caregiver Support Day; a day of resources and support for caregivers; which included VA resources and programs, but also resources on the local and national level. Mike continues his superior professional skills while working with families and veterans from all eras, even though the main part of his program is geared towards Post 911 veterans. You would never know the difference in who he is working with, as he treats all with the highest regard and respect, going above and beyond his role as the Caregiver Support Coordinator.



Gregory Rifleman

Chief-Podiatry

Minneapolis VA Health Care System

Dr. Rifleman is a fantastic physician with only the Veteran at heart. He is very down to earth and talks to the vets like they are his neighbors. He is not intimidating to his patients and explains everything so the patients understand. The staff love working with him because he consistently gives them individualized, professional attention. When he says he is going to accomplish a duty it is done promptly and without error. The accuracy of his work is second to none and when he says he is available he absolutely is available and has only the veteran's interests in mind. Dr. Rifleman exemplifies the highest standards of ethics and professional service that we could ever expect in any organization.



Anna Schorer

Medical Oncologist

Minneapolis VA Health Care System

Dr. Schorer has been involved in several improvement projects locally at this VA, VISN 23, and nationally. Specifically, she has been involved in coordinating the Lung Cancer collaborative, implementing cancer safety initiatives, implementation of the E-Consult initiative, initiating a charter for the Community of practice in oncology, and working tirelessly as the director of the field advisory committee at the national level to improve Cancer care within the VA system. She oversees the training programs for the residents and fellows in the hematology/oncology section and is involved in cancer survivorship. In addition, she remains an outstanding, caring and dedicated clinician; providing exceptional care for her patients. Her enthusiasm and passion for continuous cancer improvement is unsurpassed.



Wendi Slattengren

Physical Therapist

Minneapolis VA Health Care System

Wendi Slattengren is a VA physical therapist. What makes her truly outstanding is that she consistently takes that "extra step" without expecting anything in return other than knowing she did the right thing for her patients. She is sensitive to the reality that we are living in a time of diminishing resources and actively problem solves ways to bring innovation to PT services while engaging her patients as true partners in their health care and helping them reach their personal goals. She has been a key innovator in our department, successfully implementing new programming in integrated medicine. In addition, she is a volunteer at her children's school and participates regularly in community service projects.



Sarah Stransky

Medical Support Associate

Minneapolis VA Health Care System

One of Sarah's major contributions has been the coordination of care when patients are referred from outside our facility. Sarah has transformed our capacity to quickly and reliably get patients' outside records. Now, we are able to review patient records before the patient arrives, plan and schedule pre-visit testing, and make the veterans' visits more productive. This benefits veterans by improving timeliness and reliability of care and benefits the clinicians by allowing us to focus on clinical issues while she works behind the scenes to have all the administrative pieces in place. Somehow, Sarah has managed to do this all with the sunniest of dispositions, and she is invariably willing to accommodate special needs, turning the work around on a dime.



Brian Walsh

Pipefitter/Engineering

Minneapolis VA Health Care System

Brian is a Certified Pool Operators (CPO) and is responsible for the total operation of the SCI/D Therapy pool. More than 12 tests must be performed every morning to assure the safety of our patients and their therapists. Brian used initiative and foresight this year as he volunteered to assisted the manufacture’s technician. He documented and learned valuable techniques and maintenance procedures. This improved routine up-keep, safety checks, and future budgets of the VA. A manufactures visit is a minimum of \$2500 per visit. I have seen him mentor and teach new employees these skills using patience and understanding, always thinking of the patients and VA’s “I Care” Mission. His focus is always on being of service to his fellow veteran, whether they’re patients, supervisors, or co-workers.



Theresa Weber

Captain MPLS Police

Minneapolis VA Health Care System

Captain Theresa Weber is the model of professional behavior in all aspects; she strives for excellence at work at all times, as shown by her positive helpful approach and rapid response time. She personifies customer service at the VAHCS. She approaches every situation, even the most hostile, with a calm demeanor. The very nature of her job is consistently at a high stress, high alert mentality. She is truly a professional in all of these situations, and she is able to instill a calming presents to any situation by creating the feeling of, “everything is under control, we can relax now. Captain Theresa Weber is here.” She is able to take control of these situations, and instill a safe and secure atmosphere.



Larry Cronemiller

Program Support Assistant

VA Regional Office

Caring for those less fortunate is one of Larry’s many attributes. His drive and determination to gather donations for the needy is unstoppable. Larry bought and donated 20 lap blankets to the Vets Home; 40 new coats to the VAMC and Fisher House; 40 toys to the VA Toy Drive; 30 small toys/books to Voc Rehab; toothbrushes and toothpaste to Stand-down; 400 pounds of food to a local church; 460 pounds of food to the VA Food drive; Over \$100 in grocery gift cards to VA Needy Family. Larry donated time and energy to various organizations. He received a generous donation, which he gave to the needy. He donated clothes to homeless shelters. He is a generous and caring individual serving the community.



Jocelyn Domeier

Senior Loan Specialist

VA Regional Office

Jocelyn Domeier is a dedicated employee who works tirelessly on behalf of our country’s Veterans, military personnel, and community organizations. Her exceptional abilities with MS Excel have allowed her to make modifications to an application, which has positively impacted our stations performance. Jocelyn’s attention to detail has positioned her at the top of the nation in terms of quality, and that success has led her to an appointment on a team that is currently re-writing a national processing manual. She has spent numerous evenings and weekends attending outreach events for Veterans, most recently a bingo event at the Minneapolis Veterans Home. She’s also been a volunteer for the Feed My Starving Children Organization for the past five years, distributing food to people in 70 countries.



Candy R. Kriska

Employment Coordinator

VA Regional Office

Employment is the corner stone of the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program. Ms. Kriska exemplifies what all Employment Coordinators in our division strive for, matching the disabled veterans in our program with careers not just jobs. She maintains this standard by using her community outreach by attending job fairs and training those people outside the agency who work with our veterans on how to better assist them with employment needs and working with our agency. Ms. Kriska works tirelessly traveling every week to Faribault, Mankato and Owatonna to meet with veterans about employment. She is constantly working on educating and forming working relationship with employers public and private to facilitate the employment of our disabled veterans. Ms. Kriska is deserving of this recognition for her invaluable service to the veterans we serve.



Dawn M. Eggers

Financial Program Specialist

VA-Debt Management Center

We are honored to nominate Dawn Eggers "Civil Servant of the Year". She is a public contact agent with DMC and consistently performs above expectations with proven dedication in assisting our nations' Veterans. Dawn is our go-to person for high priority/hostile call backs and in most situations is able to turn a negative call into a positive result. Dawn answered a total of 13,182 calls during 2011 for a monthly average of 1099 calls. Her compassion and professionalism for the Veterans help reach a best case resolution regarding their debts. Dawn often contacts other agencies on behalf of the Veteran to achieve total VA collaboration. Dedication, loyalty, caring, and professional demeanor are qualities that make Ms. Eggers our choice for Civil Servant of the Year.

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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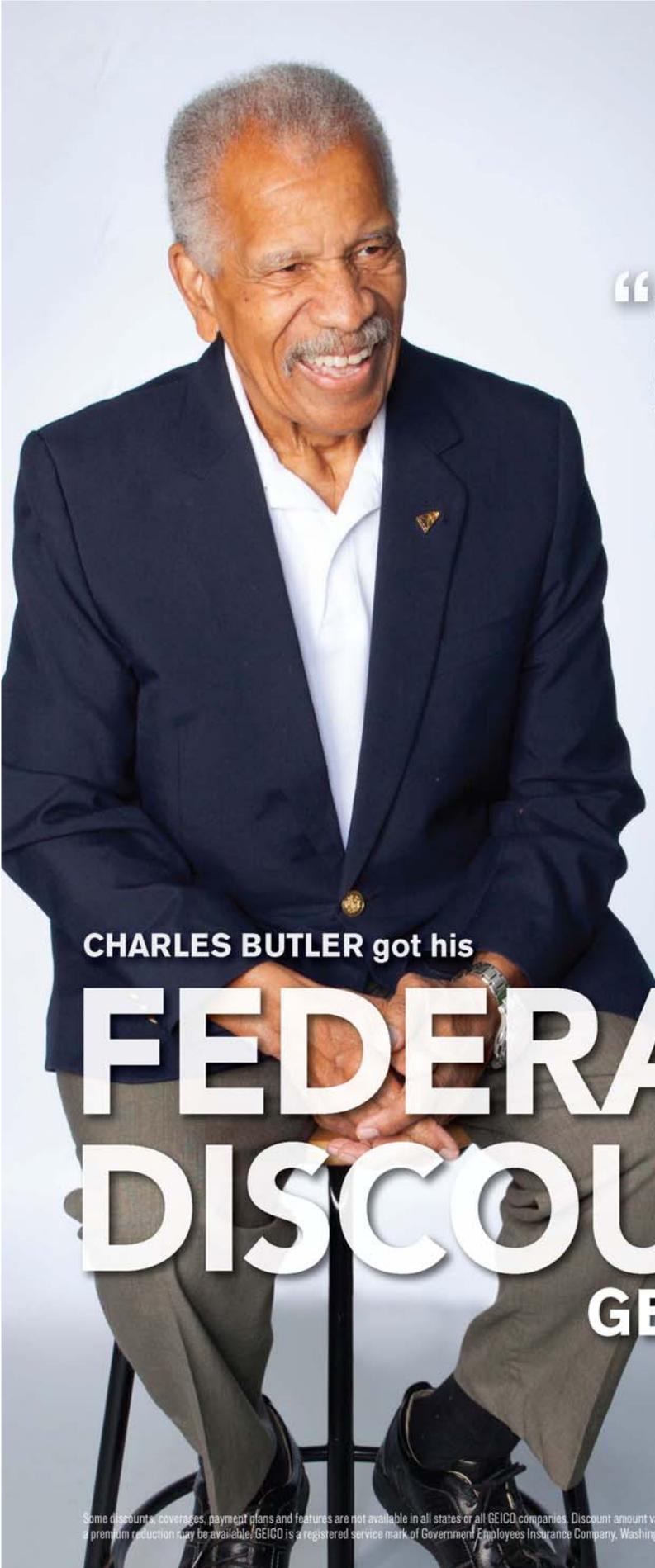
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Acknowledgements/Sponsors

INDEX:

Name	Page Number
Dan Bednarek	8
Sidney Bell	26
Brian Besch	14
Karen Brehmer	15
Ross Carlyon	16
Cassandra Q. Carter	8
Martin Cassellius	10
Marci Collins	26
Carol Connor	24
Larry Cronemiller	29
Heather Cseresznye	27
Nancy Cutaia	20
Adam Dagsgard	20
Daniel Daly	21
Shondra Dickson	17
Jocelyn Domeier	29
Sherry Duval	11
Dawn M. Eggers	30
Pamela Farrington	17
Beth Frederick	27
Scott Fretheim	12
Teresa Graziano	16
Carl Hardzinski	11
Maria Herr	18
Dale Hoeft	13
Brian Hogge	23
Karen L. Hubertus	15
Rodney Jackson	26
Kristi Johnson	21
Ted Johnson	27
Pamela Katorosz	17
Randall Kiehne	25
Candy R. Kriska	30
Linda Kucera	24
Jody E. Kuoppala	13
Ken J. Kuznia	24
Nancy Lair	11
Steven Lavey	9
Lauren Leaf	22
Jason Lee	8
Tom Lewis	25
Holly Littlefield	17
Jason Lundgren	12
Mary Magnuson	24

INDEX:

Robert A. Malewicki	16
Katherine A. Malloy	25
Deb Melchert	13
Terry Mertins	23
Mary Mikula	23
Charles Miller	13
Nina Miller	12
Joe Mortzheim	10
James B. Mosner	9
Jennifer Murphy	9
Araceli Navarro	18
Anthony Nicoli	12
Lou Ann O'Connor	18
John Orr	14
Stephan Patnode	16
Paul Peters	22
Bev Peterson	18
Michael Reckard	27
Therese Reilly	11
Vannesa Reth	19
Gregory Rifleman	28
Jana Rinke	26
Jody Ritter	21
Jerrad Robinson	14
James Robson	22
Michelle Schmid	25
Anna Schorer	28
Kirby D. Schueler	9
Amy Schwarz	15
John Short	19
Jamie Slack	19
Wendi Slattengren	28
Aaron M. Snyder	10
Carlos Sosa	22
Timothy Spaude	20
William Stein	23
Sarah Stransky	28
Kristin Timmons	15
Annette Vogel	10
Brian Walsh	29
Theresa Weber	29
Dennis Wieber	14
Richard Wolff	19
Xong Xiong	20
Justin Zoss	21

