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On the cover: A Defense Contract Management Agency Central Command employee, left, uses a height gauge to check the inside diameter on an M16 40-millimeter grenade launcher mount while a contractor quality manager watches on. Inset top: A DCMA Central Command employee visually inspects an M16 40 mm grenade launcher mount. Inset bottom: Prior to authorization to ship an M16 40 mm grenade launcher mount, a DCMA Central Command employee, right, performs a final document review with a contractor quality manager.



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Supporting the Department's Efficiency Initiative



As most of you know, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates launched an Efficiency Initiative in June to significantly reduce the Department of Defense's excess overhead costs and apply the savings to force structure and modernization. Dr. Ashton Carter, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, then issued a memorandum for acquisition professionals that provided the framework of the initiative. Our agency can play a key role toward the success of the Department's effort and we must.

At the September Defense Contract Management Agency Council meeting, the senior leadership team identified four targets of opportunity, areas our agency can pursue to meet the Department's efficiency goals. The four areas consist of developing cost-savings strategies both internally at DCMA and externally for our customers. Internally, we will:

- Reexamine the way DCMA does training and development
- Reduce spending in the areas of conference and mission travel

Externally, we will:

- Better leverage our expertise in the contracts arena to find savings
- Work in tandem with industry to reduce redundancies and increase output for our customers.

I believe we can achieve significant efficiencies by pursuing each of these focus areas. We have already begun the process of identifying and implementing policy enhancements, and you will soon learn more details on action items for each target. In the meantime, I want every commander, manager, supervisor and leader, as well as each DCMA employee, to work diligently to identify ways to be more efficient in our business operations and find savings opportunities for our customers. Let's together challenge the status quo of doing business and find ways to make a difference.

Meeting the Department's challenge on the Efficiency Initiative provides yet another opportunity to highlight DCMA's mission performance. The hardworking men and women of this agency have continued to provide exceptional support to our warfighters in performing Contract Administration Service duties. This issue of the *Communicator* — Duty Today in DCMA — is dedicated to showcasing the great things our employees do every day in the field. The many photos included in this issue capture the diverse and critical work we perform across the agency. I want to thank each of you for all the work you have put in over the past couple of years moving our agency forward while tackling many of the challenges we have faced. You should know that I am proud of what you are doing, and I am confident we are making a difference for the warfighters and the taxpayers.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Charlie Williams, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Charlie Williams, Jr.
DCMA Director

DCMA International Employees Meet With Australian Defence Officials, Visit War Memorial

Air Force Col. Michael Luft | DCMA Pacific Commander

Defense Contract Management Agency International representatives recently met with the Australian Department of Defence, Defence Materiel Organisation, in Canberra, Australia, as part of continuing engagement between DCMAI and the Australian government.

During the meeting, Australian DMO representatives presented updates to several Ministry of Defence programs affecting mutual efforts with DCMAI. Additionally, updates from both DCMAI and DMO regarding ongoing Memorandum of Agreement negotiations

were discussed, ensuring both parties are updated on their current status. DCMAI also briefed new delegation work received in which DMO personnel support quality assurance inspections.

After the meeting, DCMAI and DMO representatives toured the Australian War Memorial and Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, which is dedicated to all Australian military killed in action from the earliest Australian engagements at Gallipoli to current operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. 



Australian Defence Materiel Organisation and Defense Contract Management Agency International representatives recently toured the Australian War Memorial and Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Canberra, Australia, after meeting as part of the continuing engagement between DCMAI and the Australian government.

Airman Follows in Mother's Steps in Providing Munitions Support to Warfighters

Colin Schmitz | Keystone Intern, DCMA St. Louis

“What do I want to do when I grow up? What will it take to reach that point?”

This is a difficult decision young adults must ponder as they begin to plan their future. It all stems from their dreams and their role models. Some look toward their hobbies, such as music or sports, for inspiration. Others look to job trends for their decisions. Others look to their parents for inspiration.

Air Force Airman 1st Class Charles Hall has chosen such a route for his future. Hall, son of Defense Contract Management Agency Chicago-St. Louis Contract Administrator Debra Hall, began his path to success by following in the steps of his mother.

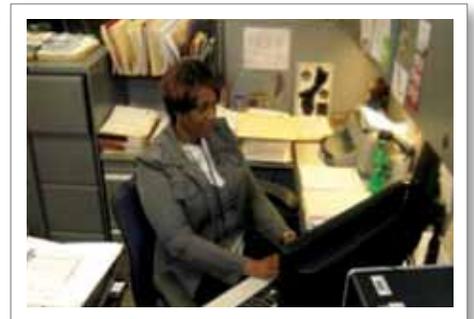
In December 2008, he responded to the call to protect and defend his nation through the Air Force. After completing basic training, he was assigned the role of munitions specialist. This job entails

providing his fellow warfighters with the ammunition they need to defend themselves as well as the tools to defend our freedom. He recently returned from a deployment in Afghanistan where he fulfilled this mission.

For his mother, this is a familiar role, because she had a similar position when she served in the Air Force, and, as a contract administrator, she administers ammunition contracts.

Those who work at DCMA Chicago-St. Louis consider this office not merely a community but a family. In this family, contract administrators have the role of being the parents for their contracts. Parents provide guidance, nourishment, support and care to their children to ensure they grow to be productive, healthy, balanced, mature and moral adults for their community and country. Contract administrators are dedicated to delivering quality supplies and services on time and within cost to their customer, the warfighter.

This is why DCMA takes pride in its work, because DCMA knows the customer is a member of someone's family and, many times, a member of its family. 



Debra Hall, Defense Contract Management Agency Chicago-St. Louis contract administrator, works at her desk where she oversees ammunition contracts. Her son, Air Force Airman 1st Class Charles Hall, is a munitions specialist in the Air Force. Both provide munitions support to warfighters in their respective roles. (Photo by Mike Otey, DCMA Chicago-St. Louis)

Contracts Executive Leaves Legacy of Innovation, Excellence After 25 Years of Service

Cassandra Locke | DCMA Public Affairs



Charlie Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director, left, presents David E. Ricci, DCMA Contracts executive director, a certificate for his retirement at DCMA headquarters in Alexandria, Va., Sept. 30. Ricci retired after 25 years of government service. (Photos by Cassandra Locke, DCMA Public Affairs)

After 25 years of government service, the executive director of Contracts at the Defense Contract

Management Agency, David E. Ricci, retired in a formal ceremony at the DCMA Headquarters building in Alexandria, Va., Sept. 30.

Ricci's responsibilities included policy development and deployment of training and mission support tools in the areas of contract management, property administration and small business.

"Dave has brought more value and competence to the acquisition community," said Mike Williams, former DCMA chief information officer.

"Dave was the senior leader in charge of establishing the DCMA Executive Directorate of Contracts."

According to Williams, Ricci was tasked with reinvigorating the professional disciplines included within that directorate and heightening the Contracts workforce's professionalism throughout the agency.

"I believe he did an excellent job in doing all of those things," added Williams.

Ricci has done many things throughout the years to improve the agency and the overall acquisition process. According to Robin Schulze, DCMA Contract Policy director, Ricci's biggest contribution to

the agency has been his vision for DCMA's contracting workforce.

"When he was selected to be the executive director for Contracts, he was faced with many challenges," said Schulze. "The agency wasn't functionally aligned, had no standard internal policy, no structured competency assessment methodology, no consistent internal controls, little rigor in training and few enterprise-wide performance measures."

Schulze said Ricci immediately set off to functionally align the Contracts community and implement several key initiatives. The functional alignment was completed in 2008.

“In less than two years, he has successfully implemented most of those initiatives, including standard policy that includes the how-to-do details long sought by the contracting community.”

— Robin Schulze, Defense Contract Management Agency Contract Policy director

“At our 2008 Contracts conference, he presented his initiatives to the contracting community and received a standing ovation in support of his vision and leadership,” said Schulze. “In less than two years, he has successfully implemented most of those initiatives, including standard policy that includes the how-to-do details long sought by the contracting community.”

Ricci also implemented an agency-specific contracting competency assessment tool, the contract management boards of review, for consistent internal controls and enterprise-wide performance indicators.

“He has also made great progress toward his goal of establishing a robust training program that is tailored to our unique mission,” added Schulze.

At the same time, Ricci developed an overall strategy to reinvigorate the Department’s cost and pricing skills.

According to Schulze, cost and pricing skills had been almost completely obliterated within the Department of Defense. The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics eagerly sought and endorsed his strategy, which included the establishment of DCMA’s pricing center.

“The center has been a great success,” said Schulze. “I attribute much of that success to Dave’s leadership and innovative hiring strategy.”

She said the Department needed to grow hundreds of journeyman-level cost and price analysts quickly, a task that usually would take several years. To overcome the challenge, Ricci targeted the mass of unemployed journeymen from the financial industry.

“As a result, we are providing the Department the support it needs years in advance of what was initially projected,” said Schulze. “I have personally reviewed several packages that were developed by these new-to-government journeyman hires and can say with confidence the strategy was a huge success.”

Among Ricci’s visionary successes was the implementation of the paid cost rule.

“Implementation of the rule, as planned by the Department, would have resulted in contractors maintaining dual systems, resulting in millions of dollars in unnecessary increased costs to the government,” said Schulze. “Dave developed an approach to seamlessly and flawlessly implement the rule without the additional costs to the Department — a huge success, not only for the Department and agency, but also for taxpayers,” she added.

Ricci was also recognized for independently resolving the Department’s specialty metal issues. Ricci has remained the Department’s specialty metal expert to this day. This year, at the USD(AT&L)’s request, Ricci developed the business case, delegation of authority and contract modification to implement the current specialty metals requirement.

“I’ve been very lucky throughout my career and worked for many great bosses, but Dave is the best boss I’ve ever had,” said Schulze. “He is recognized not only throughout the Department but also by the civilian agencies as one of the most proficient technical experts in federal acquisition. His ability to set the tone and vision — for not only DCMA but DoD — is unparalleled, and he inspires me to challenge myself each and every day. He is a consummate professional, leader and mentor as well as a treasured friend.”

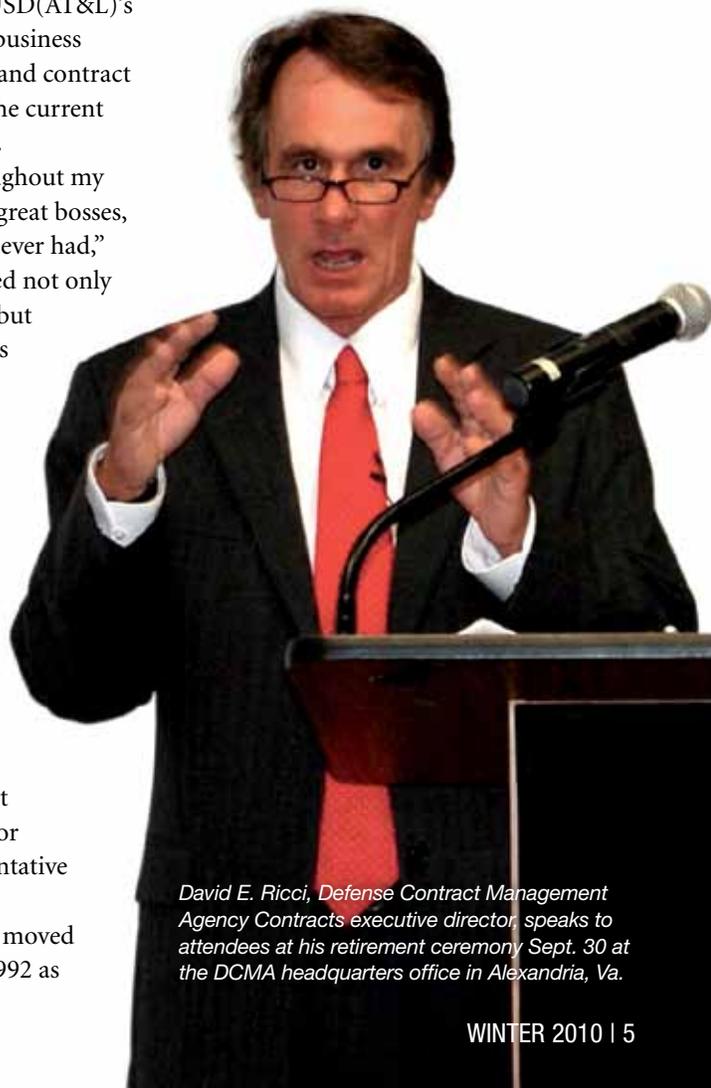
Ricci began his government service as a contract negotiator with the Naval Plant Representative Office in Stratford, Conn., at Sikorsky Aircraft in 1985. He moved to DCMA Headquarters in 1992 as

a participant in the agency’s Professional Enhancement Program and has held a variety of positions in the contracting field, including serving as DCMA’s contract policy director from 1997 to 2005.

Prior to his current position, Ricci was the deputy executive director for Contract Operations and Customer Relations at DCMA Headquarters. His responsibilities included policy direction, training development and mission support tools for all operational personnel within the agency in functions such as contract administration, property, product assurance, engineering and customer relations.

“Fair winds and following seas, and I’m sure the future is bringing you better,” said Williams to Ricci.

Ron Youngs, DCMA Cost and Pricing Center director, will assume all of the Contracts directorate position’s authorities and responsibilities until a new Senior Executive Service appointee has been selected and is in place. 



David E. Ricci, Defense Contract Management Agency Contracts executive director, speaks to attendees at his retirement ceremony Sept. 30 at the DCMA headquarters office in Alexandria, Va.

Gilbeau Takes DCMAI Helm

Jo Adail Stephenson | DCMA Public Affairs



The official party members render their respect during the playing of the national anthem at the Defense Contract Management Agency International change of command Aug. 27 at the Navy Memorial auditorium, Washington, D.C. More than 150 distinguished visitors, military and civilian personnel attended the ceremony where Rear Adm. Robert Gilbeau assumed command of DCMA International.

Navy Rear Adm. Robert Gilbeau assumed command of Defense Contract Management Agency International Aug. 27 during a change of command ceremony officiated by DCMA Director Charlie Williams, Jr. at the Navy Memorial auditorium, Washington, D.C.

Navy Capt. David Graff relinquished command to Gilbeau after serving as DCMAI commander since May 2007. More than 150 distinguished visitors, military and civilian personnel attended the event.

During Graff's tenure, he commanded an organization of more than 700 civilian and military personnel responsible for administering more than 24,000 contracts valued in excess of \$16 billion.

For his outstanding service and devotion to duty, Graff was presented with the Defense Superior Service Medal at the ceremony.

"You [Graff] were the right leader at the right time," Williams said. "It takes a leader who trusts his people but also holds them accountable for excellence to succeed, a leader who is decisive yet is a good listener, a leader who can work dozens of different mission or personnel issues on any given day."

In speaking about Graff's breadth and depth of leadership as DCMAI commander for 39 months, Williams said Graff is, "A leader I can send to Capitol Hill to talk to congressmen and commissions and know he will represent the agency superbly and a leader who can be a highly respected member of my senior leadership team, providing insights and advice to his peers on agency-wide issues far beyond the boundaries of his international command," Williams said.

Graff's leadership sustained direct support to *Operation Enduring Freedom*, *Operation Iraqi Freedom* and a wide range of major defense and federal acquisition programs including DCMA's contingency contracting administration services

mission in theater operations throughout Iraq and Afghanistan.

Gilbeau comes to DCMA after serving as the deputy commander for aviation at the Naval Inventory Control Point-Philadelphia.

Williams welcomed Gilbeau saying, “Several flag officers and senior civilians in the (Department of Defense) have come up to me since you got this assignment to let me know how lucky we are to be getting you. They say you’re a great leader and a great guy, and we’re going to hold you to it.”

Gilbeau assured Williams he was ready to meet his expectations and those of the taxpayer and warfighter.

“Our team, throughout the globe, ensures the goods our nation buys for the war effort are of the highest quality and meet the required specifications,” said Gilbeau. “The entire organization does this while focusing on what we as taxpayers actually pay for those goods and services, and we make sure it is, in fact, fair and reasonable. These efforts are critical to ensure DoD will have the resources it needs to reset and modernize in the most efficient means possible.”

Gilbeau stated he knew DCMA is accomplishing this mission and affirmed his confidence in his team’s ability to rise

“It takes a leader who trusts his people but also holds them accountable for excellence to succeed.”

— Charlie Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director

to any increased efforts Defense Secretary Robert Gates requires.

“I am committed to doing whatever it takes to accomplish this critical mission in this critical time while providing the support my team needs as we forge the way ahead,” he said.

Ashore, Gilbeau’s previous assignments include instructor at Naval Transportation Management School; director of Material, Fleet and Industrial Supply Center, Guam; director of Navy and Marine Corps Aircraft Engine Programs, Naval Inventory Control Point; deputy assistant chief of staff for logistics, commander, Naval Air Forces; Material Support Integration program manager; commander, Fleet and Industrial Supply Centers; and head of Aviation Material Support for Chief of National Operations Air Warfare Directorate.

His operational and afloat tours include assistant to supply officer, USS *Guadalcanal*; supply officer, USS *Harry W. Hill*; assistant supply officer, USS *Boxer*; supply officer, USS *Nimitz*; crisis action team leader — Tsunami Relief; and deputy commander and chief of staff for the Joint Contracting Command – Iraq and Afghanistan.

He is a designated Naval Aviation and Surface Warfare Supply Corps officer and a member of the Acquisition Professional Corps.

A native of Fremont, Calif., Gilbeau is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, Naval Supply Corps School, Naval Transportation Management School, Naval War College, Naval Postgraduate School, University of Michigan’s Ross School of Business Executive Program and University of North Carolina’s Kenan-Flagler Logistic Technologies for Executives program.

His awards include the Legion of Merit (two awards), Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal (four awards), Navy Commendation Medal (five awards), Navy Achievement Medal (five awards), Combat Action Ribbon and multiple campaign and unit awards. 



Defense Contract Management Agency Director Charlie Williams, Jr. passes the guidon to the incoming DCMA International Commander Navy Rear Adm. Robert Gilbeau. Gilbeau assumed command Aug. 27 during a change of command ceremony officiated by Williams at the Navy Memorial auditorium, Washington, D.C.

Worldwide Training Conference: “Performance Matters”

Cassandra Locke | DCMA Public Affairs

The Defense Contract Management Agency annual Worldwide Training Conference was held in Atlanta, Ga., Oct. 25 to 29. Common themes for the conference were efficiency, stewardship and business acumen.

Keynote speaker Frank Kendall, deputy under secretary of defense for acquisition and technology, presented his guidance on acquisition efficiency. He said it’s critical to target affordability, control cost growth and incentivize productivity and innovation within industry. He added that it is important to promote real competition and improve tradecraft in acquisition on services and reduce nonproductive processes and bureaucracy.

“You have a duty to challenge contractor costs,” said Kendall. He explained this can be done by eliminating redundancy within warfighter portfolios, rewarding contractors for successful supply chain management and indirect expense management, and increasing small business roles and opportunities. Kendall ended by emphasizing attendees’ critical roles in the acquisition process and how they support warfighters and taxpayers.

Charlie Williams, Jr., DCMA director, reminded conference attendees, “The road to success is under construction.” Williams emphasized the importance of each person understanding the agency’s strategic plan so everyone is on the same playing

“If you want to be engaged, if you want to be involved, if you want to make a difference, you need to know what’s happening at the strategic leadership level.”

— Charlie Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director

field and collectively understands the mission, vision and goals to which agency employees are bound.



Charlie Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director, introduces the DCMA employee panel, from left: Mariangela Monsalve, human capital specialist; Seung Yoo, contract administrator; Leroy Cates, quality assurance specialist; and Beatrice Cruz, contract specialist, before they address attendees at the Worldwide Training Conference in Atlanta, Ga. The employee panel read a prewritten essay to attendees entitled, “If I was the DCMA director, I would... .” (Photos by Cassandra Locke, DCMA Public Affairs)



Acquisition Efficiency Guidance Roadmap

- Target Affordability and Control Cost Growth
- Incentivize Productivity & Innovation in Industry
- Promote Real Competition
- Improve Tradecraft in Acquisition of Services
- Reduce Non-Productive Processes and Bureaucracy

Frank Kendall, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology, presents his guidance to acquisition efficiency during the Worldwide Training Conference in Atlanta, Ga. He said it is critical to target affordability, control cost growth and incentivize productivity and innovation within industry.

“We need to be more efficient, and we want to use your time as effectively as we can.”

— Shay Assad, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy director

“If you want to be engaged, if you want to be involved, if you want to make a difference, you need to know what’s happening at the strategic leadership level,” said Williams. “You need to know what the department is trying to do to ensure that we have success in the Department of Defense’s acquisition business in supporting our warfighters and customers.”

Williams said employees need to read and pay attention consistently to the plans in place to lead DCMA forward.

“There’s a lot of work we have to do and a lot of work we’ve already started; the reality is there’s a lot more that needs to be done,” said Williams.

According to Shay Assad, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy director,

as the agency expands, it needs to be more effective in buying services, mitigating bureaucracy and focusing on efficiency.

“If you see you are doing things that don’t add value, tell your supervisor. We need to be more efficient, and we want to use your time as effectively as we can,” said Assad.

“We are on a path to grow the acquisition workforce, especially growing DCMA.”

Tacitly supporting the Department’s leadership stance on acquisition efficiency, Ronald Youngs, Contracts acting executive director, addressed the agency’s new cost recovery initiative and the DCMA/ Defense Contract Audit Agency overlap reduction initiative. The joint letter, signed by Williams and Patrick Fitzgerald, DCAA director, committed their resources to continuing to resolve these initiatives.

The organizations established a senior steering group chaired by both agency directors, and a working group has been established at DCMA headquarters led by Robin Schulze, DCMA Contracts policy director. *DCMA Express*, at <https://home.dcma.mil/express/>, and the next edition of the *Communicator* will address the new CRI in more detail.

Gordon Kranz, Engineering and Analysis executive director, and Michael Shields, Jr., Quality Directorate executive director, conducted a joint briefing to address the technical community’s path forward. The directors said 2010 was the year of publishing domain-specific functional policy to establish a starting point and that 2011 will be the year of integrating policy, training and tools to address gaps identified.

Later in the conference, Pam Conklin, Financial and Business Operations executive director, touched on performance management tools, like the Performance Labor Accounting System.

“PLAS data accuracy is important because this allows the agency to access process efficiency and measure productivity changes,” said Conklin.

Conklin added that in fiscal year 2011 there will be a 15-percent reduction in travel at the headquarters level, a 5-percent reduction in operational directorates travel and an overall reduction in conference attendance.

Joseph Sweeney, Portfolio Management and Integration acting executive director, said everything starts with the customer. He addressed customer engagement, PM&I’s



Army Lt. Gen. Kathleen M. Gainey, Logistics, J-4, joint staff director, left, awards Army Col. Louis Steinbugl, center, and Army Col. Kenneth Copeland, former Defense Contract Management Agency International theater commanders, the Bronze Star at the DCMA dinner ceremony during the Worldwide Training Conference in Atlanta, Ga. Both colonels were recognized for their meritorious service while serving overseas.

role, provided insight to improve weapon systems management and elaborated on the Defense Acquisition Executive Summary policy. Sweeney said it is the contract management office's responsibility to execute a customer engagement policy.

Marie Greening, speaking at the conference for the first time as DCMA chief operating officer, discussed the successful integration of the Corporate Management Council. The council is the senior government and industry forum that engages major industry leaders on improving customer and agency outcomes. Greening also talked about the integration of the Operations Integration Panel, the senior forum for final intra-agency deliberation on operational issues.

Karen R. Penn, Diversity, Inclusion and Recruitment Division director, elaborated on the five levels of the diversity spectrum and workforce supply trends. To reach level five, the agency needs to incorporate diversity into all business practices, policies and procedures, leverage it as a catalyst for creativity and innovation, and use it as a competitive strength. Penn emphasized that diversity not only addresses sex and



Charlie Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director, thanks Army Sgt. Danny Allen Dickey for his service at the agency dinner ceremony recognizing wounded servicemembers during the Worldwide Training Conference in Atlanta, Ga. Dickey was wounded while serving in Iraq in 2008 and was recognized for his sacrifice and service during a dinner recognizing wounded warfighters during the Worldwide Training Conference in Atlanta, Ga.

race, but it also addresses veteran status and disability.

Penn said the potential workforce over the traditional retirement age of 65 is the only age group that will grow after 2010. Many over 65 will delay retirement or work part-time for financial and family reasons. She added the competition for younger workers will increase.

During one evening of the conference, wounded warfighters were special guests at a dinner. This event reminded attendees of their roles' importance in supporting warfighters. The dinner's guest speaker was Army Lt. Gen. Kathleen M. Gainey, Logistics, J-4, joint staff director. After speaking on the value DCMA brings to the troops, the general awarded Army Col. Louis Steinbugl and Army Col. Kenneth Copeland, both former DCMA International theater commanders, the Bronze Star for their meritorious service overseas.

"Throughout my career, I've worked for a lot of organizations. The reality is all organizations have room for improvement. We're no different," said Williams. "But, I've been in some organizations that didn't have the heart to improve it. They didn't have the heart to make tough choices. I don't think that that's what this organization is all about, because I've been around enough of you in these two-and-a-half years to know that there's a passion for what we do; there's a passion for delivering good quality products."

Photos from the conference are available at: *P:\DCMAHQ\Director\DS\DSA\Congressional and Public Affairs\Public Affairs\Photos\Worldwide Training Conference 2010.*

Presentations from the conference may be accessed at: <https://home.dcm.mil/registration/CommandConf/Fall10/agenda.cfm>. 



A Missing Warrior Table is set during the Worldwide Training Conference dinner to recognize wounded warriors and to honor missing comrades in arms. The empty place setting represents Americans still missing from each of the services. The single rose reminds dinner attendees of servicemembers' families and loved ones who keep faith awaiting their return. The slice of lemon on the bread plate reminds attendees of the missing warriors' bitter fate.

A Model for Expertise: The Competency Assessment Model eTool

Maichi Halley | DCMA ITSCO Communications

Michael Shields, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency Quality Directorate executive director, chartered an integrated product team in January 2010. James Davenport and Tom Leeper, DCMA quality assurance specialists, led the IPT to develop a single automated tool that provides first-line supervisors and functional technicians the ability to identify, store, track, review and report

competency and training needs. This team worked in conjunction with the Institute for Defense Analysis, a federally funded research and development corporation, to identify a set of functional requirements to create a prototype from which a new application, the Competency Assessment Model, was built.

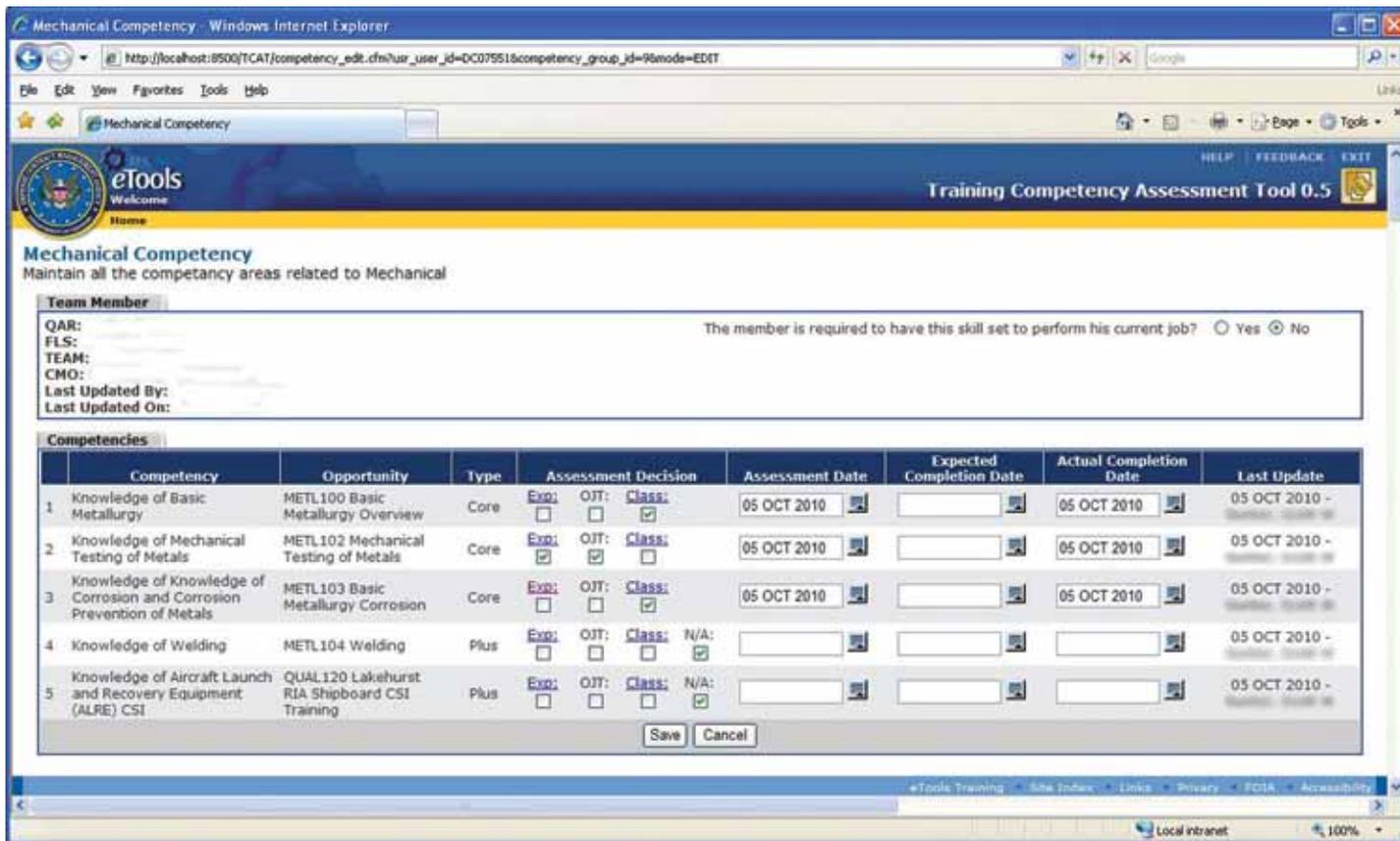
IDA and the IPT met on a weekly basis with all stakeholders, including functional

“The tool will provide the capability to share lessons learned, analyze training status, identify areas of opportunity and address areas of improvement.”

— Michael Shields, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency Quality Directorate executive director



Stephanie Strohbeck, Defense Contract Management Agency program analyst, works in the newly developed Competency Assessment Model at her desk at DCMA headquarters in Alexandria, Va. The Competency Assessment Model provides first line supervisors and functional technicians the ability to identify, store, track, review and report competency and training needs.



A screenshot of the Competency Assessment Model program shows how first-line supervisors and functional technicians will be able to identify, store, track, review and report employees' competency and training needs.

analysts, subject-matter experts, developers and users. Within a couple of months, the prototype was approximately 80 percent complete. From this prototype, IDA worked with DCMA Information Technology to develop an eTool that could function as a production system with a framework that supports the QA community and provides an enterprise solution for tracking training needs throughout the agency.

Upon completion of testing, a fully operational eTool was built in just days. The project's short overall cycle time was a significant accomplishment. Jacob Haynes, DCMA Information Technology Customer Service Organization acting executive director, stated, "This was a huge success for DCMA. IDA and ITCSO's collaborative efforts resulted in achieving a record turnaround time for eTool development."

As processes change, the agency is beginning to identify more tools and capabilities to meet its needs. As eTools become more integrated into the agency,

they enable employees to work more efficiently and effectively with fewer resources. The Competency Assessment Model is a materialization of this progression that creates a documented, consistent and standardized approach to identifying and tracking skill sets fundamental to expertise development.

E-capabilities, for instance, is a feature incorporated into the tool that allows DCMA users to interact with relevant data and functionality across business processes, data domains and eTool components. DCMA can now leverage enterprise-wide data sets in an integrated, consistent and rational manner, providing users with situational awareness based on real-time information.

"The tool will provide the capability to share lessons learned, analyze training status, identify areas of opportunity and address areas of improvement," said Shields. "The outcome is that the workforce can more readily identify the competencies needed to better execute its mission and improve support to

the contract management office. In the future, we hope to link the tool automatically to the Electronic Individual Development Plan and the Civilian Training Management System." 

"This was a huge success for the Defense Contract Management Agency. The Institute for Defense Analysis and Information Technology Customer Service Organization's collaborative efforts resulted in achieving a record turnaround time for eTool development."

— Jacob Haynes, DCMA ITCSO acting executive director

Michael E. Shields, Jr. Appointed to SES

Katherine H. Crawford | Staff Writer

Michael E. Shields, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency Quality Directorate executive director, was appointed to the Senior Executive Service in a ceremony at DCMA Headquarters in Alexandria, Va., Aug. 11.

Many of Shields' colleagues, as well as his wife, children and parents, attended the ceremony.

After the national anthem and an invocation by master of ceremonies Marcus Berry, DCMA Director Charlie Williams, Jr. welcomed attendees and gave a brief history of the SES position and its role. He explained his view of the SES, stating that it's important "that we understand that when we're talking about senior executives, we're talking about leaders, not managers. We are talking about people who are called to lead institutions and enterprises across the federal government." He continued, "SES are called to step out of what has traditionally, up until this point in their careers, been their typical functional lane."

Williams felt strongly that Shields was well-qualified for becoming an SES, explaining, "We know that Mike can work at an SES level, to work across the natural seams of any organization. We also know that he can work in a collaborative way on issues and problems to resolve those issues in a way that's good for the institution. We also know that Mike is able to maintain an open mind in order to envision the future, another very important thing that we call on these SES leaders to do — to set the vision, to establish a strategy, then bring the team together to move down that road that we've set." He concluded, "Mike has certainly demonstrated the skills to be a leader in our Defense Contract Management Agency."

Following his remarks, Williams presented Shields with an SES certificate signed by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates in recognition of his acceptance to the SES. Shields' wife, Patricia, then stepped forward to present the SES pin to her husband and attach it to his lapel, and Williams presented Shields with the SES flag.

Next, Williams administered the SES oath of office to Shields. As Berry explained to the audience, Williams' recitation of the oath symbolized a reaffirmation of his commitment to serve the nation as a member of the Department of Defense.

With the ceremonial formalities completed and Shields an official member of the SES, he addressed the audience, stating, "This is a very special honor, and I'm truly grateful for it." Shields expressed his gratitude for those in his life who had supported him on his journey, thanking first his parents, then the managers and senior leaders who mentored him throughout his career and, finally, Patricia.

Addressing Williams, Shields remarked, "I'm proud to dedicate myself, sir, to achieving the vision, your vision, of the agency and also to focus my efforts on serving others." He listed some of the items he intends to focus on going forward, including supporting his peers on the senior leadership team, rebuilding the quality community, helping new Keystone interns and fostering those in the Tomorrow's Leaders program. He concluded by saying, "Our mission here at DCMA is really vital to the security of the country, so I'm honored and proud to be here."

The SES corps was established in 1978, and there are approximately 7,500 members across the federal government. According to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, this dedicated corps of executives is comprised of men and women charged with leading the continuing transformation of our government. These executives share a commitment to public service and a set of democratic values grounded in the fundamental ideals of the Constitution. As the leaders of the federal civilian workforce, SES members strive each day to create a more citizen-centered, results-oriented federal government. 



Michael E. Shields, Jr., Quality Directorate executive director, poses for a picture with his family Aug. 11 after being appointed to the Senior Executive Service. From left: daughter, Katherine Davis; son, William Shields; father, Michael E. Shields, Sr.; wife, Patricia Shields; son-in-law Michael Davis; son, Patrick Shields; and mother, Carmella Shields.



Kelly Graef, Defense Contract Management Agency Central Regional Command quality assurance specialist, ensures a Marine Corps' Acquisition Category 1D medium tactical vehicle replacement cargo truck is fully functional before delivery to warfighters. The MTVR cargo truck is a medium tactical all-terrain combat vehicle designed to carry 15 tons on highways and seven tons off-road. The MTVR cargo truck is one of nine variants the Navy and Marine Corps use. (Photo by Jo Adail Stephenson, DCMA Public Affairs)



David Frank, Defense Contract Management Agency Hampton (Richmond Office) lead quality assurance representative, right, and Katie Morgan, DCMA Hampton (Richmond Office) quality assurance Keystone intern, check and discuss the production oxygen levels at the Airgas facility recently in Chester, Va., with Sam Fulke, Airgas instrumentation and electronics specialist, to ensure it meets contract requirements. The oxygen produced at the facility is used to supply pilots oxygen during flight. (Photo by Mark Woodbury, DCMA Public Affairs)





Mahlon (Dave) Johnson, Defense Contract Management Agency Central Regional Command quality assurance specialist, looks on while a 50,000-gallon soft shell storage tank undergoes an air leak test. The tank will be used for storing fuel for troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. (Photos by Jo Adail Stephenson)



Mahlon (Dave) Johnson, Defense Contract Management Agency Central Regional Command quality assurance specialist, inspects the drain valve on a 50,000-gallon soft shell collapsible storage tank. The tank will be used for storing fuel for troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.



Mahlon (Dave) Johnson, Defense Contract Management Agency Central Regional Command quality assurance specialist, inspects a soft shell collapsible storage tank in its container prior to shipping. The tank will be used for storing fuel for troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.



Navy Cmdr. Mark Nowicki, Defense Contract Management Agency Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford executive officer, flies a finalized aircraft from the DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford office to its intended customer. (Photo by Navy Lt. Cmdr. Suzanne Parker)



James Baltrush, Defense Contract Management Agency Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford contract administrator, left, and Lori Dana, DCMA management analyst, look at a seat to be installed in an H-60 and discuss the aircraft's production schedule at DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford. (Photo by Mark Sudikoff)



Dave Casolino, Defense Contract Management Agency Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford program integrator, left, and Lori Dana, DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford management analyst, look over the tail section of an aircraft before delivery to the customer at DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford. (Photo by Mark Sudikoff)



Jon Geppert, left, and Mike Molkenbuhr, Defense Contract Management Agency Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford earned value specialists, work together to complete a surveillance report at DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford. (Photo by Chris Paton)



Mark Sadlon, Defense Contract Management Agency Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford team leader, front, explains to Christine Guarino, DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford contract administrator, a quick-change assembly that is to be installed on an aircraft at DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford. (Photo by Mark Sudikoff)



Navy Lt. Cmdr. Suzanne Parker, Defense Contract Management Agency Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford chief of flight operations, performs a preflight operational risk management assessment at DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford. (Photo by Navy Cmdr. Mark Nowicki)



Christopher Paton, Defense Contract Management Agency Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford team leader, reviews the final assembly production operation schedule for an H-60 aircraft at DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford. (Photo by Mark Sudikoff)



Mark Webb, left, and Paul Garofolo, Defense Contract Management Agency Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford quality assurance representatives, inspect an aircraft prior to government flight and acceptance at DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford. (Photo by Mark Sudikoff)



Navy Lt. Cmdr. Suzanne Parker, Defense Contract Management Agency Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford chief of flight operations, performs a preflight inspection prior to government flight and acceptance at DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford. (Photo by Navy Cmdr. Mark Nowicki)



Defense Contract Management Agency NASA Product Operations Stennis Manned Space Flight Support Center personnel pose with the last space shuttle external tank after spending numerous hours on the project. The tank was delivered to NASA on July 8. (Photo by Randy McGee)

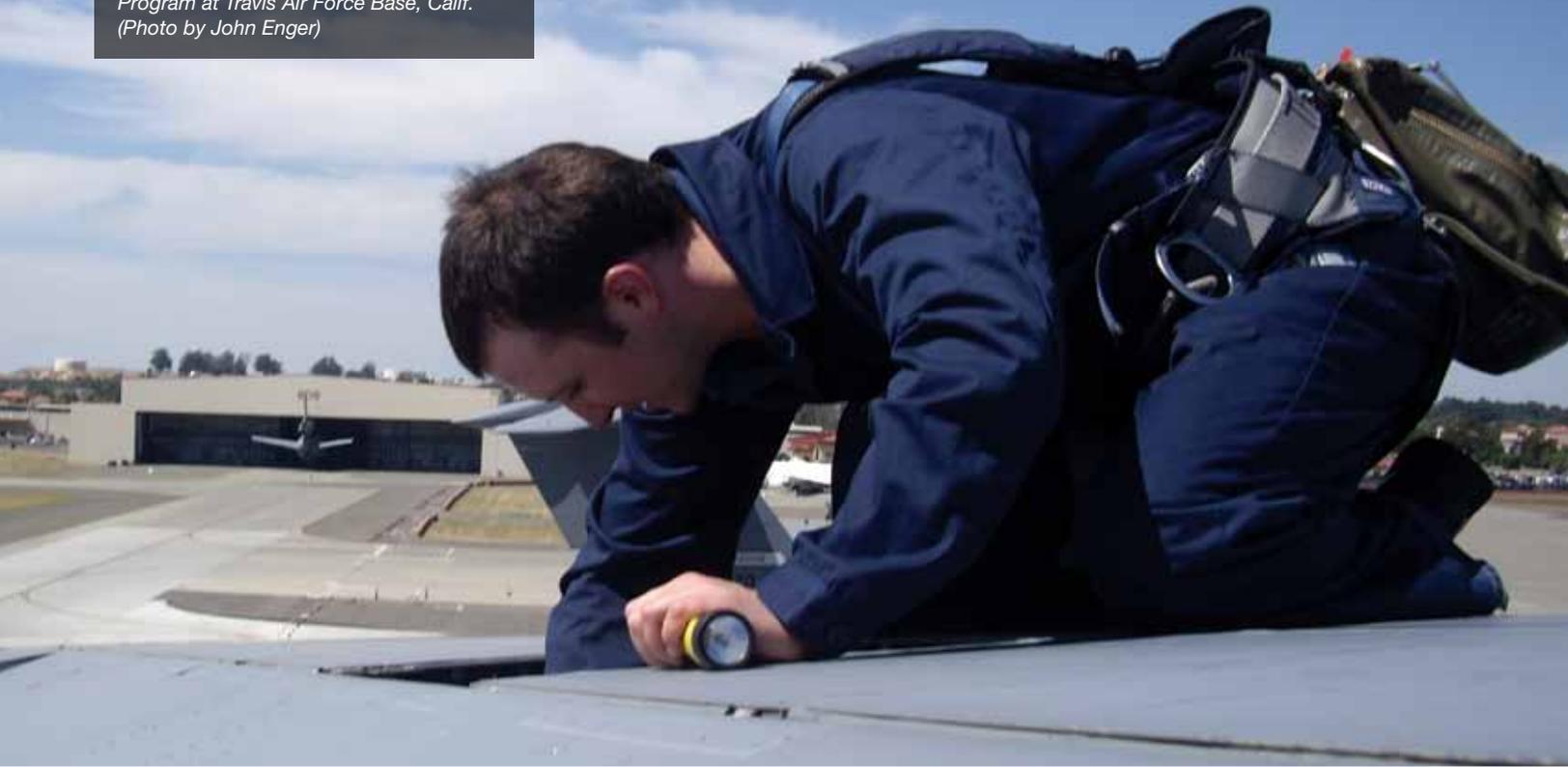


Greg Stefanovic, Defense Contract Management Agency NASA Product Operations Johnson Space Center quality assurance specialist, examines equipment associated with support to the International Space Station in Houston. (Photo by Harvey Person)



Kevin Fuson, Defense Contract Management Agency NASA Product Operations ATK Launch Systems quality assurance specialist, right, oversees the contractor performing a set screw operation on a booster separation motor for the Ares booster program in Brigham City, Utah. (Photo by Judy Hennefer)

Dustin Warner, Defense Contract Management Agency Lathrop quality assurance specialist, inspects the wiring harness installation in the tail section of a New York Air National Guard C-5 Galaxy as part of the C-5 Avionics Modernization Program at Travis Air Force Base, Calif. (Photo by John Enger)



Tony Dumlao, Defense Contract Management Agency Lathrop lead quality assurance specialist, inspects the wiring harness installation in the ailerons of a New York Air National Guard C-5 Galaxy as part of the C-5 Avionics Modernization Program at Travis Air Force Base, Calif. (Photo by John Enger)



Agency Gets New ‘Greenback’ Manager

Mark Woodbury | DCMA Public Affairs



Recently appointed Financial and Business Operations Executive Director Pam Conklin, left, discusses budget items with Jocelyn Rolen, Defense Contract Management Agency Financial and Business Operations Directorate executive assistant, during a meeting at DCMA Forward in Chester, Va. Conklin started with the agency on Aug. 29 and was the first Senior Executive Service appointee to the duty stationed at the future headquarters location on Fort Lee, Va. (Photos by Mark Woodbury, DCMA Public Affairs)

“Follow the money. Always follow the money,” is advice from an anonymous source in “All the President’s Men” that led *Washington Post* reporter Bob Woodward to discover critical information on the Watergate coverup.

When a person follows the money within the Defense Contract Management Agency, it leads squarely back to Pam

Conklin, Financial and Business Operations executive director. However, unlike “All the President’s Men,” there’s no coverup at the end of this information trail, just a seasoned professional who lives for the challenge of ensuring all dollars and cents are accounted for.

Conklin recently joined the DCMA team and is eager to share her experience and expertise. She comes to the agency

with more than 28 years’ experience in finance and budget, having served in various capacities for the government. Her most recent assignment was as the Defense Commissary Agency’s chief financial executive where she managed a \$1.3 billion appropriations and \$6 billion resale stock fund. As the Financial and Business Operations executive director, Conklin is responsible for the management

of DCMA's business infrastructure and all matters pertaining to the financial operations within the agency.

Interested in knowing more about the person who handles the agency's money, the *Communicator* sat down with Conklin to discuss the kind of person she is and what she finds important in life.

Q: What do you like most about your job with DCMA so far?

A: I am thrilled with the challenge and to hopefully make a positive impact on DCMA. I am also thrilled with the people here. Everyone has welcomed me with open arms. It's been fantastic to see the professionalism, work ethic and dedication, especially with all the turmoil of the transition and relocating. But, everyone has been fantastic, very positive and encouraging. I am just excited to be here.

Q: Do you have a personal motto? If so, what would that be?

A: No, I really don't. I am a very positive person and a very passionate person. Some people talk about the glass being half-empty or half-full; I like to say my glass is full. But, no, I really don't have a personal motto.

Q: How has having a glass-full perspective on life been a benefit to you?

A: Well, I am all about sharing knowledge and information to empower people and giving everyone an opportunity to do his or her best. This has obviously helped me get to where I am today. With the Defense Commissary Agency, we did a lot of good things — clean audit opinions and become the gold standard within the Department of Defense for internal controls. That wasn't just one person. That wasn't just me as the comptroller or chief financial executive; it was everyone in my organization working together as a team. So, I am all about empowering everybody and hopefully motivating them with my passion and positive outlook.

Q: Any prior military service?

A: No; I worked for the Army but not in the military. I was a civilian. I was in

“I believe in baptism by fire; throw them into the deep end, and they'll not only come out treading water but swimming laps.”

— Pam Conklin, Defense Contract Management Agency Financial and Business Operations executive director

Germany for eight years at the four-star Army headquarters in Heidelberg. The first three years was in budget work, but for the last five years, I was actually an arms control specialist doing force structure for the drawdown in Europe from 1990 to 1995. Those were pretty exciting times.

Q: What perspectives did your arms control specialist job help give you that have helped within your budget career?

A: It gave me the perspective that I could do anything. If I could go from being a budget analyst to being an arms control specialist and excel at it, it told me I could do anything I put my mind to, but I have always had that attitude. Just give me a job, and I am going to do it well. I believe in baptism by fire; throw them into the deep end, and they'll not only come out treading water but swimming laps. I definitely believe in throwing myself into and immersing myself into the process and learning everything I can as quickly as I can.

Q: While living in Germany did you learn any German?

A: Somewhat. For me, the best way to learn about a country and its people is through its food, and I certainly embraced learning German as it applied to reading menus. If anything, this is my motto: “Some people eat to live, but I certainly live to eat.” Food is very important to me. I was raised in the South, so, of course, food is important to my heritage and culture. My husband is Italian, so we have another important food angle going on there. On top of that, he is a fantastic cook. So, we definitely embraced learning about Germany and the other nearby countries, France and Italy, through their restaurants.

But, yeah, I can still speak a little German. I still throw a phrase or two out there. I am not conversational today, but I can still read a German menu. Funny thing is, I cannot understand an English menu at a German restaurant. I was in Germany a year and a half ago on business with colleagues, who were novices in German menus, so I asked if they had an English carte — an English menu — and they did. I had one too, but I couldn't understand it. I had to ask for a German menu. Fried potatoes on the English menu just didn't tell me if it was pommes frites (French fries), bratkartoffeln (hash browns) or croquettes (potato pancake). I could still figure out schnitzel on the English menu, but with just about everything else, you lose something in translation.

Q: When you're not at work, where would people find you?

A: (1) At home with my family. My husband and I have two teenage sons. We are very blessed to have a great neighborhood where we enjoy being right in the social center of it. (2) Somewhere with a book. I love reading. I read hardbacks, listen to audio books and often am in four different books at the same time. I try to make sure they are different genres so I don't get the plots confused — a fiction, a nonfiction, something from a different time era. I am certainly an avid reader. (3) Doing a Sudoku puzzle. This is kind of ironic because I am a numbers person as a comptroller, and some people might think that I wouldn't want to have anything to do with numbers when I get home. But, doing my Sudoku puzzle is kind of my destressor after a long day.

Q: What would you say is the best book you have ever read?

A: “Killer Angels.” It’s a Civil War book by Michael Shaara. It’s about the Battle of Gettysburg. The way he writes it focuses on five or six key leaders — (Gen. Robert E.) Lee being one and (Brevet Maj. Gen.) Joshua Chamberlain, who was my favorite to read about. He was a college professor from Maine, and the college basically said, “You have to stop enflaming your students to join the Army. You have to stop and take a sabbatical.” So, his sabbatical was to go to the governor and say, “Commission me into the Army.” He has some really great leadership moments in the war. One was at Gettysburg at the Battle of Little Round

Top, and the other is where he has been handed over a group of deserters from the Union Army he is ordered to kill. Instead, he gives them this impassioned speech, and these people are ready to fight for him. They pick up their guns and go off to fight another fight. So, I would have to say it is one of the best books of all time. A close second is “Les Misérables” by Victor Hugo.

Q: Who is the most important person in your life, and how has that person influenced you?

A: My dad. He comes from a humble background. He was a farmer. Both he and my mom worked hard their entire lives. There were some rough times, and he instilled in us a work ethic and a great

understanding in “the basics” of life. My dad was the person who taught me how to balance a checkbook while I was still in high school. He did this because I was the treasurer of Beta Society at the state level. I marvel at that because, in today’s generation, many people don’t know how to balance a checkbook.

Q: What five things could you not live without?

A: My family, food, reading, Sudoku and, truly, my work.

Conklin was the first Senior Executive Service appointee to be duty stationed at the future headquarters location on Fort Lee, Va. She officially came onboard Aug. 29. 



Charlie Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director, left, introduces Pam Conklin, recently selected DCMA Financial and Business Operations/Comptroller executive director, to the finance and budgeting personnel at DCMA Forward in Chester, Va., Aug. 13.

Mentoring Strengthens Engineering Workforce, Increases Impact to Warfighter

Sam Rousso | DCMA Public Affairs



Karl Salting, Defense Contract Management Agency Boeing Huntington Beach engineering Keystone intern, standing, discusses his progress with his supervisor and mentor, Alberto Gonzales, at the DCMA Huntington Beach office recently. (Photo by Sam Rousso, DCMA Public Affairs)

“I enjoy working for (the Defense Contract Management Agency) because I appreciate the

willingness of my coworkers to assist me and their professionalism,” says Karl Salting, a DCMA Boeing Huntington Beach engineering Keystone intern.

Salting, a 2007 graduate of Cal Poly Pomona, Calif., has been with DCMA since May 2009. Following a couple of years experience with private industry, he applied for a job with the agency.

Salting says he “heard about DCMA from a colleague; I decided to look for more information. Later, I attended an orientation at the agency facility in Carson, Calif. I followed the procedures that were outlined there and applied. From there, it was a waiting process, which eventually landed me in the Keystone Program.”

Engineers at DCMA work with the very latest in defense systems, weapons and advanced equipment. While the actual design work is done by outside contractors, engineers’ contributions are essential, serving as the government’s eyes and ears during the entire procurement process. From initial design to final production, engineers use their skills to make sure the government gets what it pays for.

Salting is currently working on major programs, such as the Wideband Global Satellite Communication system, Tracking and Data Relay Satellite, and the Mobile User Objective System. All are major communications programs designed to speed the flow of information up and down the chain of command.

As a Keystone intern, Salting says he familiarizes himself “with all the processes of DCMA, whether it is in the engineering, industrial specialist, contracts, quality assurance, program integrator or pricing area. Though as an engineer, I should specialize more on the engineering processes, and that is why I attend contract self-oversight meetings, failure review boards, program floor walks and material review boards. Aside from that, rotational assignments allow me to understand what each member of the Program Support Team does. I am also the point of contact of a program called Metrics Studio where I input data from our Program Support Team every month.”

In addition, Salting is enrolled in Defense Acquisition University and Skillport courses to achieve the necessary Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act certification level for his job series once he graduates from the Keystone Program. These courses supplement all his on-the-job training.

Salting’s supervisor and mentor is Alberto Gonzales. Gonzales has worked for DCMA since 1988. After starting as a general engineer, with additional training he became a program integrator, then a lead engineer and finally a supervisor. Gonzales’ experience is different from the track Salting is taking.

“When I started with DCMA in 1988, I didn’t have a mentor. It was a struggle to know what DCMA does, how it works, who does what,” said Gonzales. “The first few years were spent learning the engineering processes only. It was only after several years that I knew what the contracting and quality assurance sides of the house do. This mentoring program facilitates incorporating interns into the process and making them productive and efficient.”

There are three stages to mentoring, Gonzales says. “The first stage is knowledge

transfer. This is where the intern shadows his or her mentor, and all the required DAU courses come in. Aside from the engineering processes, the intern has to know the processes for other disciplines: contract, quality and management support. We implement this through our rotational cross-training.”

Skills development is the second stage. “The intern has to develop technical expertise in his or her field through constant and continuous interfacing with coworkers and contractor peers. I always want to develop an intern’s full potential by expanding his or her skills,” said Gonzales. “In Karl’s case, his complementary functions could be earned value and/or program integration. I believe employees should be flexible to take on various positions to make them indispensable and also for upward mobility. In these days of constant changes due to downsizing, rightsizing, budgets, etc., it is to the employees’ advantage, and management’s as well, to be able to shift employees to where the requirements are. Flexibility due to multiple skills is always a plus, if not a must.”

The third aspect of mentoring, Gonzales says, is being a role model. “It is our responsibility to be examples in other softer skills, such as ethics, integrity,

fairness, dedication and quality work. Keystones are the lifeblood, the hope and future of our agency. Their development to their full potential rests on us mentors and supervisors. How we groom them today will determine what kind of employees they will be tomorrow.”

Salting says he has gained a few valuable lessons learned during his time with the agency.

“Since starting work at DCMA, I’ve learned that teamwork is a must when accomplishing tasks that we are given. Constant communication benefits all parties involved,” said Salting. “The ultimate DCMA goal is delivering quality products to the warfighter, contract compliance and customer satisfaction. Every contract deals with numerous areas of commodity expertise that DCMA has. Aside from working within DCMA, it is imperative that we work with the program office and contracts. Once you build that trust and integrity and continue diligently to progress, all else will naturally come around.”

Overall, Salting finds his work very fulfilling.

“The word doesn’t begin to encompass my overall thoughts on how much I appreciate being able to serve my country in support of the warfighters. I’m very

motivated that this job that we do delivers products and services that save the lives of our servicemen and women who put themselves in harm’s way,” said Salting. “The quality and technical performance of our products ensure mission success and ensure they come home safely.”

Gonzales agrees. “DCMA work is very fulfilling. Knowing that DCMA’s products and services are for the warfighters and mission success, nothing could be more fulfilling than our work. The quality and technical performance of our products through contract compliance guarantees the accomplishment of the mission. Our work is both rewarding for us employees and the customer, program office and the warfighter. It never dawned on me the full meaning of that statement until I heard the guest speaker at a contractor’s conference.”

The speaker was a Navy pilot who brought his wife and child. According to Gonzales, he said, “Thanks to you all, through your products, I accomplished my mission, and I came back home safely. My entire family says, ‘Thank you!’”

Gonzales concluded, saying, “Since then, I’ve been using that with all my employees to emphasize the importance of our work stating, ‘There’s a warfighter out there counting on you; don’t let him down.’” ©



An artist’s rendering of a Mobile User Objective System satellite. MUOS will be a network of Department of Defense-controlled satellites and associated ground facilities providing narrowband communication services. MUOS is just one of the projects Karl Salting, Defense Contract Management Agency Boeing Huntington Beach engineering Keystone intern, is involved with as part of his job with the agency.

Contract Administrators Dot Contract's I's and Cross its T's

Ann Jensis-Dale | DCMA Public Affairs Staff



Barbara Belcastro poses for a picture at her Maryland office. Belcastro is a corporate administrative contracting officer for a large Maryland defense contractor.

Contract administrators have a vital role in the daily operations of the Defense Contract Management

Agency. The agency could not operate without them. After all, what they do is spelled out in the agency's name — contract management.

There are a variety of functional areas within the contract specialist career field at DCMA. There are administrative contracting officers, termination contracting officers, contract administrators, divisional administrative contracting officers and corporate administrative contracting officers. Agency-wide, DCMA only has 26 CACOs that support 30 contractors; Barbara Belcastro is one of them.

“Barbara is tenacious in protecting the government's interests. She is highly sought after to share her vast knowledge and experience.”

— Jean-Marie Faris, Defense Contract Management Agency Cost and Pricing Center Corporate Administrative Contracting Officer Division

Belcastro is assigned to a large defense contractor in Maryland. CACOs are senior contracting staff, certified at Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act Level III, and work with ACOs, DACOs and corporate level contractor employees. They are responsible for the review and approval of corporate-wide policies, procedures and activities that impact the government when it contracts with the corporation.

CACOs negotiate with contractors on such items as the cost impact to the government of a contractor's changes to its cost accounting practices, the cost impact of its noncompliance with government Cost Accounting Standards and its final incurred costs on cost-type contracts. CACOs also are responsible for the establishment of advance agreements or recommendations on corporate/home office expense allocations.

“DCMA CACOs are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate delegated contract oversight functions listed in the Federal Acquisition Regulations and Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations are performed; advising the buying activity of contract status and major areas of concern; making contractual oversight determinations and decisions that legally bind the government; and leading a contract administration team. Leading the

team requires close cooperation between the ACO and all functional specialists involved in administering the contract or contractor business system,” said Felisha Hitt, DCMA Functional Information Resource Management Center director.

In simple terms, CACOs are responsible for negotiating and advising on matters that affect the corporate entity as a whole, rather than just one segment of the company.

Belcastro has had a wide range of contract administration assignments throughout her career, and her work is very important to DCMA's contract management function. Belcastro says that some of her most rewarding actions involve cost impacts and incurred costs negotiations, making final determinations of allowable costs and facilitating meetings between the contractor and the Defense Contract Audit Agency.

There is no typical day for a CACO. Flexibility is a key characteristic required for the job. According to Belcastro, she may have a plan to complete specific work tasks, but things don't always go as planned. “I must be flexible and adjust priorities when I receive a short suspense,” she said.

Belcastro said one of her most important responsibilities as a CACO is assuring taxpayers' money is used wisely.

“Defense Contract Management Agency corporate administrative contracting officers are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate delegated contract oversight functions listed in the Federal Acquisition Regulations and Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations are performed.”

— Felisha Hitt, DCMA Functional Information Resource Management Center director

“Barbara is tenacious in protecting the government’s interests. She is highly sought after to share her vast knowledge and experience,” said Jean-Marie Faris, DCMA Cost and Pricing Center Corporate ACO Division and Belcastro’s supervisor.

Recently, Belcastro received a DCAA report questioning a contractor’s overhead cost allocations for approximately \$1.7 million with \$300,000 in question related to consultant and professional services.

This report sparked Belcastro’s interest and prompted her to investigate. She reviewed similar costs questioned by

the agency in 2000 through 2002 and conducted a desk audit review of 11 major consultants the corporation employed. Her findings resulted in disallowed costs for an additional \$2.3 million for consultants and professional services for a total of \$3.3 million.

Belcastro’s findings were presented to the agency and the contractor, resulting in reimbursement to the government of more than \$3 million.

“Barbara is the consummate professional; I am very fortunate to work with her. I recently saw her in action in a

meeting with the contractor, and it was obvious to me that she is highly respected and quite effective in protecting the government’s interest,” Faris said.

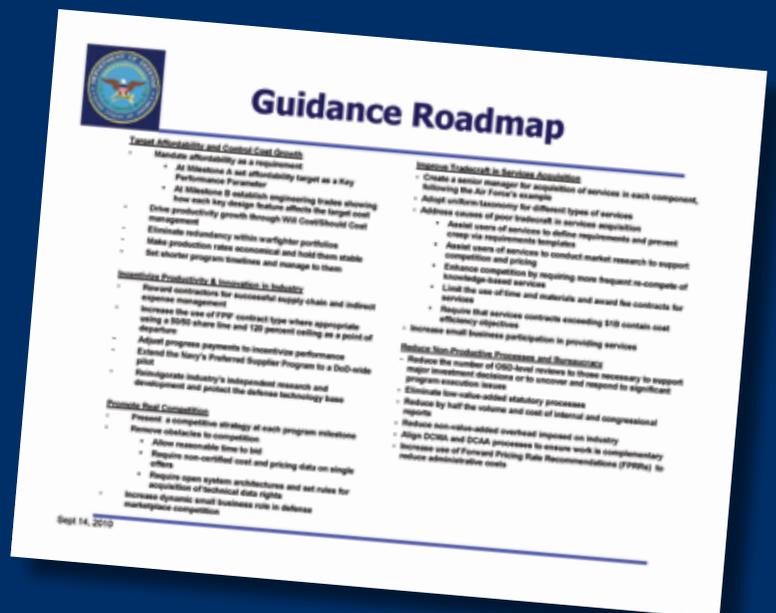
According to Faris, Belcastro also has developed a very professional and productive working relationship with her DCAA counterparts.

“As a mentor, Barbara has gone above and beyond in providing exceptional on-the-job training and meaningful developmental assignments to her new cost/price analyst. She also is a wonderful resource to DCMA Maryland personnel and has prepared and conducted training for other junior personnel at the contract management office,” Faris said.

Marie Greening, DCMA Operations Directorate chief operating officer, is grateful to have Belcastro on the agency’s team. “DCMA is fortunate to have employees like Barbara Belcastro,” said Greening. “She displays dependability and initiative daily and raises the bar for those that work with her.” 

Department of Defense Efficiency Initiative

On Sept. 14, Dr. Ashton B. Carter, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, unveiled a Guidance Roadmap for the acquisition community to follow in support of the Department of Defense Efficiency Initiative. His memorandum outlines 23 principal action items in five major areas the Department will pursue to deliver efficiency results. For the complete memorandum, visit <http://www.acq.osd.mil>.



Long-Time Employee Puts ‘Quality’ in Quality Assurance

Mark Woodbury | DCMA Public Affairs



David Frank, DCMA Hampton (Richmond) lead quality assurance representative, center left, demonstrates a punch to the martial arts students he teaches at the Quinton, Va., community center Oct. 14. (Photos by Mark Woodbury, DCMA Public Affairs)

When a warfighter uses a piece of equipment, he or she expects it to work right every time. Malfunctioning equipment in a warzone is more than an inconvenience; it can mean the difference between mission success and failure. Ensuring warfighters have the proper equipment built to the quality standard required within the contract is the responsibility of the Defense Contract Management Agency’s quality assurance workforce.

Depending on a quality assurance representative’s area of expertise, he or she could be monitoring the quality and performance of anything from airplanes to ships, weapons systems to food items, foul-weather gear to software — just to name a few. Within this diverse career field, according to his colleagues, customers and leaders, there is none finer than David Frank. Frank is assigned to DCMA Hampton (Richmond) as a lead QAR.

Frank started his career with DCMA 38 years ago after realizing his strong

desire to know how things work and how things “should be” were worthy traits for someone in the quality assurance field.

Frank said he also realized he was a “good QA fit” when he realized that no two work days were the same.

“There is always something new and different going on with this job,” said Frank. “This brings a lot of excitement and novelty to the job, something I have appreciated for 38 years.”

The importance of what he does for the warfighter each and every day is not lost on Frank.

“Our warfighters are using the equipment I am saying is ready to go,” he said. “These men and women are ducking bullets over there. They need to know that someone like me is doing my job to ensure they are getting quality equipment needed to do their job. There is no halfway in this job.”

Just like a heart surgeon who has to do his or her job perfectly day-in and day-out for people to survive, Frank places his job

on equal grounds. His personal motto, “Do the best you can in everything you do,” was instilled in him at a young age and has allowed him to perform at his best day-in and day-out.

At this late stage in his career, Frank says he feels a great responsibility to mentor and train new QARs coming into the agency.

“Dave’s mentorship to me has been priceless,” said Katie Morgan, DCMA Hampton (Richmond) QAR Keystone Program intern. “He always has an answer that comes with a prior experience perspective that helps ensure the best action is taken.”

Morgan said a trait she admires in Frank is his ability to work with the contractors to correct situations in a way that keeps a positive relationship between the agency and contractor.

“Dave has a way of being able to tell the contractor where they are deficient and their need to make things right without causing strife,” said Morgan. “This is a trait I am working on developing on a daily basis.”

Morgan attributes Frank’s ability to communicate this way with the contractor to the relationships he establishes with the contractors he oversees.

“The contractors know they are able to reach out to him at anytime, day or night, to get clarity on a situation even before something could become a problem,” said Morgan. “The contractors appreciate this level of service and react with respect when deficiencies are identified.”

Adrian Robbe, Frank’s supervisor, says the value he brings to the office is immeasurable.

“Over the past four years, I have observed him invest his life in helping others to succeed in the QA profession,” said Robbe. “Through his informal communication, face-to-face meetings and on-the-job efforts, Dave has done a wonderful job in conveying his knowledge, wisdom and experience to his protégés.”

“She’s always with me... I can’t imagine a day with her not being right by my side.”

— David Frank, Defense Contract Management Agency lead quality assurance representative

Frank’s desire to mentor and pass along life’s lessons does not stop at the workplace. This extends into his community life as well.

After taking a martial arts class with his daughter while she was in college 17 years ago, Frank embraced the newfound passion and looked for the first opportunity to pass along his passion to others.

“Once I got my black belt, I immediately started looking for places where I could teach,” said Frank. “I realized quickly the increased focus and concentration that comes with participating in martial arts. I realized how these traits can help so many people in all aspects of their life, and I wanted to help others gain this in their own lives.”

In an effort to offer more activities for entire families within his small

community, Frank started up a family martial arts class and has taught for several years at his local community center.

While contemplating who has had the most influence in shaping him into the person he is today, Frank’s eyes begin to water. He pauses, then stammers and chokes out the words, “That would have to be my wife.”

Frank says his connection to his wife has been a 41-year partnership and marriage. Counting the 12 years prior to their marriage, where he and his wife were dating, Frank has had a “partnership” with his wife for 53 years.

Even with the early stages of Alzheimer’s disease affecting his wife, Frank says, “She’s always with me. You will always find her with me at each of my classes looking on. I can’t imagine a day with her not being right by my side.”

Although Frank’s partnership with DCMA will come to a close in the coming years, Robbe points out, “Frank’s training and sharing of his knowledge and experiences with our QA specialists is creating a legacy of successes that will be evident in DCMA for many years to come.” ☺



David Frank, DCMA Hampton (Richmond) lead quality assurance representative, right, discusses proper documentation with his fellow QAR colleagues Archie Lomax, middle, and Michael Coyle, left, in the DCMA Hampton (Richmond) office recently.

Did you know?

The Defense Contract Management Agency has a total of 3,065 quality assurance specialists throughout the agency or approximately 28 percent of the agency’s current workforce. The following are where quality assurance specialists are located throughout the agency:

- Eastern Division — 1,010
- Central Division — 680
- Headquarters, Centers and Operations — 655
- Western Division — 585
- International — 78
- Special Programs — 57

The quality assurance career field helps support the agency’s mission to be the “Department of Defense’s leading experts in quality assurance.”

The headquarters quality assurance staff is aligned as:

- Process and Policy Management Support Team
- Information Management Support Team
- Resource Management Support Team
- Quality Engineering Support Team
- DCMA NASA Audit Team

For information on DCMA quality assurance, or on how to become a quality assurance specialist, e-mail the Quality Assurance team at DCMAQA@dcma.mil.

Employee Gains Insight From Navy, Marathons Experience

Finishes Marine Corps Marathon With Second Overall Finish

Matthew Sablan | Staff Writer



Navy Lt. Gina Slaby, Defense Contract Management Agency Tucson contract administrator, running at the 2009 Cross Country Nationals. Slaby finished the 2010 Marine Corps Marathon as the second place overall female runner with a time of 2:45:58. (Photo courtesy of Navy Lt. Gina Slaby)

Members of the Defense Contract Management Agency come from every walk of life to serve America's warfighters. Each employee has a story to tell, and Navy Lt. Gina Slaby's story includes service to her country. She has served in the Navy at Diego Garcia and aboard the USS *Lake Erie* at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Now, as a contract administrator at DCMA Tucson, she assists with contract closeouts, payments and other contracting duties.

Inspired to join the military by her father's service in the Air Force, Slaby began running when she joined the Navy in 2005. Her training led her to begin running marathons, later joining the Navy Running Team. "My first marathon was the 2007 Marine Corps Marathon," Slaby said. "I had never run a marathon before and finished it in less than three hours. It was a huge sense of accomplishment."

On Oct. 31, Slaby was the first active-duty woman to cross the finish line at the 2010 Marine Corps Marathon and the second woman to finish overall, finishing in 2:45:58.

"My favorite part of the course is the finish line," Slaby said. "I love ending at the Marine Corps War Memorial with all the people cheering in the background."

Slaby trained for her first marathon while stationed at Diego Garcia, rising before the sun was up to avoid the excessive heat. "All these places (Diego Garcia, Pearl Harbor and Tucson) have been so hot that I've had to wake up at around 4:30 a.m. so I can get my workout in before the sun comes up," Slaby said.

She has also trained while aboard the *Lake Erie*, running laps on the ship. In the 2008 Marine Corps Marathon, she says that she "hit the wall around mile 22." In

“Being a warfighter has helped me see the big picture of what DCMA does.”

— Navy Lt. Gina Slaby, Defense Contract Management Agency contracts administrator

describing this experience, combined with her experience in her first marathon, she learned that, “Anything can happen. It is completely unexpected.” This is true both in her service and in marathons.

Since transferring to Tucson, she has brought the insight and commitment

she developed from these marathons to DCMA. But, this isn’t the only expertise that has helped her at DCMA. She has firsthand experience of the value DCMA brings to the warfighter.

“We were the warfighter,” she explained. “We launched missiles; we needed good quality equipment. DCMA, contract administrators, quality assurance and program managers — everybody has to come together and deliver support and services.”

One time where DCMA delivered for Slaby was while she was deployed aboard the *Lake Erie*. The *Lake Erie* participated in *Operation Burnt Frost* to destroy the disabled satellite USA-193 to prevent it from causing damage upon reentry. Slaby explained it wasn’t just the missile used to

destroy the satellite DCMA delivered; it was the entire weapons system and all the associated equipment that needed to be top of the line.

“Being a warfighter has helped me see the big picture of what DCMA does,” Slaby said.

Slaby will continue to support her fellow warfighters while serving at DCMA. She will also continue her own pursuits. Her current goal is to run in the Olympic trials, which requires a qualifying time of 2:46:00, roughly one minute faster than her performance at the Marine Corps Marathon. Confident that she can achieve this goal, Slaby’s next race is the Rock ‘n’ Roll Arizona Marathon in Phoenix in January. 📍



Sailors assigned to Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Lake Erie (CG 70) man the rails pier-side to Naval Station Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, upon completion of a deployment to the Western Pacific. Navy Lt. Gina Slaby, Defense Contract Management Agency Tucson contract administrator, deployed aboard the Lake Erie prior to her service with the agency. Her service with the agency has given her the hands on insight in the value DCMA provides warfighters. (Photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class James Foehl, Navy Visual News Service)



Faces *of* DCMA



My name is:
Craig "Mel" Hamner

I am:
A program analyst for the Combat Support Center where I help support the Basic Contingency Operations Training course.

Describe your job in a sentence.

I coordinate the scheduling and reports administration for military and civilian attendees to the BCOT course.

How long have you worked for DCMA?

I have been with the agency for three months.

What's your favorite thing about working for DCMA?

The teamwork; there are a lot of moving parts within the Combat Support Center, and teamwork makes it all gel.

What's your best memory of working here?

At this point, my best memories come from hearing customers, both internal and external, say, "Thank you very much. That helped a lot."

How do you make a difference in the agency?

BCOT attendees have a lot of questions, and I am one of the conduits through which information flows. A better informed/trained employee usually makes for a happier and more productive one.

Craig Hamner





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