



Procurement Countdown

Summer 2003 No. 127

My Experience... Supporting the Columbia Recovery

By Vann R. Jones, Marshall Space Flight Center

In addition to my 15-year federal acquisition experience, nine of those years as a Contracting Officer, I also have over 24-years' experience as a part-time professional photographer. While in college, I worked as a photojournalist for a newspaper, and later owned and operated a small photography business with my wife, Terri. My portfolio includes images of President George Bush, Sr., former CBS News anchor Walter Cronkite, world-renowned heart surgeon Dr. Michael DeBakey, astronaut and former Congressman John Glenn, former University of Alabama head football coach Paul "Bear" Bryant, and former first lady Rosalyn Carter. Recently, this combination of procurement and photography skills put me in a unique position to support the Columbia STS-107 recovery operation in Texas.

Following the tragic loss of Columbia STS-107, I felt helpless as I sat in a conference room at MSFC watching the NASA/JSC memorial service on NASA Select. Having worked at JSC for over 13 years, now seeing my fellow co-workers and friends mourn was very difficult for me. As I wiped away tears with my new family here at MSFC, for whom I am so thankful, a voice inside kept telling me to "do something." Following the memorial

service I called a friend at JSC and asked if there was anything I could do to support the recovery effort, and the answer was a resounding "yes... we need help."

Back to Texas

The following day, with approval and support from the MSFC Procurement Office, I was on a plane to Dallas. There, I reported to Jeff Williams, Alternate Chair of the Columbia Mishap Investigation Team. The team was working at the Naval Air Station (NAS) in Ft. Worth, TX. Upon arrival, I was immediately assigned to a recovery team to photograph shuttle debris in the field. With the military deployment to the Middle East because of the War with IRAQ, there was

room at the Joint Reserve Base. We quickly converted a vacant building into what became known as the "NASA-DFW (Dallas-Fort Worth) Command Center." Here I worked with DOD, EPA, FEMA, FBI, Texas Rangers, local law enforcement and other NASA and contractor employees from KSC and JSC on a massive land and air search for shuttle debris. The support for



Vann Jones in front of a Blackhawk Helicopter at NAS Ft. Worth, TX

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Highlights...

What's the right way to use a combination synopsis/solicitation? Find out on page 4.

Need a Point of Contact? POCs for the Procurement IFM Issues group, the IG's Office, and the *Procurement Countdown* are on pages 5 and 6.

An update on the Intern program and a list of participants starts on page 6.

The features in this issue focus on Simone Rollings at GSFC, and Joy Garnett at JSC. Those articles are on pages 8 and 11.

An update of DGS appears on page 10.

Karen Dempster at LaRC has a patent pending. See what it's all about on page 10.

After 40 years of government service, Connie Poole retired. Read an open letter from her on page 12.

Columbia Recovery

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NASA by our sister agencies and from the local law enforcement, businesses, and citizens of small cities and towns in Texas was overwhelming to all of us. This recovery operation would have been impossible without their help and support, down to the ice cream for the search teams that was donated by Blue Bell. Despite having been trained as a Contracting Officer, there are just some times you don't ask procurement questions, or stand in the way of 125 recovery workers and their ice cream.

We had 32 search and recovery teams and only four photographers; therefore, we stayed pretty busy working between teams in the field and/or setting up a tabletop photo studio in an old airplane hanger to photograph debris that was brought in from the surrounding counties. In just a few short days, I saw the chaos of the event become an organized and highly effective team of professionals working with a common purpose: helping unravel the aerodynamic mysteries of February 1.

As network cables were pulled for lap-tops and telephone lines installed for communications, the situation room was soon filled with wall maps, team assignments on marker boards, in-boxes, and work flow processes that would have passed any ISO audit. Daily meetings were scheduled, including telecons with our counterparts at

the other command center in Lufkin, TX and other NASA field centers. There were two command centers with different functions. At Lufkin, they were working on "crash debris." Our center was focused on "cause debris."

Working as a Team

We worked 14-to-16 hour days and, despite the weary bodies and eyes, we still took time to laugh together and take a few photos of each other. As logistics were needed to support the teams, I went to work as a Contracting Officer making small purchases and even driving to the businesses at times to pick up supplies. Primarily I worked as a photographer taking images of the charred tile and debris. With my digital imaging counterpart and friend, Michael McGuyer (JSC), and fellow photographers Bill Stafford (JSC), James Blair (JSC) and Drew Rory (USAF), we labeled, archived and/or transmitted images to NASA engineers around the US for further review.

At exactly 0800 hours on Saturday, February 8, just one week after the disaster, we paused as a NASA family in Hanger 1049 for our own memorial service. There, the military personnel "retired the colors" in honor of our seven beloved friends and astronauts. The memorial was led by Mr. Jim Kennedy, Deputy Director

at KSC, and former NASA astronaut, Andy Allen. This was a very emotional time for all of us as we knew the challenges of the job at hand. This memorial gave us some closure of our loss. It renewed our energy. It reminded us that we are part of the NASA family and of NASA's purpose to *"improve life here, extend life to there, and find life beyond."*

As part of this support, I had the experience of logging over 25 hours in an Army Blackhawk helicopter looking for shuttle debris over the fields and farms of West Texas. What a humbling and unique experience for me to represent NASA and the MSFC Procurement Office in this national endeavor.

I want to personally thank Steve Beale, MSFC Procurement Officer, my supervisor Byron Butler, team lead Bryan Williford, my procurement teammates, and Mr. Jim Ellis, MSFC CIO, for their support in allowing me the chance to contribute in a small way to our nation, Agency, and center during my 13 days in Texas. This experience has given me a renewed appreciation for the important role we perform in procurement to ensure NASA's goals are accomplished...in triumph and tragedy.

While flying back to Huntsville, AL, I found my eyes fixed on searching the land below, in hopes of finding just one more piece of shuttle debris.



People on the Move

GRC

Congratulations: Karin Huth has been selected as the Chief, Aeropropulsion and IT Branch. She replaces Ken DeLaat who retired in mid-April (see below). Karin's educational background is rich with an undergraduate degree, a law degree, and an MBA. She brings a wealth of experience to the position. We congratulate Karin.

New Faces: Cheryl Washam transferred from the Bureau of Prisons and has been assigned to the Services and Constructions Branch. Eunice Adams-Sipp transferred from DCMA and has been assigned to the Technology Support Branch. Leahmarie Stervagi is a new hire and assigned to the Aeropropulsion and Information Technology Branch. Daniel Rodriguez is a new hire and assigned to the Space Systems and Grants Branch.

Farewell: Ken Delaat retired in April. (We couldn't convince him to stay any longer.) His "can do" attitude, expertise, people skills, and dedication will be missed. We wish him success in building his new home in Las Vegas, and much health and happiness in his retirement.

GSFC

Congratulations: Recent Promotions: Eric Newman; Malores Pridgeon; Sandra Harrell; Nathan Watters; Lashawn Davis.

Farewell: Tanya Conner to the US Mint; Jamala Jones to

NSF; Barbara Hammond to EPA; Michael Allen to TSA.

HQ

New Faces: The Office of Procurement welcomes two new detailees. Suzan Moody from the NMO is on a one-year detail working on the SRBA. George Myers, from MSFC, is not actually with us, but is located here. George is working with the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Chuck Duff, on Freedom to Manage. George will be with us at least through the summer, possibly longer.

Farewell: Jeff Cullen has left Washington to take over Connie Poole's job at JSC. Jeff had been at JSC before he moved up here several years ago. Steve Miley has left the Office of Procurement to work in the Office of Space Flight here at Headquarters. Before leaving, Steve had spent 15 months on a detail in the Administrator's office.

JSC

Changes: The JSC Office of Procurement recently reorganized and now consists of five divisions, Policy and Business Systems, Space Station, Shuttle, Institutional and Projects Procurement. The reorganization was undertaken to centrally locate procurement personnel by division. This will enable us to respond more efficiently to the needs of our technical customers.

Farewell: Connie Poole retired in May after 40 years

with the government. Connie has written an open letter to *Procurement Countdown* readers. It is on page 12.

KSC

Congratulations: Mr. Jeff Lamke, Chief, Launch Services Office: The Procurement Office at KSC is again diversifying to meet our customer's needs. A new Launch Services procurement office (OP-LS) was established to award and administer all Expendable Launch Vehicle (ELV) Program Requirements, including Source Evaluation Boards (SEB). Jeff is the chief of this new office and has moved from the front office where he served as the SEB Manager. He now supervises all ELV-related contracts personnel while retaining his SEB manager responsibilities. Needless to say Jeff is a very busy man. The new office consists of 10 procurement employees who are co-located with ELV customers and is responsible for a variety of ELV program requirements including NASA Launch Services Contracts, Small ELV Services contracts, commercial payload processing contracts, as well as other ELV supplies and services orders, contracts, and interagency agreements.

Mr. David Culp, Lead, Mission Support Office: David is serving as the Executive Intern to the KSC Center Director. This position is a six-month term with responsibilities for developing

The list of **People on the Move** only includes those names that were submitted to the *Procurement Countdown*. If you know people who should be listed in this column, contact your center *Procurement Countdown* point of contact, or send the names to the editor, Susie Marucci, on (202) 358-1896, or e-mail at susie.marucci@nasa.gov.

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People on the Move

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presentations, writing speeches, responding to correspondence, scheduling events, and providing other support directly to the Center Director.

Congratulations to the following KSC Procurement Office employees who recently received promotions: In the Acquisition Management Office are Dennis Eaton and Henry Molnar; in the Engineering Support Office is Karen Voight; in the Launch Services Office are Terrance Crowley, Sherry Gasaway, Christopher Grubbe and Edwin Martinez; in the Mission Support Office are Attila

Csoma, Judy Ross, Jalane Shelton, and Larry Third; and in the Operations Support Office are Penny Ebright, Timothy Freeland, Lisa Morales, Marco Pochy, Laura Rochester, John Vondenhuevel, and Michael Wheeler.

New Faces: Kennedy Space Center extends a warm welcome to our newest employees. Ms. Regina Clifton comes to us on a detail from the Spaceport Technology Project Management Office at KSC. She has been in the Kennedy Undergraduate Studies Program for the past 6 years and has just graduated from the University of Central Florida with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting. She is

currently serving in the Mission Support Office.

Farewell: Alas, we must bid farewell to Ms. Lisa Kestel, OP-MS, who resigned from NASA due to an extended family illness and Mr. Stephen Paglialonga, who transferred from the Procurement Office to the Spaceport Technology Project Management Office where he now is a Program Analyst.

LARC

Farewell: LARC says goodbye to one of our best! Carol Reddic, Grants Administrator, moved to Dallas. She will be working with DCMA in the Lockheed Resident Complex. She will most definitely be missed!



Proper Use Of A Combination Synopsis/Solicitation

By George Huff, Johnson Space Center

Some NASA buyers are confused about when it is appropriate to use a combination synopsis/solicitation (Combo). Since Combos enable buyers to streamline the procurement process, it is very tempting for them to want to apply them as broadly as they can. While we should be taking advantage of Combos whenever their use is appropriate, we need to know when we should be using them, and when not, so we do not abuse this valuable tool.

How do Combos work? Combos combine the synopsis and solicitation into a single document. This eliminates the need to post both separately with a 15-day wait period in between. The SF1449 is not used. A more detailed description of this “streamlined solicitation for commercial items” can be found at FAR 12.603.

When do you use Combos? As you can see from both the title of this process and its location in the FAR (Part 12), Combos apply only to commercial items – which, by definition, must be awarded on a firm-fixed-price (FFP) basis or on a fixed-price with economic price adjustment basis (FP-EPA). Note that Federal Acquisition Circular 2001-13 recently clarified that a fixed price contract providing an award fee incentive and/or performance or delivery incentives that are based solely on factors other than cost remains a fixed price contract. The Test Program for Certain Commercial Items allows simplified acquisition procedures to be used for commercial items up to \$5M. Neither the Combo nor the Special Test Program can be used for non-commercial items.

If you have questions regarding Combos, please contact Celeste Dalton (202) 358-1645, celeste.m.dalton@nasa.gov or George Huff, 281 483-4108, george.e.huff@nasa.gov.

Good People to Know!

Procurement IFM Issues Group Formed

With the rollout of IFM on procurement desktops, software implementation issues and other concerns related to IFM continue to crop up. To ensure that the center procurement offices have insight, and input, into the procurement-related IFM decisions that affect them, Code H has formed a "Procurement IFM Issues Working Group." This group has started meeting about every two weeks by telecon to discuss and resolve major IFM issues that affect procurement. Each Procurement Office is encouraged to submit major IFM issues to its representative to be discussed and resolved by the Working Group. Every center has a representative. The members are:

Anne Guenther (Chairperson), Code HC
 Reginald Walker, Code HC; Jane Maples, IFM Core Finance; Celeste Dalton, Code HK

Center Representatives:

Pat Hudson	ARC	patricia.b.hudson@nasa.gov
Monique Sullivan	DFRC	monique.m.sullivan@nasa.gov
Paivi Tripp	GRC	paivi.h.tripp@nasa.gov
Val Burr	GSFC	valorie.a.burr@nasa.gov
Karon Cox	JSC	karon.f.cox@nasa.gov
Tim Pugh	KSC	timothy.w.pugh@nasa.gov
Kim Stone	LaRC	kimberly.g.stone@nasa.gov
(Ginny Wycoff, alt.)	LaRC	virginia.c.wycoff@nasa.gov
Elaine Hamner	MSFC	elaine.w.hamner@nasa.gov
Bob Greco	NMO at JPL	robert.a.greco@nasa.gov
Becky Dubuisson	SSC	rebecca.s.dubuisson@nasa.gov



Finding the Right Person in the IG's Office

As many of you are already aware, NASA's Office of Inspector General was recently reorganized to combine the audits and inspection functions under a new Office of Audits (OA). The Procurement Directorate within the new OIG OA will conduct a variety of oversight activities including audits, inspections/evaluations, and reviews. Joe Kroener was named director of this office and is stationed at Headquarters. Joe began his NASA career in 1990 in the Goddard Procurement Office. He has worked for the OIG as a senior Procurement Analyst since June 1999. Lorne Dear (stationed at JPL) is the Associate Director. Joe Fasula (Kennedy) is a project manager in the new office. Their information is below.

Joe Kroener, Director	202-358-2558	joe.kroener@nasa.gov
Lorne Dear, Associate Director	818-354-5634	ldear@mail1.jpl.nasa.gov
Joe Fasula, Project Manager	321-867-4531	joseph.fasula-1@ksc.nasa.gov

NASA Contracting Intern Program (NCIP)

By Yolande Harden, Headquarters Contract Management Division

The NCIP is in its fifth year and has evolved into a strong and thriving program, which provides experienced and trained contract specialists to the center procurement organizations upon completion. NCIP was designed to fill the void created by the dwindling procurement workforce at the centers as a result of attrition.

The program is geared towards recent college graduates with degrees in business-related fields. The students serve a 30-month rotation as contracting interns. This program is different from other NASA co-op/intern programs in that it is Agencywide. Participants are designated as Headquarters' employees assigned to duty stations at the various centers. Interns rotate between NASA centers to provide maximum exposure to the Agency's mission.

The program's success rate has increased significantly in the last year. As of this June, five participants have either completed the program or been hired by centers prior to program completion. Several others will complete the program within the next year. The current interns are an integral part of their respective center procurement organizations. Several have received limited Contracting Officer warrants for simplified acquisition thresholds. The interns have worked in a variety of areas including: major source evaluation board activities, acquisition planning for an award term procurement, major construction contract negotiations, IFM SAP implementation and training, and administration of award fee contracts, to name a few. Additionally, all of the current interns have received their Career Acquisition Training Program Level I certification and a few have received their Level II certification.



We will have an influx of interns this June as 24 new faces join our ranks. This new class will bring the total number of interns to 38. We will have interns represented at all of the centers. One intern has accepted a permanent position in the NASA Management Office at JPL effective in June. Three of the interns worked during the past year at White Sands Test Facility. The roster of current and in-coming interns is listed on the next page.

We anticipate continued success with the program and solicit the assistance of center procurement personnel to assist the interns in their development as contract specialists. They definitely have a role in the future of the NASA procurement organization.

Procurement Countdown Points of Contact

Have a great idea for a story at your center? Sent an article but it never showed up in print? Who do you talk to when these issues arise?

Talk to your *Procurement Countdown* Point of Contact. Each center has one. They will be delighted to take your articles and answer your questions. Their information is listed below.

ARC	Carolyn La Follette	(650) 604-5821	carolyn.s.lafollette@nasa.gov
DFRC	Brian Bowman	(661) 276-3329	brian.g.bowman@nasa.gov
GRC	Virginia Bittinger	(216) 433-2755	virginia.a.bittinger@nasa.gov
GSFC	Doris Wood	(301) 286-2238	doris.s.wood@nasa.gov
HQ	Contact your division director		
JSC	Jeff Cullen	(321) 483-5554	jcullen@ems.jsc.nasa.gov
KSC	Mike McCarty	(321) 867-9340	michael.s.mccarty@nasa.gov
LaRC	Tom Weih	(757) 864-3878	c.t.weih@larc.nasa.gov
MSFC	Jerry Williams	(256) 544-0295	t.jerry.williams@nasa.gov
NMO	Carl Weber	(818) 354-5359	carl.c.weber@nasa.gov
SSC	David Keith	(228) 688-3562	david.r.keith@nasa.gov

Of course, if you need additional help or guidance you can always contact the editor of the *Procurement Countdown*, Susie Marucci, 202-358-1896, susie.marucci@nasa.gov.

Interns

Name		Center	NCIP Start	School
Hooks	Maria	Ames	June 2003	Ohio Univ.
Mitchell	Charlotte	Ames	June 2003	New Mexico State
Pedraza	Dunamis	Ames	June 2003	Florida International
Romero*	Gabriel	Ames	June 2000	New Mexico State
Pane	Justin	Ames	June 2003	Florida International
Brown	Maikeyza	Dryden	June 2003	Hampton Univ.
Herrera	Rhett	Dryden	June 2001	Arizona State
Schell	Eric	Dryden	June 2001	Arizona State
Genovese	Michael	Glenn	June 2003	Ohio Univ.
Kaszyca	Michael	Glenn	June 2003	Univ. of Cincinnati
Vance	David	Glenn	June 2003	Ohio Univ.
Briscoe	Ayana	Goddard	June 2003	Hampton Univ.
Harris	Kimberly	Goddard	June 2000	Tennessee State
Robinson	David	Goddard	March 2000	Drexel Univ.
Tesler*	Kevin	Goddard	June 2000	Univ. of Cincinnati
Chapman	Ameka	Johnson	June 2003	Hampton Univ.
Conroy	Lori	Johnson	June 2003	Univ. of Cincinnati
Everette	Chivonne	Johnson	June 2003	Wilberforce Univ.
Garcia	Irene	Johnson	June 2003	New Mexico State
Garnett	Joy	Johnson	June 2001	Hampton Univ.
Jones	LaToy	Johnson	June 2000	Tennessee State
Lind	Richard	Johnson	June 2001	New Mexico State
Malik	Michal	Johnson	June 2003	Michigan State
Niese	Bradley	Johnson	June 2003	Ohio Univ.
Unbehaun	Emily	Johnson	June 2001	Univ. of Wisconsin
Wingerberg	Jonathon	Johnson	June 2003	Univ. of Cincinnati
South	Koby	Johnson	June 2001	New Mexico State
Stock	Christopher	Johnson	June 2003	Michigan State
Soto	Joshua	Kennedy	June 2001	New Mexico State
Barnett	Devin	Langley	June 2000	Tuskegee Univ.
Burk	Daniel	Langley	June 2000	New Mexico State
Carter	Erica	Langley	June 2003	Hampton Univ.
Eason	Aaron	Langley	June 2003	Hampton Univ.
Jacobs	LaShonda	Langley	June 2003	Hampton Univ.
Sage	Geoffrey	Langley	June 2003	Drexel Univ.
Guinn	Keshia	Marshall	June 2001	New Mexico State
Davis	Tasha	Marshall	June 2003	Alabama A&M
Triplett	Rhoney	Marshall	August 2002	Athens State Univ.
Gilliam	Stacy	Stennis	June 2003	Tuskegee Univ.
Mason	Ricarda	Stennis	June 2003	Tuskegee Univ.

*These interns will complete the program in June 2003 and begin their careers as permanent NASA employees.

A Closer Look:

Simone Rollings: Making a Difference

By Doris Wood, Goddard Space Flight Center

When it came to my attention, it was Goddard Space Flight Center's (GSFC) turn to spotlight a "Non-Manager" for this issue, I immediately thought of Simone Rollings. In my effort to gain Senior Procurement Management's buy-in, I decided to obtain support of my selection. As a result, management wholeheartedly supported my decision to interview Simone. Ron Brade, Associate Division Chief, Procurement Operations, concluded by saying, "Simone is an excellent candidate...she understands the power of



influence without authority, and we certainly need to highlight that. Not to mention that she was recently accepted into GSFC's Leadership Alchemy

Program...She is an excellent choice! I am glad you thought of her."

Simone's mission in life is to always make a difference and influence others to want to do the same. She considers herself a "People Artist," because she paints an environment that encourages and empowers others to realize their greatness. When asked "Who Most Influenced Your Career?" She responded, "It has not been one individual, but several individuals who have provided support and encouragement in my career at GSFC. I am truly blessed to have supportive family and gifted friends who embrace values similar to mine. Most importantly, God has been and continues to be influential in my life. As I continue to mature

spiritually, I increasingly understand my purpose in life and how God has ordered my steps, at times, unbeknownst to me."

In the Beginning

Before working at NASA GSFC, Simone graduated from the University of Virginia and worked as an accounts receivable manager for a small business for four and a half years. While she was in charge of the day-to-day operations of the accounting department with full responsibility of managing 232 commercial accounts, she also served as the acting store manager. She credits her work experience with the small business for her strong customer-service, communication, and interpersonal skills. Further, she experienced firsthand the challenges of small businesses obtaining contracting opportunities. As a result, she set a goal to work as an advocate for small businesses.

NASA GSFC Career

Simone Rollings chose to serve the Goddard Space Flight Center and its community by joining our workforce in September 1998 as a Graduate Co-op student while pursuing her Masters of Business Administration at the University of Baltimore. I personally had an opportunity to work with her during the initial months of her orientation at GSFC. It was immediately known to everyone around Simone that she possessed strength and character. She is confident, a quick learner, and not afraid to ask for help.

She always strives to do her best. Simone was quickly immersed into new contract awards and contract administration and never skipped a beat!!!! While a Graduate Co-op, she awarded 23 Small Business Innovation Research Phase I contracts, valued at up to \$70K and seven SBIR Phase II contracts, valued at up to \$600K.

I met Simone during her time in the Applied Engineering and Technology Directorate (AETD). After only a short time in the contract management field, Simone was appointed and accepted the challenge of serving for two consecutive years as the team lead for all Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)/ Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) contract awards for both GSFC and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). This team consisted of up to 12 procurement professionals from journeymen to senior-level. During those two years, Simone oversaw the timely negotiation and award of 153 SBIR/STTR contracts. Personally, she awarded 15 percent of the total SBIR/STTR contracts. As one of those professionals working for her, it became very clear to me that Simone is gifted with the skills to lead, motivate, and support others.

After working in the AETD procurement office, Simone was co-located with the Earth Science Data Information Systems (ESDIS) project office, providing contract management support for eight multi-million dollar contracts, including

research & development and information technology requirements with 8(a) small businesses, women-owned small businesses and non-profit institutions. At one time, Simone was managing the workload of two contract specialists.

Currently, Simone works as a procurement analyst in GSFC's Industry Assistance Office (also known as the Small Business Office). She moved there after working as a contract specialist for three years. With her background in government contracting and her role in NCMA, she is enhancing GSFC's outreach to small businesses. She publicizes all NCMA events to the small businesses that she and her colleagues counsel or meet at small business conferences. Because of her experience as a contract specialist, she is also able to advise small businesses on the federal procurement process.

Her proudest accomplishments include chairing and coordinating NASA GSFC's first offsite Annual Small and Small Disadvantaged Business Conference. After 28 years, GSFC's 29th Annual Small and Small Disadvantaged Business Conference was held offsite, because of heightened security following the attacks of September 11, 2001. Despite planning challenges including a limited timeframe for planning and a conservative budget, the conference attracted 450 participants from 15 states.

Another special accomplish-

ment was the recovery of a \$23,000 potential loss from delinquent accounts that were two-four years old. She did this within four months of becoming the accounts receivable manager. She also implemented an automated accounting system for the accounts receivable function, which increased productivity and efficiency in billing and customer service by 75 percent.

A third career highlight is Simone's efforts in identifying a qualified 8(a) small business for the GSFC Education Office's urgent follow-on requirement: management and operation of GSFC's Visitor Center. She coordinated with GSFC's Education Officer on all phases of the contracting cycle: acquisition planning, solicitation development, and negotiation. Although she no longer worked as a contract specialist, she was able to draw upon her work experience and training to successfully make a timely contract award.

Simone realized early in her career at NASA the significance of joining a professional organization. She joined the National Contract Management Association Free State chapter in 1999 with the intention of complementing her on-the-job training. She became more involved in the education department when a fellow member stepped down. She took the position as Programs Chair. Simone held that role for two program years and later became the Vice President of Education. She was instrumental in attracting notable contract management speakers

on "hot" contracting topics for the local contract management community. Currently, she is President of the NCMA Free State Chapter.

Simone was instrumental in the development of the Procurement Operations Division's New Employee Orientation Program. She wrote the initial draft of the new employee guide entitled, "Procurement At-A-Glance" for her PIP Level II project. This product was the catalyst for the development of the Training Initiative Committee. Its goal is to improve the quality of procurement services through training activities that are not already provided by institutionalized training programs.



Outside of Work

In keeping with her commitment to make a difference in life, Simone is actively involved in the community. She mentors and coaches young women, helping them realize their goals of obtaining job opportunities and attending college. Some of her other "non-work" jobs including being active in her local church, supporting the development of a non-profit organization that aims to serve the Prince George's community, and volunteering time for the SHARE program, a community-building food network that provides affordable food to area families.

In 1998, Simone ran the Marine Corps marathon in support of the Whitman Walker Clinic. She raised \$1,600 and

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Document Generation

By Ken Stepka, Headquarters Analysis Division

...as most of us know, is not an attempt to clone any or all of the NASA FAR Supplement. Document Generation Systems (DGS) are software systems designed to enhance our ability to create FAR-compliant contractual documents and manage the workflow – the processing of documents within the Agency as well as to our vendor community and back. These documents run the gamut from solicitations to awards and a variety of modifications to both. For as long as most of us can remember, an effective, easy-to-maintain, Agencywide DGS has been the holy grail of office automation. The rise of Internet-based tools, driven from desktop browsers, added to our wistful thinking — why couldn't we have the same?

The Office of Procurement and a dedicated team of center reps are working closely with the Integrated Financial Management (IFM) Program office to develop requirements for a DGS. This IFM project is formally identified as Contract Administration (CA). During discussion of this module, you may often hear it referred to as DGS, or CA, or DGS/CA – its all the

same project. Our goal is to solicit products and ultimately deploy a DGS fully integrated with the suite of IFM business systems. Last summer, this team met in Washington to develop the first iteration of procurement requirements. This workshop developed a full spectrum of requirements, including DGS and a high-level set of “eProcurement” requirements. This requirement set supported the IFM business case developed and was presented to senior management this past fall. During these discussions, agreement was reached to split DGS requirements from the eProcurement requirements and move out to complete the DGS portion first.

This past March, the Agency team reconvened in Washington for a follow-up workshop to take the DGS requirements to the next level of detail. Before pen was put to paper, the team listened to reps from DGS providers and participated in an informative “lessons-learned” discussion with a Department of Agriculture manager. He was responsible for deploying their DGS system within an environ-

ment very similar to NASA's – many offices with diverse requirements spread across the country. The team spent the next several days formulating functional requirements across the document generation and procurement process. These requirements were then prioritized into four categories – mandatory, value-added high or low, and non-applicable (requirements initially defined but rendered out of scope or undesirable following discussion). This version is currently under review by the workshop team to ensure it is consistent with their findings and presents a clear requirements summary. Later, a final version will be forwarded to the procurement officers for review and discussion within your organizations.

The IFM schedule for future functional modules continues to evolve even as Core Financial continues deployment across the centers. Funding for the CA module is now targeted for FY05. In the meantime, Code H is working closely with the IFM program office to plan for the start and support of this project. We will keep you informed of our progress in future *Count-down* articles.



Good Idea!

Karen Dempster, NASA Grants Officer, has a pending patent with her previous employer, Jefferson Lab. The Lab, known as the Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility, is managed and operated by Southeastern Universities Research Association (SURA) for the US Department of Energy. The invention is the Jefferson Laboratory Solicitation Bulletin Board. Karen was one of six to create an electronic bulletin board with multiple web pages that publish required items and up-to-date information relating to the items of potential sellers. The bulletin board provides the seller with the necessary information required to engage in business with the lab.

What's it all about:

A Blessing in Disguise

By Joy Garnett, Johnson Space Center, NCIP Intern

I knew that the experience would prove to be beneficial, however, it never occurred to me that doing an internship for a semester could be an experience of a lifetime. Reflecting back on my junior year in college, I remember preparing for final exams and pondering career development. Initially it was not an issue because a well-known private corporation had recruited me to work in supply-chain management for the summer.

Unfortunately, two weeks before the spring semester came to an end, I got laid off – before the start of what could have been potentially the best opportunity for a senior business major, or so I thought. As I was taking finals, the chairperson of my department called to let me know that she had recommended me for an interview with NASA. She informed me that there was a new program based out of Headquarters called the NASA Contracting Intern Program (NCIP). Top NASA procurement management had been to various colleges recruiting top business students for internships. Overall there were a total of twelve slots to be filled. Hampton University was the last stop on the map with only two slots remaining. With finals at their peak and the wrath of intense pressure steadily arising, I did not see how this would realistically fit into my set study schedule. After all, I had been studying for at least a week and all I needed was a monkey wrench thrown into my plan to change the flow of this set schedule that worked so well. There was not adequate time to

prepare, and the next thing I knew I had an interview and two finals all in less than 48 hours. Somehow in the process of all that chaos, I managed to compose myself and adjust my schedule accordingly. In between my last two finals, I interviewed with NASA and I was preparing to return home to enjoy my last summer vacation as a college student.

Now that finals were over, for the first time in my life I had



to make major decisions that would ultimately reflect the outcome of my future. Within two days of my interview, I was offered a job with NASA and the only pending issue was my acceptance. With only a few days to make my final decision, I found myself torn between two things I considered to be relatively important in my life at that time, (senior year and career development). In actuality, I was very hesitant about taking the position because it required a semester away from school. I was approaching my senior year in college and I just could not fathom the idea of leaving for an entire semester. Just a few weeks prior, I turned down another exceptional job opportunity for the very same reason. The opportunity was wonderful but the timing was not; so I thought. The more I debated and contemplated the situation I really could not come up with a legitimate reason not to take the offer. In actuality, I only had one more

semester of required classes and would have graduated a semester early from college. In addition, I had been assigned to Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland, which meant that I could live at home with my parents for the semester. After all, mentally I was exhausted from intensive course work and was suffering from an acute case of burn out. The more closely I assessed the situation, the more I realized that this monkey wrench that had been thrown into my plan was actually a blessing in disguise. Once reality set in, I quickly became excited about working for NASA. I knew the experiences that lay ahead would prove to be invaluable.

What's In A Name

When most people hear the acronym NCIP, they are bewildered by it. When I first came to NASA I was astonished to learn that of all the acronyms used in the Agency, this was one that no one seemed to recognize. Although the NASA Contracting Intern Program is still relatively new to Headquarters and the Agency as a whole, I have found that the exposure and camaraderie parallels no other. While the interns are located throughout the nine centers, we share an intimate bond, which allows us to learn from each other's experiences. Now looking back on my junior year in college, it is hard to imagine not taking advantage of a cooperative educational experience to explore the infinite opportunities with NASA. I am most proud that I ultimately made the best decision, and I know the best is yet to come.

A Farewell Message From Connie Poole

As many of you know, Connie retired recently from JSC after a long and distinguished career. Connie wrote the following open letter to everyone in procurement at NASA shortly before she left:

I'd like to take this opportunity to reflect and say thanks and so long to the many friends I've made while working at NASA. Although it really doesn't seem possible, I will have 40 years of service just prior to my retirement date of May 3, the last 15 of which were spent with NASA. A career is made up of many jobs, some of which seem a lot more fun looking back than they did at the time. I've thought long and hard about the lessons I've learned. In retrospect, the tasks along the way that were the most difficult turned out to be the most rewarding, both personally and professionally. I couldn't see it (or even dream it) at the time—but it's a fact. Every career has high and not-so-high spots. Neither lasts—but the friends you make along the way do. Here's what I know now that I wish I'd known earlier:

•*When the going is tough, take one day at a time and have faith you are learning a lesson that is going to serve you well, often in ways that you can't imagine.*

•*Be good to yourself and to each other—if you can't make it better—don't make it worse.*

•*Each of us was given a helping hand along the way.*

•*Life is a circle—repay the kindnesses you were shown by helping someone else.*

•*Try to enjoy the journey instead of longing to be at the destination—you're likely to spend longer in the journey.*



Having worked at Headquarters and at JSC, I've met many wonderful folks from across the Agency. My life has been richer and more rewarding because of you—thanks!

Simone Rollings

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completed the 26.2 mile run. (The money Simone raised went to provide medicine and mental health counseling for HIV and AIDS patients.) She actually persuaded a local restaurant owner to donate his banquet space to have a fundraising party. She then went out and recruited a band and a poet to offer free entertainment. This was an accomplishment within an accomplishment.

With all this said, Simone manages to spend the remainder of her time with her family and friends, hosting cookouts and holiday celebrations. Simone also enjoys reading, visiting art shows/museums and attending poetry readings. Currently, Simone is taking sewing lessons and planning to go on her first fishing trip this summer.

So, What's Next?

Specifically, Simone does not know. As long as opportunities are aligned with her life's mission and present meaningful challenges, the sky is the limit. Professionally, she plans to continue advocating the utilization of small businesses for federal contract opportunities and providing outreach to the small businesses. Personally, she will continue to volunteer in her community, empowering others in the area of education and entrepreneurship. Simone adds, "I am a confirmed believer that your success in life is largely based on what you give back to your community."

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