

# Victoria Hooper Returns as Deployee Support Coordinator

Victoria Hooper retired in January 2006 after serving 37 years in the Corps, but has now returned to serve as the new Deployee Support Coordinator. The fact that she came back, she said, "is proof she really loved her job!" When Hooper heard about the position, she saw it as a chance to work exclusively with the people of the District. "That's my heart," she explained. "The people of this District are my heart."

Hooper started as Deployee Support Coordinator February 4, 2008. As part of the Executive Office, Joanne Mann, the Executive Officer, is her direct supervisor while MAJ Straus is her senior leader. The relatively new position offers support to deployees and their families, and has Hooper serving on teams for the Division and Headquarters.

Both the Division and Headquarters teams uniformly address steps the Corps goes through to prepare deployees and their families. By teaming together, they implement the best ways to handle issues that arise and to stay in contact with the deployee and his or her family.

Currently, Hooper emails seven deployees one to two times a week and sends cards to deployees and their fami-

lies for special occasions like birthdays, anniversaries, and graduations. In her contacts with deployees' children, she makes a point to express the pride the Corps has in their parent.

In the emails to deployees, Hooper asks about their basic daily routines, what kind of work they are doing, and how they are enjoying it. She often acknowledges the big sacrifice for deployees AND families.

"It's important to let them know that we share their concerns and that we share the pride of knowing what wonderful work is being done," Hooper said. "When you're

working seven 12-14 hour days in one compound, you start to lose perspective. The simple act of telling deployees about ordinary things like the weather, the Corps picnic, or the presidential election helps the deployees make sense of things."

Hooper commended MAJ Straus for initiating the Family Support Group Teleconference. At this monthly teleconference, family members of deployees call in to hear Hooper present a program. She said that the program typically consists of relaying news about deployees, as well as, explaining safety concerns for the deployees. In addition, she offers

information about the areas in which they are serving. One of the many services she provides to family members involves suggesting ways to constructively pass the time until deployees return home.

Further, Hooper stresses the importance of sharing the rich histories of the countries in which Corps deployees serve. "Having a knowledge of the countries and the work being done there is power for these families. It can help get rid of fear and give them an understanding of the purpose and goals," Hooper explained.

Hooper further stated, "I am so impressed with the work being done. The deployees are helping to build back a country so that it has its basic needs met." She exclaimed, "I look forward to every day!" and she is brimming with pride for the District deployees.



Victoria Hooper

## **Employees now in Gulf Region Division (Iraq):**

*Qiana Davis,*

*Office of Counsel*

*Mark Gibson, EC-C-KYL*

*Robert Franklin (USAR),*

*RM-B*

## **Employees now in Afghanistan Engineer District:**

*Ray Bess, OP-N-M*

*Larry Cole, OP-OLD/P*

*Diann Farmer, RE*

*Joe Faustina, OP-N*

## HOW TO APPLY FOR A GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM (GWOT) POSITION

To volunteer for a position, contact the Nashville District Operations Division, Readiness/Emergency Management Branch.

To see what is available, GWOT positions are posted on several sites, such as ENGLink, (<https://englink.usace.army.mil>), CPOL (<http://cpol.army.mil>), USAJOBS ([www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov)), and the USACE homepage has a link to CPOL as well. (<http://www.hq.usace.army.mil>). Then look at GWOT Recruitment Page.)

Once you find a position for which you feel you can qualify, you

must build a resume in the RESUME builder to link with the position you want. Without the resume being linked with the position, there is no way to be considered for the position. There are a number of ways to find a position overseas. You can use a vacancy announcement, a placement from division or higher, or by word of mouth.

No matter how you find a position, paperwork MUST be processed through Readiness/Emergency Management Branch for processing. As with most Government

processes, there is a large amount of paperwork to be completed. The Readiness/Emergency Management Branch has a step-step instruction to expedite the deployment paperwork. Due to the ever changing deployment requirements, please stay flexible during your pre-deployment preparation.

-- You can reach the staff at the Readiness/Emergency Management Branch at (615) 736-7037, email [kathy.a.grimes@usace.army.mil](mailto:kathy.a.grimes@usace.army.mil), or [jerry.breznican@usace.army.mil](mailto:jerry.breznican@usace.army.mil).

# Nashville District's Deployment Diary

## Qiana Davis, Office of Counsel

Beginning with this edition, the DISTRICT DIGEST will feature a personal view of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) mission. Our Nashville employees who are presently deployed or have returned from deployment have accomplished so many great things. We want to bring to you the real picture of the work, the commitment, and the reward.

This month, we are featuring one of Nashville's newest deployees, Ms. Qiana Davis, an attorney with Office of Counsel. Qiana made her decision to apply for a GWOT position after one of her friends, another attorney from Corps of Engineers, Memphis, was selected for a position in Iraq. They emailed often and Qiana was impressed with the opportunities to help the Iraqi people and to be a part of something very special.

Qiana is a native of New York City. As an only child, Qiana and her mother, Lenore Boyce, are extremely close; in fact they both have spoken of being best friends as well as parent and child. Mrs. Boyce is so very proud of Qiana's accomplishments, and they miss each other dearly.



Lenore Boyce (left) and Qiana Davis

Qiana's education includes college graduation from University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida. She received her Juris Doctorate in 2005 from Indiana University.

Qiana is engaged to fiancé Jabari Capp. They met while working together at the University of Miami's library. Jay graduated from the University of Miami with his Masters in Biomedical Science. He always knew he wanted to help people, and he was accepted at Meharry Medical School in 2005.

Another important



Gyzmo



Qiana and fiancé Jabari Capp

part of Qiana's life is Gyzmo, her peek-a-poo (mixture of Pekinese and Poodle) dog. Qiana says Gyzmo is her pride and joy and is the best and greediest dog in all of Nashville, but she would not trade him for anything. Gyzmo spends most of his day sleeping and dreaming about Centennial Dog Park and his "Mother" coming home from Iraq.

Memphis District, Corps of Engineers was Qiana's beginning service with the federal government. In February 2006, Qiana reassigned to Nashville District Office of Counsel. In 2007, she deployed in support of Hurricane Katrina to assist the Director of Project Hope in New Orleans, LA.

The GWOT journey began for Qiana with finding a job, being selected, and being processed through Operations Division, Readiness/Emergency Management Branch. On March 2, 2008, Qiana traveled to Winchester, VA, to the Trans-Atlantic Center's (TAC) Unit Deployment Center (UDC) for training and receipt of uniforms, boots, required safety gear, etc. The intensive training is usually for three to four days.

All aboard, Qiana left the USA on March 6 for Frankfurt, Germany, and then on March 7 she traveled to Kuwait, Kuwait. A long and tiring trip ended after she was met by her sponsor and transported to her new assignment in Iraq.

"I arrived in Iraq on Saturday, today (Monday) is my first full day of work and I am very busy trying to get acclimated. The

conditions here are very nice, the USACE compound was surprisingly nice," said Qiana in her March 10, 2008 email. On March 19, Qiana said, "Things here are going great, I am learning so much, it is like a 'trial by fire.' I am loving being out here,



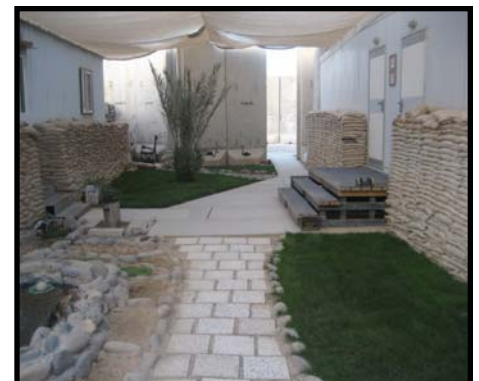
Qiana Davis and Diann Farmer at UDC

the Corps is really making a difference in Iraq." In the same email, Qiana shares her thoughts: "I can't think of the hardest thing I've had to do yet, but I do get emotional when you learn that some of our contractors have been killed while working on a Corps project. The contractors over here are very brave, they face danger everyday so that Iraq will be a better country in the future.



Training at UDC

The most rewarding thing to me is awarding contracts for schools, health clinics, police stations, pipe lines, and other things that help build this country. I am proud to come to work because I know that everyday I am making a difference. Even though the hours are long and challenging it is all worth it to me because I feel fulfilled."



USACE Compound in Iraq