



I Am Public Service

Great Work
In Our
Own Words





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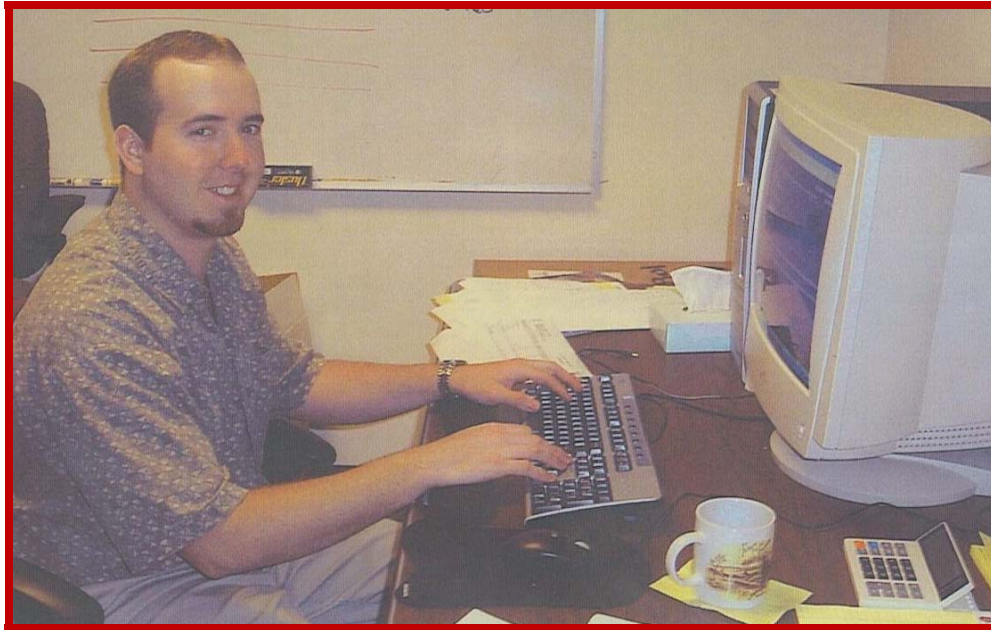
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For Matthew

(1982-2005)



who had just begun
his career as a public servant.

Support for IAmPublicService.org

Given the world's financial and regulatory crisis – the most severe in our lifetimes by far – it's abundantly clear that public services, infrastructure and protections are more essential than ever. **Public and private sector leaders alike understand that government is a critical catalyst to achieving maximum wealth creation and social equity, and that the best government is flexible, agile and well-managed.** Unfortunately, to afford the government we need in today's environment, we need a government with dramatically more productive, equitable, and transparent services. **IAmPublicService.org not only highlights the importance of public service, it provides a vital venue for public servants to share their stories about transforming the public service from within**—stories that illustrate how the knowledge, ingenuity and skills of a diverse and talented public service can be harnessed to fundamentally reshape how governments provide homeland security, health care, education and countless other public services.

- Anthony D. Williams, Co-Author of *Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything*

President Obama has said: **"It's only when you hitch your wagon to something larger than yourself that you realize your true potential and discover the role you'll play in writing the next great chapter in America's story."** As you'll read in the following pages, the personal stories of public servants from across the country demonstrate this statement. **The people in these pages have hitched their wagons to something larger than themselves and are making a difference every day.** Read their stories. Be inspired to follow in their footsteps.

- John Kamensky, Senior Fellow and Associate Partner, IBM Center for the Business of Government

Acknowledgements

IAmPublicService.org began as a simple idea: let's tell the stories of people who have dedicated their lives to serving the common good as public servants. Our intention was always to use volunteers and the viral Web to spread the word. Within days of launching the site and releasing a social media press release, the buzz began. While an expression of appreciation always presents the possibility of missing someone important, we'll take that risk and list a few of the folks that contributed to the production and promotion of IAmPublicService.org:

- **Steve Mandzik** – for being there at launch, setting up the website and framing many stories
- **Don Long** and **Rich Mariner** – for providing creative counsel on graphic design issues
- **Christopher Dorobek** and **Amy Morris** (Federal News Radio 1500 AM) – for hosting us on “The Daily Debrief” at the start of the new year
- **Ed O’Keefe** (Washington Post’s Federal Eye) – for being the first to publicize it beyond GovLoop
- **Tony Krzmarzick** – for spending several hours of formatting and editing
- Friends at the **Partnership for Public Service**, **Government Executive** and the **American Society for Public Administration (ASPA)**
- Friends on Twitter like **@adrielhampton**, **@dslunceford**, **@Microsoft_Gov**, and **@ariherzog**
- **Alan Balutis** (Distinguished Fellow, Cisco) and **Kitty Wooley** (Human Capital Strategist, U.S. Department of Education) – for expanding the reach in the first few days after launch

Thank you to all of you and anyone else that we did not mention, but helped us move from concept to completion!

- **Andrew Krzmarzick** and **Steve Ressler**

Introduction

A recent survey conducted by Gallup and the Partnership for Public Service revealed that fewer than 40% of Americans believe that Federal government employees were performing their jobs satisfactorily. With the many challenges that we face as a nation at this moment in history – from geopolitical to economic instability – it’s imperative that we restore the public’s trust in government and its ability to be part of the solution. **That’s why we created IAmPublicService.org: to encourage public sector employees – Federal, state and local – to share their stories and to inspire and engage the next generation of prospective public servants.**

In his inaugural address, President Obama said, **“The question we ask today is not whether our government is too big or too small, but whether it works – whether it helps families find jobs at a decent wage, care they can afford, a retirement that is dignified.”** The stories highlighted in the following pages are written by people who are committed to ensuring that “government works” on behalf its citizens, who daily approach their work with passion and a sense of purpose. President Obama also offered a call to action: **“Starting today, we must pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and begin again the work of remaking America. For everywhere we look, there is work to be done.”** Indeed, each citizen has a responsibility to engage in this endeavor to remake America. Let us then celebrate the much-needed work of our neighbors who have dedicated themselves to maximize our tax dollars through the performance of their mission with excellence and honor. And once we’ve given them our gratitude, let’s continue to contribute in our own communities, seeking to be, in our own unique way, public service.

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Richard Barr

In the 1980's I worked as a benefits counselor for the Veteran's Administration at the regional office in New York City. The state of New York had a property tax benefit for veterans, but required proof of service

from the VA. That meant that our office had to assign employees full time to take requests and write letters even though most of the applicants could have provided their discharge papers directly to the local tax offices.

In addition, too many cases were affected by a fire in the national Veteran's records center which had destroyed many records and now delayed a prompt reply. Finally, frustration won out, and I began a guerilla

campaign of asking applicants if they would like a privately prepared information sheet describing the problem with the state law and how it was affecting many people. At my own expense, I printed up the fact sheet

used my own envelopes and stamps to spread the word in the hope that it would become viral. I also spoke before an American Legion Post and appealed to them to lobby state legislators. I was told by one

before an American Legion Post and appealed to them to lobby state legislators. I was told by one of the veterans organizations that they had tried for 11 years to change that provision of the law. So, maybe my

nudge didn't do much, but the law was changed within the year. The VA was able to redeploy their state-tax-letter-writers, and vets got their tax breaks without waiting months sometimes to get the VA certification.

I never sought or received any credit for what I did. It was a small thing after all, but I know of many federal employees over the 30 years I worked for the government who went beyond their assigned duties to

make things better. I can only tell my own stories, but I do it for them.



Martin Bennett

From 1968 to 1973 I was an inspector for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). During that period I was responsible for a quarter of the first 12 and 141 toys that FDA banned. In 1971 I inspected a

manufacturer and found that the paint on his toy brooms contained about 4% lead. Shortly thereafter, I conducted about half of the field surveys which demonstrated the need for the original ban of lead containing

paint. We used x-ray fluorescence detectors which proved to be very effective in identifying suspect products. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) was established in 1973 to protect the public from

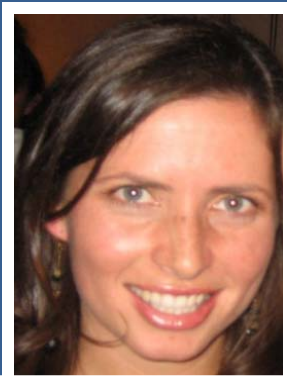
unreasonable risks of injury and to develop uniform safety standards. CPSC originally had about thirty-five investigators, import inspectors and chemists stationed in the New York Metropolitan area. I was the office's most

experienced investigator. We covered all manufacturers, importers, wholesalers and retailers of regulated products. In addition to my assigned duties in FDA and CPSC I was personally responsible for identifying a number of previously unrecognized hazards and the need for new regulations and standards.

In 1977, I suggested that CPSC repeat the survey that FDA had conducted by utilizing x-ray fluorescence detectors to identify lead painted toys. The suggestion was rejected. Three years later I submitted a memo listing 19 children's products which had been coated with lead paint. I urged the use of these detectors, but other staff members again turned my suggestion down. In recent years, CPSC identified many Chinese made toys that had been painted with lead. Thus, in August 2007 I gave a copy of the 1980 memo to the staff of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. During a meeting of that Committee (in November

2007) CPSC's Chairman agreed to purchase and utilize x-ray fluorescence detectors. Unfortunately, the public was exposed to lead painted toys during the thirty years between rejection of my 1977 suggestion

and CPSC's purchase. I retired from the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) in 2002 after serving the federal government for 42 years - 34 in product safety and eight in plant quarantine.



Mary Bussjaeger

When I used to think of public service, I associated it with volunteering, or as a career in a non-profit, but after working in the government for over three years, I see the many benefits of serving the public as a federal employee.

My career in the government started with a student intern appointment at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM). At the time, I was in graduate school and I took the job to get more experience and pay the

bills. After graduating with a Masters of Public Administration, I was offered a permanent position. Three years later, I continue to work for OPM and have been given many opportunities for development in my career.

I serve as a Human Resources Specialist and do projects in a variety of areas including: recruitment, outreach, new employee orientation, human resources, special events, and performance management. In this

position, I have been able to travel, grow professionally, and interact with very talented people. Government employees serving on the front lines and behind the scenes have valuable roles, and need one another

in order to be successful and serve the public. Agency missions are accomplished when employees of all levels work together. Being strategic in human capital planning allows this to happen. This is one reason

I continue to do what I do! From my short time in government, I have come up with many ideas to improve government. For example, ask WHY? Sometimes work is done one way because it has been

done that way for so long. Asking why and suggesting alternative approaches can improve processes. I also believe that using more technology could greatly increase government efficiency. By developing

online systems and using current technology, the labor time of employees can be maximized and paper will be saved. In the long run, these simple ideas will save the government money by doing more with less.



Vladimir Diaz

I strongly believe in the power of vision, action, and service as the drivers for personal and societal change. I migrated with my family from the

Dominican Republic to New York City in search of better opportunities. At the age of fourteen, my interest in public service was sparked when I

learned that USDA food stamps helped to feed my family in economic hardships. I am the first one in my family to graduate from an institution of

higher education. I earned a Master's degree in marketing from the Johns Hopkins University and a Bachelor's degree in business from the State

University of New York. As a Liaison Officer for the USDA, I am responsible for cultivating knowledge and developing leaders in South Florida and Puerto Rico. I work with university presidents, administrators, and

faculty to provide more than 300,000 Hispanic students with professional development opportunities in the federal government. My most memorable moment in public service took place in Honduras when I served

as a volunteer for USAID to help more than 400 organic coffee growers to export coffee into the United States and the European Union. Making a difference in one person's life is what drives me to serve my

my country, my world. My idea for a better government is simple yet profound: to serve those who really need help and to welcome people of diverse backgrounds and ideas. In addition, I strongly believe that if

public service wishes to survive, it must be open to change and new ideas.



Arlena Fitch-Gordon

I have been employed with the Defense Industrial Security Clearance Office (DISCO) for 43 years. During this time, I have held a variety of jobs

that were involved with the national security of our nation. DISCO is the sole National Industrial Security Program charged with the responsibility of

determining the eligibility of industrial personnel for access to classified information or material, domestic or foreign. The objective of the security

determination process is to assure that the applicant can be trusted with access to classified defense information on a continuous basis.

It is no secret that our nation still has enemies. For this reason, the mission of DISCO remains vital. Vigilance in safeguarding against errors in clearance issuance makes DISCO and its employees vital to our security as

a free people. One only has to listen to the news or read the newspaper to realize that we must constantly be on guard during the Global War on Terrorism. I am often asked why I am still working or why haven't I

retired. My response is simply that I love my job and feel that on a daily basis, I am contributing to the Global War on Terrorism as I review applications for security clearances. I am ever mindful that my job is

important because spies still exist today, and the clearance that you granted in error could have been that of a future spy of our nation. As a result, adjudicators must be ever vigilant and dedicated on a daily basis.



Patt Franc

In 1979, I was simply looking for a job. I accepted a position with the US Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) in Lakewood, Colorado. I had no ties to the mining community and knew

nothing about mining, but the work I was hired to do was of the garden-variety administrative type, and needed a job. I quickly found that my government colleagues were an exceptionally committed group,

often sacrificing personal goals for the greater good and embracing a belief that what they do truly improves conditions for American workers. It didn't take long for me to see that fit in and could make a difference here.

I joined the professional organization Federally Employed Women which really expanded my vision of public service. FEW afforded unlimited opportunities to make a difference, to expand my personal and

professional network, and to gain knowledge, skills and abilities in areas that helped me progress in my career. The government took chances on me, supported me and gave me so many opportunities to excel.

I found that the most rewarding aspects of government work are the unlimited opportunities to be a creative change agent, something people who really don't understand government workers might dispute.

Understanding the systems, identifying the needs and taking risks to improve the status quo ensure that my work is rarely boring. Through hard work, a can-do attitude, dedication, supportive leadership and an

incredible group of mentors, I turned a simple job into a wonderful and richly satisfying 30-year career. I'd recommend public service to anyone who puts others first, believes that there is no "I" in team, and wants

to feel the sense of accomplishment and satisfaction that comes with hard work.



Julie Frasco

I believe in the power of kindness and public service allows me to practice my belief every day. I have been a government employee specializing in Public Health for nearly 10 years interspersed with years of work with non-

profits. I have been a community affairs specialist, a CDC certified Risk Communicator to the administrator of a large agency. Each role has allowed me to interact personally with people. Currently, I serve as the

Community Relations Administrator for the second largest County Public Health Department. In this capacity, I work with the Director and Public Information Officer (PIO) in identifying relationships that need to be

fostered or coalitions that could be coordinated that may benefit delivery of public health services or services of fellow agencies to clients or stakeholders with whom the Department works closely. In addition,

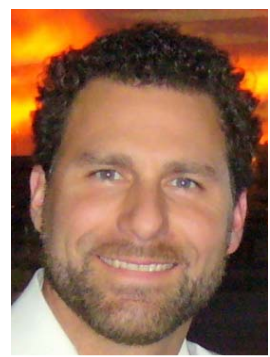
I am the back up to the PIO and address disease outbreaks or emergencies that affect our community such as the recent Cryptosporidium outbreak that impacted our public pools and health of local swimmers, West Nile Season and the flu vaccine shortages in 2005 and 2006. I also serve as the only Risk Communication

Specialist in our state. I am called to create messages that target specific issues that may affect us, such as radiological\IED exposure, pandemic flu and the like. The CDC recently endorsed our communication plan as a best practice as it focused on creating messages that engaged the public and sought to gain them

as partners in an agency or multi jurisdictional response to a community event. My most memorable project was creating and producing a live radio talk show on a large Spanish language station that brought public servants on air to answer calls and address topical issues affecting our community. All of these rich, varied

and diverse experiences affirm my belief that positive change does happen, everyday. Public service is one of the best experiences in which to participate in this fundamental human exchange. We can improve government by putting health and education at the top of every fiscal plan. These two elements of society

are fundamental to a community's long term sustainability and success. It seems simple but a healthy and educated population will fulfill their obligation of being engaged in their government and a government that made these items a priority would see the health and welfare of its society endure.



Scott Fraser

At the end of the work day you've got to ask yourself, "What difference did I make today?" The answer to that has many different meanings to people. Prior to becoming a government employee I had a 13-year career

as a business management consultant at some of the top firms in the country. Few can deny the skill-building nature of consulting and how it ultimately enhances your career. And truth be told, many consultants truly

help government agencies achieve their mission. However, I was unsatisfied with my answer to that question, so I decided to make more of a difference, I started working for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

in 2005. Currently, I serve as the Communications Coordinator and Press Officer for EPA's Office of Environmental Information and I work closely with the Agency's Chief Information Officer. I help write the stories that

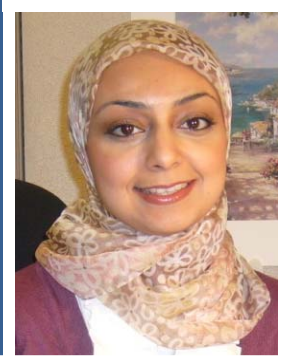
demonstrate how my Office is helping to promote the Agency's mission of protecting human health and the environment. I believe there is a great need to promote recruiting and retention of younger employees in the Public Sector. And new technologies can help. For the past several years, I have coordinated video

teleconferences (VTCs) between students at my alma mater, the University of Notre Dame, and alumni at the Agency. The effort was geared to show students how many different careers are available with EPA and how Federal employment should be a part of their job search. I have led and promoted an internal

EPA employee group known as the Emerging Leaders Network (ELN). This grassroots network is dedicated to building the potential and reinforcing the passion of EPA's emerging leaders to support the Agency's mission. By engaging younger employees, the Agency is better positioned to tackle the environmental

challenges of tomorrow. As a volunteer of the Partnership for Public Services Annenberg Speakers Bureau, I have attended several speaking engagements where I tell my story and inspire college students to apply to jobs in the Public Sector. I will continue to work with the Partnership and encourage the use of VTC and

other technologies that minimize the carbon footprint associated with college outreach. In addition, I will continue to work with EPA's Office of Public Affairs to use Web technologies to tell the stories of EPA employees. At the end of the day, I feel pretty good about what I do to make a difference.



Noha Gaber

I have a confession to make: joining the federal government wasn't high on my list of career options. It's not that I didn't want to become a government employee; honestly, the thought just never crossed my mind.

Four years ago, I would have never thought that I, a UK-educated environmental engineer who spent most of her early career working internationally, would work for the US Environmental Protection Agency

and also become an ardent advocate for public service. In my career visions statement that I drafted as part of the application for employment at EPA, I shared the following thoughts: "My choice of undergraduate

studies was fueled by my desire to address one of the greatest challenges facing humanity. For me, environmental engineering and management work is not a mere job or profession, but a true calling. I am driven by a

passion and a determination to make a significant positive impact in the challenge of achieving sustainable development." It didn't take long for me when I joined EPA to realize that I had serendipitously found the organization that was most in line with my career vision! At EPA, I am able to utilize and build on my

technical knowledge as well as support the development of policies and regulations that fulfill the Agency's mission to protect human health and the environment. I find myself surrounded by many individuals who come to work every day with the responsibility of ensuring that we live in a cleaner, healthier

environment. Every year, many highly qualified and enthusiastic professionals join EPA inspired by its mission. But as is the case with most large organizations, it can be a bit overwhelming. With the help of a great group of colleagues, I started the EPA Emerging Leaders Network (ELN). As an employee-driven, voluntary

organization, ELN's mission is to build the capacity, and reinforce the passion of, EPA's emerging leaders. To promote effective leadership and interdisciplinary teamwork, we organize seminars, professional skills workshops, round-table discussions, community service programs, and social events. ELN activities provide

a collegial environment and opportunities for employees to meet, discuss, develop ideas, broaden our understanding of the Agency as well as the environmental issues facing our nation. In just three years, the community has grown to exceed 500 employees from across EPA's Offices!



Michael Gale

Not every kid in America gets to wake up to the great outdoors. I was lucky. My father was a state forest ranger in West Virginia. My earliest memories are filled with images of catching crawdads in the creek,

learning about native trees, and experiencing the everyday wonder of our public lands. Now I work for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the Department of the Interior. Our mission is to enhance wildlife, plants,

and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. Dad couldn't be more proud. I can remember as a kid placing my feet into the large footsteps he left behind in the snow during winter hikes on the trail

by our house. That memory has transformed me into something much more profound today. My dad and I are public service. We believe in connecting the next generation to nature and conserving our wonderful

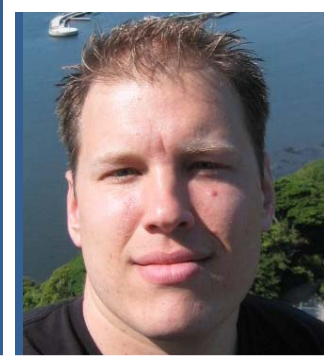
natural heritage. Our children are disconnected from nature, and they spend far less time outside than with things like video games. Don't get me wrong. I like video games. In fact, my agency developed an online game for kids, ages 6-8, that's full of lessons about nature and activities to do outside. Seems

counterintuitive, but I found myself, even as a biologist, learning from the game! Maybe the great irony of conservation today is technology. Technology changed our ecology and redefined 20th century environmentalism. For example, think about how the car fragmented the landscape or how industrial

technology changed our water and air. A new generation of public servants will use this same technology as a tool to solve past and emerging conservation challenges. New media will help the next Rachel Carson wake the nation up again. GIS and GPS gives land managers faster, better tools to make smarter decisions.

New energy technologies will keep our nation running while protecting the environment. For his birthday, we are getting dad a new computer. As he chats with me on his new cell phone about his computer needs - his excited about scanning embarrassing pictures of me growing up - we are participating in a much larger

dialogue across time that our nation, and our government, is having about the generational shift that technology is impelling. Forging ahead, we are a new public service.



Adriel Hampton

My job as a civil investigator for a metropolitan City Attorney's Office means seeing the best and worst of citizens and government employees. Fortunately, it often involves rooting out abuse and fraud. I've done

everything from helped inspect homes owned by hoarder-clutters overflowing with old computer parts, to raiding massage parlors in an operation to crack down on human trafficking, to investigating marijuana

dispensaries for code violations. In my three years in government, I've worked on three massive cases: a 40,000 gallon diesel spill, a whistleblower fraud complaint that led to several resignations, and a fatal tiger attack at

the San Francisco Zoo. My teammates and I are low profile and unsung, but together we help save millions of dollars for the taxpayer each year. I also serve on an interdisciplinary team of inspectors who enforce city safety

codes. I remember one big fire code case that I made when I spotted a resident in party photos posted on MySpace. The cardboard sign over her head hadn't been in the warehouse that morning when I inspected it, and it was hard to pick out architectural details from the photos. There must have been 200 people

jammed into the space. In one photo, two party-goers posed on a landing where I could recognize the paint-spattered banister. That morning, I'd poked behind a curtain in the kitchen and snapped pictures of three armless mannequins, bottles of industrial cleansers and two stacks of safety cones. Later, I recalled

that Burning Man, a counter-culture art event in the dusty Nevada desert, was still going on and found that these six people had rushed back with enough gear to fill up the space in time to turn a party pad into a passable art studio for the inspection. They probably shouldn't have written about that on the Web later

that afternoon. So why am I public service? Sometimes the simple answer is security and predictability. But the longer answer is that sometimes government service can be tremendously frustrating for someone of my generation. People have this impression that government workers are slackers, that we're there for the

benefits or because we knew the right people. I stay in public service because I believe in the mission. I believe in "government of the people, by the people, for the people." If people with a vision of a better tomorrow avoid or leave public service, or if we give up that dream, tomorrow is lost. This is why I serve.



Ron Hartzmann

I work with the USDA-Agricultural Research Service (ARS) at the Boise, ID location. While I believe my work with the USDA ARS as a Supervisory Hydrologic Technician is important, I have found something lacking in the

degree of fulfillment. I believe each of us has a need to make a direct and immediate, positive difference to others. In 2002, I became a certified ATV Safety Institute (ASI) instructor in order to ensure the safe operation of

All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) at our research watershed. The ASI is a nationwide not-for-profit organization that promotes the safe operation of ATVs. After teaching ATV Safety to government employees for two years,

I received permission from my supervisor to teach the ASI RiderCourse to the general public on my own time. Since that time I have instructed hundreds of individuals about safe riding practices. In December 2007,

I was accepted to attend training to become a Chief Instructor for the ASI. I now use most of my accrued annual leave to travel to other states and teach instructor candidates how to effectively reach students and teach ATV Safety. In applying to become a Chief Instructor one question that was put before me

was: "Why do you want to become a Chief instructor?" For me, the main word in my reason was passion. As an ASI ATV Safety Instructor for the past five years, I have become very aware of the tragedies involved with ATV accidents. Many of them could have been prevented. It is my goal to communicate the

importance of safe riding with passion to as many ATV riders as possible in order to reduce the number of ATV related accidents and fatalities. I hope that by teaching ATV Safety I have either saved the life of a person that attended my class or that from the information and the manner in which I present it one of my

students has saved someone else. Therefore, every instructor has to convey a passion for the student to think safety. I appreciate the possibility of helping future ATV Safety instructors more strongly sense their own passion in this regard. I continue to instruct ARS employees about ATV safety in Idaho and Oregon in

addition to teaching the public through the ASI RiderCourse. As often as possible, I travel to other states to teach and qualify new ATV Safety instructors. That so many factors came together to provide for my need to make a difference makes me feel incredibly blessed.



Colleen King

I became a civilian employee of the Department of Army on February 2d 1978 while my husband was serving in the United States Army. When he was transferred from Alaska to Maryland in 1980, I was fortunate enough to transfer as well. When he "got out of the Army" in 1981 after six years of service - I stayed in .Wanting to move closer to family, I was able to transfer to Pennsylvania. Our last move in 1998 was precipitated by BRAC.

I was going to lose my job at Letterkenny Army Depot after 17 years. Again, I was fortunate to transfer back to Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland. I have been a member of the human resources community for

over 30 years. We advise supervisors and employees on issues involving civilian personnel and Federal service. We answer employee's questions and provide guidance to managers on positions and on recruiting and

paying their civilian employees. I have known many loyal, hard-working employees in the Federal government, but I am most proud of the relatively small organization for which I now work. We are responsible for safely storing our nation's stockpile of aged chemical weapons and ridding our nation of

dangerous munitions - a responsibility which became urgent after 9/11. Employees in our organization are dedicated to making the world safer by eliminating deadly nerve agent and the mustard gas that has been stored for forty plus years in containers that had been literally rotting or rusting away in earth-covered

bunkers. Our employees are working diligently to finish our mission even though it means we will put ourselves out of a job. One of our sites has already closed and its employees retired or placed in other jobs. Another site is in its closure phase and more are working toward completing their mission. We are proud of

the job that we are doing for our country even though we aren't directly supporting the soldier, which much of Department of Army does. While our work isn't heroic, we are quietly improving the future for communities surrounding the storage sites of early cold war chemical materiel. I recommend we contract

out less (we get better performance at a lower cost by hiring Federal civilians) and hire interns or trainees in nearly every field to prepare for the upcoming exodus of baby boomers.



Jamie Klenetsky

Though only 23, I'd been burned by the corporate world. I wanted to do something that I knew would help the public. I wanted to be treated with respect, not as a means to a bottom line. As a web designer, this is a particularly difficult task, since design is so tied to advertising and marketing. As a last-ditch effort I applied to be the assistant web designer in Morris County, NJ, and to my luck I got the job. And I couldn't be more pleased. What I do is an immediate help to all citizens of the County. I update our County's websites and come up with new and innovative content. I also ensure that our sites are accessible for low-vision and other handicapped individuals. We are trying to add more interactive and engaging content, such as Google maps. A good example is on our Senior, Disability, and Veteran Services website, where a map helps constituents find local Dial-a-Ride, American Legion, Nutrition, and VFW sites. We have added RSS feeds to our press release pages throughout our sites. For our County Prosecutor, we now post videos of recent cases and breaking news updates. None of these changes are new in the web world, but they aren't utilized on many government websites. Also, we make sure to use CSS and very little JavaScript (for those who have JavaScript-disabled), add alt tags to all images (so that screen readers can read a description of the images), and make menus with text (again, for ease of use with screen-readers). We use standards-compliant code. Our sites fare well with screen-readers, according to a blind employee. I'm proud that I'm able to do something I care about to serve a greater purpose. So far, my favorite accomplishment has been speaking at the National Association of Government Webmasters conference in St. Charles, Illinois, last year. I was invited by the web director of Seattle, WA, to speak about trends on the Web – and I was received well! I think the most important thing is to focus on the greater purpose of being in government. It's not politics or to get ahead or any of that, but to serve the peoples' best interests.



Andrew Krzmarzick

"You really want me to put my hand in that cow's side?" I asked. "Yeah, we need the sample to test the digested material," responded the research scientist, who also happened to be my boss. I was a Research

Apprentice – my first real job – for one of the US Department of Agriculture's research units at Iowa State University of Science and Technology in Ames, Iowa. Our project explored the implications for

genetically modified grasses. Our question: if we changed the genetic structure of the grass so that it is more easily digestible by livestock (in order to produce leaner meat), will it alter the plant's survivability in nature?

That seemed pretty cool to me and I was getting paid to pluck leaves off of grass and put my arm in a cow with a cork in its side. I continued this job during my first 2-3 semesters of college, but decided to take a different

career path. I have spent most of the past decade in the non-profit sector, winning over \$100 million in grants that sustain programs providing health care and supportive services for people living with HIV/AIDS, ensuring food and shelter for the homeless, and creating customized projects for children in impoverished

neighborhoods and struggling schools. Most of the grant money that I have won has come from government and, by extension, from our tax dollars. I am always impressed at the way these organizations strive to be good stewards of this public funding, making dollars stretch to serve as many people as possible.

Today, I work for the Graduate School, USDA – an organization whose mission is "to develop people and to make government more efficient and effective." Every day, we provide training that helps public servants to get better at their jobs. In my time at the Graduate School, I've managed a project at Robins Air Force

Base where we provide professional development and career counseling services for thousands of civilian employees. I've developed and delivered workshops that address some of the timeliest topics in the public sector: four generations in the workforce, social media/Web 2.0, and telework. Most importantly,

I've tried to contribute to the advancement of public service. Growing up, there was a plaque in our home that read: "What you are is God's gift to you. What you make of yourself is your gift to God." I hope my efforts are a pleasing gift – to God and to the people who daily serve the common good as public servants.



Jeffrey Levy

I've had the honor of running EPA's response Web sites after 9/11 and Katrina, and they were the most moving, personally satisfying events in my 15-year career.

Both involved long hours, weekend work, high pressure and visibility, and a whole lot of quick decision-making on little information. We were literally making it up as we went along.

On 9/11, I actually flew to Boston for a supposed 1-day meeting. I was supposed to fly home the same day.

I did get home the next day on the train, which was a harrowing experience that included a bomb scare and sitting on a bridge for an hour.

I'd been doing Web stuff for EPA's Office of Public Affairs for one month. Late that week, I found myself leading a meeting by phone that included our incoming CIO and people in three cities.

We needed to transfer data from the collectors to the analysts so we could post it on the Web, but no one's systems talked to each other.

Things have changed for the better, but putting our heads together on that was a great example of creative, determined government workers doing their best for the public and coming up with innovative solutions under intense pressure.

I forged friendships working to respond to 9/11 that last to today.

I hope we never face such a situation again, but I'd gladly step up to help respond anytime



Michelle Mills

I work at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) in the Department of Health and Human Services. We service one of the largest programs in the federal government, the Medicare/Medicaid programs.

Currently, I work in the Chicago Regional Office's Division of Medicaid and Children. This means that I provide technical assistance and oversight for policy and law to the six states in our region to operate their Medicaid

programs. I completed a master's degree in social policy, focusing on health policy and administration. I went to graduate school intending to study theory on social policy and poverty issues and decided that health

policy was my niche. When I integrated economics, it became clear that the government is the largest and most influential player in addressing poverty, health care, and the un/under-insured. After graduating, it was

clear that CMS was the most logical place for me. In the long run, I want to help see that all Americans have health care coverage. One day I might work on policy for this. In the meantime, I work for both the department and agency that will have a large part of seeing this happen. I genuinely believe that universal

health care is crucial for our country. People suffer every day when they cannot make ends meet over medical debt, or when they avoid health care due to high costs. This is simply unacceptable. Currently, I make a smaller impact and help states with their Medicaid programs in less sweeping ways. I genuinely

make our federal-state relationships about partnerships to improve state programs for individuals receiving government services. I am committed to making Medicaid better and easier for the recipients so they can get the health care they need. Medicaid is an entitlement program and there are certain rights guaranteed

under law; someone needs to make sure these rights are protected. That is one of the things that I do every day. I serve because I know that if someone else did my job that cared less than I did or did not have the

same values of good government, poor, marginalized, and disabled Americans would suffer. I want to help lift up these people and make life a little easier and make sure their rights are protected.



C. L. Page

I began my federal career as "just a job." I was going to save enough money to open and manage a hair salon in the suburbs. After a couple of temporary appointments at two different agencies, I accepted a permanent position at the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). I began as an information receptionist, then worked as a secretary to three principals, and became an executive secretary to a regional director. I was able to transfer to a junior administrative officer job, before going to work in our Washington, DC, office as a data researcher. I worked on a database that was used by offices nation-wide to track bank examination findings. Data mined from the software was shared with the FDIC's board of directors, other federal regulators, and in response to Freedom of Information Act requestors. I returned to San Francisco, as a consumer

affairs specialist. I am serving the public by explaining the federal consumer protection statutes that govern our banking experiences. These laws pertain to the minimum hold periods that a bank can enforce, how

personally identifying information collected during banking activities is disposed, how a check is turned into an electronic debit, and how a lender provides notice regarding the amount and cost of a loan. While I

have had buy-out and early retirement opportunities, I continue my federal career because I know that I make a difference. There are times where I provide an answer that a consumer or banker may not have

expected and I supply resources that prove beneficial to the recipients. My most memorable moments in public service are when I am conducting public outreach (hosting literature displays, discussing identity

theft issues, conducting interactive educational sessions). It's when someone tells me that I provided information that allowed them to understand a law or regulation or why a federal statute didn't apply.



Cara Peck

Food scraps to electricity? The waste from my dinner fueling my lights? In an era when we are looking at everything from algae to biofuels as renewable power sources, an answer lies in our leftovers: food waste can generate clean energy! One of the most demanding changes our country needs is the development of clean, renewable energy. Developing domestic fuel sources not only promotes homeland security but also gives us an opportunity to reduce greenhouse emissions. I work for the government because I know I am making a difference for current and future generations. For the past three years I have been working for the U.S. EPA to promote a sustainable means of converting the food waste (almost 25% of what is sent to landfills) into a renewable power source. As a Life Scientist, I manage an innovative grant to demonstrate this technology

and have given presentations across the nation on the low hanging fruit of food energy! Food waste is rich in energy and by processing the waste in anaerobic digesters, that energy is recovered rather than being

emitted as a potent greenhouse gas. The process is truly a model of sustainability. Food waste is collected, processed and sent through an anaerobic digester which converts it into biogas and ultimately electricity.

These digesters are already in place at many wastewater treatment plants and many have excess capacity. After the energy is recovered, the residual material can be turned into valuable compost. The

compost can then be applied to soil to enrich the very land that produced the food originally. My project shows that government service develops innovative solutions to old problems. So, while utilizing banana

peels and chicken bones might not seem like the most mainstream government job, I know that my work makes a difference as agencies across the nation contact me about using this technology.



Michael Pisani

I believe that General Charles Krulak, the 31st Commandant of the Marine Corps coined the term "Civilian Marine". I have been a member of the Marine Corps since 1961. When I left Active Duty in 1981, I was fortunate enough to be able to continue serving the Corps chose this path because I wanted to continue supporting those who wear the uniform every day and to whom I, and all freedom loving people owe an enormous debt of gratitude. I wanted to do what I could to make their job a little easier and a little better. It is difficult sometimes, to see exactly how the things I do impact the Marine Private in Iraq, the Gunnery Sergeant on the drill field at Parris Island, the Captain at the controls of his MV-22 aircraft or the General at Headquarters Marine Corps lobbying for more funding, but I know that we all have essentially the same mission; to see that the Corps

and the Marines that make it up, comprise the best prepared, best equipped, and most highly motivated force possible. I serve with pride those who serve. To be a part of the Corps has always had its own set of

rewards, not the least of which has been the simple idea that I have, in some small way, contributed to a greater good. I know people who make more money. I know people who are more important, or at least

think they are. I am content to know that I am a tiny part of what makes this country what it is. If freedom is not free, then I am trying to help those who pay the bill the best they can.

As President Reagan said: "Some people live an entire lifetime and wonder if they have ever made a difference in the world, but the Marines don't have that problem."

I am a Civilian Marine; it doesn't get much better than that.



Denise Przbylowicz

I am a civil servant. I work in an office. It's neither glamorous nor high profile, yet day after day, here I am. My decision to become a public servant was because of my family. Almost all of my family has worked in some sort of government, and several members are servicemen. My father is a Marine, and his father was in the Army. I originally tried to join the Marines through the Marine Band, but missed their audition period. So I took the civil service test, and got a call for a summer job working for the Defense Mapping Agency. Today, I work for the Government Printing Office. I buy printing for the Federal Government from private industry printers. When troops are deployed, I make sure the manuals, maps, and ID cards are in their hands. When young men and women join the military, I make sure they have the training aids on their desk. When a Federal Judge sits over his court, I make sure he has an informed defendant, a full jury, and a complete file folder. When a war veteran goes to the VA Hospital for treatment, I make sure every flow sheet for every test is available. No matter what the need, if a Federal Government agency – our customers – sends a request, rest assured the Government Printing Office will make sure their mission is successful! I personally strive to make my customers happy and to keep the United States' day to day operations moving in a smooth and efficient manner. No matter what the critics say, there are good people in government and we do care!

The Government Printing Office has employees across this country to serve our Federal customers, and we do it proudly! After all, we are taxpayers, too! I always said I'd never work behind a desk, but it has truly been a wonderful experience, and I found out: I'm pretty good at it! Later on, I felt the regret of not serving my country in the armed forces, but came to realize that I already DO and always have, just not as a military member. There are so many projects, some mundane like letterhead or business cards, some important like hospital forms or law enforcement aids, but it's not really the order itself that's so special. It's the relationships with customers and vendors, the people behind the paperwork, with the same heart and passion as me. I don't think there's another agency I would rather work at than the Government Printing Office. I am proud of the work we do and happy that we accomplish the missions of our customers.



Johari Rashad

My original career plan was to be an Army nurse (my dad was career Army and my mother was a federal employee in health care), but nursing school didn't work out. While I didn't join the uniformed service, I was happy to join the civilian corps: I started working for the Federal Government after I graduated from Howard University. Thus, I have continued my family's tradition of public service and I've made it my mission to represent the Federal Government well. I have been given numerous opportunities for training and development throughout my career. I was selected to participate in an intern program that enabled me become a Federal trainer in human resource management issues. Over the past 29 years, I've trained thousands of Federal employees – civilian, military, political appointees and foreign civil servants on how to improve their human resource management functions better. I've had the opportunity to travel across the country and across the ocean to conduct briefings, workshops and conference presentations. As a result of my educational background and experience, I've been a program manager, supervisor, internal consultant, and policy writer and I've been able to influence real changes in agencies. I've worked for by writing policies, developing training courses, evaluating programs, and providing recommendation to senior managers. I've also worked to help Federal employees develop and manage their careers VERY satisfying work!

I've trained thousands of employees to manage their Federal careers and have been a mentor to many. My most memorable experiences in public service occur when former students report back on their career advancement and when I m able to re-connect with students who remembered my sessions even after years had gone by. I'm pleased when I see how former students have been able to improve their agency's operations. I know that I've made a difference in how the Government works: I've seen it in the people. In the latter part of my Federal career, I want to continue to make Government better by passing my knowledge and experience to new workers, being a mentor to a new generation of Federal employees, and leaving behind a legacy of good work.



Steve Ressler

I serve in multiple ways. During the day, I work as an IT Specialist for the Department of Homeland Security.

Outside of work, I run GovLoop.com, a social network connecting over 6,000 federal, state, and local government employees....and growing!

I believe public service is important and essential to our nation. I want to work on projects that are meaningful, not just contributing to a company's

bottom line. Public service provides that opportunity to work on important issues and give a little back to this great country.

My most memorable moment in public service was watching thousands of government employees who never knew each other begin to share ideas and best practices on GovLoop.

It is empowering to see so many passionate and innovative public servants in one place, working so hard to improve government service.

We can improve public service by leveraging the millions of passionate, innovative individuals in public service ranks. We must ask for their advice in improving government service.

Use them to recruit brilliant new minds into service. Allow them to connect directly to meet citizens both online and offline. Places like GovLoop are well-suited to facilitate this interaction and collaboration.



Nancy Roddy

When my husband was sent on a remote tour to an Army base in Korea, I decided to go along even though I was not command sponsored. While at the base in Korea, I applied for my first government job. I wound up as a switchboard operator on a temporary assignment. I learned Army organization utilizing a telephone switchboard dating back to the Korean War. When that job ended, I served in the Education Center as a test proctor. This second job got me very excited about a career in the government serving the Army as an education counselor. Following my husband to Ft. Bragg, I got my Masters in Education, worked as a basic skills teacher for soldiers, and applied to be an Army education counselor. A few years later, my dream came true and I had my best job ever; up until then, anyway. We were at Ft. Riley, Kansas, and I was the First Infantry

Division Learning Center Manager and Education Counselor. I realized my passion in counseling soldiers, giving briefings on education benefits, and piloting the Army's first on-line learning system. This was in the mid-80s. Then, with orders to the Pentagon, we moved once again, this time with a toddler in tow.

To my chagrin, there were no education counseling positions available. I pounded the pavement with old fashioned networking. I met a hiring manager who was hoping to help military spouses. To my surprise, he hired me to help establish the program. That was my initiation into the world of Federal human resource

management. From there, my HR management positions with the Department of Defense (DoD) included such varied jobs as recruiter for the overseas schools, educator certification chief, and operations team chief. I served DoD for over 15 years in many different capacities. No matter what my job title, I knew that

my efforts supported the fighting forces and their dependents. After leaving DoD, I came to serve the National Science Foundation. With many varied positions as a senior specialist, I know that my efforts

continue to support the country but with a different mission. Whether in recruiting, training, or even internal controls management, the dedicated specialists at NSF help America lead the world in discovery.



Julie Saad

As a child, when people would ask me what I wanted to be when I grew up, I would respond: President of the United States. Young as I may have been, this aspiration signified the birth of a passion for public service and policy that over the years continued to build and remains with me at present. I moved to Washington, D.C. to pursue a Masters Degree in Public Administration and make a difference in my nation and the world. I found my niche in Federal service because it provided an opportunity to make a difference by inspiring, educating, and transforming current and future generations of Federal leaders so that others will be ready to serve when the exodus of baby-boomers begins (60% of the Federal workforce will be eligible to retire by 2016). As a Human Resources Policy Specialist at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management and member of the Annenberg

Speakers Bureau, I have traveled to universities across the country promoting public service, explaining the Federal application process, facilitating student workshops and attracting talented new colleagues to the government sector. As a member of the non-profit organization Young Government Leaders, I am part of a community of leaders who collaborate across government agencies to share experiences, leverage best practices, and build lifelong relationships - all with the ultimate goal of making government one of the top employment choices for future generations. At the end of the day, I dedicate myself to these endeavors because I believe in the Federal government's ability to do great things for its citizens. Unfortunately, stereotypes about its overly bureaucratic nature and institutionalized ideas have weakened the public's perception of government and its workforce. I support President-Elect Obama's call to make government cool again and believe it IS possible if we establish a Federal culture that embraces creativity and new ideas, rewards based on performance, emphasizes recruitment of generations X and Y, and utilizes Web 2.0 technologies that are attractive to these new generations of leaders. I hope that, in some small way, my work promoting Federal service is helping to achieve these goals.



Karen Simpson

After visiting Washington DC as a child, I knew that I wanted to work in the government in some form. I went to college hoping to serve in government as a lawyer and majored in political science. In my junior year, I came across masters programs in public administration. I decided to apply for these programs in my senior year hoping to get me one step closer to serving in government. I put my law school dreams aside and decided to attend the Robert F. Wagner School of Public Administration, New York University, and work towards getting an MPA. After graduating from NYU, I moved to Washington, DC, to take a job with the US Department of Education. My most memorable public service moment comes from working at the U.S. Department of Education. I volunteered to be a tutor through an ED program that sends tutors to DC public schools.

I tutored a young girl with a lot of potential; however, she could not concentrate on school due to her family situation. Her family was evicted from their home and was living in a shelter. I worked with the Department of Education volunteer coordinator to get her family in a safe environment. Eventually, the family moved into public housing and was provided government subsidies. There are still too many families in the same situation. Government subsidies help these families, but they are not able to support themselves. This is why I work in the education and job training area. My current position is with the U.S. Office of Personnel Management in the Training and Executive Development policy office. We produce policy, guidance, and tools to assist the Federal workforce meet their missions. Knowing that my contributions assist the Federal workforce meet their missions is exciting for me. The Federal Government cannot serve the public properly if they do not have the right knowledge, skills, and abilities. I hope to return to my true passion one day - providing programs to youth and adults in education and job training.



Philip Smith

I joined the USDA's Agricultural Research Service in March 1991 as a temporary, part-time replacement for an individual who had been called for reserve duty in Operation Desert Storm. I was a consultant in private industry and accepted the ARS position as a filler - almost a lark - between consulting projects. More than 17 years later, my lark has become a fulfilling career. Why did I stay? On a personal level, it was difficult to leave my good ARS friends when the reservist returned several months later. But good people work in every organization, whether public or private. I stayed for deeper, professional reasons. When I was consulting, I enjoyed the variety of complex, technical problems that clients hired me to analyze. I made recommendations to my clients, but, once they paid me, my job was over. I never knew if they accepted or derived benefit from

my recommendations. My position at ARS is similar to my consulting job, in that I offer technical consultation to our scientists on the fascinatingly broad variety of their agricultural research projects. But, unlike my

consulting career, I am part of the organization at ARS, and I am able to see whether the scientists accept and benefit from my recommendations. If they don't, I am able to work with them in a rewarding, give-and-

take environment to develop alternative solutions they can accept. Do I miss my prior consulting life? Not really. Though it had some plusses over government service, it cannot hold a candle to the satisfaction I

derive from helping ARS scientists keep the United States' food and fiber supply as competitive, productive, safe, and environmentally friendly as possible. Not bad for something I got into as a lark.



Ken Sosne

I work as a middle manager for the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research at the U.S. Department of Education.

We give out grants to improve the lives of people with disabilities. We also support returning disabled veterans with brain and spinal cord injuries.

My staff makes sure that the money is distributed correctly, accounted for and that it is actually getting positive results for the American taxpayers.

I serve because it is a way I can give back and make a small difference in peoples' lives. My most memorable moment was when I was working for

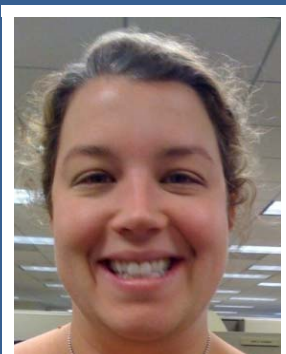
the Immigration and Naturalization Service and we became the Department of Homeland Security. I know that people worry about undocumented citizens possibly taking American resources but what I found was

that immigration is in my opinion an economic issue. As we were shutting down INS to merge into DHS I located a lapel button that said "United States Citizenship - Go for It." It also had Immigration and

Naturalization Service with an American Flag in the middle. It made me think of everyone that wants to come to the "promised land" and all the people that have taken their oath of citizenship on the lawn of

Monticello. How rich this county is and I as an INS employee helped the system work better for our next generation of citizens. In my seventeen years the one idea to improve government is make it more visible

to all in the positives. We only hear many negatives. Market federal service to all and look for ways to consolidate programs to bring value to all.



Beth Vlerick

My father grew up in Washington, DC so I have many relatives including my father who have worked for the Federal Government. I never really understood what kind of work they did nor did I investigate heavily into

what their agencies did - mostly it was a cluster of acronyms and words that I didn't recognize OPM, HHS, Customs, etc. However, after being a VISTA volunteer for a year after college I decided to go to graduate

school for my master's degree in public policy rather than law school. And once in my graduate program I learned about the Presidential Management Fellowship (PMF) program. I am so glad that my professors

encouraged me to apply for it because I got the fellowship! Through the PMF, I entered the Federal workforce in a unique way that afforded me many opportunities to learn from longtime Federal workers why

working for the government was so special. I think my most memorable moment in public service was when I learned of the process for making final regulations from federal laws. I never knew that the American

public was able to respond to the Notice for Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) and that such responses were not only taken seriously but taken into account when writing the final rule. To me, that's true democracy in

action! When I tell my friends about this opportunity for public involvement, they are amazed and as proud to be American as I am. I think one way to improve government is to make opportunities like commenting

on NPRMs more well known to the public. I work with several bright and hard-working individuals who can do our country a great deal of good. We need to bring more ambitious and intelligent workers into the

federal workforce and strive for higher quality and efficiency in the work that we perform. I hope this model will have an impact on our state and local government workforce as well.



Sue Webster

I've worked for the Crane Division, Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC Crane) in Crane, IN, a facility full of dedicated individuals working to directly support the Warfighter. As a federal employee, I'm proud to serve

on a Continuous Improvement team for the Navy working with others in my daily operations to gain improvements in cost and processes. This organization is focused on increasing support to the Warfighter and is

working in three areas: Special Missions, Strategic Missions, and Electronic Warfare/ Information Operations. As a volunteer, I am very active and currently serve as the National President of Federally Employed Women

FEW, the organization of choice for leadership, equity, and the advancement of women. I have been a member of FEW since 1992 and am a Lifetime Member. I have served at all levels of the organization,

including the holding Chapter, Regional, and currently National offices. FEW is full of volunteers who are dedicated to working to help one another through networking, mentoring, training, diversity and compliance efforts. One of my most memorable moments in service came in 2004 when I was recognized

by receiving the State of Indiana Women's Commission Torchbearer Award (Volunteerism) for the work I do with FEW. I have worked for NSWC Crane since 1981. I am proud to be a public servant as I know that the work being done at Crane is of vital importance to our men and women in the armed forces.

When I started my career, I had no idea of the significance but today, I understand and am proud to have the opportunity to serve. I live in Ellettsville, IN, and because of the opportunities that NSWC Crane gives me, I have the opportunity daily to contribute to assisting and supporting the men and women at Crane

who, in turn, are supporting the Warfighter. Working at Crane gives me the chance daily to serve in some small way. Working with the members of FEW gives me the opportunity to give back to others and to help them as they begin or continue their opportunities either directly working for the US government or working

for an industry partner supporting government activities. I meet with members and potential members of FEW throughout the U.S. and I am reminded of how blessed we are to have the opportunities that the federal government has given each of us.



**David Weller and
Kathleen Parker**

As the Research Leader, and Program Assistant for the USDA-Agricultural Research Service in Pullman, WA, we established and direct a science outreach and engagement program involving scientists, engineers, staff

students of USDA-ARS, Washington State University (WSU), Bellevue Community College and USDA-NRCS, and members of The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation. The overarching goal of our program,

Pumping-Up the Math and Science Pipeline: Grade School to College, is to enhance the flow of students from Native American Reservations and rural communities into science, technology, engineering, and mathematics

(STEM) professions. Our program currently focuses on students on the Colville Reservation and in rural regions surrounding Omak, WA. We recently extended the program to students of The Confederated Tribes of

the Chehalis. Our Pipeline Program has six components: 1) science and math education in reservation and rural schools by ARS scientists and University faculty/students; 2) organization of on-reservation summer science camps; 3) support of high school Summer Research Interns in ARS labs; 4) mentoring undergraduate

students of color in STEM majors; 5) connecting students to employment opportunities in STEM professions; and 6) development of a biofuels program on the Colville Reservation. The Pipeline Program initially enhances students' interest in science and math through monthly visits to Nespelem School and Paschal

Sherman Indian School on the Colville Reservation by scientists and university students, who present science modules. Next, student interest is cultivated during the Skwant Life Science Summer Camps held at the Paschal Sherman Indian School. High school students are offered paid Summer Research Internships in ARS

labs. The Pipeline Program also partners with the WSU College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) to mentor and promote the success of CAMP undergraduate students in STEM majors. Our program is underpinned by the commitment of world-class scientists and engineers to not only mentor, train and

young future scientists, and to teach in the communities of these students. Past experience has shown that introducing students early to the culture of science, math and engineering is a strong stimulus to pursue a career in a STEM profession. Our mission: extending the benefits of science and math to all Americans.



Lin Wells

When I was seventeen in 1967 I took an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. I've had the privilege of doing that continuously ever since, in the uniform of the Naval Service and as a

DoD civilian. Presently I teach and conduct research at the National Defense University in Washington, focusing on the transformation of national security institutions, cyberspace issues, and affordable support to

stressed populations (post-war, post-disaster and impoverished). I serve to give something back to the Nation that has given me and my family so much. To help buy time for the values that we hold precious to

win acceptance in the marketplace of human ideas. To protect America's great enduring strengths: Opportunity, inclusiveness, and the willingness to learn from our mistakes. My most memorable moment in public service was

at sea, in command, the day the Berlin Wall fell. It's rare that anyone gets such an opportunity--to realize a vision that he or she has lived for during their whole professional life. My idea to improve government/public

service: Encourage broad participation by government, business and civil society in STAR-TIDES. This is an international, knowledge-sharing, research project being coordinated from the National Defense University

to provide affordable, sustainable support to stressed populations (post-war, post disaster, impoverished). It is an example of a public-private partnership and a whole-of-government approach that could increase

the effectiveness of civilian coalitions in these stressed environments while saving all stakeholders money through cost-effective logistics solutions and coordination of supply chains. STAR-TIDES represents the kind of

"soft power" initiative that senior leaders have called for and offer opportunities for citizens and public servants alike to participate in an important project that can improve people's lives around the world.



Kent Wood

My name is Kent Wood and I am the farm manager for the USDA-ARS Cropping Research Service in Lubbock, TX. I have been involved in agriculture all my life. In 1991, my life changed. I had a small business

and had to sell because it was no longer profitable. In 1992, I went to work for the USDA-ARS as a part time technician. At that time, my perception of government employees was like that of a poll that stated 60% of

the people in the United States viewed public employees as not being quite up to task. I have strived to help reshape the mindset of Americans by utilizing my talents and knowledge in ways that display quality

service in my performance. When I became the farm manager in Lubbock, I was fortunate to work under very dedicated, intelligent, and hardworking scientists that continue to strive to improve every area of

agriculture and the surrounding environment. This enabled me to use the latest farming practices to produce quality work and assisted me in protecting our environment and water usage. I worked to produce more products on less acres of land using less water. I am continually trying the newest techniques

for agricultural improvements, then pass on the information to the public. In my current position, I have had the opportunity to work with representatives from the corporate, private, educational, and scientific fields. to be the very best I can in ALL areas of public service. This within itself is a key to changing public opinion!

Some agricultural outreach where I have represented the USDA is with the Progressive Farmer migrant safety camp. I shared my farm safety expertise with migrant children in hopes of making a difference in young lives that would not have had that opportunity otherwise. I like working with all ages, especially in agriculture.

I have volunteered my time with FFA showing pig projects to help them be more rounded in all aspects of agriculture along with other opportunities in life. I also attend field days where I am in the direct public eye communicating with area farmers/producers listening to their ideas and sharing our science to make their operations more successful. Who I am in every area of public service demands my own level of excellence. I, as a public servant, strive to work hard for the taxpayers to make a stronger and better nation to live in. I enjoy my job and thank the taxpayers for letting me work for them.



Matthew Worner

My name is Matthew Worner and I've been a federal civil servant for almost 14 years. In 2001, I decided that I had been with the Education Department for 5.5 years (first job out of college) and it was time for a

change. My sister, Michelle said, "Matthew, you can travel to other countries if you work at the State Department." So I contacted her former supervisor and he passed my resume on to the audit and inspection

managers in the State Department and Broadcasting Board of Governors Office of Inspector General. My role was to assist and lead the information systems security audit and conduct the information systems security

evaluations as part of a team of specialists. I served as an information security and information management inspector and participated in inspections of 10 overseas missions, four consulates, one American

Presence Post, one domestic bureau, and one domestic office. I independently inspected the Information Management (IM) offices in places like Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Khartoum, Seoul, Lisbon, The Hague (during the 50th anniversary of D-Day), Amsterdam, Prague, Paris, Beirut (when the former prime

minister was assassinated), Damascus, and Syria (when the UN Security council resolution was issued demanding Syrian troop withdrawal from Beirut). I felt like I was seeing history...in the catbird seat, so to speak. My last trip was to Baghdad. And I went out with a bang. After spending a night in either the Four

Seasons or the Sheraton, you take a special military plane in from Amman, Jordan into Baghdad International Airport. Followed by a long 5-6 hour stay at Camp Stryker and then take an armored bus into Embassy Baghdad with Blackhawk helicopter support. As a guy from Mayville, ND, where the average

temperature in the summer is 72 degrees, I had to adapt to the 115-130 degree weather in Baghdad. We stayed in a trailer about the size of a walk-in closet, using public restrooms and shower facilities much like a military camp. When we were ready to leave, and we could not get air support for our armored bus, so we

ended up in Baghdad for several more days. After handling Baghdad, I never had a stronger mental toughness or assurance about myself and a much greater respect for our soldiers. Also, being in Baghdad made me realize how much I love my country and family (as I told a soldier on his 2nd tour, God bless him).