

Endeavor

Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity

Spring/Summer 2007

MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR

Welcome to the first edition of the NASA Endeavor, an on-line publication of the Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity. ODEO is committed to promoting a fair and equitable workplace environment in support of the NASA mission, as embodied in the U.S. Vision for Space Exploration. Endeavor is part of those efforts.

We believe Endeavor will contribute significantly to sustaining a work environment that encourages all NASA employees to perform at the highest level of excellence, individually and as teams, and to feel free to express differing ideas and perspectives. We intend Endeavor to be a forum for pro-

actively promoting the principles and practices of inclusion, fairness, and equity, and for raising awareness on the rights and responsibilities established under EO law.

In the coming editions, Endeavor will report on EO and diversity news, trends and case developments relevant to NASA, spotlight Centers and individual NASA employees, and look at Agency policy and programs impacting the NASA workforce, such as procedures for the provision of reasonable accommodation, language assistance services for persons who are limited English proficient, and much more. In the team spirit of NASA, we will seek contributions from the NASA



Brenda R. Manuel

Center EO and Diversity Offices and Agency stakeholders such as Human Capital Management and the Office of Education, to provide information on matters such as professional development initiatives and opportunities. We are pleased to share the first edition of Endeavor. We hope that you will find it informative and useful as you perform your daily responsibilities at NASA.

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NASA NEWS

ADMINISTRATOR RE-ISSUES NEW POLICY STATEMENTS

The Administrator has re-issued Agency policy statements regarding EO, including a statement re-affirming policy on equal employment opportunity at NASA, and a statement establishing a NASA Non-harassment Policy. Both policies were originally issued in March 2006 and were recently re-affirmed by the

Administrator in January 2007. How do these Agency policies



Michael Griffin

affect the NASA workplace? One important way in which

they affect us as NASA employees is that they reinforce our commitment to creating the most effective and productive work environment possible, one built on teamwork and integrity. To this end, the policies make clear that:

- Employees have the freedom to compete on a fair and level playing field.

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Points of Interest


- Administrator re-issues new Policy Statements on Diversity, EO, and Non-Harassment.
- Conflict Management Initiative
- Center Spotlight (Glenn Research Center).

AGENCY INITIATIVE: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

ODEO LAUNCHES CONFLICT MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE

PILOT

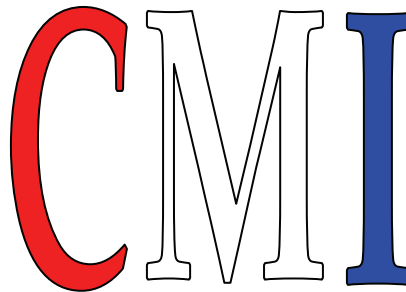
By Fred Dalton, EO Manager, and Andrea de Coteau, Agency ADR/EEO Coordinator

 ODEO is embarking on a new endeavor: the Conflict Management Initiative (CMI), to be launched with a pilot program at three NASA Centers.

ODEO has designed the CMI to provide NASA managers, supervisors, and employees with effective tools to more strategically address workplace conflicts and resolve them early on, reducing the need for employees to access formal processes, such as the EEO complaints process. From an institutional perspective, the CMI is designed to help NASA by minimizing the financial impact of EEO complaints processing. In addition, it will help to maximize workplace productivity and morale by enabling employees to focus on the mission of their organization - without the prolonged and costly distractions created by unresolved workplace conflict.

Through CMI, ODEO seeks to strengthen and enhance Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) programs

in EEO already in place across the Agency, while at the same time exploring innovative approaches to managing conflict. The CMI will give the Agency an opportunity to step back from its current Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) programs, to evaluate the overall effectiveness of ADR at



each Center. In addition, while the CMI is designed primarily to address efficiencies and compliance obligations in the EEO complaints processing and the EEO/ADR context, its potential benefits extend well beyond EEO to almost any situation where conflict and ultimately formal disputes, can arise.

The CMI will soon get underway, with a pilot program at Glenn Research Center (GRC), Johnson Space Center (JSC), and Marshall Space Flight Cen-

ter (MSFC). The CMI pilot will encompass Center-by-Center needs assessment of issues around workplace conflict and EEO Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) programs; training for managers, supervisors, and employees to develop communication and conflict resolution skills; and review of current Center and Agency EEO ADR Programs, to establish a consistent procedural and policy framework.

The basic conflict management training module will be deployed to one or two organizations at each of the three Centers. About 200 managers, supervisors, and employees at each of the three Centers will be trained during the pilot.

The basic conflict management training will be designed to examine conflict from the perspectives of managers and supervisors as well as those of employees. The training will facilitate improved managerial-employee lines of communication, emphasizing the need for confidence among employees to speak openly and honestly regarding workplace concerns.

To learn more about ODEO's Conflict Management Initiative, contact Fred Dalton, CMI Program Manager, on 202-358-0941, or at fdalton@nasa.gov.

NASA NEWS Cont'd...

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- Equal employment opportunity (EEO) covers all human capital and employment programs, management practices, and decisions
- NASA supports employee exercise of rights under EEO law. Reprisal against individuals who engage in protected activity will not be tolerated. NASA supports the rights of employees to exercise all available rights under the civil rights statutes.

- Workplace harassment will not be tolerated, allegations of harassment will be immediately investigated, and, where allegations are substantiated, appropriate action will be taken.

In addition to these policy statements, the Administrator issued a statement re-affirming the Agency commitment to diversity in March 2006, which is still in place. This policy statement makes clear the importance of diversity in moving forward with the U.S.

Vision for Space Exploration. The policy states in part that: "to design the most effective systems, NASA must have a diversity of views, ideas and perspectives. This requires taking into account all the possible sets of training and experience that come from people of different backgrounds and life experiences."

To review the policies visit ODEO's website at:

<http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/codee/>

CENTER SPOTLIGHT: GLENN RESEARCH CENTER

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

By Robyn Gordon, former Chief, Diversity Management Office, and Robert Romero, Chief, OEOP

Although sometimes the terms Equal Opportunity and Diversity Management are used interchangeably, they are actually distinct in concept, theory and practice.

Diversity of course refers to the many differences that make us individuals, including our geographic background, marital status, and profession, just to name a few. As we all know, our society has always been, and continues to grow more diverse every day. Nowhere is this diversity more evident than in the U.S. workforce. In 1987, a report entitled, *Workforce 2000*, created by the Hudson Institute for the Department of Labor, predicted the increasing diversity of the American workforce. The report described workforce demographic changes



Glenn Diversity Walk

that included increases in the age of the average worker as well as a steady increase in the number of women, minorities, and people with disabilities entering the workforce in the coming decades. In 1990, with the recognition that the workforce was becoming more and more diverse, the term “managing diversity” originated.

Diversity Management is not a synonym for Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) or Equal Opportunity (EO). EO

refers to specific rights protected under the law and regulations and policies designed to ensure compliance with the law. Diversity Management instead is a compliment to EO, one that can provide the tools for taking an organization far beyond simple compliance with the law.

Glenn Research Center (GRC) has institutionalized the distinction between diversity and EO by establishing both an Equal Opportunity Office and a Diversity Management Office.

The Glenn Equal Opportunity Office, managed by Robert Romero, is primarily responsible for ensuring compliance with EO laws and affirmative employment requirements. The Equal Opportunity Office manages many activities including maintaining and analyzing workforce statistics, organizing training on EO for managers, supervisors, and employees, and handling discrimination complaints at the informal stage.

The Glenn Diversity Management Office (DMO) is currently headed by Renee Batts. In keeping with diversity management's objective of a workforce environment in which compliance is only the starting point, the DMO is focused on building upon the foundation laid by the principles of EO. To this end, the DMO assists in the development of policies and the acquisition of skill sets that can enable GRC's diverse workforce to reach optimal levels of achievement, individually and organizationally. This includes proactive efforts to assist in keeping morale, motivation and productivity high.

For example, GRC has formed a Diversity Management Council which works with the DMO to develop diversity initiatives linked to GRC's strategic mission. One such initiative is the GRC Diversity Leadership Award, which the Center has recently re-instituted. This award

recognizes individuals or teams that have made significant contributions to the promotion and practice of diversity, particularly in regard to creating and maintaining an inclusive work environment. This year's recipient will be recognized at the Center's upcoming



Glenn Diversity Walk

Honor Awards Ceremony.

The Diversity Management Office and the Equal Opportunity Office are working hand-in-hand to bring to fruition the goal set forth by Glenn Center Director, Dr. Woodrow Whitlow, Jr., in his message to Center employees “My ultimate goal is to maintain our status as an organization that relies on a dynamic workforce with the requisite talent, multidisciplinary knowledge, and cutting-edge skills to accomplish the mission and achieve our goals.

I have accepted the challenge to ensure that we continue to have a work environment where creativity and differing perspectives are embraced. I also realize that leadership on this issue starts with me. Therefore, I am asking that each of you join me in committing fully to embracing diversity and inclusion at the Glenn Research Center”.

For more information:

GRC EO Programs

http://www.nasa.gov/centers/glenn/about/EEO_Equal_Opportunity_Programs.html

GRC Diversity Programs

<http://www.grc.nasa.gov/WWW/diversity/>

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS

NASA PROMOTES EO AMONG ITS GRANT RECIPIENTS

By David Chambers, EO Specialist

NASA currently awards approximately \$1.2 billion annually in federal financial assistance to hundreds of institutions across the country, including universities and colleges, non-profit organizations, and corporations. Part of NASA's mandate is to assess and improve educational opportunities in the programs it funds. Within NASA, ODEO has primary responsibility for ensuring equal opportunity at institutions receiving NASA financial assistance.

One of the tools ODEO is using in these efforts is Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs receiving Federal financial assistance. Many people are familiar with this law as a means of promoting gender equity in sports. But Title IX also applies to academics. In fact, in July 2004, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a report on Title IX activities among "math and science" agencies.

The GAO report examined the Title IX compliance efforts of NASA, the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy, and the Department of Education. The report found that the Agencies could more effectively use



Title IX to promote gender equity and inclusion in math and science education programs. Consistent with GAO's findings, Congress included a provision in the NASA Authorization Act of 2005 calling for the Agency to conduct at least two Title IX compliance reviews annually.

To make more effective use of Title IX, and to comply with the Authorization Act, ODEO has instituted a Title IX compliance program for assessing issues of gender equity in Engineering

and Physics programs funded by the Agency, including a review of promising practices at these institutions.

In conducting these reviews, NASA will focus on a number of areas, including:

- Admissions practices and outreach/recruitment efforts;
- Academic advising/career counseling and guidance,
- Research participation and classroom experiences of students;
- Self-assessment efforts; and
- Culture/climate indicators (e.g., "family friendly" policies, safety matters affecting academic environment, sexual harassment policies).

ODEO has conducted on-site visits at three Universities beginning in November 2006. ODEO is in the process of evaluating the schools' Title IX compliance and reporting on promising practices for promoting gender equity and diversity in their programs.

For more information visit:

http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/codee/title_VI-title_IX.html

NEW APPROACH FOR DISABLED VETERANS PROGRAM

By Elizabeth Walker, EO Specialist

NASA Disabled Veteran Program Managers are strategizing to implement an improved agency plan for the recruitment, hiring and promotion of disabled veterans. In partnership with ODEO, DVPMs are reviewing promising practices across the Agency for greater dissemination.

There are over three million living disabled American veterans, including over 26,000 who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan. Currently, NASA employs 342 Disabled Veterans, each of whom contributes to the accom-

plishment of NASA's mission. Hiring more disabled veteran engineers, scientists, and skilled information technologists will bring fresh perspectives on the

"The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional to how they perceive veterans of early wars were treated and appreciated by our nation."

President George Washington

Agency's efforts to develop a new generation of spacecraft, return humans to the Moon, and eventually Mars and

other destinations in our solar system. These individuals bring integrity and leadership skills, experience in teamwork, high-performance under extremely stressful conditions, as well as familiarity with and respect for procedural requirements, all of which are valued assets needed for NASA to successfully accomplish its mission.

ODEO is currently disseminating a new brochure, available in Braille, on the Agency's Disabled Veteran's program. In addition, ODEO is planning a more proactive program to increase training opportunities on applicable laws and policies regarding the recruitment, hiring, promotion and awarding of Agency contracts to Disabled Veteran-owned business.

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