

# Avionics, Air Force and experience in Orlando

Patrick Tremblay | DCMA Public Affairs

**T**ammy Mygrant was an Air Force mechanic on an airborne battle management radar program. She transitioned to civilian life, continuing to work with aircraft. Like many in central Florida, she eventually worked on the space shuttle program, and found herself looking for a new opportunity as the program came to an end.

That new opportunity came four years ago when she was selected to become a quality assurance specialist with DCMA. She is now using her decades of experience to ensure items being produced for military customers meet contract specifications.

Mygrant is part of the DCMA Orlando team that provides contract services for customers working with a small, Air Force veteran-owned business that makes precision tools for avionics, including tool kits designed to meet the needs of military aircraft maintenance crews.

“I used to use these tools,” said Mygrant. “So, I know what level of quality the customer expects.”

This experience and understanding of the product and customer set Mygrant and other mid-career level employees apart from many other new agency hires.

“This is very different than being a contractor for NASA,” said Mygrant, noting every transition has a learning curve. “It’s taken me a lot of time to learn the DCMA way of doing things.”

One of the main differences in Mygrant’s work is she now spends most of her day observing and validating supplier processes and controls, rather than doing hands-on inspections of parts and systems.

Gene Simms works with Mygrant as the DCMA Orlando pre-award survey manager and industrial specialist assigned to the aviation tools contractor. He retired from the Air Force in 1996, and came to DCMA in 2001 after several years in





commercial manufacturing.

“DCMA is one of the best jobs I’ve ever had,” said Simms, who’s proud to be supporting customers he feels an affinity toward. “Numerous contractors I work with make all types of aircraft parts and components, and I like to get involved in every bit of it.”


The aviation tools contractor has been in contract administrator Fushia Turner’s portfolio for the past nine months. Turner is also an Air Force veteran, but unlike Mygrant or Simms, she joined the agency as a Keystone intern. She’s now in the last year of the program.

Turner said all contracts are different, but what stands out with this small business contract is payments sometimes come from other disbursing offices, or ODOs, which can be a different payment system from what is typically used. The rest of the contract administration remains the same.

Bob Tavelli is the longest serving DCMA employee supporting contracts with this supplier. The Massachusetts native joined the federal government 38 years ago as an Army Materiel Development & Readiness Command, or DARCOM, procurement intern, and has spent the past 33 years with the agency. He’s now an administrative contracting officer, and the aviation tools contract falls under his watch.

Tavelli and Turner each have different responsibilities regarding the aviation tools contract, but both agree that maintaining a professional working relationship with the supplier, and the teamwork of DCMA people assigned to the contract, are essential to success.

For DCMA contract’s role in this success, Tavelli defers to Turner. “Fushia is the face of DCMA for this contract.”

Turner responds in kind. “I’m learning from the best. He’s teaching me a lot.” 



1) Gene Simms, Defense Contract Management Agency Orlando pre-award survey manager, discusses recent contracts with a representative of at the central Florida supplier’s facility. (Photos by Patrick Tremblay, DCMA Public Affairs)

2) Fushia Turner and Bob Tavelli work together on the aviation tools contract at Defense Contract Management Agency Orlando. Turner is the contract administrator and Tavelli the administrative contracting officer.

3) Tammy Mygrant, Defense Contract Management Agency quality assurance specialist, verifies the contents of a military avionics tool kit prior to shipping at a small central Florida contractor. The business supplies tools for military aircraft avionics, and DCMA Orlando provides contract administration services on behalf of customers.

4) Eugene Grayson (center right) and Gene Simms (right) of Defense Contract Management Agency Orlando talk with contractor representatives from a Central Florida aviation tool company about contractual issues at the company’s plant.