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U.S. DOE/NNSA - Nevada Site Office



March/April 2009 - Issue 136

A publication for all members of the NNSA/NSO family

NSO's Aponte Wins Safety Professional of the Year Award

Nevada Site Office employee Xavier Aponte has been awarded the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Federal Safety Professional of the Year award.



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Xavier Aponte

Federal and M&O Contractor Safety Professional of the Year awards are granted for distinguished service and outstanding achievements or contributions that are clearly and demonstrably greater than normally would be expected in performing assigned duties.

For calendar year 2008, Aponte joins Lloyd Gordon, Los Alamos National Laboratory, as an awardee. This is the fourth year federal safety professionals have been recognized, and the first year an M&O contractor safety professional has been recognized.

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NSO's Aponte Wins Safety Professional of the Year Award

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For calendar year 2008, Aponte joins Lloyd Gordon, Los Alamos National Laboratory, as an awardee. This is the fourth year federal safety professionals have been recognized, and the first year an M&O contractor safety professional has been recognized.

Aponte, the Nevada Site Office Functional Area Representative for Electrical Safety, demonstrated outstanding leadership, oversight and skill in implementing effective Electrical Safety Programs at the Nevada Test Site. He developed and implemented improved oversight procedures for Facility Representatives, and increased the participation of Safety & Health Subject Matter Experts in focused walk-throughs and electrical safety training.

Aponte also provided outstanding expertise and contributions as a member of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Hoisting & Rigging Technical Advisory Committee, the DOE Construction Safety Advisory Committee and the DOE Voluntary Protection Program Steering Committee. These accomplishments have contributed immeasurably to providing a safe working environment for all employees.

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NSO Engineer Receives Energy Excellence Award

Stephen Scott, NNSA technical security engineer, has been awarded the U.S. Secretary of Energy Excellence Award for his dedication and efforts in implementing a host of security upgrades at the Nevada Test Site.



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Stephen Scott, left, receives the Secretary of Energy Excellence Award from former Secretary of Energy Samuel Bodman.

Scott was presented the award last month by former U.S. Secretary of Energy Samuel Bodman. In the presentation, Scott was “recognized for his exemplary dedication and commitment to national security technologies. Mr. Scott’s vision and leadership brought together a technical team of electronic security system engineers and technicians that planned, developed and launched the Technology Deployment Integration Center at the Nevada Test Site. As a result of Mr. Scott’s dedication, motivation and pursuit of excellence, the Department’s protection strategy has been enhanced through the successful procurement and deployment of national security technologies.”

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CTOS Instructor Aids Rescue of U.S. Airways 1549

As an instructor for the Counter Terrorism Operations Support (CTOS) program at the Nevada Test Site, John McKenna remains at the ready to assist with any emergency that might involve a nuclear or radioactive threat.



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CTOS casual instructor and New York City Police Det. John McKenna (in water, hand raised) works with colleagues to clear passengers from U.S. Airways Flight 1549 after it crashed into the Hudson River in January.

But on the afternoon of Jan. 15, McKenna would become a major asset to a different kind of emergency when a U.S. Airways flight crash landed in the Hudson River in Manhattan, where McKenna works as a New York City Police detective.

“I’d been at plane crashes before,” said McKenna, a casual instructor for National Security Technologies (NSTec). “In a large situation like that, it’s rare that anyone survives.”

Actually, everyone did survive – all 155 passengers and flight crew – thanks in part to the extraordinary crash landing efforts of pilot Chesley B.

“Sully” Sullenberger, who was hailed as a hero for his part in the “Miracle on the Hudson.”

The U.S. Airways Flight 1549 collided with a flock of birds shortly after takeoff at around 3:30 p.m. and lost all engine power. McKenna would become the first in what would be a half dozen police, fire and rescue personnel who would jump into the frigid waters of the Hudson on that Thursday afternoon to help passengers and flight crew members make it to safety.

“It was the end of a tour. I had some work done on my vehicle and I was topping it off with fuel when calls started coming in over my radio,” McKenna recalled. “We thought maybe it was a movie shoot – there are different events going on all the time in New York City. But the computer in my car was telling me something different. We’d had a Cessna and things like that go down before. This wasn’t a Cessna.”

Several witnesses who saw the plane belly flop into the river called to confirm the aircraft had in fact crashed. McKenna was near the New York waterway, and sped over to the nearest ferry boat. He grabbed his SCUBA gear and waited for some of his co-workers to arrive.

“It was a tour boat. There were four or five passengers waiting for a tour,” McKenna said. “I was getting dressed on the deck when my co-workers showed up and we jumped on the boat to head out to the plane.”

At the crash site, numerous ferries and boats already had surrounded the aircraft. The rear of the plane was sinking in the water as passengers scurried out onto the wings and jumped into the frigid water to board life rafts. “Everything appeared to be still floating. I jumped into the water, but instead of going to the people who were already out, I wanted to clear what was inside,” McKenna said.

He entered the plane at the front, first clearing the cockpit. “I started walking back through the fuselage. The water was swirling around my feet, and the carry-on bags were getting caught on my fins.” By then, the

rear of the plane had become totally submerged. "My partner swam to the back and into the plane through a door just above the wing. After his canvas, we asked another police diver to come in for a more detailed—yet brief—search."

When the rescuers determined that all passengers had made it out, McKenna and his colleagues exited the aircraft. "At first, we had all the adrenalin rushing, but it really started getting cold," he said. Outside in the water, they helped the last few passengers and crew members board boats still responding to the scene.

The pilot and crew of U.S. Airways 1549 have since been honored by the President, and on television and at sporting events. McKenna joined fellow rescuers who were honored by U.S. Airways and New York Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg shortly after the incident.

In addition to his work with the New York City Police Department, Emergency Service Squad #1, McKenna travels around the country to teach CTOS training to first responders at various sites. He frequently teaches at the NTS, and will return in July to assist with a hazardous material training course.

Sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), CTOS is a highly specialized training course that focuses on radiological and nuclear threats. More than 61,000 state and local emergency response personnel have learned to take immediate, decisive action to prevent or mitigate terrorist use of radiological or nuclear Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), such as Improvised Nuclear Devices (INDs) and Radiological Dispersal Device (RDDs or "dirty bombs"). The performance-based, hands-on training is carried out in realistic scenarios at the NTS, and throughout the United States and its territories via Mobile Training Teams like ones McKenna is a part of.

"One of the strengths of our First Responder training is that we have superbly experienced first responder instructors training other first responders to handle potentially very difficult circumstances," said Robert Summers, NSTec's director of Homeland Security and Defense

Applications. “We are honored to have proven instructors like John McKenna on the CTOS team.”

Looking back at the efforts to rescue Flight 1549, McKenna said he’s grateful that all the first responders came prepared. “The experience of the pilot and the amount of luck they had to land at that part of the river where all the ferries are – and they didn’t hit the bridge or other boats – made our jobs easier. Everyone did an excellent job.”

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NSTec Earns Safety Program Recommendation

National Security Technologies (NSTec) is being recognized as one of the top contractors in the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) complex with the recent announcement that the U.S. Department of Energy Voluntary Protection Program (DOE VPP) has recommended that NSTec receive its highest STAR rating for safety.

NSTec, the management and operations contractor for the Nevada Test Site (NTS), receives the recommendation after more than three years of planning and implementation, and following a two-week inspection by a DOE headquarters team. The DOE VPP program focuses on worker health and safety. Activities included safety and health program reviews, employee interviews, and walk-throughs of several NSTec work locations in North Las Vegas and NTS.

NSTec has now achieved the four highest standards for management excellence: the VPP STAR status, the DOE's Earned Value Management System certification in Project Management, and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) certifications in quality (ISO 9001) and environmental management systems (ISO 14001).

"This completes a grand slam for NSTec in receiving these certifications, and I believe we can safely say now that we are among the best contractors in the complex," NSTec President Steve Younger told his employees after the visiting DOE VPP team announced their recommendation. "I want to say how proud I am of everyone, and how hard they have worked to make this a safer place to work."

The DOE created the VPP in January 1994 to recognize and encourage excellence in occupational safety and health protection. The program

closely parallels the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) VPP.

DOE-VPP also includes coverage of radiation protection/nuclear safety and emergency management because of the type and complexity of DOE facilities.

Much like the OSHA program, DOE-VPP provides several proven benefits to participating sites, including improved labor/management relations, reduced workplace injuries and illnesses, increased employee involvement, improved morale, reduced absenteeism, and public recognition.

The DOE-VPP has three levels of recognition: STAR, MERIT and DEMONSTRATION. Contractors whose programs meet the top requirements for outstanding safety and health programs receive STAR recognition. Contractors with highly effective programs who commit themselves to attain STAR status within a five-year period receive MERIT recognition. DOE uses the DEMONSTRATION program to recognize existing achievements in unusual situations about which more information is needed before approval requirements for the STAR program are determined. STAR status is reserved for the top one percent of companies.

The VPP is designed around five basic elements, or tenets:

- Management/leadership
- Employee involvement
- Worksite analysis
- Hazard prevention and control
- Safety and health training.

Contractors that choose to apply to the VPP must develop robust safety and health management systems and demonstrate effective implementation of safety and health procedures. These contractors are subject to frequent DOE reviews.

NSTec will be reviewed again in three years.

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Meadows School Wins Second Consecutive Science Bowl

The Meadows School of Las Vegas marched through a 32-team, double-elimination tournament to win the U.S. Department of Energy's Nevada Regional Science Bowl competition, held Saturday, Feb. 7.



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The Meadows School senior "Blue" team won first place in the DOE Regional Science Bowl. They joined NSO Public Affairs Director Darwin Morgan (front, right) for a photo. They are: (front) David Santo Pietro, Coach; (back row) Ronita Mukherjee, Vishnu Halhore, Tyler Fitzgerald (captain) Jiemin Zhou and Prakriti Gaba.

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The Meadows School winning team in action.



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NSO Public Affairs Director Darwin Morgan (center) stands with the second place team from Shadow Ridge High School in Las Vegas.



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NSTec Public Affairs Manager Dante

Pistone (back right) stands with the third place team from Palo Verde High School in Las Vegas.



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Science Bowl contenders attend the luncheon for this year's competition.

The victory for the school's senior "Blue" team marked the second consecutive win, and the third in four years for the high school. The win, on the campus of the University of Nevada Las Vegas, earned the Meadows School team a trip to Washington D.C. to represent the region in the national competition and a check for \$5,000 for their school. The National Science Bowl is America's largest and most prestigious science competition for high school students, and the only educational event and academic competition sponsored by a federal agency.

The teams from Nevada, Arizona, California and Utah tested their math and science knowledge during the competition. High school teams were quizzed on all science disciplines, including astronomy, biology, chemistry, earth science, general science, mathematics and physics. Each team of students was tested in a high-paced question and answer format resembling the TV game show *Jeopardy*.

Placing second and winning a prize of \$2,500 for the school was Shadow Ridge High School of Las Vegas. Third place and a \$1,500 check went to

Palo Verde High School of Las Vegas. The Faith Lutheran High School "Blue" team took fourth and won \$1,000 for their school.

Other teams that placed in the tournament were:

Fifth place - \$500

Meadows High School "Green" team
Reno High School "Green" team

Seventh place - \$300

Douglas High School, Minden, Nev.
Coral Academy of Science, Reno, Nev.

Ninth place - \$100

Boulder City High School "Green" team, Boulder City, Nev.
Clark High School "Green" team, Las Vegas
Green Valley High School, Las Vegas
Valley High School, Las Vegas

The team from The Meadows School will travel to Washington D.C. for the U.S. Department of Energy's National Science Bowl Competition, April 30 – May 5. The team will be competing for the national title with students from 42 states plus Washington D.C., Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Key sponsors for the multi-day event were the National Nuclear Security Administration, National Security Technologies, Northrop Grumman and the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation.

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NTS Hosts Homeland Security Summit

The National Nuclear Security Administration Nevada Site Office (NNSA/NSO) and National Security Technologies (NSTec) joined the Nevada Office of Homeland Security and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate and Domestic Nuclear Detection Office (DNDO) to host the Regional Homeland Security Science and Technology Summit during the week of Jan. 12 at the Nevada Test Site and Atomic Testing Museum.

Dr. Dale Carrison, chair of the Nevada Homeland Security Commission welcomed first responders and emergency management officials from Arizona, California and Nevada to the summit. The event, sponsored by Gov. Jim Gibbons, was designed to introduce them to the unique capabilities of the National Laboratories. The summit also brought together representatives from the Sandia, Lawrence Livermore and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratories.

"The National Governor's Association expressed the need to strengthen partnerships and further collaborations in the '2007 State Homeland Security Directors Survey.' It is in this spirit that DHS is conducting the (summit)," stated Gibbons' invitation.

"While the objective of the summit is to share information and get to know one another, we hope the conference will enhance science and technology partnerships among states, the Department of Energy (DOE), National Laboratories, DHS/Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate and DHS/DNDO."

Among those invited to the summit were the Adjutant Generals, State Emergency Management Directors, State Office of Homeland Security

Directors, State Directors of Public Health, and officials representing the local first responder community from the various states. With the NTS serving as host, the federal partners demonstrated technologies that support state and local jurisdictions and worked to create a more direct relationship with the first responder and emergency management communities.

“The expectation from Congress is for DHS/S&T to take a leadership role in supporting state and local technology needs, as well as those of the first responders,” said Randel Zeller, director, Interagency and First Responder Programs, DHS S&T Directorate. “Not all of the solutions are going to come from Washington D.C. The idea is to build collaborations at the state and local levels that support our customers.”

The Regional Homeland Security Science and Technology Summit ended in success in that there will be further collaboration between the states/national laboratories in the future.

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NSTec Names First Volunteer of the Year

National Security Technologies LLC (NSTec), the management and operational contractor for the Nevada Test Site, has named its first Volunteer of the Year. Lani Fellows, a member of the technical staff, is being recognized for her volunteer efforts in support of the National Multiple Sclerosis, All America Chapter, Nevada Division. Last year, Lani donated almost 100 hours in support of activities like walk MS, bike MS, and their volunteer appreciation dinner. She was formally recognized by the organization for her overall dedication and excellence.



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NSTec President Steve Younger (right) presents the Volunteer of the Year Award to Lani Fellows.

“Lani is a testament that one person can and does make a difference. Her energy and enthusiasm earned NSTec the “Largest Corporate Team” at last year’s walk MS in Las Vegas—and I’m sure we’ll get it again,” said James “J.D.” Daniels, a co-worker who nominated her for the award.

In just over two years of operation, NSTec continues to demonstrate its commitment to volunteerism and corporate citizenship:

- Donated more than \$200,000 to worthy causes in Nevada through NSTec Cares.
- Created Our Actions Make a Difference to recognize and reward employee volunteer service. Employees earn \$5 for every hour they volunteer in the community. To date, NSTec has donated more than

\$14,000 on employees' behalf, representing almost 3,000 hours of community service.

- Served as a United Way of Southern Nevada Pacesetter in 2008, and employees pledged more than \$350,000. Routinely recognized as a "Top 5" campaign, the program also finances an Employee Crisis Fund.
- Created an Education Development Fund and scholarship programs focused on improving science, technology, engineering, and math at the elementary school, middle school, high school, and collegiate levels. To date, NSTec has awarded more than \$1.5 million in education grants and scholarships.
- NSTec is a finalist in the 2009 Governor's Points of Light Award in the corporate/business category.

"NSTec is committed to the communities where we live and work, and I am extremely proud of our employees who are making a difference every day," said NSTec President Steve Younger. "It's particularly rewarding in today's economy to see how employee commitment and corporate investment can be leveraged to provide very real returns for those in need."

Adds Lani, "I am grateful to work for a company that encourages employees to give back to the community and am especially grateful for the contribution to a charity that means so much to me." As part of her award, NSTec will donate \$500 to a charity on her behalf.

NSTec manages operations at the NTS and its related facilities and laboratories for the U.S. Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration, Nevada Site Office. NSTec teams with Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Los Alamos National Laboratory, and Sandia National Laboratories on many programs. NSTec also works on projects for other federal agencies as it fulfills its mission.

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NSTec Kicks Off Wellness Program for 2009

National Security Technologies (NSTec) Occupational Medicine, in cooperation with Workforce Enhancement, NSTec and PAI Fitness, rolled out its Wellness 2009 program on Feb. 18. More than 160 employees attended the kick-off event featuring “Healthy Weight Management and Fitness.”



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Employees from NSTec participate in a Fun Walk as part of the Wellness Campaign Kick Off for 2009.

Attendees enjoyed presentations, strolled through vendor booths, and were given a wellness guide and pedometers as an added bonus. The following day, more than 130 employees participated in the “Heart Walk,” a one-mile fun/fitness walk with prize incentives. Employees unanimously voiced their enthusiasm for these events, and are looking forward to the second quarter’s wellness topic, “Anxiety and Stress Management,” which will premiere in April.

“I am happy to see the wonderful participation and turnout we have had in these events, and I hope that it continues throughout the year,” said Dr. Jeff Moon, NSTec Site Occupational Medical Director. “The challenge now is to maintain this momentum and facilitate an ongoing planned program.”

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Milestones

National Security Technologies

45 years

John Doyle

40 years

Masafusa Nishimura

35 years

Vicki Presser

30 years

David Henderson, Gary Morrison, Savannah Mills

25 years

Patricia Herrin, Shirley Hawkins, Stephen Eckert, Terry Smith

20 years

Craig E. Soucy, Beverly Slater, Christopher Tunley, Kathleen Meade

15 years

Beverly Larson, Richard Gross

10 years

Adrienne A. Anderton, Allison, Urbon, Joseph Leeming, Robert Morrow

5 years

Robert T. Pelayo, Gregory A. Chadwick, Arturo Cisneros, Gary M. Hedrick, Raul G. Lopez, Matthew T. MacDonald, Colin A. McCarthy, Carlo O. Ochipinti, Michael D. Sonne, Vernon V. Thomas, Lenoris L Fuller, Kym S. Hook, Conne Walton-Davison, Connie White-Yelder, Jeff Valdez, Joyce Curlee, Kevin Broadbent, Larry Platte, Linda Sams, Marcus Brown, Mario Guerrero, Theresa Pecor.

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Masthead

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Acronyms

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Acronyms

The following acronyms appear frequently in *SiteLines*:

BEEF	Big Explosives Experimental Facility
CTOS	Counter Terrorism Operations Support
DAF	Device Assembly Facility
DOE	Department of Energy
EM	Emergency Management
ES&H	Environment, Safety, and Health
FRMAC	Federal Radiological Monitoring and Assessment Center
JASPER	Joint Actinide Shock Physics Experimental Research (gas gun)
LANL	Los Alamos National Laboratory
LLNL	Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
NNSA	National Nuclear Security Administration
NSO	Nevada Site Office
NSTec	National Security Technologies, LLC
NTS	Nevada Test Site
PIP	Process Improvement Project
R-MAD	Reactor Maintenance, Assembly, and Disassembly Facility
RSL-A	Remote Sensing Laboratory - Andrews
RSL-N	Remote Sensing Laboratory - Nellis
SC	NNSA Service Center
SCE	Subcritical Experiment
SNJV	Stoller-Navarro Joint Venture
SNL	Sandia National Laboratories
STL	Special Technologies Laboratory

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