

Special Interest Articles by:

- Diversity and Program Compliance Division.
- Public Civil Rights Division.
- Complaints and Compliance Division.
- Policy.

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2010 Leadership Summit Deemed a Success

The 2010 Executive Leadership Summit at Hampton University on November 10-12, 2010, was designed to provide professional development, provide opportunities and create a network for aspiring leaders in the private and public sector. Founder and President of Hampton University Dr. William R. Harvey said the summit is all about passing the torch to those who aspire to leadership positions and assist them in the development of strategies for

accomplishing professional and personal goals. OCR partnered with NPS and Hampton University in Hampton, Virginia. This was in support of the MOU between DOI and National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO). Dr. Harvey shared his 10 fundamental leadership principles with the participants who were inspired by the numerous sessions that were presented. Office of Civil Rights Diversity &

Program Compliance Program Specialist Sylvia Jones said Dr. Harvey's model was applicable to people regardless where they work."The fact that he's coming out with a book is great and seeing the whole Hampton University family as a model for people to follow is inspiring," she said. Second year attendee Jones believes that the leadership summit is great training and she recommends it to both the public and private sector. (Continued on page 3)

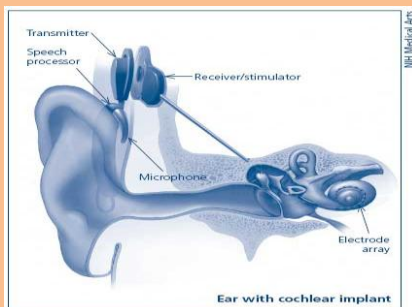
A lifelong Dream of a Cochlear Implant gets Installed for EEO Specialist

"This is the day the cochlear implant is turned on," says Office of Civil Rights EEO Specialist Melinda Hayden, who has been hearing impaired since infancy. Now through the miracles of technology, she has made the decision to have a cochlear implant activated on November 11, 2010. A cochlear implant is a small, complex electronic device that can help to provide a sense of sound to a person who is deaf or severely hard of hearing.

The implant is very different from a hearing aid. Cochlear implants bypass damaged portions of the ear and directly stimulate the auditory nerve whereas hearing aids amplify sounds so they may be detected by damaged ears. According to Hayden, the implant and sound processor are functioning as expected. "When I hear "speech," it sounds like everyone is talking underwater and right now everything sort of echoes," she said via blackberry. My CI

audiologist told me that what I am hearing was similar to what other clients have told her, she added. According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), as of April 2009, approximately 188,000 people worldwide have received implants. The implant consists of an external portion that sits behind the ear and a second portion that is surgically placed under the skin. The implant consists of a microphone, which picks up sound from the environment, a speech

processor, which selects
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Ear with Cochlear Implant

A lifelong Dream of a Cochlear Implant gets Installed for EEO Specialist

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and arranges sounds picked up by the microphone, a transmitter and receiver/stimulator, which receives signals from the speech processor converting them into electric impulses and finally an electrode array. This is a group of electrodes that collects the impulses from the stimulator and sends them to different regions of the auditory nerve. Many

researchers say an implant does not restore normal hearing, however, it can give a person who is hearing impaired a useful representation of sounds in the environment and help her or him to understand speech. Melinda said, "It was very strange at first. I could feel a pulsing, then it pulsed louder and it went through a series of beeps." She said she was instructed to tell the audiologist what sound levels were

comfortable to her and trying to get use to the sound processor. The use of the cochlear implant requires significant therapy to learn or relearn the sense of hearing. With the support of her sisters and her OCR family, her lifelong hearing journey will be a success. Melinda's online friends who have cochlear implants have told her to at first be prepared for a "strange week" of hearing sounds differently. Much success to Mindy!!!

Sylvia Jones Retires after 42 Years of Federal Service



OCR staffer Sylvia Jones

Remarkable as it seems, Office of Civil Rights Special Emphasis Program Manager Sylvia Jones is calling it quits after 42 years of Federal Service. Jones, who began her career straight out of business school, said she is embarking on a new and exciting journey that involves photography, tennis and singing. "When I retire, I would like to take a look at the pictures I have taken," said Jones, who has

folders labeled by location such as Miami, Puerto Rico, and Anchorage, Alaska. Jones said she had the opportunity to travel to a glacier which made it an interesting trip. In her earlier years, Jones was with the NPS National Capital Region then a small stint with the Air Force on a civilian capacity before returning to Interior. In 2004, she transferred from the Office of Educational Partnerships to OCR EEO

Office, where she is responsible for Minority Higher Educational Programs such as HBCU's, Tribal Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions and the Asian American Pacific Islander. Her duties also entailed annual reports, and plans, responding to requests for information and serving as the minority institution representative. Moreover, Jones keeps the OCR (Continued on page 4)

Perspectives on Employment of Persons with Disabilities Conference



The 29th Annual Perspectives on Employment of Persons with Disabilities Conference held December 8-10, 2010, at the Hyatt Regency in Bethesda, Maryland was a great source for information and insight on disability employment

issues in the Federal government. According to sources, attendees were able to get an edge in recruiting, hiring and retain qualified Federal employees with disabilities from workshops, keynote speakers and a general session. The conference was also designed to get

the latest reception of knowledge on personnel policies and practices, developments in technology, legal updates, and resources that would help their agency achieve their goal. Many participants had networking opportunities from Federal colleagues from across the nation.

2010 Leadership Summit Deemed a Success

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Keynote speaker Mr. Robert Stanton, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of The Department of the Interior addressed a group of students about having a strong work ethic and remembering those leaders who paved the way. NPS Minority University Outreach Officer Workforce Management for Interior Ms. Bessie Sherman agreed. "This is It", she said, referring to the youths reminding them that it is time for them to take the torch as tomorrow's executive leaders while seeking

employment opportunities with the federal government. Sherman said what inspired her the most was the student leadership track session led by Robert Stanton and the importance of education at minority serving institutions. This made a lot more sense to the youths hearing it from him, she added. "The information he presented was both humorous and enlightening and everyone at the summit learned a great deal from the presentation," she said. Summit presenter Janette L. Brown, Director, Office of Small Business Programs from the Environmental Protection

Agency told attendees that when the opportunities come, be ready, don't limit yourself and what you think you can do. Brown, who has served on the senior executive level of the Federal government for 17 years said, "When you are building your portfolio, focus on the business success with other agencies goals and objectives." She also informed the group that there is an Office of Small Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) at every agency. The summit is part of Executive Order 13532—Promoting Excellence, Innovation, and Sustainability at Historically Black Colleges and Universities.



2010 Hampton University Leadership Summit



Robert Stanton advises students on having good work ethics

OCR and BLM EEO Office Offers Basic EEO Counselor Course

On November 29, 2010, through December 3, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Equal Employment Opportunity Office (EEO) offered a basic Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Counselor Course at the BLM Training Center in Phoenix, Arizona. The course is designed to create a base of knowledge and skills that are required by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) Management Directive 110, and prepared participants to serve as effective fulltime

or collateral EEO Counselors. OCR Senior Policy Advisor Alvin Dillings said attendees were taught the basics regarding the EEO complaint process, EEO laws, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), and counselor report-writing. "The course also included the opportunity for individuals to develop essential counseling techniques and an audio visual aid training," OCR Director Sharon D. Eller said the EEO Counselor serves as a problem solver, fact-finder, and a bridge between

employees and management. "He or she must be objective, communicate effectively, show good judgment in handling sensitive information, and they must be able to secure the confidence of both employees and management," Eller said. In addition, the EEO Counselor is the required first step in the EEO complaint process and they play a vital role during the counseling stage. The names of all participants who completed the Basic EEO Counselor Course were submitted to DOI Learn for credit hours.

OCR Senior Policy Advisor Alvin Dillings



Sylvia Jones Retires after 42 Years of Federal

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Director abreast on events OCR needs to be involved in. As Jones embarks on her journey into new and exciting adventures, she said, "Getting back into my extensive music collection which consists of Gospel, Classical, and Jazz would be great. Classical music is good for thinking because I use

it for my writing; however, taking pictures is more therapeutic." Jones, whose passion is photography added that this particular hobby makes her do some walking, especially during the summer when the flowers peak and particularly in the fall. Her other extracurricular activities will include

singing in two church choirs when she retires. "I also want to start piano lessons and travel where I can use my photography," said Jones, who mentioned that she would enjoy a photography cruise. What she'll miss the most at Interior are the people that she worked with, the extensive interagency networks, conferences and the entire EEO community.

"I love working in OCR because I learned what to do and not what when it comes to ethics".

-Sylvia Jones

Turnout Great for Office Ergonomics Fair

The National Business Center partnered with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and exhibitors to host an Office Ergonomics Fair in the Bison Bistro on October 20, 2010. Exhibitors were invited to set up booths for Interior employees so they could try out a variety of the

latest in modern ergonomic products and equipment to enhance their safety, comfort, and productivity. Many of the totality of goods were specifically designed and proven to reduce and eliminate tension, fatigue, and the strain employees experience while working

at their work stations. OCR Disability Resource Analyst Jennifer Meltz, a representative for the Accessible Technology Center (ATC) said, "The turnout was great and resulted in a lot of people requesting ergonomic assessments (Continued on page 6)



Goldtouch Keyboard Equipment at Ergonomics Fair

Deadlines on Proposed Revisions to the ADA Title II Regulations Is drawing near

"The definition is explained more distinctly for example, it limits the species of service animals to dogs." –Barbara Elkin

The 2010 changes of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) Title II Regulations will be the first major update in approximately 19 years. The selected changes to nondiscrimination policies and these 2010 standards, which include new construction, alterations, application to existing facilities, and adoption of updated accessibility standards will go into effect March 15, 2011. Barbara Elkin, Attorney Advisor, Department of Justice, Civil

Rights Division, Disability Rights Section said State and local governments will have to become familiar with new Title II definitions such as, other powered-driven mobility devices, qualified reader, service animals, video remote interpreting (VRI) service and wheelchair. On November 16, 2010, Elkin told attendees at the Association of Federal External Civil Rights Specialists/Officers meeting that the other powered-driven mobility device category was

designed to include devices that are not wheelchairs or scooters. Elkin said in her overview with regard to service animals, "The definition is explained more distinctly for example, it limits the species of service animals to dogs". The revisions also makes it clear that comfort or emotional animals are not covered and that individuals with physical, sensory, psychiatric, or other mental disabilities can use service animals. The revisions to the general service animals provisions can be found

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Deadlines on Proposed Revisions to the ADA Title II Regulations Is drawing near

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In § 35.136 in Title II, however the general rule is that covered entities must permit service animals, said Elkin. She did inform attendees that the specific exception for when service animals can be excluded are when the animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it; or if the animal is not housebroken. The proposed revisions to the ADA Title II also explained the definition of a wheelchair. It states that it must be a manually – operated or power-driven device designed primarily for use by an individual

with a mobility disability indoors, or both indoor and outdoor. Again, according to the 2010 changes to the ADA Title II Regulations which go in effect March 15, 2011, which is drawing near, manually powered mobility aids include walkers, crutches, canes, braces, or other similar devices. One thing Elkin pointed out in the proposed revisions is that entities may not ask an individual using a wheelchair or other power driven mobility device questions about the nature and extent of the individual's disability. On March 15, 2012, exactly 18 months

from the publication date of the Federal Register, the 2010 Standards must be followed for new construction, alterations, and program access. Prior to March 15, 2012, Title II entities can choose to use the 2010 Standards, or the 1991 Standards. The 2010 Standards are the U.S. Access Board's Americans with Disabilities Act/Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Guidelines and the 1991 Standards are the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines. Standards are available at the Department of Justice's ADA website at www.ada.gov.



2010 changes to the ADA effective March 15, 2011

OCR is working with MANRRS to establish an MOU

The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) is currently working with the Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANRRS) to establish a memorandum of understanding (MOU). The goal and objectives of the MOU are to promote education, employment, and contracting opportunities, and to increase outreach efforts to diverse communities. It is also designed to strengthen partnerships with minorities and women served by MANRRS. Historically, ethnic and

racial minorities who had the opportunity to pursue scientific careers have concentrated mostly on a limited number of options. MANRRS is a national society that welcomes membership of people of all races providing a host of networks and role models to support the development of minorities. MANRRS 26th Annual Career & Training Conference titled "Cultivating a Generation of Excellence" will be held March 31 thru April 2, 2011, in Overland Park, Kansas. According to its website, the conference includes key speakers,

various cutting edge workshops, professional scientific presentations, business meetings and recruitment activities. Emphasis is also placed on professionals with diverse agricultural and related science backgrounds from various geographic locations throughout the United States. MANRRS functions through the support of goodwill of individuals, businesses, government agencies like the Department of the Interior's Office of Civil Rights, foundations, academic institutions, and other non-profit organizations in a collaborative endeavor that benefits all involved.

-MANRRS objective is to promote and implement initiatives which foster inclusion and advancement of members of ethnic/cultural groups.

Birthday's for Sept, Nov, and Dec.

September

Melinda Hayden
Sept. 24

November

Vanessa Green
Nov. 10

Sylvia Jones
Nov. 18

Judy Banks
Nov. 25

December

Michael Zimmerman
Dec. 26

We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.doi.gov/diversity

OCR Participates in the Federal Hispanic Career Advancement Summit

On November 29-30, 2010, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) participated in the Third Annual Federal Hispanic Career Advancement Summit at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Natcher Conference Center, in Bethesda Maryland. According to organizers, the summit was aimed to help over 850 attendees realize

their professional aspirations and develop individual competencies in order to prepare for senior positions in the Federal government. OCR worked with the planning committee that assisted with the executive coaching session along with DOI representatives. On day two, approximately 200 individuals from the GS

13-15 levels met on a one- to- one basis with Senior Executive Service (SES) candidates on career development. Equal Opportunity Specialist Acquannetta Newson said, "The first 90 days in government session was really beneficial for me." She said after a review of the survey from those in attendance, the Third Annual Federal Hispanic Career Advancement Summit was a success.

Turnout Great for Office Ergonomics

(Continued from page 4) of their workstations. According to Meltz, the Accessible Technology Center had a booth with a variety of mice and keyboards that the employees could look at and touch such as, a split keyboard, one handed

keyboard, roller ball mouse, and a right handed and left handed mouse. Many of the attendees at the Ergonomics Fair stopped by between the hours of 10:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m., to inquire about an ergonomic assessment at

their work station. Other exhibitors that had products on hand were American Office, Caddo Solutions and Ergo Design Inc. The ATC also demonstrated other dexterity-related equipment that enhanced employee concerns.

The Counselor's Column by Joyce Corley

SEASON GREETINGS FROM THE COUNSELOR'S CORNER!

Wishing all Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year!
See you next quarter!

SAVE THE DATE

*Remember to observe the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday on Monday January 17, 2011.

*Management Directive 715 Report (MD-715), the policy guidance which the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) provides to Federal agencies for their use on establishing and maintaining effective programs of the EEO is due on January 31, 2011.

Spotlight



This is Judy making sure all the records are secure!

Judy Banks is an Equal Employment Opportunity Records Management Specialist in the Employee Complaints and Adjudication Division, Office of Civil Rights, under the direction of Lola Hatcher-Capers, Deputy Director, Office of Civil Rights. Judy has Federal Records Management responsibilities as a Federal employee.

Q. What is your background?

“I started out with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) as a Technical Information Specialist from 1993-1995.” I also interpreted facets of physical science to school children and employees, she added.” Prior to this, Judy worked in the Geochemical Laboratory from 1978-1993 and EEO for NPS.

Q. What are you responsible for?

“I am responsible for administrative electronic hearing records for EEO Judges at Interior and manage records program for all EEO records that have been ready to archive.”

Q. What do you like to do for extracurricular activities?

“I love to read, shoe shop and sing in a church group called the “Fresh Anointed.”

Q. Do you have any particular hobbies? Reading and exercising

The Directors Corner

From the Director:

During this past quarter, the EEO Community has strived to induce people to reach past themselves on the need for a deepening consciousness along this agency’s journey.

To achieve success with diversity and inclusion programs, we must continue to build strong fruitful professional relationships.

We also have to continuously challenge the way things are done, while keeping the lines of communication open.

As we approach this holiday season and the upcoming New Year, we must not lose sight of the broader picture, which is that our truly inclusive work environments tend to have teachable moments that are essential to advancing Interior’s diversity mission. This mission is to engender a workplace where everyone’s contributions are embraced and valued.

Remember, our vision for the future is to ensure that managing diversity is seen as a strategic business practice, not just a set of projects or initiatives.

Have a wonderful holiday season.

See you next newsletter!
SHARON D. ELLER

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News from the Bureaus:
 Each newsletter will highlight a report of events or information considered as a subject of choice from two bureaus. The featured Bureaus for this quarter's newsletter are Office of Surface Mining and the Bureau of Reclamation.

THE BUREAU'S QUARTER



OSM: Celebrated Disability Awareness Month with a Noontime Chat & Chew.

On October 28, 2010, at the South Interior Building, The Office of Surface and Mining's Office for Equal Opportunity (OEO) featured Ms. Karen Alexander, founder of PAMD International, LLC. Alexander, a double amputee, spoke on her challenges as an employee, how to manage people and various ways on how she can still be a productive manager. PAMD is an acronym for describing Ms. Alexander's foundational principles and life sustaining beliefs which is to be positive with an attitude and that all things are possible.

As a motivational speaker, Alexander told the audience that people can live and achieve the impossible by eliminating self-imposed limitations. The goal of the Chat & Chew was to help employees gain a new awareness and comprehension of the importance of hiring persons with disabilities. According to attendees, the speaker was informative and fun! EEO Specialist Patricia Lowery said the Chat & Chew was also a part of OEO's Diversity Awareness Series with those in attendance receiving one hour of diversity training.

BOR: What's happening in Reclamation this past quarter?

*The Reclamation Diversity Council (RDC), formerly the MD -715 Corporate Committee met in Denver October 18-21, 2010, to prepare for the FY 2010 Management Directive 715 Report of Accomplishments and FY2011 plan. The RDC is diversely comprised of senior executives and managers from all geographic regions/offices and occupations. While EEO and HR professionals actively participate to provide technical assistance, the RDC members are chartered to have lead responsibility for MD-715. During FY 2010, the RDC met five times to track progress and maintain communication.

*Bureau of Reclamation led events that were conducted in conjunction with HACU's 24th Annual Conference in September 2010, such as exhibit booths, workshops and targeted recruitment. This resulted in 20 diverse hires with all positions located in all regions and the Denver Office.