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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to acknowledge the contributions of the following people and organizations:

VOCAL INSPIRATION 🌿 Linda Thomas, Supervisor of Distribution & Operations, U.S. Postal Service

COLOR GUARD 🌿 United States Coast Guard Base Alameda Color Guard

LEADERSHIP 🌿 John Kramar, Chair – San Francisco Bay Area Federal Executive Board and  
District Director, U.S. Custom and Immigration Service,  
Department of Homeland Security

Maria Jauregui, Co-Chair Federal Employee of the Year Program and  
Court Administrator, U.S. Immigration Court, Department of Justice

Gita Uppal, Co-Chair Federal Employee of the Year Program and  
Director, Strategy & Outreach, San Francisco VA Health Care System

Sara Russell, Director, San Francisco Bay Area Federal Executive Board

Gail Castaneda, Program Specialist, San Francisco Bay Area Federal Executive Board

MASTER OF CEREMONIES 🌿 Patricia Raymond, Board Member – San Francisco FEB,  
Regional Communications Director, San Francisco Region IX, Social Security Administration

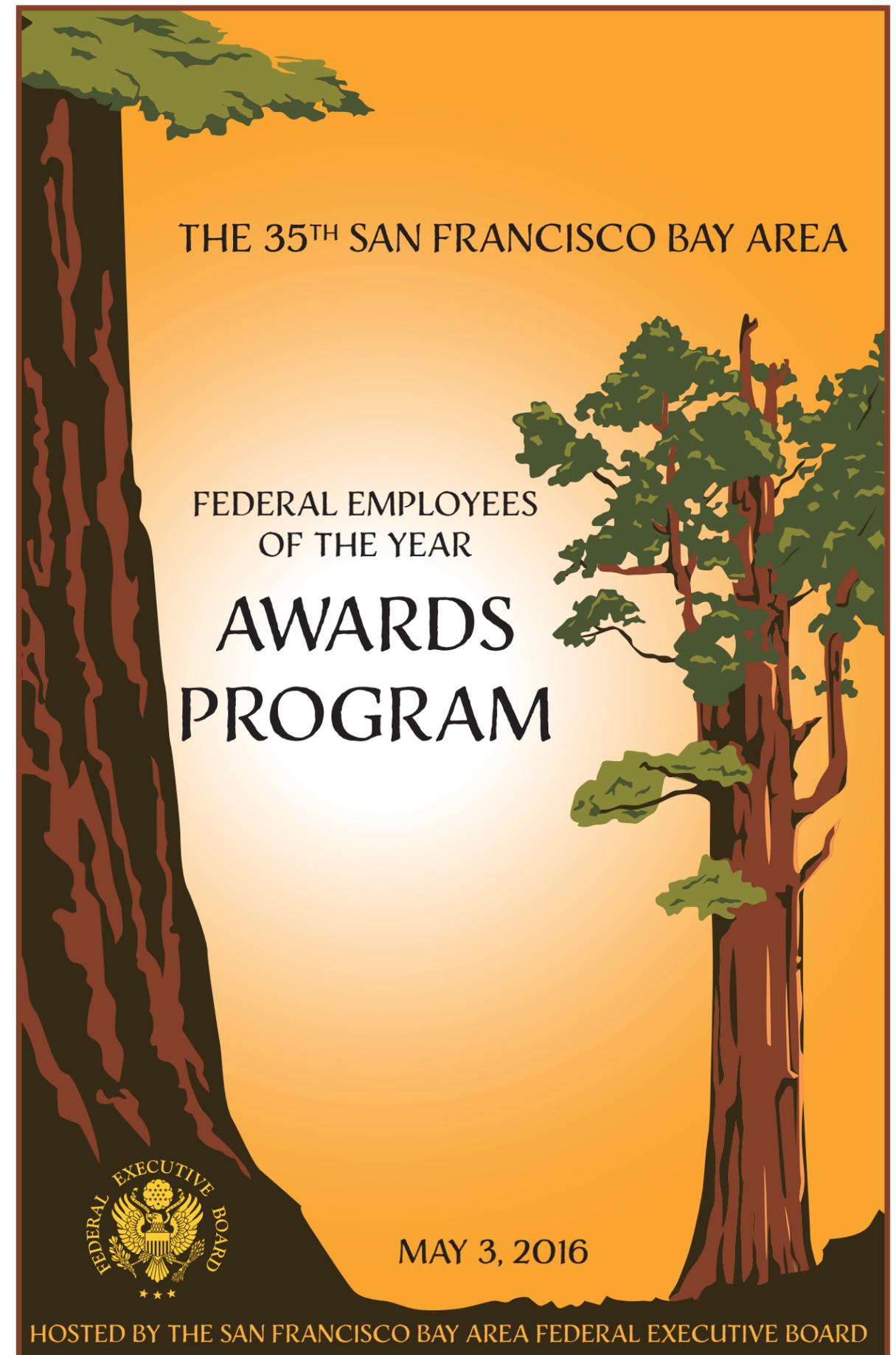
PHOTOGRAPHY 🌿 Edgardo Caballero, MA, Medical Photographer, San Francisco VA Health Care System

PRINTING 🌿 Gina Arias-Arrieta and Matthew Yttrup, General Services Administration

ARBORIST & PROGRAM DESIGN\* 🌿 Rand Careaga, U.S. Customs & Border Protection, DHS

VENUE 🌿 San Francisco Public Library

CATERING 🌿 The Coffee Smith, Jang Madruedee Samithavej



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SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA  
**FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD**

90 7th St. Suite 18-300  
 San Francisco, CA 94103

May 3, 2016

Dear Colleagues in Public Service,

On behalf of the San Francisco Bay Area Federal Executive Board and the entire federal community, it is my honor and pleasure to welcome you to our 35th Federal Employees of the Year Awards, during the 2016 Public Service Recognition Week.

2016 is a year of anniversaries in our federal family.

This marks the San Francisco Bay Area Executive Board's 55th Anniversary. In 1961 President Kennedy created the first ten Federal Executive Boards including ours, and we continue to be the go to place for Bay Area federal executives and staff for coordination and information. Our Keynote Speaker, Tom Leatherman, is a Superintendent with the U.S. National Park Service which celebrates its Centennial this year by preserving natural and cultural resources for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.

The Federal Employee of the Year Awards is the Bay Area federal community's opportunity to acknowledge the extraordinary accomplishments of our Nominees, Finalists, as well as the dedication, hard work, and accomplishments of all our federal employees. Every day, federal employees derive rewards from knowing that they are making a difference in the lives of others and this great Nation. Today we celebrate them all.

I want to thank all the Agencies and Nominating Officials who took the time to nominate their employees and the Peer Reviewers and Blue Ribbon Panel who evaluated the nominations.

Congratulations to each of our Nominees and Award Winners—you truly are "Feds Soaring High" and make a difference with your exceptional achievements in public service.

Best Regards,

John Kramar  
 2016 SF-FEB Chair  
 District Director, District 21  
 U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
 U.S. Department of Homeland Security

CHAIR AWARD

**Betty Reid Soskin**, a Richmond, CA resident, is "the nation's oldest permanent park ranger." During WWII, Betty worked as a clerk for Boilermakers Union A-36, a segregated fabrication and shipbuilding union. She has been a civil rights activist and songwriter. Today, at the age of 94, she is an active NPS employee at Rosie the Riveter World War II Home Front National Historical Park (Rosie the Riveter), conducting park tours and explaining the Park's purpose, history, various sites, and museum collections to visitors.



*National Park Service*

Betty was drawn into the National Park Service while participating in the planning of the formation of Rosie the Riveter. She was often the sole voice representing people of color from the time period in those meetings. Of Cajun and Creole background, her great-grandmother born into slavery, Betty has much personal experience to draw from and is a talented and moving speaker. She has been celebrated as a tireless voice for making sure the African-American war-time experience—both the positive steps toward integration and the presence of discrimination—has a prominent place in the Park's history. This helped her ensure that the contributions of minorities and women on the home front during WWII were not forgotten.

The National Park Service has proudly had Betty represent the agency at several important events. On January 20, 2009, at the invitation of Congressman George Miller, she attended the inauguration of President Barack Obama as the 44th President of the United States where she proudly wore her NPS uniform and had her great-grandmother's photo tucked into the pocket above her heart. And on December 3, 2015, Ranger Betty introduced President Obama at the National Christmas Tree lighting ceremony.

Every day Betty works at Rosie the Riveter she continues to demonstrate the power of personal stories and our nation's history to educate and inspire future generations based on her personal narrative and unique perspective.



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## 2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS, SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

### STANDING COMMITTEES CHAIRS

#### Human Resources Council

**Robert Trefault**, Group Manager, Agency Compliance & Evaluation, Office of Personnel Management

#### Leadership Development Program

**Robert Trefault**, Group Manager, Agency Compliance & Evaluation, Office of Personnel Management

#### Federal Employees of the Year Awards

**Maria Jauregui**, Court Administration, U.S. Department of Justice

**Gita Uppal**, Director, Strategy and Outreach, San Francisco VA Health Care System

#### Public Affairs Officers Council

**Marlow Schindler**, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Small Business Administration

### SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD STAFF

#### Sara Russell

Executive Director

#### Gail Castaneda

Program Specialist



**The San Francisco Federal Executive Board (SFFEB)** was established, along with the other FEBS, by President Kennedy in 1961. SFFEB is the hub of the federal community in northern California comprised of nearly 150 agencies and 70,000 employees. We focus on promoting partnerships for emergency preparedness, workforce development and intergovernmental collaboration. SFFEB is made up of the highest-ranking federal leaders in the Bay Area. Members represent civilian, military, postal, and law enforcement agencies, both small and large in size.

[www.sffeb.us](http://www.sffeb.us)

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## MASTER OF CEREMONIES

**Patricia Raymond** is the Regional Communications Director (RCD) for Social Security's San Francisco Region. Patricia began her career in 1999 as an Outstanding Scholar Claims Representative in the South Tucson District Office. Throughout her career, she has been selected for a number of leadership development programs and has gained experience working in field offices, Central Office, Disability Determination Service (DDS), the Office of Disability Adjudication and Review (ODAR), and the Regional Office. Patricia served as the Deputy Executive Officer in the Office of the Regional Commissioner from July 2010 until she was selected as the RCD in January 2011. As the RCD, Patricia's primary responsibilities have revolved around the media, community outreach to promote Social Security initiatives, liaison with regional congressional offices, and coordinator for dignitary visits to the region. In addition, she serves as the liaison to the Office of Communications (OCOMM) executives, National and regional congressional offices and advocates, and the Area Directors for the Public Affairs Specialists. Patricia graduated cum laude from Texas A&M University, Kingsville, and received her Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from Northern Arizona University. Patricia has received several recognition awards for her work and commitment to public service.



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## KEYNOTE SPEAKER

**Tom Leatherman** is currently the Superintendent at four National Park Service historic sites in the East Bay: Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site, John Muir National Historic Site, Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial and Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park. He started his National Park Service (NPS) career in 1989 as an intern at Pinnacles National Monument. He went on to



*National Park Service*

work in several parks in the West as a seasonal employee before getting his first permanent job back at Pinnacles in 1995. Years later, as the chief of natural and cultural resource management at Pinnacles, he was able to build a nationally recognized natural resource program, including the reintroduction of California condors and red-legged frogs. In 2005 he was selected as the superintendent of Manzanar National Historic Site in the Eastern Sierra. He served in this position for three years before coming back home to the Bay Area (he grew up in Santa Cruz) to take the position as the Deputy Superintendent of the four historic sites in the East Bay. He was selected as the Superintendent of these sites in January of 2011. Tom lives in Pleasant Hill and while not at work he enjoys spending time with his family, hiking and cooking.

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## 2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS, SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

### APPOINTED MEMBERS

**Lydia Baca**

Commissioner, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service

**John Cabeca**

Director, West Coast Region, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

**Jesus Mendoza**

Regional Administrator, Western Regional Office, Food and Nutrition Service, USDA

**Rafael Nunez**

Inspector in Charge, San Francisco Division, U.S. Postal Inspection Service

**Carol Russo**

Regional Director, Rocky Mountain Region, Community Relations Service, U.S. Department of Justice

**Patricia Raymond**

SF Regional Communications Director, San Francisco Region, Social Security Administration

**Betsy Thompson, MD, DrPH**

Acting Regional Health Administrator, US Public Health Service, Region IX, Health & Human Services

**Kathleen A. Roscher**

Assistant Federal Security Director, Transportation Security Administration, Homeland Security

**Fred Lau**

Federal Security Director, Transportation Security Administration, Homeland Security

### STANDING COMMITTEES CHAIRS

**Acquisition Interagency Council**

**Les Yamagata**, Deputy Regional Commissioner, General Services Administration

**Combined Federal Campaign**

**Ridwana Bentley, Esq.**, U.S. Department of Justice

**Emergency Preparedness Advisory Council**

**Robert Fenton**, Regional Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency

**Emergency Preparedness Working Group:**

**Chris Craft**, Regional Emergency Coordinator, U.S. General Services Administration

**James Macauley**, Regional Continuity Manager, Federal Emergency Management Agency

**Richard Boyden**, Senior Analyst, National Archives and Records Administration

**Patricia Port**, Regional Environmental Officer, U.S. Department of the Interior



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## 2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS, SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

### OFFICERS

**Chair: John Kramar**

District Director, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

**First Vice Chair: Julianna Boor**

Regional Director, Veterans Benefits Regional Office, Veterans Administration

**Second Vice Chair: Gita Uppal**

Director, Strategy and Outreach, San Francisco Veterans Administration Health Care System

**Past Chair: Cathy Dunlap**

Senior Commissioner's Representative, Internal Revenue Service, U.S. Department of the Treasury

**Treasurer: Janie Thomas**

Regional Administrator, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management,  
U.S. Department of Labor

### EX OFFICIO MEMBERS

**Mario Canton**

Regional Director, Federal Protective Service, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

**Robert Fenton**

Regional Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

**Andrew McMahon**

Regional Administrator, General Services Administration

**Robert McMenemy**

Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Department of Justice

**Robert Trefault**

Manager, Office of Personnel Management, Agency Compliance and Evaluation, Merit System  
Accountability and Compliance

### MILITARY CHAIRS

**Merry Goodenough**

Deputy Director, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

**Captain Joseph Kramek**

General Counsel/Staff Judge Advocate, Eleventh Coast Guard District

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## 35<sup>TH</sup> FEDERAL EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR AWARDS CEREMONY AND LUNCHEON

MAY 3, 2016 ■ SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY - KORET AUDITORIUM

### WELCOME

Maria Jauregui, Co-Chair, Federal Employees of the Year Program;  
Court Administrator, U.S. Department of Justice



### PRESENTATION OF COLORS & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

U.S. Coast Guard, Base Alameda



### OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM

Linda Thomas, Supervisor of Distribution & Operations, U.S. Postal Service



### MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Patricia Raymond, Director of Communications, Social Security Administration



### KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Tom Leatherman, Superintendent, U.S. National Park Service



### PRESENTATION OF CHAIR AWARD

Gita Uppal, Co-Chair Federal Employee of the Year Program;  
Director, Strategy & Outreach, San Francisco VA Health Care System



### PRESENTATIONS TO FINALISTS AND WINNERS

"Feds Soaring High"



### CLOSING REMARKS

Sara Russell, Executive Director, San Francisco Bay Area Federal Executive Board



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## 2016 FEYA BLUE RIBBON PANEL

### MICHAEL BALDONADO

*Director San Francisco District Office, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (Retired)*

Michael Baldonado retired from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission on December 3, 2014, after a 35 year career with EEOC. During his tenure Mr. Baldonado served as an Attorney in the Office of Review & Appeals, an Administrative Judge in the Washington, D.C. Area Office, Special Assistant to Commissioner Tony E. Gallegos, Chief Administrative Judge in the San Francisco District Office, SFDO Deputy Director and SFDO Director. Since retirement, Mr. Baldonado has worked with the Council of Tribal Employment Rights and the Tribal Employment Rights Officers in the Pacific Northwest and Southwest Regions. He has also served as a pro bono Mediator for the EEOC SFDO Hearings Unit.

### LANEY WHITCANACK

*CEO, CORO Northern California*

The Coro Foundation is a nonpartisan nonprofit organization focused on redefining leadership. With substantive programs for youth, recent college graduates, and professionals, they cultivate emergent leaders at all stages of their lives and careers. As CEO, Laney oversees Coro's training programs including working with the Office of the President of the UC system on the UC-CORO system wide Leadership Collaborative, a leadership experience for UC executives. Laney oversees the Coro Fellows Program and she created CORO's Community Leadership Program and CORO's first-ever leadership program for UCSF faculty. Previously, Laney was Chief Community Officer and the Executive Vice President of Talent & Communications at Federated Media Publishing. Laney is currently an Advisor to Maybrooks.com, an online resource for working moms and serves on the board of directors of Project Glimmer. She also started The Princess Project in 2002, which engages thousands of girls and women across California each year in volunteer opportunities. Laney, a CORO alumna, received her B.A. from UCLA, a Masters in Education focused on Adult Leadership Development from Harvard University, and an MBA from the Simmons School of Management.

### ROBERT ADACHI

*Director of Forensic Audits, Association of Government Accountants, Environmental Protection Agency Pacific Southwest Region, Office of Inspector General (Retired)*

After graduating from UC, Berkeley, Bob Adachi worked for IRS for a number of years before joining the OIG for the Environmental Protection Agency. In EPA, he was involved in every type of audit, including performance audits, financial audits, and contract audits. He also provided assistance to the investigative staff in connection with grant and contract fraud. Bob received numerous awards during his career, including the PCIE and CIGIE Awards for Excellence, the EPA Gold Medals for commendable service to the Agency and the OIG Honor Award for Exceptional Contributions. Bob retired near the end of 2015.



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### MASTER CHIEF SEAN SMITH

*United States Coast Guard, Training Center Petaluma*

Master Chief Sean Smith, the Operations Specialist School Chief, spearheaded a change to Coast Guard wide policy enabling junior members to advance as soon as they become eligible. This change benefited the service's most junior members enabling them to receive the compensation for advancement while also allowing them to arrive at their new duty stations wearing the rank of Petty Officer. In the Coast Guard, becoming a Petty Officer is a major career milestone and signifies not only an advancement but also that a member has earned a career field and is part of a larger community.

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### PETTY OFFICER SHELDON WILLIAMS

*United States Coast Guard*

Petty Officer Williams sets a great example of promoting equal opportunity and diversity. He goes above and beyond the call of duty to volunteer at the Oakland Military Institute high school. He coaches a wide range of children from differing backgrounds using insightful mentoring techniques and serving as a distinguished role model. His efforts taught the students the benefits of team work while bolstering concepts of honor and respect. He developed and presented an outstanding Native American Month presentation lauded by Commander, Coast Guard Pacific Area. He's an active member of the Asian American Pacific-Islander and African-American committees.



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## LIEUTENANT STEVEN C. BLUM

*United States Coast Guard, Base Alameda*

Over the last six months Lieutenant Steven Blum dramatically improved the resiliency of over 2,100 Coast Guard personnel and their families in the Bay Area. Prior to that, as a construction manager working on Staten Island, New York, Lieutenant Blum managed \$4M in Hurricane Sandy restoration projects at Coast Guard Sector New York. Working 70-80 hours per week, he restored critical operational capabilities to the unit responsible for maritime safety, security and stewardship for the Port of New York, New Jersey, and the Hudson River.

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## HIGHER LEVEL ASSEMBLY VALUATION SUPPORT TEAM

*United States Coast Guard Petaluma*

The Higher Level Assembly Valuation Support Team at U.S. Coast Guard Training Center Petaluma, displayed superb teamwork and coordination by completing two major milestones in the project, significantly enhancing the Coast Guard's ability to account for electronic assets and improve the management of limited resources. Operating under aggressive timelines, the team collaborated with over 40 national and international manufacturers and successfully reviewed over 1000 historical procurement documents to properly assign financial value to nearly 3700 electronic components. These components were organized to streamline property reporting

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## LTC JEFFERY PALAZZINI

*United States Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District*

LTC Jeff Palazzini is the Deputy Commander for the Sacramento District, directly overseeing 80 administrative and logistics staff who, in turn, supported almost 900 engineers and scientists fulfilling our mission. In his first job supervising and working with civilians, Jeff has demonstrated a remarkable agility in leadership that has completely transformed the morale of his subordinates and directly enhanced the efficiency of this organization. From efficiency gains in our GSA fleet vehicle process, to rebuilding supply accountability, Jeff has reconnected his employees to the delivery of our mission and affected the morale and quality of life across the organization.

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## LT JOHNATHAN REBUCK

*United States Coast Guard, Training Center Petaluma*

LT Jonathan Rebeck is a registered professional Civil Engineer with USCG Training Center Petaluma Facilities Engineering. He is responsible for the review of design packages and performs construction management to support \$315M in infrastructure. He managed inspection and partnered with engineers, contracting, and contractors to execute 43 construction projects totaling \$17.2M. When faced with differing site conditions, he has undertaken complex civil engineering designs in order to keep projects on track and within budget. During construction, he coordinates contractors and customers ensuring successful construction completion with no interruption in the execution of the mission

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## 2016 PEER SCREENING COMMITTEE

CHRIS BROSS  U.S. General Services Administration

SHELLY DUNN  Internal Revenue Service

JUDY FASSLER  U.S. Department of Justice

REBECCA GALINDO  U.S. Customs and Immigration Service, DHS

ADRANNA GOMEZ  Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

CASEY GRIFFIN  Internal Revenue Service

LESLIE GRIFFIN  Internal Revenue Service

ALICE GUMARU  U.S. Department of Justice

BARBARA HERRERA  Internal Revenue Service

FARLEY HOWELL  Federal Emergency Management Agency, DHS

GORETTI LYSEK  Internal Revenue Service

ANA MADRIGAL  U.S. Customs and Immigration Service, DHS

JAMIE MARINCOLA  U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

CHRIS MATTHEWS  U.S. General Services Administration

ANTHONY MIRA  Transportation Security Administration, DHS

VEDA PERKINS  Internal Revenue Service

SHARON RUMMERY  U.S. Customs and Immigration Service, DHS

LORENE SAMS  Internal Revenue Service

MARCIE STONE  Federal Emergency Management Agency, DHS

ROBERT TREFAULT  U.S. Officer of Personnel Management

ANA TRAN  U.S. Department of Justice



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**The San Francisco Bay Area Federal Executive Board's** Federal Employees of the Year Awards recognize outstanding federal employees in the San Francisco Bay Area and Sacramento region. The nominees demonstrated exceptional and noteworthy performance and results, outstanding leadership, innovative approaches to assignments, and/or continuous improvement of procedures and processes in one of the following awards categories during 2014-2015.

**CHAIR AWARD** ■ The Board of Directors Chair Award is bestowed to recognize and honor an organization or individual who has given exceptional service to the citizens of the United States.

**ACQUISITION AND CONTRACTING** ■ Recognizes individuals or teams employed in the contracting profession who have shown exceptional performance and results in promoting innovative acquisition solutions, creating contracting processes or awarding contract actions that demonstrate substantial savings and efficiency to the customer/taxpayer, increasing small business contract/subcontract participation resulting in a positive economic impact to the local community, and/or awarding contracts under extreme challenges and making selfless commitment and sacrifice to the mission. Positions include but are not limited to Contract Specialists, Contracting Officers, Contingency Contracting Officers, Procurement Analysts, Cost/Price Analysts, Acquisition Policy Specialists, and Small Business Specialists.

**ADMINISTRATIVE AND CLERICAL** ■ For an individual or team who performs administrative professional or clerical duties, and has shown exceptional performance and/or results. Job series examples: Personnel Staffing/Classification Assistant, Budget Assistant, Administrative Assistant or Officer, Secretary, Clerk-Typist, Supply Clerk, or clerical support and equivalent positions, Administrative Assistant, etc.

**CIVIL OR CRIMINAL LAW ENFORCEMENT** ■ For an individual or team who performs civil or criminal law enforcement, and has shown exceptional performance and/or results. Job series examples: Civil Investigators, Civil Attorneys, Special Agents, Border Patrol Agents, Immigration and Naturalization Agents, FBI Agents, Drug Enforcement Agents, etc.

**CUSTOMER SERVICE** ■ For an individual or team in any category or position who has shown exceptional performance and/or results by demonstrating outstanding internal and/or external customer service.

**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT AND DIVERSITY** ■ For an individual or team in any category or position who has shown exceptional performance and/or results in promoting equal employment and diversity in the workplace, among these areas: civil rights, special emphasis, affirmative employment, and/or diversity and inclusion.

**MANAGEMENT** ■ For an individual or team of managers, supervisors, or team leaders, in any category or position who has/have shown exceptional performance and/or results using leadership skills, coaching, empowering, rewarding, and recognizing employees or teams.

**PROFESSIONAL** ■ For an individual or team employed in any of the professions and specialized fields that have shown exceptional performance and/or results. The absence of a degree will not disqualify a nominee in this category. Nominees may be employed at any level of professional work, but they will be compared, and should be nominated, based on their competence, efficiency, and accomplishments in their professional field. Job series examples: writer-editor, program analysts, program specialists, legal, social services, accounting, statistics, etc.

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## SCOTT WELCH

*United States Coast Guard*

Scott Welch devoted 1,568 off-duty hours to the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps, a national organization dedicated to helping young Americans realize personal achievement and success through a voluntary program that teaches basic seamanship, self-reliance, leadership, and teamwork in a safe, structured, and disciplined setting. He led 12 adult volunteer officers and 45 cadets, aged 10-17, through unit inspections, regional Seamanship Challenges, advanced training exercises, honor guard events, and community outreach. During a period of reduced financial support, Scott Welch grew his program by maximizing use of \$20,000 budget, raising \$7,000, and arranging sponsorship from the local area.

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## EUGENE MOTHERSHEAD

*United States Coast Guard, Base Alameda*

Eugene Mothershead, the sole Alarm Technician for Coast Guard Island in Alameda, maintains over 50 fire alarm, security, and communications systems on a facility with 700k square feet of building space. In addition, in the past two years he oversaw \$150k of new contracted alarm installations, and saved the Coast Guard \$20K by designing and installing a new barracks fire alarm system himself. He greatly enhanced work safety for over 2,100 personnel by managing 50 fire drills annually and routinely going beyond what is asked of him, such as providing 24-hour alarm system support for Coast Guard's mission critical command centers.

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## DANIEL STANDLEY

*United States Coast Guard, Training Center Petaluma*

Daniel Standley is a heating, ventilation and air conditioning maintenance mechanic in the Training Center Petaluma Facilities Engineering Division. Mr. Standley personally completed 547 work orders while providing amazing results. Mr. Standley was a technical advisor for a \$4.5M Utility Energy Services Contract project that included the installation of 8 hydronic boilers. He was also responsible for the \$20K emergency installation of 11 furnaces in Coast Guard housing, minimizing any loss of heating to residents. He provided on the job training to an active duty machinery technician that helped him acquire a universal HVAC certification.

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## REBECCA ARAKAKI

*United States Coast Guard, Pacific Area Command*

Storekeeper First Class Rebecca Arakaki is recognized for her exceptional performance in financial account management while being assigned to Coast Guard Island for the Pacific Area Command by managing over \$109 million dollars. She helped implement and develop new accounting procedures to obligate and manage accounts. This had a direct impact in data integrity allowing senior management to reallocate funds and improved operational readiness. SK1 Arakaki recognized customer support as a critical factor in Coast Guard operations and provided superior account management support to all units and staff so they can focus on operational missions.

## AWARD CATEGORIES DEFINED



## SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

## TRADES AND CRAFTS

## UNIFORMED MILITARY



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**ANNA K. REIBER**

*Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services*

Anna Reiber volunteers at the Marine Mammal Center in Sausalito nurturing injured and orphaned seals and sea lions. Last spring they cared for a record 200 seals at once. "During the busy time in spring, I go in at 7 p.m. and get home at 2 or 3 a.m. I chose Thursday Night Crew because I didn't want to give up my weekends. I can make it through Fridays [in the office] with coffee." Reiber grew up volunteering at a wildlife rehabilitation center that cared for eagles, cougars, and bears. She brings coworkers into the Center for volunteerism as well.

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**ROCKY AND VALLEY FIRE RESPONSE TEAM**

*Department of Veterans Affairs, San Francisco VA Health Care System*

Northern California experienced an especially devastating wildfire season in the summer of 2015. Both the Rocky and Valley Fires severely impacted veterans who receive care at the Clearlake VA Clinic – part of the San Francisco VA Health Care System. The response team worked diligently to maintain clinic operations while providing key services to affected veterans on the ground. Through both fires, the team went above and beyond the call of duty to take care of the Veteran community in extraordinarily difficult circumstances.

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**RICARDO SOTELO**

*United States Coast Guard*

Petty Officer Ricardo Sotelo has demonstrated an exemplary dedication to selfless service through community outreach programs and internationally expanded his efforts into Mexico. While balancing a full-time workload as the U.S. Coast Guard Base Alameda's Naval Engineering Department electrician shop leader, Petty Officer Ricardo Sotelo persistently devoted hundreds of volunteer hours towards civil betterment with many local community projects. He utilized his extensive professional military training to assist families within the community by improving their overall safety, fitness, nutritional awareness, and education. His consistent altruism as a civil servant is a true inspirational model for others to emulate.

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**VETERANS FUNDRAISING TEAM**

*Department of Veterans Affairs*

Mr. Brad Blackburn and Mr. Tim Hum are employees with the Department of Veterans Affairs, Oakland Regional Office. Both enthusiastic motorcyclists, Mr. Blackburn and Mr. Hum formed a chapter of the Illuminati Motorcycle Club in the Sacramento area three years ago. Mr. Blackburn and Mr. Hum helped raise \$10,000 for U.S. Army Veteran Christian Valle, a double-amputee, who was in need of a home. Valle lost both his legs while serving in Iraq and the club's fundraiser took him closer to a mortgage-free home. Mr. Blackburn and Mr. Hum's motorcycle club also participate in other charity events throughout the year.

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**SCIENTIFIC OR TECHNICAL** ■ For an individual or team employed in any scientific or technical field who has shown exceptional performance and/or results. The absence of a degree will not disqualify a nominee in this category. Nominees may be employed at any level of professional work, but they will be compared, and should be nominated, based on their competence, efficiency, and accomplishments in their field. Job series examples: physical sciences, biological sciences, medicine, chemistry, architecture, mathematics, technology, engineering, technician, drafting, information technology.

**SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY** ■ For an individual or team who, through volunteering services on their own time, has forged a bridge between federal employees and the service needs of their community in which they live. Examples: time and effort directed toward projects of civil betterment and/or voluntary organizations that serve individual or community needs.

**TRADES AND CRAFTS** ■ For an individual or team employed in Wage Grade positions, or equivalent military positions, related to a specific trade or craft, who have shown exceptional performance and/or results. Job series examples: Warehousing, Machining, Electrical, Catering, Custodial, Printing, etc.

**UNIFORMED MILITARY (REGULAR OR RESERVE)** ■ For an individual or team of uniformed military personnel in any field who have shown exceptional performance and/or results for outstanding performance of duty. This category includes military officials who are based at any of the nine-county Bay Area installations.

AWARD  
CATEGORIES  
DEFINED

On the following pages the San Francisco Bay Area Federal Executive Board is proud to present  
the 2016 nominees for the Federal Employee of the Year Awards



**FEDERAL EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR AWARDS**



**BARBARA BROWN**

*United States Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service*

Barbara Brown is an outstanding professional, administrator, and college. She helps run eight large collection of-fices and assists with administrative duties for three of my colleagues that are without clerical help. She has done an outstanding job in helping our territory complete its mission. Her professional knowledge, resourcefulness, and dedication to duty have contributed immeasurably to the achievements of the organization

**LILLIAN FINE**

*United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service*

Lillian Fine's exceptional customer service and work performance exceeds expectations and are the hallmarks of Lilly Fine's accomplishments as an employee of to the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service agency. Since Lillian Fine joined the FNS Western Regional Office as a program technician in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Division, she has proven to be a highly dependable employee, exceptional teamworker, and dedicated civil servant who consistently enriches those she serves with an unwavering sense of professionalism, dedication and a can-do positive attitude.

**INTAKE PROCESSING CENTER TEAM**

*United States Department of Veterans Affairs*

The Intake Processing Center Team, United States Department of Veterans Affairs implemented centralized mail processing as part of a transformation initiative to go paperless. The goal was to reduce the volume of incoming paper for compensation claims, and to eliminate the need to ship paper claims to an off-site scanning facility. Implementing an electronic mail system has contributed significantly to the improved processing times for disability claims.

**ESTELLA LYONS**

*United States Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service*

Estella Lyons ensures that the Tax Compliance, Revenue Agent and Collection offices run smoothly. She keeps on top of her work and supports her office by keeping things in pristine order and completing her work timely. Because of her dedication and unyielding service she has saved the government thousands of dollars paying wages and benefits. She's a faithful government employee who serves with a good heart. She keeps everyone smiling, which aides in maintaining a happy and productive team.



**MARK WALTON**

*United States Coast Guard, Training Center Petaluma, Facilities Engineering*

Mark Walton is a registered Mechanical Engineer with Training Center Petaluma Facilities Engineering. His primary duty is design for repair and renovations on base. As a collateral duty, he manages the water/wastewater operations. In this capacity, he showed outstanding forethought and coordination in transitioning the base from an outdated wastewater facultative pond system to a state of the art \$36M biological nutrient removal system without interruption of service or violation of discharge requirements. His ability to reach out and partner with the construction contractor, regulatory officials, the customer and other stakeholders, contributed to the overall success.

**PATRICK M. BROWN**

*United States Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service*

Patrick Brown is being nominated for his work as a subject matter expert for the Affordable Care Act. His diligent study and thorough explanation of the complicated details helped his peers and customers better understand the new law. His grasp of the information was essential in preparing the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Sites to apply the new law correctly. Patrick is proactive in elevating tax law issues that need clarification so that partners have the updated information they need to prepare correct returns. He makes himself available to his colleagues by participating in media events and the training of his partners.

**DISASTER RESPONSE TEAM**

*Federal Emergency Management Agency*

While working Typhoon Soudelor disaster, this team donated time and equipment to save a small, damaged zoo on their days off. They led the federal response and recovery for a major typhoon that impacted Saipan. They spent more than four months on the island with a team of professional responders supporting the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The one zoo on the island sustained major damage from the typhoon impacting the infrastructure and the animal's safety, health and welfare. The team purchased chainsaws with their own money and spent their weekend days off leading volunteers to clear debris in and around the zoo including damages to cages and facilities housing the animals.

**GIVING BACK TEAM**

*United States Treasury, Internal Revenue Service*

The Giving Back Team worked feverishly in collecting 250 canned goods for the Food Bank. They put together a Warm Coat Drive encouraging tenants from the building to contribute to the drive. They collected over 250 coats which they distributed to several local charitable organizations. They volunteered to be key workers for the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) where they exceeded their goal.



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**DR. KAREN SEAL**

*United States Department of Veterans Affairs, San Francisco VA Health Care System*

Dr. Karen Seal is a truly engaged VA physician-researcher in that her research, clinical care and systems/policy work have seamlessly and reciprocally informed one another leading to meaningful improvements in VA care. Over the past 24 months, despite severe cut-backs in research funding, she has overseen a thriving research program, received multiple grants, mentored trainees, and published high-impact papers. Furthermore, she has used her research to transform front-line clinical care of some of our most vulnerable patients, while working to change medical center policy to improve safety in opioid prescribing and increase access to mental health care.

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**PEDRO SULLIVAN**

*United States Coast Guard*

Petty Officer Sullivan is an exceptional technician with a thorough knowledge and understanding of all computer systems. He is well-rounded, with firsthand experience on several platforms within the afloat and ashore community. Through his vast experience and personal passion, his knowledge and expertise is often leveraged to resolve complex issues. When tasked with upgrading the entire District to Windows 7, he relied on his specialized skills to create complex scripts that enabled the local support command to upgrade over 3,000 machines before the mandated due date. His knowledge and technical acumen has been instrumental asset in supporting Coast Guard missions.

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**STANLEY TONG**

*United States Environmental Protection Agency*

Stanley Tong is EPA Region 9's senior engineer for commercial/industrial air pollution regulations. His analysis of pollution controls for a wide range of activities led to many upgraded requirements. He coordinates EPA's analysis of analytic methods for measuring pollution in California, which develops more methods than all other States combined. For example, he recently helped develop methods for measuring trace levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and dust in the arid southwest. He also provided primary staff support in changing EPA's general definition of VOCs to address chemical reactivity. This definition is copied in hundreds of regulations nationwide.

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**LINH UNG**

*United States Department of Treasury, United States Mint*

Linh Ung has demonstrated excellence since June of 2014 when she joined the team at the San Francisco Mint as the supervisory laser engraving engineer. Linh has become an expert in the use of laser frost techniques and has developed frost patterns never before attempted at the San Francisco Mint. Her development of the laser equipment has led to a new and improved approach to creating an enhanced frost on proof coins. As a result, the new enhanced finish on the coins has expanded the numismatic programs for the U.S. Mint, San Francisco.



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**ALEXANDER MATHEWS**

*United States Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service*

Alexander Mathews has dedicated time and energy assisting other support administrator as well as providing administrative support to six IRS locations. He's provided excellent support to management and staff. He orders much needed supplies in order for reports to be processed. Because of his great work ethic and excellent communication skills each of the offices are operating in an easy manner.

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**ERIKA TUNGLAND**

*United States Army, Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District, Executive Office*

Erika Tunglund is the Sacramento District's crucial key to successfully hiring, welcoming and rewarding a staff of 1000 employee's. A tireless worker, she has empowered management with timely advice and information to survive a significant generational transition and find talent. Despite the surge of recruitments in the past two years, Erika retains her delightful disposition and incredible attention to detail. She has leveraged social media for recruiting, refined policies to streamline decisions, and facilitated the creation of an Awards Board to improve fairness and equity of employee recognition. A spectacular performance throughout a pivotal workforce transition.

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**ROGELIO ZULUETA**

*United States Department of Veterans Affairs, San Francisco VA Health Care System*

Rogelio Zulueta has been instrumental in providing better surgical access to veterans by cutting surgical scheduling errors, providing excellent customer service, and going above and beyond the requirements of his position. He helped facilitate better customer service to both veterans and healthcare professionals. He identified communication issues between each surgical section's residents and their operating room schedulers. He quickly implemented meetings that led to new policies that resolved the communication issues that were causing a high number of scheduling errors. He implemented a new employee training program.

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**GREGORY CRESPO**

*United States Housing and Urban Development, Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity*

Gregory Crespo investigated California loan modification companies for violating the Fair Housing Act. Greg's investigations showed that the companies targeted Latino homeowners at risk of losing their homes to foreclosure, charged the homeowners thousands of dollars, and failed to provide meaningful loan modification assistance, which precipitated the homeowners' properties being foreclosed. In January 2016, HUD issued a charge of discrimination, concluding that Greg's investigations showed Fair Housing Act violations. This landmark HUD charge, representing the first of its kind in the nation, would not have been possible without Greg's exceptional investigations.



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## DOCUMENT AND BENEFIT FRAUD TASK FORCE TEAM

*Department of Homeland Security, ICE Homeland Security Investigations*

Homeland Security Investigations San Francisco's Document and Benefit Fraud Task Force Team is an inter-agency task force composed of officers from diverse federal agencies including Departments of State and Labor, and unites the abilities of federal departments to combat immigration benefit fraud. The team pursued unique investigations that required innovative techniques in order to enforce federal law and to protect the integrity of our immigration and financial systems, resulting in an average of eight nationally-ranked Significant Cases. This work garnered significant media attention and resulted in a change in government policy to close the vulnerabilities exposed by these investigations.

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## DANIEL ROBINSON

*United States Treasury, Internal Revenue Service*

Daniel Robinson is an outstanding field officer. He was nominated for the Michael Dillon award this last year and was Revenue Officer of the Year for the Western Area, Small Business/Self Employed Division of the Internal Revenue Service. Daniel has served as a subject matter expert in several complex topics such as suits, seizures, nominee and alter-ego investigations. He has mentored several senior Revenue Officers not just in his group but in the Oakland and Sacramento as well. He has served as a cooperating Revenue Officer for accepted fraud referrals involving tax evasion, bank fraud, structuring, wire fraud and mail fraud. Daniel has also provided recommendations for procedural changes to IRS seizure policies to a National Task Force on seizures.

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## TACTICAL ANALYTICAL UNIT TEAM

*Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection, San Francisco Field Office*

The Tactical Analytical Unit combines analysis, field work, and liaison efforts to identify and address illicit activity impacting Customs and Board Protection and Law Enforcement Partners, both foreign and domestic. CBP's investment in the TAU provides a mechanism for law enforcement partners to investigate and/or exploit international nexuses. During 2015, the TAU's endeavors resulted in over 180 enforcement actions (seizures, arrests, search warrants) encompassing narcotics violations, terrorism related investigations, crimes against children, weapons smuggling, and the capture of fugitives in the US and abroad.

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## ACQUISITION TEAM FOR D2D BLANKET PURCHASE AGREEMENT TEAM

*United States General Services Administration*

The Acquisition Data to Decisions Blanket Purchase Agreement Team awarded a five year contract to Small Disadvantaged Businesses with a 23.52% savings. The team established this Purchase Agreement to acquire specialized IT services and software licensing, and did so in less than 165 days. The D2D Platform provides business process solutions, based on a first-class, custom-tailored architecture that is secure, easy-to-maintain, and scalable.

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## JIM WILSON

*United States Coast Guard*

Jim Wilson was faced with significant challenges resulting from the unexpected Presidential directive to improve cyber security across the federal government. He lost more than half his staff to support Coast Guard Cyber Command in its wake. Despite the new direction, and increased workload, he remained steadfast, rapidly adjusting priorities to fit the new paradigm. He assisted the Pacific Area Commander in preparing for their first Cyber Readiness Inspection, facilitated the upgrade of 7,500 computers to Microsoft Windows 7, and completed 15 violation reports. This resulted in achieving an unprecedented 96% on the Federal Information Security Management Act cyber scorecard.

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## BASE ALAMEDA SMALL BOAT SHOP TEAM

*United States Coast Guard, Base Alameda's Naval Engineering Department*

Boat Repair Team U.S. Coast Guard Base Alameda's Naval Engineering Department provided exceptional technical services while completing 100 boat maintenance, repair, and major overhaul activities to support Coast Guard cutters on the west coast. The team spearheaded the Coast Guard's Centralized Cutter Boat Pooling pilot project. This innovative approach restored boats to "like new" condition and allowed ships to deploy as fully operational assets critical to the Coast Guard's missions at-sea. Above and beyond the routine maintenance activities, the team responded to and corrected 35 catastrophic equipment casualties, often trailering boats overnight as far as San Diego and Seattle.

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## CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN PRIMARY CARE TEAM

*San Francisco VA Health Care System Center*

The San Francisco VA Health Care System Center of Excellence for Primary Care Education is at the forefront of teaching interprofessional learners how to deliver team-based patient-center care. The program trains internal medicine residents, nurse practitioner students and other health professions learners. Trainees and faculty work closely with clinical care teams to deliver superb patient care. Their innovative teaching has been recognized nationally by the Patient Centered Primary Care Collaborative and the National Center for Interprofessional Practice. They have been highlighted in publications, podcasts, and national presentations.

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## HEMATOLOGY/ONCOLOGY TEAM

*United States Department of Veterans Affairs, San Francisco VA Health Care System*

The Hematology/Oncology Multi-Disciplinary Team has consistently delivered research based integrated, personalized care over the cancer continuum, starting at diagnosis and continuing through treatment, response, cure and/or recurrence, survivorship, and end of life. The team consists of Medical Oncologists, staff and advanced practice nurses, pharmacist, social worker, dietitian, palliative care and clerical staff. The team is highly functional, delivering compassionate care that is reviewed by the group daily. A multi-disciplinary huddle is held prior to every clinic day with an integrated plan developed for therapy and supportive care.



**REGION 9 EL NIÑO TASK FORCE TEAM**

*Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region IX*

In the summer of 2015, the National Weather Service predicted a very strong El Niño season, with above average participation for Winter 2015-2016, particularly in drought stricken California. Region 9's Regional Administrator Robert Fenton created an El Nino Task Force, its mission to prepare the Region by engaging federal, state, local, tribal, and community partners to identify and manage El Niño's many threats. The Task Force focused on four areas: Development of a decision support tool and trigger points; Examination of geographic areas and critical infrastructure most vulnerable to potential El Niño impacts; Identification and remediation of gaps and shortfalls; preparedness and out-reach messaging.

**FRANK STRONA**

*United States Health and Human Services, Center for Disease Control*

Frank Strona provided outstanding technical assistance during his deployment for the CDC Ebola response, serving as the Health Promotion coordinator for Guinea. He also responded to the request for deployment for Ebola response activities, extending his deployment through December, 2015 and serving as a team lead for mechanisms. Through his deployment, Frank was instrumental in implementing funding processes; including contracts and funding opportunity announcements. During his role as the Lead for Mechanisms on the International Task Force Ebola Response, Frank added his background in systems and technology towards the initial development of an integrated SharePoint system for funding mechanisms.

**ANNA SUTTMANN**

*Department of Veterans Affairs, San Francisco VA Health Care System*

Anna Suttman has been a passionate advocate for creating processes for purchased care that are veteran-centered and driven by performance data. The congressional mandate to purchase non-VA care for veterans did not come with detailed guidance for the day-to-day implementation. She has done this by bringing together all purchased care programs in geriatrics under one reporting umbrella, the Community Care Oversight Committee (CCOC). The hallmark of this work is the combination of shared business and clinical expertise that has effectively addressed multiple changes in VA purchased care; advocating for fluid processes that better meet the needs of the Veterans.

**PAUL WHITELEY**

*Office of Personnel Management, Agency Compliance and Evaluation, San Francisco field Office*

Paul Whiteley demonstrates extraordinary service in times of challenging conditions. Through loss of seasoned employees and an influx of new junior evaluators, Paul Whiteley has been steadfast in his efforts to provide continuity and thoughtful insights to new evaluators while continuing to demonstrate exceptional client engagement as lead evaluator to the Department of Defense. He represents OPM with dedication to the mission and to the federal workforce.



**DMDC LIFECYCLE ACQUISITION TEAM**

*United States General Services Administration*

The (Defense Manpower Data Center) DMDC Lifecycle Acquisition team supports major programs and initiatives within the Department of Defense and maintains the largest archive of personnel, manpower, training, security and financial data with the DOD. The team determined that multiple contracts could be merged to leverage efficiency and savings. They reviewed requirements, discussed operational approaches and developed and flexible acquisition vehicle to ensure DMDCs objectives were met. The task order was awarded for a total of five years to a Small Business with a 23.1% savings.

**MARILYN RENEE JEWELL**

*United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service*

Renee Jewell is a Procurement Analyst, Contracting Officer, Small Business Specialist, and Program Manager for the U.S. Forest Service Region 5. She has demonstrated exceptional performance coordinating the agency's acquisition systems, increased the Region's small business compliance from 2% to 79%, and served as a Regional Acquisition Management Training Coordinator. She routinely represents the agency in small business panel discussions and has managed several large-scale renewable energy project contracts paving the way for the Region's first net zero facility and serving as the agency representative to the Federal Aggregated Solar Procurement Pilot.

**TRACY WILMOT**

*United States General Services Administration, Pacific Rim*

Tracy Wilmot leads the contracting oversight and policy effort for the Region, and he is a mentor to every contracting officer in the Region. As the Division only formed 18 months ago, his effort to standardize policy and implement best practices has resulted in the Acquisition Management Division rising from a collection of 50 independently operating contracting officers to a cohesive cadre of acquisition professionals. He is engaged in almost every acquisition initiative happening in the country. He is an important sounding board for the national force. He makes valuable, tangible contributions every day. Tracy's initiative and persistence, it is likely that the Region would have failed to achieve success in what is being called the most important national effort for the contracting workforce in years.

**JASON S. BENBOW**

*United States Coast Guard, Coast Guard Training Center Petaluma*

Chief Warrant Officer Jason Benbow manages a team of over 20 personnel and oversees the records of more than 400 members assigned to Coast Guard Training Center Petaluma and handles the administrative tasks associated with an average monthly throughput of nearly 250 students. Jason Benbow has established himself as the expert on Coast Guard policy and is the Command's go-to person on all personnel matters. He manages a team responsible for maintaining the records of over 400 permanently assigned personnel and the management of students assigned to schools at the Training Center.



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## TERRY BROWN

*United States Coast Guard, Pacific Area*

Terry Brown U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area Awards Manager is responsible for administering the awards program for the entire Coast Guard Pacific Area which spans all Coast Guard units west of the Rocky Mountains, including Alaska and Hawaii, and five Deployable Specialized Forces units located on the East Coast. Mr. Brown is the subject matter expert and the primary conduit to the Coast Guard Headquarters Awards Program Manager located in Washington, D.C. As the sole guardian of the awards program he ensures swift and accurate recognition for the 13,000 Coast Guard members assigned to the Pacific Area.

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## CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER TEAM

*United States Coast Guard, Coast Guard Training Center Petaluma*

The Child Development Center at Coast Guard Training Center Petaluma consists of a staff of 16 team members. They provide developmental childcare to 56 Coast Guard and Department of Defense dependents. In the past 24 months they have demonstrated consistent excellence by maintaining the highest standards which can be applied to childcare including accreditation in the National Association for the Education of Young Children. At the same time they were able to improve the school lunch program, implement parent discounts, develop innovative curriculum tracking tools and exceed their training requirements.

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## DISASTER RESPONSE TEAM

*Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region IX*

The Disaster Response FEMA Region IX Team supported responding to a record number of typhoons and hurricanes in the Pacific along with other disasters and threats in the region. FEMA Region IX and key federal agency partners in the area provided strong and effective response and recovery operations to major disaster events to include the California wildfires and typhoons in the Pacific including a major hit to Saipan. This team response provided critical support to save and sustain lives, reduce damage and help communities recover as they sacrificed many long days, weeks, months of service away from families and their on-going duties.

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## EUREKA VA CLINIC TOWN HALL COUNCIL TEAM

*United States Department of Veterans Affairs, San Francisco VA Health Care System, Eureka VA Clinic*

The Eureka VA Clinic Town Hall Council Team is part of the San Francisco VA Health Care System. It was formed in 2015 to improve communication between Eureka VA Clinic staff and the local veteran community. The group of dedicated VA employees and veterans meets biweekly to discuss ideas for improving the clinic environment and ensuring that Eureka Veterans have access to the care they need. Since establishing the Town Hall Council, the Eureka VA Clinic has seen an improvement in patient satisfaction and a decrease in patient complaints. This dedicated team works hard to bring the best care possible to Eureka veterans.



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## OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS TEAM

*Department of Veterans Affairs, San Francisco VA Health Care System*

The Office of Public Affairs Team, San Francisco VA Health Care System works diligently to communicate the Health Care System Director's vision to all staff and to drive employee engagement. The Director relies on feedback from the annual VA All Employee Survey to make substantive changes in the workplace and improve employee morale, but employee participation in the survey has been low in the past. In 2014, the Public Affairs team sought to turn that trend around. As a result of the team's creative, targeted communication efforts, the All Employee Survey participation rate increased by 80% from 2014.

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## JAMES PHILLIPOSIAN

*United States General Services Administration*

James Philliposian over the past 24 months, has managed some of the most challenging projects in the region's most difficult projects and is viewed as a trusted advisor. James Philliposian has taken on the largest leased project in the region; the EPA Region 9 Regional Headquarters. He is also currently managing the SSA Mountain View project, which became challenging due to the market constraints in Silicon Valley. In order to maintain forward momentum on these projects he has worked with GSA senior management and senior management within the client agencies.

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## PREPAREDNESS AMBASSADORS TEAM

*Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region IX*

The Preparedness Ambassadors Team is a unique effort linking preparedness messaging to the San Andreas movie nationwide release. An accompanying Public Service Announcement narrated by Dwayne Johnson, enabled Region IX's Preparedness Ambassadors, partnered with regional movie theaters, state/local emergency managers, other federal agencies, and Warner Bros. Studios, to promote preparedness to a receptive audience. These Preparedness Ambassadors used their weekends giving demonstrations and coordinating with a Hollywood celebrity to drive disaster awareness and action among Region IX's 38 million residents.

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## R6 ETA SMART TRAINING TEAM

*United States Department of Labor, Employment and Training, Division of Financial Management*

The Region 6 SMART (Strategies for Monitoring, Accountability, Risk-mitigation, and Transparency) training team of the Employment and Training Administration, Division of Financial Management and Administrative Services provided just-in-time, critical financial and administrative training to hundreds of grantees throughout Region 6 for the purpose of enhancing grantee operational integrity, increasing transparency and decreasing improper payments.



**APRIL G. CRAWFORD**

*Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service*

April Crawford is an invaluable member of the IRS. She is a technical expert on programs and her communication is outstanding. As our staff keeps shrinking, she has taken on additional duties and is the main instructor for new analysts. She also provides daily support and information to the Territory Managers. Along with her many duties, April has recently participated on several high-profile teams and assisted with several critical assignments that have had lasting positive impact on the area.

**BLANCA HERRERA**

*United States Department of Veterans Affairs*

Blanca Herrera has dedicated her entire Federal career to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Oakland Regional Office. As a member of the Director's Office, she has put in countless hours to provide exceptional service to both our internal and external customers. Due to a shortage of staff in the past year, Blanca Herrera voluntarily took on additional responsibilities to ensure the office continues its mission. In addition to her duties as the Training Manager, and Equal Employment Opportunity Manager, she became an advisor on Employee Relations, Local Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator, and Public Affairs Officer.

**CEFERINO ("CEF") MANANDIC**

*United States Coast Guard, Pacific Area*

Ceferino Manandic developed a multi-year Resource Proposal Tracker that displays all proposals affecting the Coast Guard Pacific Area region, with billet and funding reductions and additions clearly identified. The Tracker is an excellent archive, serves as an outstanding briefing tool for senior leaders, and facilitates a thorough review of proposals during each budget cycle. In the past two fiscal years, Mr. Manandic's systematic tracker review uncovered over \$10M in funding errors ranging from incorrect cost assumptions to misalignments between content and billet maps. Because the errors were discovered early in the budget cycle, they were promptly corrected.

**OAKLAND V.A, SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION RENO TEAM**

*United States Department of Veterans Affairs, Support Services Division*

The Oakland VA "Support Services Division Reno Team" accepted the Reno VA Finance and Accounting workload on July 1, 2015. The size of the Reno workload was an additional 25% of the Oakland VA Finance and Accounting workload. In these first 6-months, the team processed over \$2.5 million in Veterans benefits, while maintaining a swift 30-day turnaround time. The Oakland "SSD Reno Team" has successfully maintained the high quality and timeliness of support for the Reno VA Regional Office, including processing and managing Reno RO's Budget, Travel, Accounting and Finance, including a variety of Finance Transactions. This additional workload has been completed without any additional resources.



**FACILITIES ENGINEERING EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM**

*United States Coast Guard, Coast Guard Training Center Petaluma*

On December 11, 2014 a severe winter storm brought high winds and driving rains (about 7 inches in 1 day) into the North Bay area threatening operational continuity and resident safety. The Facilities Engineering Emergency Response Team safely executed a coordinated response to rapidly developing emergencies throughout the storm's duration. Actions included: constructing and diverting drainage culverts away from populated areas, clearing felled trees, performing emergency pumping operations from an overflowing retention pond, and conducting emergency waste water treatment operations. The sum of these efforts averted crisis and minimized damage, ensured the safety of staff, residents and students, and enabled the Center to carry on its mission.

**LUCEE ROSEMARIE FAN**

*Department of Homeland Security, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services*

Lucee Rosemarie Fan completed exceptional work as the USCIS Community Relations Officer expanding outreach into new areas, including libraries and schools, reaching underserved and remote communities, fostering collaborative relationships to effectively reach immigrant communities in Northern California. She developed and executed 70 outreach events for more than 4,000 attendees in 2014, and over 91 events in 2015 for over 3,000 attendees. Events were numerous and diverse, including the promotion of multi-language engagement, national immigration initiatives, fighting the unauthorized practice of law, and community education on benefit eligibility

**FNS WESTERN REGION SNAP E&T TEAM**

*United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service*

Food and Nutrition Service' Western Region Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Employment and Training Team goes above and beyond on a regular basis to provide excellent customer service to states and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program agencies. They are constantly making themselves available to answer questions, provide technical assistance, and working tirelessly on behalf of the program. This includes very challenging travel arrangements, working late, and functioning very effectively as a team to ensure that all agencies' needs and questions are addressed in a timely and accurate manner. The team is constantly looking at new ways to improve communication, services, and program access.

**STACEY M. FONG**

*United States General Services Administration, Public Building Service, Design and Construction*

Stacey Fong has proven over the last 24 month her abilities to adapt to challenges presented in workplace projects both internally to GSA as well as with all of our federal customers. She provides guidance and execution to create federal work spaces that are innovative and inviting. She has been tasked with the restack of the Pacific Rim Regional headquarters to present 10 different alternatives to all division and staff offices for management decision.



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**JAMES HOANG**

*United States Social Security Administration*

James Hoang is a dedicated and valued employee. Throughout his more than 20 years with SSA, James has demonstrated his passion for public service by assisting members of the public and fellow employees. James is a master technician. Due to his knowledge and tenure, James is often the primary reference point for both management and peers. James regularly assists with outreach events, particularly those where his multilingual abilities can be of use. In sum, James is singularly responsible for the excellent level of quality the Sacramento office provides to the community.

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**LILA JAFFRAY**

*United States Department of Veterans Affairs, San Francisco VA Health Care System*

Lila Jaffray in her Department of Veterans Affairs career has been a champion to the visually impaired veteran community. She strives to bring advocacy to the rights of these veterans and promote integration for these individuals into our society. Lila Jaffray's dedication to veterans around the country has given veterans a sense of independence, confidence, pride and inspiration to live their lives to the fullest. She has an uplifting spirit and morale that brings a positive essence to the Department of Veterans Affairs. She held a "White Cane Safety Day" Educating staff, Veterans, and the community about how to recognize and assist those with vision loss.

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**AIXA KASSIM**

*United States Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service*

Aixa provides outstanding customer service in a variety of ways to internal and external customers. In addition to being an outstanding technical employee, Aixa provides extraordinary service by responding to requests efficiently, mentoring employees to develop their bankruptcy knowledge and she has participated in the KDTV Univision 14 Spanish Television show since 2005, answering multilingual questions from taxpayers and helping them with tax forms.

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**JEFFREY NEWMAN**

*United States Coast Guard*

Petty Officer Jeffrey Newman demonstrated exceptional leadership and unparalleled initiative when he volunteered to fill a technical gap created when nearly one-quarter of his host command was detailed to Washington DC. Despite an overwhelming workload, and continuous demands, he excelled. He orchestrated a broad range of subject matter experts to recapitalize all classified servers and 245 out-of-warranty computers aboard the Coast Guard's newest class of cutter: the BERTHOLF, WAESCHE, and STRATTON. His actions allowed all three National Security Cutters to meet federal cyber requirements and substantially raised the Coast Guard's overall Federal Information Security Management Act scorecard.



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**NICOLE BEESON**

*United States Coast Guard, District 11*

Nicole Beeson is the Sexual Assault Regional Coordinator for the U. S. Coast Guard's District 11, which encompasses California, Arizona, Nevada, and Utah. The position requires her to provide oversight and training to all Coast Guard members within her area. As the first coordinator in this position she was required to visit every county in all four states to establish a working relationship and understanding of the different processes for each when referring a victim of sexual assault. Being a part of the sexual assault response team in the community has enhanced awareness and services.

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**ELIZABETH BELENIS-SLATER**

*United States General Services Administration, Federal Acquisition Service, Customer Accounts & Research Division*

Elizabeth Belenis consistently demonstrates high energy, dedication and relentless commitment to improving processes, customer service and business building results. She ensures that her staff consistently provides solutions which are in the best interest of the client, providing them with the best value solutions for their current needs, always keeping the taxpayer in mind. She made several noteworthy contributions in 2015 significantly impacting GSA.

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**CLEANING THE AIR IN THE LOS ANGELES AIR BASIN TEAM**

*United States Environmental Protection Agency*

The Cleaning the Air in the Los Angeles Air Basin Team consisting of Wienke Tax, Carol Bohnenkamp, and Laura Yan-nayon, has delivered outstanding contributions to cleaner air in the Los Angeles Air Basin. As a direct result of their continuous and sustained roles as the EPA staff overseeing state and local efforts to improve air quality under the Clean Air Act, the Los Angeles Air Basin has achieved 20% and 40% reductions in ozone and particulate matter, respectively since 2004. These reductions have and will continue to lead to thousands of fewer cases of cardiovascular disease, asthma exacerbation, heart attacks, and premature deaths.

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**DIANA CIRIMELE**

*United States Coast Guard, Resource Management Division*

Diana Cirimele is recognized for her exceptional performance as the Pacific Area Budget Officer for the United States Coast Guard at Alameda, CA. With her expertise, she monitored and accounted for over \$80M each of the past two year for the whole western area to include Alaska and Hawaii. Diana Cirimele's excellent communication and analytical skills ensured Pacific Area achieved a closeout rate of 100% obligated the past two fiscal years. With her keen analysis she was able to identify various shortfalls in high essential areas which had a direct impact to the Coast Guard operational mission.



**JESSE WU**

*United States Housing and Urban Development, Public and Indian Housing*

Jesse Wu has exhibited exceptional leadership, communications and technical knowledge in assisting the San Francisco Housing Authority, Mayor's Office of Housing, and HUD in significantly improving the Public Housing portfolio in San Francisco. More importantly, Jesse's efforts have improved the lives of thousands of San Francisco citizens. Jesse has assisted in the rehabilitation, recapitalization and transfer of ownership for 4,584 units of Public Housing. As both the SFHA Portfolio Transformation team lead and more recently as the Acting San Francisco PIH Director Jesse Wu has shown leadership in coordinating and leading this transformation effort.

**TERRIE ZUIDERHOEK**

*Federal Emergency Management Agency, Recovery Division*

Terrie Zuiderhoek has dedicated 36 years to working disasters – helping those most in need after their lives are shaken by a catastrophic event. She has worked hundreds of disasters, touched thousands of survivors, and traveled hundreds of thousands of miles throughout her career to work recovery programs. People look to her as a pillar in the Agency, and her vast knowledge of island culture and strong partnerships solidify her unique role as FEMA's foremost technical expert on Pacific disasters.

**18F TEAM**

*United States General Services Administration OCSIT-18F*

The 18F Team is transforming how government technology is built for the American people. The team has launched over a dozen high-profile products for their customer agencies that are having a positive impact on the service delivery of the federal government. The 18F Team is a team of top-notch designers, developers, and product specialists inside of GSA. It serves as civic consultancy for the government enabling agencies to rapidly deploy tools and services that are easy to operate, cost efficient, and reusable.

**DR. CARLA ANDERSON**

*United States Department of Veterans Affairs, San Francisco VA Health Care System*

Dr. Carla Anderson took over a leadership role for about six months while motivating people around her. She saved the VA money and continued to provide excellent care even when the clinic was short staffed and providers were feeling burnt out. The staff and doctors all appreciate her devotion to the VA mission and dedication to helping those in need.



**OFFICE OF PATIENT CENTERED CARE TEAM**

*United States Department of Veterans Affairs, San Francisco VA Health Care System*

The Office of Patient Centered Care Team confronted unique challenges in 2014-2015, with nationwide concerns about the agency's integrity and transparency. At San Francisco VA, our Office of Patient Centered Care stood at the frontlines to hear and address veterans' concerns in a timely, substantive manner. The small OPCC team also reached out to veterans with a series of focus-groups and initiated new, proactive programs responsive to veterans' priorities. These efforts bore impressive results: complaints are trending downward, and our Survey-of-Healthcare-Experiences-of-Patients scores now exceed national averages across all composites.

**OFFICE OF THE REGION 9 FEDERAL ACQUISITION SERVICE**

*General Services Administration, Office of the Regional Commissioner*

The Office of the Regional Commissioner's staff provides innovation, professionalism, technical acumen, resulting in consummate customer service to internal customers. During the past 24 months, they have created and implemented a new communication tool to solicit feedback from employees, developed a very robust google site which is a repository of our knowledge management and operational/policy guidance, created a sponsor program for new employees on-boarding with the agency, and developed methods in which to streamline administrative processes.

**SALES BRANCH TEAM**

*United States General Services Administration, Personal Property Management*

GSA's Personal Property Management Sales Branch Team, through outstanding customer service, delivered unprecedented savings of over \$70 million in 2015 and \$72 million in 2014 for the American taxpayers. The Sales Team achieved record breaking sales and exceeded performance measures for two consecutive years by executing sales of federal personal property for hundreds of federal bureaus to thousands of buying customers. The Sales Branch supports federal agencies that no longer have a need for personal properties, which are re-used through competitive sales to the buying public, thus minimizing waste and prolonging a product's life cycle, ultimately saving taxpayers millions of dollars annually.

**SAN FRANCISCO YOUTH SERVICES TEAM**

*United States Department of Labor, Employment Training Administration*

The San Francisco Youth Services Team made significant contributions in increasing strategic alignment among youth programs at the local level and in improving overall effectiveness of Region Six youth grants. The Team brought together youth programs to exchange ideas and develop strategies for working better together, reducing duplication of service and strengthening services under the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. This event served as model for developing successful youth partnerships. Additionally, the Team designed and facilitated comprehensive program/fiscal training at a recent a "YouthBuild Peer to Peer" event. Another example of the Team's efforts in improving youth services regionally.



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**DENISE SHAWVER**

*Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service, Office of Chief Counsel*

Denise Shawver does provides extraordinary customer service to IRS Counsel. By providing the data needed to accomplish our mission, she personally partners with Counsel leadership to create brand new processes for obtaining and delivering the data needed to manage growing inventories with diminishing resources. Ms. Shawver uses the technologies we already have to provide information in a highly usable form, more efficiently and with extraordinary customer service. She does this in addition to her official duties and frequently on her own time. Ms. Shawver's extraordinary dedication has resulted in considerable organization efficiencies, and reflects well on all of us.

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**IDA SISNEROS**

*Department of Justice Executive Office for Immigration Review, Immigration Court*

Ida Sisneros is a Legal Assistant at the court. The San Francisco Immigration Court conducts hearings for people who have violated the United States immigration laws of which the majority are non-English speakers from Central & South American countries. She is fluent in Spanish and uses her language skills on a daily basis at the reception window where she constantly assist about 100 customers each week. At the reception window, Ida Sisneros is also the only Spanish speaking legal assistant available to assist the many customers who arrive each day. For these reasons, her help is a valuable asset to the court and should be recognized.

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**SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION, OUTREACH TEAM**

*United States Social Security Administration*

In 2015, San Francisco Region's leadership of the Social Security Administration conducted seven Community Leadership events and seven Community Public Town Hall events throughout California to provide education to both community leaders and the public about the impact of changing marriage rules regarding family benefits for the LGBT community. This collaborative outreach effort with The National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, along with participation from the CA State Assembly and Congressional leadership, ensured that individuals and their families were aware of Social Security policies and procedures with regards to the benefits SSA administers.

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**JACQUELINE SUEN**

*United States General Services Administration, Public Building Service, Client Solutions*

Jackie Suen is a Regional Account Manager for the 9t Circuit Federal Courts in GSA Region 9, Client Solutions Division. She has excelled in her position since she began her career in 2006. She previously worked with DHS and started in the Courts in 2012. In the last 24 months, she has gone above and beyond to improve GSA's relationship with the Courts, both in the 9th Circuit and nationally. In the summer of 2014, Jackie served as the National Account Manager. During this time, GSA and the Courts began an in-depth Service Validation Initiative.



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**OAKLAND TERRITORY MANAGERS**

*Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service*

Team Oakland has implemented a new and improved approach to field investigations. Team Oakland consistently fosters cooperation and teamwork not only among the staff but across the Area. This team's technical expertise and commonsense approach are crucial to the continued high level of service our staff and customers have come to rely on. They took the lead in initiating new protocols focused upon efforts to maximize field time and facilitate better customer service and prompt case resolution. They drafted a strategic plan for the Area to improve field presence. They have taken actions to promote employee-focused attention to the importance of approaching work from the customer's perspective. Their professional knowledge, resourcefulness, and dedication to duty have contributed immeasurably to the achievements of the organization.

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**ANDREANA OSOSKI**

*Department of Veterans Affairs, San Francisco VA Health Care System*

Andreana Ososki demonstrated extraordinary service and management during a challenging year when our Geriatrics & Extended Care Service Line experienced a transition in leadership. Our Associate Chief of Staff stepped down right before Andreana was hired as the GEC Business Manager. Andreana quickly adapted to her new leadership role and provided critical administrative management that kept the service line running and providing exceptional care to thousands of vulnerable older veterans. The service line is complex with unique program structures and over 60 staff. Andreana was the glue that held everything together during this year of transition.

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**SAN FRANCISCO FIELD OFFICE ADJUDICATIONS AND FRAUD MANAGEMENT TEAM**

*Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection*

San Francisco Field Office Adjudications and Fraud Management team's outstanding efforts have created positive results in the profession of administering our nation's immigration benefits. The team implemented innovative cross-training to reinforce the importance of early fraud detection, develop better skills in interviewing, and produce better fraud referrals. A program of recognition and rewarding employees with "kudos" emails, a traveling trophy, coaching with integrated team visits, and empowering with enhanced training has led to better production results. The management team truly embodies the U.S. CIS core values of respect and ingenuity.

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**YNC DIONNE WRIGHT**

*United States Coast Guard, Training Center Petaluma*

YNC Dionne Wright works is the Assistant Housing Officer at USCG Training Center Petaluma where she manages all aspects of administration of the 127 unit base housing inventory. Her primary responsibilities include housing assignments, administering the housing inspection program, responding to resident concerns, and supervising the housing petty officer. YNC Wright served in the role of Housing Officer during a four month period following the off-season retirement of the incumbent housing officer. YNC Wright displayed outstanding leadership and dedicated work ethic as she ensured housing residents were well served during an especially busy timeframe.



**ERIC CROUSE**  
*United States Coast Guard*

Chief Petty Officer Crouse mentors both junior and senior personnel toward their highest potential. He has mentored members through problems associated with: early transfer, finances, bereavement, family separation, divorce, and medical. He has provided quality coaching as team leader in a wide range of areas including Women's Leadership Symposium, Feds Feed Families Campaign, Pearl Harbor Remembrance activity, four CG Island diversity celebrations, four Base Alameda and four unit morale events. His quality mentoring has led to junior personnel earning Sailor of the Quarter as well as one receiving a Coast Guard commission as an officer.

**GLEND A GORDON**  
*Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service*

Glenda Gordon is the Section Chief, Travel Services – West and has successfully led her team through an exceedingly challenging transition from GovTrip to Concur federal travel platform. The transition required massive coordination between IRS business unit partners, interagency partners, and contractors. Glenda took the lead in devising a rollout plan which resulted in the registration of 37,910 travelers and the import of 53,853 travel profiles, ahead of schedule. Glenda has an infectious work ethic which filters down to not only her work group but others within the agency.

**TOM HUETTEMAN**  
*United States Environmental Protection Agency, Land Division*

Tom Huetteman has demonstrated exceptional leadership as Assistant Director in EPA Region 9's Land Division. Tom expertly leads a team of over 30 staff and managers, stressing innovation, environmental stewardship, and infectious enthusiasm for public service. He leads cleanup efforts of complicated sites, including PCB contamination, leaking underground tanks, and a \$1 billion settlement for contamination of the Colorado River. His relationships with state, tribal, and federal partners brought about more effective local cleanups and regulation, and led to improvements in PCB policies and cleanups nationwide.

**MICHAEL JEWELL**  
*United States Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Division*

Mike Jewell leads a team of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulatory specialists responsible for Clean Water Act jurisdictional authority for wetlands and navigable waters of the United States. Based in Sacramento, Mike and his team of 55 specialists cover California's Central Valley, the entire states of Nevada and Utah, and the Western Slope of Colorado. Despite flat national budgets, the prolonged drought across his area of responsibility and the inherent environmental complexity of this region, Mike's focus on development of his employees, innovative approaches to permitting, and ability to lead inter-agency discussions is improving performance across our regulatory program.



**TELEAUDIOLOGY TEAM**  
*United States Department of Veterans Affairs, San Francisco VA Health Care System*

The TeleAudiology VA Team has long recognized the challenge of meeting the needs of Veterans located in underserved areas. Hearing loss and tinnitus are the top two service-connected disabilities, making audiologic care a necessity. Care in rural areas means spending the majority of a day traveling to/from appointments. Tele-Audiology delivers a solution—creating access to veterans in distant locations by providing care identical to face-to-face encounters. Since August 2013, San Francisco VA Health Care System Tele-Audiology has supported the VA's mission to provide convenient, accessible services. This allows veteran-centered treatment that reaches an underserved population of Veterans providing much needed hearing healthcare.

**MATTHEW THACHER**  
*United States Coast Guard, Coast Guard Training Center Petaluma*

Matthew Thacher is an administrative assistant within Training Center Petaluma Facilities Engineering and is the focal point for communications with hundreds of customers. He is responsible for interacting with customers, documenting requests, generating work orders, relaying customer's needs to the technicians, and ensuring needs were met to their satisfaction. Mr. Thacher is responsible for compiling performance data and process trends, and providing metrics to supervisors and stake holders. Mr. Thacher is also responsible for evaluating and improving procedures for office administration, and recommend changes in administrative practices and services.

**TAMMY VANCE**  
*Department of Labor, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management*

Tammy Vance is a shining example of customer service to the staff and the agencies served. It was through her personal efforts to go the extra mile and continually seek understanding that improved our customers' experiences. She was attentive to inquiries, ensuring accurate and timely responses. She cooperatively collaborated with the appropriate program leads to resolve complex scenarios. In dealing with customers, she demonstrated the agency's customer service tenets – reliability, effective communications, professionalism, teamwork, and continual improvement.

**INTEGRATED CARE PSYCHOLOGISTS WITH A FOCUS ON DIVERSITY TEAM**  
*United States Department of Veterans Affairs, San Francisco VA Health Care System*

Doctors Watson, Burnias, and Hua have had a particular focus on improving diversity-related programming and access to care for Veterans living in the Bay Area. They have implemented programs that have enhanced healthcare for some of our most underserved veterans, including veterans who are homeless, HIV-positive, and/or part of the LGBTQ community. Their joint achievements include: awarded two public health grants, implemented first-ever "LGBTQ Pride" event at the SFVAMC, formed a consultation service to promote diversity-related programming, organized rapid HIV/HCV testing drives, and piloted psychological support services for patients who are at high risk for HIV infection.



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## SF SERVICES TO FARMWORKERS TEAM

*United States Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration*

San Francisco's Service to Farmworkers team has made significant contributions to assuring equity and improving the effectiveness of our workforce system. In 2015, the SF team brought together those who serve farmworkers through the National Farmworkers Jobs Program with the region's Monitor Advocate system, addressing long-term strategy and immediate needs. Job Program grantees provide funding to community-based organizations and public agencies to assist migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their dependents attain greater economic stability. The Monitor Advocate system, with responsibilities at the national, regional, and state levels, helps ensure that farmworkers are served equitably through workforce programs.

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## SUSANNE PERKINS

*United States Environmental Protection Agency Region 9*

Susanne Perkins has demonstrated incredible leadership as our local Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Special Emphasis Program Manager for the past six years, and concurrently as the National Chair of the LGBT Advisory Council for the past three years. Susanne has shown a passionate commitment to improving EPA's diversity and inclusion through her educational awareness trainings and briefings on our LGBT workforce and LGBT barriers with federal employment. Her ongoing outreach and recruitment efforts to positively market EPA as an employer of choice throughout the LGBT community have had a significant impact at the regional and national level.

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## TRAINING CENTER PETALUMA, LEADERSHIP AND DIVERSITY COUNCIL TEAM

*United States Coast Guard, Coast Guard Training Center Petaluma*

Coast Guard Training Center Petaluma Leadership and Diversity Advisory Council Team equal employment and diversity initiatives are exceptional. The Team hosted over 20 celebrations in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Federal Holiday, National Black History Month, National Women's History Month, National Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Women's Equality Day, National Hispanic Heritage Month, National Disability Employment Awareness Month, and American Indian/ Alaskan Native Heritage Month in 2014-2015. These events impacted over 500 employees and 6,075 visiting students. The LDAC's commitment to diversity is significant continuous effort to educate and celebrate our diverse workforce.

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## THE "A" (ACQUISITION TEAM)

*United States General Services Administration, Federal Acquisition Service*

The "A" Acquisition Team Leadership instituted changes to the organizational service delivery model. This entailed members of their staff being assigned specific accounts/customer agencies in order to foster an integrative, holistic praxis based on a customer-centric organization. The "A" team construct was established to include the Program Manager within the Assisted Acquisition Services Division, the Contracting Officer within the Acquisition Operations Division, and the Customer Service Director from the Customer Accounts and Research Division. Specific interdisciplinary teams were established to manage our customers.



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## OFELIA AMBRIZ

*Department of Veterans Affairs, San Francisco VA Health Care System, Mental Health Service*

Ofelia Ambiz, when the SFVA Mental Health Service Administrative Officer retired, Ofelia stepped in as acting AO and kept the service running until the position was backfilled. She did so while continuing to also fill her program analyst role, and also taking on two supervision duties due to additional retirements. She dedicated a vast amount of her off time to ensure Mental Health ran smoothly. Her efforts were critical to Mental Health continuing to effectively serve veterans and other staff throughout the service, both clinical and administrative, have commented on her exceptional service.

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## BACKLOG REDUCTION SUPERVISORY TEAM

*United States, Department of Veterans Affairs, Oakland Regional Office*

In 2010, in response to the dramatic increase in workload, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs declared all claims older than 125 days as the "backlog", and set a goal of eliminating this backlog by 2015. For the Oakland Regional Office, this was a significant undertaking since at its peak, there were over 28,000 Veterans waiting over 125 days for a decision. However, with lots of hard work and dedication, by September 2015, Oakland had reduced the backlog by 92%. This would not have been possible without the leadership of the Veterans Service Center Management Team.

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## NELIA BERMUDEZ

*Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service*

Nelia Bermudez is an outstanding professional, mentor, teacher and colleague. She has been out in front, not only in the way she has led her team but also in helping others across the agency. She has served as an extraordinary role model. Her supreme technical skills and her ability to relate to employees; has resulted in hundreds of cases getting resolved and reduced cycle time. Her buddy system program has worked so well that our territory has made the buddy system an integral component to working complex cases. Her professional knowledge, resourcefulness, and dedication to duty have contributed immeasurably to the achievements of the organization

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## TERRIE BRODIE

*United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission*

Terrie Brodie is the excellent leader of our District's Administrative Judges. In 2015 she volunteered to take on the additional duty of serving as the Acting Local Office Director of the EEOC's office in San Jose. She continued to successfully lead her Hearings Unit through a Pilot Program, transitioning their paper-based process to a modernized process with electronic filing of complaints. Concurrently she excelled in developing the staff in San Jose, helping them build a real sense of team work. She continues to excel in both of these fundamentally different roles and is most deserving of recognition as an outstanding manager.

