

Personnel Hilites

Summer Edition/2003

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HOW TO ACCESS

Personnel Hilites is a quarterly publication. It's available online at <http://persec.whs.mil/hilites/>

SUBMISSIONS

The deadline for submitting articles for the fall edition of *Personnel Hilites* is September 15, 2003.

INFORMATION

The editor, Rita Rutsohn, can be reached at rutsor@psd.whs.mil or at 703/617-7916. The newsletter's layout and production is done by E.S. Illustration & Design, Inc., Arlington, VA, 703/486-3885 or at es301b@aol.com.



The Pentagon Memorial—A Place Like No Other

The physical damage from the September 11, 2001 attack on the Pentagon was rebuilt in less than one year, but for the families, friends, and coworkers of the 184 people who lost their lives at the Pentagon on that day, the scars still run deep.

"Our lives are still a wreck," Elaine Donovan told a Washington Post reporter for a story that ran on July 4, 2003. Donovan's husband, CDR William H. Donovan, died in the Pentagon. "The building is up, and it looks like nothing happened, but the reality of it is, that is just a façade."

Donovan's words provide a metaphor for the lingering heartache felt by those who lost loved ones in the attack. For many people, the next step in the healing process will be the completion of the Pentagon Memorial.

Jim Laychak, who lost his brother, David, in the Pentagon, has been involved with the memorial project since the early planning stages—meeting with a focus group (organized by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) to contribute his thoughts about the site selection and criteria for the memorial design competition. Jim Laychak also served as one of the jurors responsible for selecting the winning conceptual design. Currently, he represents all of the family members, providing direction to the Pentagon Memorial project, as a member of the Family Steering Committee. At a press conference on March 3, 2003 to announce the design by Keith Kaseman and Julie Beckman as the competition winner, Jim Laychak explained the personal nature of his involvement with the Pentagon Memorial project, "I've been about trying to preserve something for my family, for the other families, for the nation. I look at this as a gift to the people that are left behind." Jim Laychak, in coordination with the other nine members of the Family Steering Committee, has established a non-profit fund, the "Pentagon Memorial Fund, Inc.," with the goal of raising \$20 million over

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the next two years for the construction and maintenance of the Pentagon Memorial.

According to Marilyn Jajko, Pentagon Memorial Program Manager, most people don't realize that taxpayer dollars won't be used to build the memorial. Approximately \$1.5 million in private contributions is needed by the end of July 2003, in order to award the design-build contract and to get the project off the ground. To date, only about \$60,000 has been received. "People are usually surprised to hear we can't begin work because we don't have the money," Jajko said. "Immediately, they want to know how they can make a donation." Through special authorization, Congress has allowed DoD to receive donations toward the Pentagon Memorial. All contributions are tax deductible. Checks made payable to the "United States Treasury – Pentagon Memorial" can be mailed to— Washington Headquarters Services, Pentagon Memorial/Repair Fund, Budget & Finance, Room 3B269, 1155 Defense Pentagon, Washington, DC 20301-1155.

The concept design for the Pentagon Memorial was selected from over 1,100 potential entries. The winning design personalizes the loss of each of the 184 people who died in the attack on the Pentagon. Julie Beckman explained, "We wanted to ensure that the final design concept embodied a place like no other because September 11 was like no other day in history."

The design concept is a memorial park inscribed with 184 memorial units or benches. Each bench is dedicated to

an individual victim. The field is organized as a timeline of the victims' ages, spanning from 3 years old to age 71. While each memorial bench is located on its respective age line, the benches are then organized by birth dates along the age line. The clustering of certain age groups, and the gap between the children and adults, is clearly evident and meaningful, though infinitely interpretative.

The 59 memorial benches honoring the victims on board American Airlines Flight 77 face away from the Pentagon so that loved ones sitting on these benches can look up at the sky. The 125 memorial benches facing the building distinguish the victims that were in the Pentagon. Visitors sitting on these benches can look toward the building. Elegant in its self-supporting form, each memorial unit is a glowing light pool—a cantilevered bench with a place for the permanent inscription of the victim's name. The western edge of the site is defined with an "age wall," a wall that grows in height, one inch per year relative to the age lines that organize the site at large. As one moves deeper into the site, the wall gets higher. Strategically, this wall separates the Pentagon Memorial from the adjacent roadway.

For further information about this project, call Brett Eaton, Pentagon Renovation Communications Team Leader at 703-693-8933. Or, visit the Pentagon Memorial website at <http://memorial.pentagon.mil>. The Washington Headquarters Services/Real Estate and Facilities Directorate has overall responsibility for this project, and the Pentagon Renovation Program is serving as the construction agent.



Business Essentials Program for New Employees

Personnel and Security Conducts Pilot Program

The Human Resource Development (HRD) division, Washington Headquarters Services (WHS), Personnel and Security Directorate, launched the "DoD Business Essentials Program for New Employees," on July 15, 2003. WHS' summer hires are playing a critical role in the evolution of this pilot program which lasts three days. As participants, they'll learn about the wide range of operational and support services WHS provides to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Defense Agencies, and the Military Services. Services provided by WHS include financial management and accounting, directives and records management, civilian and military human resources management, personnel security, information technology and data systems support, facilities management, office services, physical and information security, and legal. Expectation is high that all new employees will want to participate in the "DoD Business Essentials Program."

Supervisors interested in receiving information about this program for their new employees should contact Ken Miner, HRD Specialist, 703/617-7175.

Supervisor's CORNER

On Hiring Students and Recent College Graduates

OPM's recent memo to the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies highlights several authorities under which organizations can hire students and recent college graduates (see below). While all are viable appointing vehicles, some are more difficult to implement than others. For example, when hiring for positions covered by the Luevano decree (e.g., human resource specialists, budget analysts, security specialists), OPM must be involved in the rating and assessment process. On the other hand, under the Student Temporary Employment Program and the Student Career Experience Program, students can be hired without competition and OPM involvement. If you're interested in learning more about these programs, your HRSC servicing personnel specialist can provide additional information.



MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: Kay Coles James /s/
Director

June 18, 2003

SUBJECT: Hiring Students and Recent College Graduates

I have received a number of inquiries from colleagues asking how we can take advantage of a renewed interest in public service on the part of America's young people, especially college students and recent graduates. The myth is that it is difficult to hire these young people – they think so, and so do many of you. The fact is that nothing could be further from the truth. As is so often the case, the tools are already there, just waiting to be used. For example, there are a number of existing programs expressly designed to introduce students and new graduates to the Federal civil service; these include:

- **Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP).** This program offers temporary full- or part- time employment to students who are enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a degree-seeking program at an accredited college or university. Students are hired non-competitively but must be taking at least a halftime course load. STEP is also open to students attending high school, as well as accredited technical/vocational schools and community colleges.
- **Student Career Experience Program (SCEP).** Also known as the student cooperative education (or Co-Op) program, SCEP offers temporary, full- or part-time employment to students seeking to gain work experience directly related to their academic field of study. As with STEP, SCEP is available to students enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a degree-seeking program at an accredited college or university who are taking at least a half-time course load. Students are hired non-competitively and upon completion of their academic and work requirements (a minimum of 640-hours of work experience) may be converted to a term, career, or career-conditional appointment. As with STEP, this program is also open to students attending high school, or accredited technical/vocational schools and community colleges. SCEP gives students a 'jump start' in their chosen career fields. For this reason, it is a great tool for addressing your future Human Capital needs.
- **Federal Career Intern Program (FCIP).** Agencies may develop intern programs for recent college undergraduates with degrees or experience relevant to an agency's hiring needs. Individuals receive a non-competitive "excepted" appointment; there are no grade point average (GPA) requirements. If the individual

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successfully completes the program's required two-year internship, he or she may be non-competitively converted to a permanent career appointment.

- **Outstanding Scholar Program.** This program is open to any recent undergraduate with a 3.5 GPA or better, or who is in the top 10% of his or her graduating class, with a Bachelor's or equivalent degree relevant to an agency's hiring needs. Those who qualify for this program may be appointed non-competitively to a permanent, career position. Agencies must use this program to supplement regular competitive hiring.

Additional Information about student employment is available at studentjobs.gov. Taken together, these tools assure our ability to reach out to those who want to serve, especially minorities and women. For those who do, the Federal government offers almost limitless opportunity. And, for those of you that are looking to hire the best and brightest, I hope this explodes the myth that because of "the rules," it cannot be done.

Supervisor's CORNER

Student Loan Repayment Program

The Student Loan Repayment program is an excellent management tool for attracting and retaining high caliber candidates and employees. This program helps employees repay their outstanding Federally insured student loans (maximum \$40,000 per employee). Recently, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) reported to Congress that in FY02 nearly 700 Federal employees were participating in the program. This is a good indication that helping students with their education loan debts can be a more powerful recruitment and retention incentive than offering higher salaries. You can read OPM's report to Congress on the Student Loan Repayment program at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/PAY/StudentLoan/index.ASP>. To learn more about this program, contact your Administrative Office.

FEGLI vs. Private Insurance

It's that time of year when private life insurance companies begin to market their plans to Federal employees. Some of these companies have

been known to give the impression that they're part of the Federal Employee's Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) program and that your personnel office provided your name and telephone number. *The personnel office never releases personal information to any private company.* Another tactic used by these companies is to give you the feeling that you're speaking with a representative from your personnel office or the FEGLI office. Neither the personnel office nor FEGLI solicits employees. When changes are made to any benefit program, the Office of Personnel Management notifies the Federal workforce through established personnel channels.



While there's no Federal law or regulation that prohibits insurance telephone solicitations, you're not required to speak to these representatives.

Since everyone receives calls at home from telemarketers, we all have techniques for escaping these types of calls. In fact, you may want to politely hang up when you realize what the call is about. Federal regulation (41 CFR 101-20.308) prohibits commercial solicitation on Federal property. If a private insurance company representative shows up at your work site, you should advise one of your agency's security officers immediately.

The amount and type of life insurance you carry is a personal decision made by you, after you've evaluated your needs. Don't be pressured into buying life insurance or anything else, for that matter, without careful consideration.

PMI Executive Mentors Honored

The Presidential Management Intern (PMI) community comes together each year to publicly recognize and thank its Executive Mentors.

Mentoring is an integral component of the OSD PMI Program, and the mentors are critical to the PMIs' integration into the OSD community and culture. Because the success of the program depends largely upon the commitment of the mentors, it's fitting that the work they do be acknowledged and they be honored.

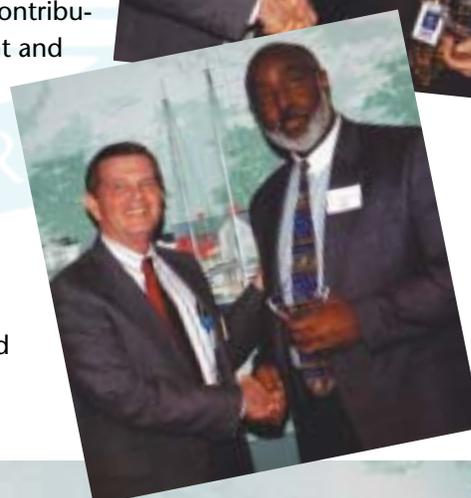
On May 5, 2003, Howard Becker, Deputy Director for Administration and Management, presented awards to four of the five Executive Mentors who worked with the PMI Class of 2001. The ceremony was held in the Pentagon's Executive Dining Room, and those receiving awards included Victor Ciardello, Director, Industrial Base Transformation (AT&L); Bill Lowry, Principal Director for Organizational Management and Support

(Policy); Barry Pavel, Principal Director for Strategy (Policy); and Pete Verga, Principal Deputy, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Homeland Defense). Ms. Diana Blundell, who recently retired, was unable to attend the May ceremony, but she was recognized for her outstanding work as a mentor.

To those who have served as formal or informal PMI mentors, we sincerely thank you. Your contributions are significant and far-reaching.

Mentors are still needed for the incoming PMI Class of 2003. These PMIs will start working in OSD in August and September.

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Howard Becker, Deputy Director for Administration and Management, presenting awards to Executive Mentors—Victor Ciardello (top), Barry Pavel (middle), and Bill Lowry (left).

The ceremony honoring the PMI Executive Mentors required help from many people. The individuals pictured participated in the ceremony and the reception that followed.

From left to right: (front row) Cara Allison, Keysha Webb, Mackenzie Eaglen, Lisa Heald, Stephanie Sanok, Jennifer Walsh, Christine Lyons; (middle row) Ian Jefferson, Jason Hamm, Cara Negrette, Shawn Steene, Jessica Powers, Chris Skaluba, Marc Cheek; (back row) Andy Gilmore, AT&L representative (unidentified), Robin Farley, Ken Krieg, and Quentin Hodgson.



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What does it take to be a PMI Executive Mentor? PMI mentors should—

- Have a breadth and depth of experience in OSD.
- Be able to provide sound advice about rotations throughout OSD.
- Be willing to spend the requisite time to mentor.
- Be able to provide logistical support for the first 30 days.
- Have a familiarity with the PMI Program.
- Be in a position to facilitate the PMI's conversion into a permanent billet at the end of the two-year program.

If you would like to learn more about the PMI Program or volunteer to serve as an Executive Mentor, call Melinda Gillis, the OSD PMI Program Coordinator, on 703/617-7941.

Volunteer your services as an Executive Mentor and make a difference in the career of a promising new Federal employee!



Pictured is Karen Nussbaum, outgoing PMI Coordinator, being presented with an Exceptional Civilian Service Award, by Howard Becker, Deputy Director of Administration and Management, for her outstanding work and service to the OSD PMI Program.

The PMI Program Coordinator is the backbone of the program, doing most of the work behind the scenes. Karen excelled at recruiting Executive Mentors, promoting the program throughout OSD, identifying rotational assignments, job opportunities for graduating PMIs, and organizing training opportunities to include a one-week trip to the field. Her sage advice, enthusiasm, and hard work were critical in helping the PMIs navigate through unfamiliar and often turbulent waters during their tenure in the program. Karen will be missed. She and her family have relocated back to Ohio.

Prepared by Christine Lyons, 1998 OSD PMI. Ms. Lyons currently works as an Operations Research Analyst in the office of Program Analysis and Evaluation. For the past three years, Christine has coordinated and chaired the OSD PMI Screening Panel for new PMI candidates.

“

“October is one of the peculiarly dangerous months to speculate in stocks. The others are July, January, September, April, November, May, March, June, December, August, and February.”

—Mark Twain

”

The Words Do Matter

He was boarding a flight in Chicago bound for New York after a long day. As he handed his boarding pass to the gate agent, he asked her if she was having a good day. She looked at him, smiled, and said, “All the better for you asking me, thanks.”

As he literally skipped down the jetway, he smiled. He had asked hundreds of people if they were having a good day. Never had he received that response. He’d heard, “It’s OK,” “No not really,” and “Fine, thanks.” But never, until now, had he heard “All the better for you asking me, thanks.”

New Armed Forces Service Medals Announced

By an Executive Order, dated March 12, 2003, the President established two new service medals to be awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who serve or have served in military operations to combat terrorism on or after September 11, 2001. The two medals are the **Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal** and the **Global War on Terrorism Service Medal**. Both are described below.

■ **The Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal** will recognize service members who deployed overseas as part of *Operation Enduring Freedom*. The receipt of this medal qualifies for veterans' preference provided the individual is otherwise eligible.

■ **The Global War on Terrorism Service Medal** will recognize those who served in support of *Operation Noble Eagle*. While a service medal is not qualifying for veterans' preference, this medal is qualifying for a Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA) under the newly revised VRA authority.

In a separate action, Section 543 of the Defense Authorization Act for FY03, Public Law 107-314 authorizes a new campaign medal—the **Korea Defense Service Medal**. The law requires the Secretaries of the military departments to issue this campaign medal to service members who served in the Republic of Korea or the waters adjacent thereto, during the period beginning on July 28, 1954, and ending on a date yet to be determined. Each service Secretary will prescribe the requirements to qualify for this new medal. Recipients of the new **Korea Defense Service Medal** will be entitled to veterans' preference provided they are otherwise eligible.

Campaign badges authorized for service performed in campaigns and expeditions may have an effect on *service computation dates* for leave. For additional information on this issue, contact your servicing HRSC personnel representative.



The Pentagon Force Protection Agency (PFPA) is the primary source of information in the Pentagon on security, emergency procedures, and related issues. PFPA has been distributing to DoD employees a variety of security brochures, pamphlets, and one-page Security Advisory flyers. If you would like to receive any of these materials or have security questions that you'd like to have answered, send an email to pfpa@pfpa.mil.



FEEA Establishes New NASA Fund

On April 25, 2003, the Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund (FEEA) in cooperation with NASA, announced the formation of the NASA Family Assistance Fund (FAF). The NASA-FAF will provide both emergency financial and educational assistance to the families of the seven Shuttle Columbia astronauts. Assistance will be provided to families "as needed" for current expenses, with the ultimate goal of guaranteeing post-secondary education to all 12 children who lost a parent. In addition, the NASA-FAF will be a standing fund, available to provide assistance in the future to the families of other NASA employees, including astronauts and those detailed to NASA, who may lose their lives in the performance of their duties.

For information about making donations to the NASA-FAF, call 303/933-7580 or 1-800-338-0755, or go to the FEEA website, www.feea.org.

[See Related Story on page 12](#)

PRESIDENT BUSH, through his *New Freedom Initiative*, has placed a priority on recognizing the untapped employment potential of Americans with disabilities and the need to expand job opportunities available to them. The Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP) provides college students and graduates with disabilities with the opportunity to launch successful working careers. Since 1995, Washington Headquarters Services (WHS) and the Office of the Secretary of Defense have been actively involved in this program. Two Personnel and Security Directorate divisions—Personnel Services and Equal Employment Opportunity

Programs—support the WRP. It represents a key resource for employers to find qualified students and recent graduates eager to enter the workforce and to demonstrate their capabilities. Ms. Esmerelda Campos (featured in the story below) exemplifies one of the many success stories of those hired by WHS under WRP. Ms. Campos and other students with disabilities help to expand the pool of highly qualified candidates and employees for the Defense Department.

For further information about the WRP, contact either Denise Michel (703/617-7144) or Sam Nowlin (703/588-0441), WHS Disability Program Managers.

Disabled Students Find Summer Work

(By Joann Kelly, a Journal Newspapers, staff writer)

Esmerelda Campos has held several jobs before, but never like this one. At 23, she's worked as a teaching assistant at an infant daycare, and now, she has a part-time job in retail. This summer, however, she's working somewhere new, somewhere she never thought of before her guidance counselor suggested it—the Department of Defense. Campos, who is earning an associate's degree from Northern Virginia Community College, is one of a growing number of students with disabilities to take advantage of a Federal program, which places them in summer jobs within government agencies. Many turn their seasonal stints into full-time positions. This year, more than 300 students nationwide are participating, the largest contingents coming from Maryland and Virginia.

Campos said she's never seen her learning disability as something that should hold her back from a position. It's just something she works with.

"It shouldn't be interference. I don't think ... but I do take into consideration that I have a learning disability," Campos said. "It requires me to get extra time for things—I'm a really slow learner, but I get it eventually." She has held her position as an office assistant for a defense health department for two weeks and has learned to answer phones, greet customers, check emails and calendars, and anything else she's asked to do. "I like it, it's really challenging, and I learn something new every day," Campos said. "I'm nervous, but I'm happy."

The office manager at the health affairs office trains Campos daily, said Deborah Bonner, her supervisor. The office regularly recruits disabled students from the program.



Esmerelda Campos takes joy in her work as an administrative assistant at the Department of Defense. (Photo by Mark Young/Journal).

"We have no problem writing down what it is that we want done, sending an email, or communicating as many times as necessary to reinforce exactly what we want," Bonner said. "I think

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she picked it up quite easily.”

The Workforce Recruitment Program places students with a variety of disabilities, including psychiatric, learning, and hearing, said Paul Muyer, who founded the program in 1975 and runs it out of the Department of Labor, where he works on special projects. Most of the students are physically challenged, and about 20 percent are learning disabled. “The main goal is for students to get something on their resumes,” Muyer said. “And, for employers to be educated, to see that students with disabilities are like everyone else, they can do fine work.”

The Department of Defense hires the most students, using about \$1.6 million in annual salaries to cover about 200 positions; the smaller Department of Labor offers 30 positions a year. Several other agencies such as the Department of Agriculture also make positions available for the program. Each year, Muyer and a team of recruiters head out to colleges around the country to compile a list of interested students. His database, consisting this year of 6,144 applicants, is then farmed out to various agencies that use the resumes in hiring for competitive positions.

He said he plans to expand the program both within the Federal government and in the private sector to accommodate students’ interests; each year the waiting lists for interviews at colleges grow longer. The number of hires increases each year, too—from 148 in 1995 to over 300 this year. But, he’s hoping for more. “There’s a lot more enthusiasm, both

within and outside the government,” Muyer said. Roughly a third of the summer employees are hired full-time after school.

Muyer started the program on his own when he was working for the Defense Department. He was motivated by his personal life—his mother is blind, his wife has chronic fatigue syndrome, and his daughter is in a wheelchair. He is full of success stories—the quadriplegic he hired in 1976 who now heads a computer research center in the Navy; the recently-hired doctoral student with cerebral palsy who is working in senior management in the Labor Department.

At George Mason University, Deborah Wyne estimates that she places about 20 to 25 students a year in the Federal government through the program. “What this does for students is it puts them in a place where they’re getting job experience. They get to see what the expectations are,” Wyne said, adding that students appreciate being able to interview on campus, where they feel comfortable. “Some have fears that if they self-disclose, they won’t get the job. It’s a big step for them to go into the real world, to walk through the doors of a company.”

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Pentagon Employees: Fire Alarm Evacuations

The fire alarm system in the Pentagon is for the protection of its occupants. It detects fire and smoke in the building and must be taken seriously. When a fire alarm activates in the Pentagon, pre-recorded instructions will be given for people to evacuate—follow the instructions. As a matter of procedure, representatives from the Pentagon Building Manager’s Office and a Pentagon Police Officer will go immediately to the scene and assess the situation. They will inform the Pentagon Communications Center of the nature of the emergency and a non-automated message will be announced on the Mass Notification System and CENS as quickly as possible.

Please send questions on fire alarm responses through your management chain to the Building Manager’s Office in the Pentagon, Room 2A258.



RESUMIX *Corner*

UPDATE

The Human Resource Services Center (HRSC) is now sending out electronic messages to applicants notifying them when their resumes have been received and processed into the RESUMIX database.

WEB TOOLS

Once your resume is in the database, you can check the receipt of self-nominations for vacancies and view/edit/update your resume through the HRSC home page at <http://persec.whs.mil/hrsc/index.html>.

Once the web page is pulled up, select "Employment Information." On this page, you'll notice the option to "Edit Resume" and "Check Receipt." These tools can be used to view/edit your resume; check on the receipt of a self-nomination; or check on the status of a position for which you've applied. But first, you'll need to get a Personal Identification Number (PIN). Just follow the instructions on the "Edit Resume" or "Check Receipt" page.

Once your PIN has been established, you'll be able to check on the receipt of your resume and self-nomination(s) or pull up a copy of your resume to review/print/ edit and resubmit directly back into the database. Just follow the instructions for editing your resume on-line. When you've finished, simply click on the "submit" button. Once your resume has been submitted, you'll get a chance to review the changes

you've made. After reviewing the changes, you can print a copy of your revised resume (for your records), and then click on the "Send This Resume" button at the bottom of the screen.

REMINDER: The HRSC is processing "Updated Resumes" once a week, on Friday. You can submit an "Updated Resume" at any time; however, updates will only be processed on Friday. If a Friday happens to be a holiday, then "Updated Resumes" will be processed on the next scheduled workday.

FAQs

The following collection of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) is provided to assist applicants with the application process:

Q: How do I find the "Self-Nomination Certificate" on the HRSC web page?

A: Go to the HRSC Job Opportunity Announcement Listing at <https://storm.psd.whs.mil/cgi-bin/apply.pl>. Once you've pulled up this page, click on the vacancy announcement for which you'd like to apply, and click on "Apply for This Job Online" at the top. This will take you to the web page where you can select the option to "self-nominate."

Q: How do I submit my resume if I don't have access to the Internet?

A: If you don't have access to the Internet, you can mail your resume to the HRSC at the following address:

Resume

Washington Headquarters Services
Human Resource Services Center
5001 Eisenhower Avenue, Room 2E22
Alexandria, VA 22333-0001

Additional information about how to apply, the resume format, and what to submit when applying is available in the HRSC Job Kit. The kit can be obtained by calling the HRSC FAXBACK line at 703/617-0652, or by calling the HRSC Call Center at 703/617-7434, or TTY at 703/617-0647.

Q: How can I get copies of vacancy announcements?

A: Copies of vacancy announcements are available on the website at <http://persec.whs.mil/hrsc/index.html>. Or, you can call the FAXBACK line at 703/617-0652.

Q: I can't get into the Resume Builder/Edit Resume on your web page. Help!

A: If you're trying to access these functions from your office, your organization may have a "firewall" in place (for security reasons) that precludes your access. Generally, users have no trouble accessing these functions from their home computers. But, if you still experience trouble, call the HRSC Call Center at 703/617-7434.

Q: What's the best method to use for submitting my resume?

A: *Resume Writer*, located on the web page, is the best method to use

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for submitting your resume. You'll receive an electronic notification verifying that the HRSC has received your resume and that information from your resume has been automatically downloaded, in the correct format, directly into the database.

Q: I'm claiming a 5-point Veterans' Preference. Do I need to submit my DD-214 along with my resume?

A: No. But, make sure that you answer all the supplemental questions pertaining to Veterans' Preference when you submit your resume. (See the Resume Format, Supplemental Information, in the HRSC Job Kit.) Applicants claiming a 10-point Veterans' Preference **must** submit a DD-214 (Member-4 Copy) along with the SF-15 Form and the required supporting documentation listed on the reverse side of the form.

Q: What do I do if I forget my PIN?

A: You can send an email message to our Web Master at webmaster@hrsc.osd.mil, or click on the hotlink on the web page, or call the HRSC Call Center at 703/617-7434 or TTY 703-617-0647.

Resume Preparation Briefings

Monthly resume preparation briefings are scheduled to help applicants write resumes for an electronic application system. Briefing topics covered include the process of applying online using the HRSC *Resume Writer*; how to verify if your resume or self-nomination has been processed; and other information available on the web page to assist applicants.

Briefings are held in the OSD Conference Center in the Pentagon, Room 1E801, from 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. No reservations are required. Seating is on a first-come basis, but it's limited.

Upcoming resume briefing dates for 2003 are—July 30, August 27, September 24, October 29, November 25, and December 18.

For additional information about the resume briefings, contact Avis Wilkins, HR Specialist, WHS/Personnel and Security Directorate, 703/617-0609 or at wilkea@psd.whs.mil.

For information about RESUMIX, contact Paula Hartzoge, RESUMIX Program Manager, WHS/Personnel and Security Directorate, 703/617-7109 or at hartzp@psd.whs.mil.



Soar as an Eagle...

One day, a farmer found an eagle's egg lying on the ground. Not knowing it was an eagle's egg, he carried it to his chicken coop and placed it beside some eggs in a hen's nest. The hen, not knowing the difference, covered the egg with her wings and protected it through its incubation period. Soon, the eagle hatched among a brood of domestic chickens. As it grew up, it mimicked the actions of the chickens. It flapped its wings to fly only a few feet in the air. It ate seeds and insects and had no reason to believe it was not a chicken. One day the little eagle looked up in the sky and saw the most majestic creature it had ever seen soaring in wide circles.

"What is that?" the little eagle asked in awe. "That," said a chicken, "is an eagle, the greatest of all birds." "That's what I want to be!" exclaimed the eagle. "You're crazy," exclaimed the domestic hen. "You can't be an eagle. You're a chicken." So, the little eagle hung its head and began scratching the ground. "I guess you're right." For its whole life the eagle continued living among the chickens, not knowing what kind of potential it had, not knowing it was born to soar. It never tried to fly higher than a few feet or eat different food. He was convinced that anything else was impossible. And, when the eagle died, it died a chicken. Don't settle for mediocrity. Use your ambition to rise above it. Dare to dream great dreams, do what you dare to do, and be what you dare to be. You were born to soar higher and higher toward great achievement. Don't let chicken-thinking hold you back from pursuing and achieving your dreams. You can never soar with the eagles if you think like a chicken.





FEEA Emergency Relief Funds

The new NASA-Family Assistance Fund (FAF) follows in the mold of several other funds administered by the Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund (FEEA)—funds initially set up in response to specific disasters and later altered to become standing funds, available to help other employees of a particular agency or group in times of need. Standing funds allow employees to donate at any time, in anticipation of need, rather than having to “pass the hat” each time a co-worker requires special assistance. A standing fund also enables FEEA to assist families in need immediately, without waiting for new funds to be collected.

The Commerce Employees Fund began in 1996 as a relief fund for families who lost loved ones when Commerce Secretary Ron Brown’s plane crashed. Most recently, this fund was used to assist the families of two Bureau of Census employees who were victims of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. The Diplomatic Fund was established by the Department of State and the Department of Defense in August 1995 to help the families of three individuals who were killed while on a diplomatic mission in Bosnia. The Federal Diplomatic Family Assistance Fund-Africa was added after the 1998 U.S. Embassy bombings in Africa to help pay the college costs for the children of the 12

Americans killed in the bombings. The Diplomatic Fund was re-activated in 2002 to assist the family of a State Department employee killed in a church bombing in Pakistan.

Unique among FEEA’s relief funds is the EOUSA/USAO Emergency Relief Fund, set up by the Department of Justice, Executive Office for United States Attorneys (EOUSA) and United States Attorney Offices (USAO), for the purpose of assisting EOUSA and USAO employees and their families facing natural disasters or personal crisis. The EOUSA/USAO Fund was established not in response to a specific disaster, but as insurance against the future needs of EOUSA/USAO employees. The fund provides financial assistance in the form of tax-free grants and/or no-interest loans to eligible EOUSA/USAO employees and their families who suffer loss as a result of an uninsured personal crisis, an emergency, or a natural disaster that causes injury to life or damage to property. In the summer of 2000, the fund provided a \$10,000 grant to a USOA employee whose daughter was paralyzed in a random shooting. The grant enabled the family to remodel their garage into an accessible bedroom and bath for their injured daughter. Agencies interested in starting their own emergency relief funds through FEEA should call 1-800-323-4140 or send an email to FEEAHQ@aol.com. Contributions

to any of FEEA’s existing relief funds may be made through check (made out to the specific fund, e.g., FEEA Diplomatic Fund) or credit card. Call 1-800-323-4140 or go to the FEEA website at www.feea.org for further information.

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Ordinary people believe only in the possible. Extraordinary people visualize not what is possible or probable, but rather what is impossible. And, by visualizing the impossible, they begin to see it as possible.

—Cherie Carter-Scott

Studies indicate that the one quality all successful people have is persistence. They’re willing to spend more time accomplishing a task and to persevere in the face of many difficult odds. There’s a very positive relationship between people’s ability to accomplish any task and the time they’re willing to spend on it.

—Joyce Brothers

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Update:

TSP Catch-up Contributions for Employees Over 50

As a result of the implementation of the new Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) record keeping system, eligible TSP participants (age 50 or older) will be eligible to make additional tax-deferred “catch-up” contributions from their adjusted basic pay to their TSP accounts.

Publicity from the TSP indicates that elections to make the additional contributions may be submitted in July 2003, which is the first scheduled election period. However, implementation of this program is dependent upon the adaptability of the personnel and payroll systems to allow “catch-up” contribution deductions. Within the Department of Defense, these systems aren’t expected to be ready until September 2003. Therefore, the Washington Headquarters Services, HRSC Benefits Branch won’t be accepting enrollments in July 2003. As soon as an implementation date is established, complete instructions on how to make these elections will be forwarded to the Administrative Officers for dissemination to their serviced civilian employees.

On November 27, 2002, the President signed into law the TSP Catch-up Contributions bill (H.R. 3340). This law allows Federal employees age 50 or older to contribute more to their TSP accounts each year. The “over 50 catch-up contribution” provision allows workers to make up for those years when they weren’t employed and didn’t contribute to their plans or otherwise weren’t able to save. These contributions are

supplemental to a participating employee’s regular TSP contributions and don’t count against either the statutory contribution percentage limitations (e.g., in 2003, 13% for employees covered by the Federal Employees’ Retirement System and 8% for employees covered by the Civil Service Retirement System) or the Internal Revenue Code’s elective deferral limit of \$12,000 for 2003.

TSP participants are eligible to make “catch-up” contributions as long as they are—

- In a pay status. One can’t be separated from service or be in a nonpay status.
- Contributing either the maximum TSP contribution percentage or an amount that will result in their reaching the elective deferral limit by the end of the relevant year.
- At least 50 years old in the year the “catch-up” contributions are made.
- In a 6-month, non-contribution period following the receipt of a financial hardship in-service withdrawal.

The maximum “catch-up” contribution limits by year are as follows:

2003—\$2,000; 2004—\$3,000; 2005—\$4,000; and 2006 and thereafter—\$5,000. After 2006, the maximum contribution of \$5,000 will be subject to increases to reflect inflation.

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Reminder: Flexible Spending Accounts

The Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) enable eligible employees to pay for certain health care expenses with pre-tax dollars. Employees can establish a *Health Care FSA* to use for out-of-pocket costs such as co-payments and deductibles for health care expenses not covered by insurance—dental services and eye-care. Also, employees can set up a *Dependent Care FSA* to pay for dependent care expenses for children and aging parents. Here are some facts about FSA:

- **Open Season** — The initial FSA Plan Year Open Season was May 19, 2003 through June 27, 2003. The next opportunity for making elections to participate in either one or both FSA will be at the next Federal Employees Health Benefits Open Season—November-December 2003 timeframe.
- **FSA Plan Year** — The initial FSA Plan Year for DoD employees begins on September 1, 2003 and ends on December 31, 2003. All subsequent plan years will run from January 1 through December 31.
- **Defense Finance and Accounting System (DFAS)** — DFAS has announced that the first FSA payroll deduction will occur for the pay period ending September 20, 2003. Employees, who enrolled during the initial FSA Plan Year Open Season, will be able to make claims for care starting September 1, 2003.

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- **Benefit Elections** — FSA aren't automatic; employees must make an election (s) each year. The benefit elections are irrevocable once the plan year has begun, unless you experience a qualifying "change in status" event.
- **Use or Lose** — If an employee hasn't incurred a sufficient number of eligible expenses (during the plan year) equal to the annual amount of money contributed, the balance remaining in account(s) when the plan year ends will be lost.
- **Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Web Site** — For additional information about FSA, go to the OPM website at www.opm.gov/insure/pretax. Or, you can link to the OPM site from the Human Resource Services Center (HRSC) web page, <http://persec.whs.mil/hrsc/benefits.html>.

Remember, OPM and the Third Party Administrator will continue to provide educational materials and information to help employees decide how to make FSA work best for them and their families. The HRSC Benefits Office will continue to disseminate FSA data as it's received.

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*Give worry its rightful place—
out of your life.*

—Anonymous

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2003 Combined Federal Campaign for National Capital Area Global Impact Selected to Manage



The Local Federal Coordinating Committee (LFCC) for the Combined Federal Campaign of the National Capital Area (CFC/NCA) announced recently that Global Impact was picked to manage the 2003 CFC/NCA campaign season. Global

Impact is replacing the United Way in handling the largest workplace giving campaign in the country—the CFC/NCA. The annual campaign gives Federal employees the opportunity to support charities that help people around the corner, across the nation, and around the world. More than 3,000 charitable agencies receive contributions from area donors. Last year, the CFC/NCA raised more than \$47 million.

“The LFCC was pleased with the caliber of proposals received this year to manage the CFC in the Washington Metropolitan Area,” said Vincent Micone, Chairperson. “After an exhaustive selection process, the LFCC chose Global Impact because of its qualifications and track record of success. Global Impact operates the Combined Federal Campaign-Overseas (CFC-O), the second largest workplace giving campaign in the CFC system of more than 350 annual campaigns.” Since Global Impact assumed management of the CFC-O in 1996, total revenue has increased by 64 percent. The CFC-O also outperforms the CFC system average in key areas such as funds raised, monetary contribution, per capita gift, and employee participation.

“We are very excited about the confidence the LFCC has shown in our reputation, campaign plan, and fiscal integrity,” said Renée S. Acosta, Global Impact's president and CEO. We look forward to supporting the generous Federal donors who are the backbone of a robust campaign and applying the lessons learned from our successful management of the CFC-O program to the upcoming CFC/NCA.

Among its other programs, Global Impact, formerly International Service Agencies, represents more than 50 of the most respected U.S.-based international charities in workplace giving campaigns across the nation. Since Global Impact began in 1956, it's distributed more than \$343 million to charities working around the world.

Complete information about Global Impact can be found at www.charity.org.

Summer Health and Safety Tips

No matter what summertime activity you choose to participate in—fun with family or friends at the park, a refreshing swim, or a backyard barbecue—hot humid days can take a toll on you physically and present some hidden dangers. Here are a few tips for managing the heat and keeping cool during the dog days of summer.

Sun and Heat Management: Studies show that more than a million cases of the most common forms of skin cancer are diagnosed annually. Even a few serious sunburns can increase your risk of getting skin cancer. You can protect yourself during the time of day when the sun's UV (ultraviolet) rays are the strongest (between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.) by wearing long sleeve tops and pants and applying sunscreen and a protective lip balm, with an SPF of 15 or higher. Reapply frequently, especially after swimming. The risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke rises along with the temperature and humidity. Heat illnesses occur when the body's cooling mechanism becomes overloaded. When the heat starts to rise, slow down. Regardless of your activity level, drink more fluids. You need water to prevent dehydration. Stay away from liquids that contain caffeine, alcohol, or large amounts of sugar. Stay indoors or in shaded locations...wear lightweight, light-colored, loose fitting clothing...limit

your outdoor activity to morning or evening hours, when it's cooler outside.



Heat stroke is a life-threatening condition. It occurs when the body is unable to regulate its temperature. It can happen within 10-15 minutes of exposure. The first signs of heat stroke are—a very high body temperature (above 103 degrees)... hot, dry, red skin...no sweating... nausea... dizziness...confusion, disorientation, hallucinations...loss of consciousness. Heat exposure caused 8,015 deaths in the United States between 1979-1999. Most heat-related deaths occur during the hot summer months. The elderly, the very young, and people with chronic health problems are most at risk.

Water Safety: Thousands of Americans drown each year and thousands more are injured or killed in boating accidents. Drowning is the second

leading cause of injury-related deaths for children age 14 and under. Some common-sense precautions for safe summer fun in the water include—have an adult closely supervise young children any time they're swimming, playing, or even bathing in water... never swim alone or in unsupervised locations...teach your children to always swim with a buddy... never drink alcohol before or while swimming, boating, or water skiing, or while supervising children...learn to

swim, as swimming lessons benefit adults and children age 4 and up...properly maintain your pool to help prevent the spread of infectious diseases... never swallow pool, lake, or river water.

Food Safety: Summer is the season for outdoor barbecues and picnics. However, food-related illnesses can put a damper on outdoor feasts. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that 76 million Americans get sick from food-related illnesses annually...more than 300,000 end up hospitalized...about 5,000 die from foodborne illness. You can protect yourself, your friends, and your family in these ways—cook meat, poultry, and seafood thoroughly...use a meat thermometer to be sure your grilled

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meats are “done.” Ground beef, for example, should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160 degrees Fahrenheit. Don’t cross-contaminate foods...wash your hands, utensils, and cutting boards after coming into contact with raw meat or poultry and before touching other foods. Bacteria can grow quickly at room temperature, so refrigerate leftover foods promptly. Wash produce thoroughly to remove visible dirt, and discard the outermost leaves of a head of lettuce or cabbage.

For further information on heat conditions and illnesses, visit the following websites: National Center for Environmental Health, CDC, at <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/hsb/extremeheat/heatexhaustion.htm>; the Federal Citizen Information Center of the General Services Administration (GSA) at <http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/aboutus.htm>; and www.healthfinder.gov for your health questions.

(This article was prepared by Monica Gielarowski, P&SD, Strategic Planning and Business Operations. The information was taken from the Federal Citizen Information Center of the GSA and the National Center for Environmental Health, CDC.)

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The greatest gift we can do for others is not just to share our riches with them, but to reveal their riches to themselves.

—Anonymous

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THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN

TSP Implements New Records Keeping System

The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board’s new daily valued Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) record keeping system is now operational. It became effective on June 16, 2003. With the new system, many features are available to participants, including but not limited to the following:

- Daily valuation of accounts and daily processing of transactions. Previously, TSP account balances were updated monthly rather than daily, and some transactions took several weeks to process.
- Account balances and transactions are processed and shown in dollar amounts, shares, and share prices. This information can be found on the TSP web site at www.tsp.gov and will appear on participants’ statements.
- The daily cutoff time for most participant-initiated transactions is 11:00 a.m. Central Standard Time.
- Share prices for the investment funds are updated each business day.
- TSP loan information will be shown on the participants’ quarterly statements rather than on separate loan statements.
- Participants can repay all or part of their TSP loans, at any time, by personal checks and through regular payroll deductions.
- Participants can have loan or withdrawal payments deposited electronically into their checking or savings accounts.
- In-service and aged-based withdrawals can be disbursed daily, in some instances.

Information concerning the transition to the new TSP record keeping system was forwarded from the Washington Headquarters Services, HRSC Benefits Branch to all Administrative Officers on June 19, 2003, for dissemination to their serviced civilian employees. For additional information about the new TSP daily valued record keeping system go to www.tsp.gov.

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Unless you try to do something beyond what you have mastered, you will never grow.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

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