



Veterans Enterprise Technology Solutions, Inc.

# The Cutting Edge



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## VETS, Inc. Quarterly Newsletter

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*Veterans Enterprise Technology Solutions, Inc. is a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB)*

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“This time of year always reminds me of how lucky we are to be living in a nation dedicated to respect for the rights of all --regardless of race, religion, age, creed or gender.”

--Jim Moody, President and CEO



# President and CEO Address

My wife, Mona, and I wish all of you, our employees and their families, a wonderful, peaceful and joyous holiday season and the very best wishes for the New Year, especially good health, happiness and piece of mind.

The holiday season is the time to step back and re-charge our batteries, spend time with family and friends, and reflect on what is truly important in our lives. It is a time to be thankful for our blessings.

This time of year reminds me of how fortunate I am to have you as employees on our team. This time of year reminds me

of what is important in life and the importance of giving to help others that are not as fortunate. This time of year is for giving, sharing and expressing our thanks. From the standpoint of our business, I am pleased to note that we continue to grow and have the confidence of a wide customer base. The future looks very bright. We will do all we can to provide the services and support we have provided in the past.

I am not saying that there will not be challenges, there are always challenges in life and we are no exception. But as we have seen in the past, it is our ability to work, think and act as a team that are key to our success.



Merry Christmas to everyone and our best wishes for the New Year!!!

**Jim and Mona Moody**  
CEO and President

## CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL VETS EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PROGRAM (ERP) AWARD WINNERS AND NOMINEES!!!



### To All VETS Teammates,

This is the first year that we established an Employee Recognition Program (ERP). I trust that you have seen the congratulatory e-mails from Jim Moody announcing the

winners and a separate message from myself, congratulating all of those who were nominated for an award.

Both Jim and I consider all nominees to be winners! Certainly, our sincerest congratulations go to those selected by the board for an award in one of the six categories, but equally as important, our heartfelt congratulations go to all 42 nominees.

The amount of nominations that we received was impressive and the high quality write-ups made the job of the selection committee very difficult. As you should note, the overall nominations in several areas were so strong, that the committee recommended more than one can-

didate be awarded in select areas.

We pride ourselves on taking care of people—that is why Jim Moody started this company and it is his focus to this day. This recognition program is one way to show support to the most valuable component of our team---YOU, our employees!

My thanks to all of the VETS family and I wish all of you a relaxing and enjoyable holiday season.

Merry Christmas & a Happy  
and Healthy New Year!!!!

**Rodney Caswell,**  
Chief Operating Officer



**COO Award for  
Exceptional Impact**

Danny Burdiez  
Edwin Ayala\* (2)  
Sue Settell  
TEAM - Karen Morris, Victor  
Guzman, Sweta Rani, Don  
Erminger, Gurjeet Gill, Jerry  
Kuntz  
Jason Oetting  
Wade Terry\* (2)  
Tom Pierce  
Taisa Banks

Wanda Fields, Daniel Knudson  
TEAM - HUB Team on SCOSS-  
USCIS  
Tiffany Arrington

**COO Award for  
Outstanding Commitment**

Villie Thamvongsa  
Claudia Moore  
Goran Kovac  
Tammy Williams  
Betty McLemee  
Heather Henry  
Stacy Henderson  
Robert Cooper  
Dwight Cunigan  
Sweta Rani  
Shalonda Parson

**President's Award for  
Excellence in Innovation**

William Carlin  
Krystal Au  
Karla Cose  
Sue Settell

**President's Award for  
Inspirational Leadership**

Emily Mudede  
Cheri Koch  
Rebecca Schmit\* (2)  
Sandra Woods  
Matthew Nguyen

# ERP

## Award Nominees

**VETS 360 Degree Honor Award**

Kimberly Irving  
TEAM - Mike McComas/ Garner  
Johnson  
Emily Mudede  
Khanh Phung Ngo  
Camie Tran

**VETS Humanitarian Award  
for Giving to Others**

Emily Mudede  
Joye Sims-Henry  
Marlys Sanders

## ERP Award Recipients

**Chief Operating Officer Award for Exceptional Impact**

Edwin Ayala – VA Hines  
Sue Settell – SCOSS II  
Tom Pierce - A3 IS SDDC GATES  
Taisa Banks -A3 IS SDDC GATES  
TEAM – HUB Team on SCOSS-USCIS

**Chief Operating Officer Award for Outstanding Commitment**

Goran Kovac – VA Hines  
Stacy Henderson – SCOSS II  
Robert Cooper – DISA DECC  
Dwight Cunigan – OPRM, IOM, Telehealth

**President's Award for Excellence in Innovation**

Krystal Au – FAA eFast

**President's Award for Inspirational Leadership**

Emily Mudede – FAA eFast  
Rebecca Schmit – SCOSS II

**VETS 360 Degree Honor Award**

Kimberly Irving – Peer Recommendation – Corporate  
Wade Terry – Subordinate Recommendation – SCOSS II  
TEAM – Mike McComas/ Garner Johnson – Manager  
Recommendation - SCOSS II

**VETS Humanitarian Award for Giving to Others**

Joye Sims-Henry – FAA eFast

# A Team Effort: VETS Human Resources

Submitted by Kendele Underwood

**Kendele Underwood** manages the Human Resources (HR) staff members at all VETS locations. After three years with the VETS team, Mrs. Underwood, who started as an Office Manager in 2009 with VETS, was promoted to Director of Human Resources in January 2011. "When I started with VETS we had around 15 employees and here we are, three years later, at approximately 500 and steadily growing. I am thankful to be a part of the VETS family."

**Sue Settell**, provides oversight and execution of HR related activities for 333 SCOSS II SCA and Non-SCA employees at the NSC and TSC. She also makes recommendations to VETS program managers, site managers, and HR regarding development and implementation of policies, procedures and guidelines. In addition to these tasks Ms. Settell plans, directs and supervises work activities of staff relating to employment, compensation, labor relations, and employee relations while analyzing health and safety programs and identifying and designing training for employee development.

**Salini Jeemon**, HR Administrator at the Texas Service Center, over-

sees HR policies and procedures to support the HR Manager at both the Texas and Nebraska Service Centers. She also collects and analyzes HR data and makes recommendations to the site management teams, while preparing internal employee communications regarding compensation, benefits, and company policies. In addition to these duties, Ms. Jeemon conducts recruitment efforts including interviewing, references checks, processing security packets, submitting packets, and monitoring clearances.

Jonathan Chumney began his second year with VETS in October 2012 as a Human Resources Generalist. His role within VETS is to assist in handling day to day functions of the HR department – new employee onboarding, handling all group benefits (Medical, Dental, Vision, Retirement, Life, Long and Short-term Disability, and Worker's Compensation), and assisting employees with any questions pertaining to these benefits. Mr. Chumney currently holds Virginia Property & Casualty and Virginia Life, Annuities, & Health licenses issued by the Virginia Bureau of Insurance.



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Director of Human Resources,  
VETS employee for 3 years.  
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Tammy Hayes became a VETS team player in July 2012 as a Human Resource/Benefits Administrator. Her experience and functions includes recruiting, new hire orientations, staff training, benefits administration, database entry of employees, FMLA, Worker's Compensation, and building security/ maintenance. Ms. Hayes also administers all group health benefits for all employees.



# Meet Your VETS HR Team

*This group of exceptional Human Resource Professionals strive to provide exceptional support to VETS employees with a wide range of HR related matters.*



*Sue Settell* -- Nebraska Service Center, HR  
Manager for TSC and NSC,  
VETS employee for 1 year, 9 months.  
Phone: 402-323-2314  
Email: ssettell@vets-inc.com



*Jonathan Chumney* -- VETS HQ  
HR Generalist,  
VETS employee for 1 year.  
Phone: 434-374-5899 ext. 111  
Email: jchumney@vets-inc.com  
POC for employees with last names  
beginning with A – M



*Salini Jeemon* -- Texas Service Center,  
HR Administrator,  
VETS employee for 9 months  
Phone: 214-489-8011  
Email: sjeemon@vets-inc.com



*Tammy Hayes* -- VETS HQ  
HR Generalist,  
VETS employee for 4 months.  
Phone: 434-374-5899 ext. 114  
Email: thayes@vets-inc.com  
POC for employees with last names  
beginning with N – Z.





# SCOSS All-stars

Submitted by Carol Dewey

At the core of the success of the VETS Team at the Texas Service Center are a cadre of employees who have been doing this work for many, many years. Below is a brief introduction to three of them:

Mike McComas is the Deputy Site Manager at the Texas Service Center but Mike has also served as the Site Manager at the Vermont Service Center for 5 years and as the Site Manager at the California Service Center for almost 3 years. Mike started working at the Texas Service Center in April of 1996 as the Assistant Center Manager for File Operations on the 2nd shift. Within 10 months he was asked to go and trouble shoot in Vermont where he stayed for 5 years. He came back to the TSC, this time as the Deputy Site Manager but within 9 months was sent to California on what was again a troubleshooting assignment that lasted almost 3 years. Mike then went to Washington, DC where he served as a Vice President of Business Development for a company there. At the start of the SCOSS I contract in 2007 Mike came home to the Texas Service Center as the Deputy Site Manager. There is no other manager at any of the USCIS Service Centers that has the breadth of experience that Mike has. Mike is a native of Odessa, TX and retired from the U.S. Navy as a Master Chief Petty Officer after twenty-two years of service. It seems that all of that sand in his childhood

sent him to sea!! Mike's most recent remarkable achievement was winning the SCOSS II PMO Team Building exercise by picking the San Francisco Giants to win the World Series. Mike is the only one on the team who got that pick!!

A contemporary of Mike's is Stacy Henderson, currently the Deputy Night Manager, who started working at the Texas Service Center two weeks before Mike did in 1996. He started as the Assistant Center Manager for Mail and Data Entry at the Stemmons Ave. location and moved to the current Mesquite location in June of 1997. Stacy had a real bap-

tism by fire when he inherited thousands of visas in plastic bags from the Integrated Card Production Facility which was years behind in its work. Added to that was the work on Temporary Protected Status for Nicaraguans and Salvadorans. This all amounted to a 2 year project with round the clock overtime. Stacy had retired from the Army when he took the job at the Texas Service Center and never dreamed he would still be there 16 years later. He had never really thought about immigration work but as he learned about the different forms used for different processes he came to really care about the people behind the paperwork. "It's all about caring about what happens," Stacy said when discussing his career.

Wade Terry is a relatively new comer compared to Mike and Stacy, having started in June of 2003. He is a mainstay at the TSC and a go-to



*From left: Dawn Lewandowski, Quality Manager, Donna Bradley, Texas Site Manager, Carol Dewey SCOSS II PM and Rodney Caswell, COO.*



## SCOSS All-stars Continued

person when something needs to get done. Wade is currently a supervisor in File Operations but has also served as a supervisor in Data Collection and as head of the Post Lockbox Review Team. He is an expert on Lockbox operations. At the start of the SCOSS I contract USCIS started the process of having all cases received by a lockbox where the fee was detached and basic data entry scanning was done. The cases coming to the TSC did not have all of the necessary data input into USCIS databases and frequently had incorrect file information or inad-

quate file searches. A post Lockbox review process was established and Wade pioneered the effort, establishing protocols and work processes to insure that the work was correct before it was sent to an USCIS Adjudicator. The process is more than 3 years old now and there are still many challenges associated with the work received from the Lockbox, but the progress made in the process at the TSC is in large part due to Wade's efforts. He recently headed a USCIS HQ mandated change in process to certain cases with mul-

iple applications being received at the TSC. It was a very complicated and time consuming process but Wade's success in administering it and establishing a new order to organizing the work recently resulted in a relaxing of the protocol that now permits a more efficient work flow. Wade is a quiet family man who said upon being asked if they were having a party for a grand child's high school graduation that they would wait until the child graduated from college and then there would be something to celebrate.

## Deltek Time and Expense (T&E) Explained Submitted by Robin Hammond

Many of you have noticed that the Deltek T&E does not reflect your correct accrued Paid Time Off (PTO) balance. As discussed during the Deltek T&E Training Webinar, we currently outsource our payroll. We are on track to bring payroll in-house using Deltek in January, 2013. However, since payroll is now outsourced, PTO accrual balances are not automatically updated in Deltek T&E. Once we move payroll to Deltek, they will be.

As a reminder, you can always find your current accrued PTO balance on PayEntry.com – the

same website you access to see your paystubs. PayEntry.com can be accessed using this link: <https://www.payentry.com/ee/>.

Supervisors who need to approve future leave for an employee who is close to exhausting his/her PTO can always call Robin Hammond or Connie Torres to verify the employee's current PTO balance.

Keep in mind that with Supervisor approval, regular full-time employees may borrow a maximum 40 hours of PTO in full- or partial-day increments. It is our goal to give you the very

best service possible. Until payroll is moved to Deltek next January, we hope this process works for you.

Our contact information is:

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Connie Torres  
ctorres@vets-inc.com  
434-374-5899, Ext. 104

# Tea with Rodney

*Every week, VETS Project Managers take a moment to discuss their trials and triumphs with the COO, Rodney Caswell, to gain new perspectives and share common experiences.*

Every Thursday afternoon at 4 pm, Rodney Caswell, Chief Operations Officer for VETS, host a one-hour conference call for all VETS program and project managers. Vice Presidents of Operations are included.

The purpose of the conference call is to have an open and frank discussion of issues, problems and concerns that our program and project managers face on a day-to-day basis. Participation is voluntary. The conference call is not a decision making function. It is about sharing, asking and obtaining information to questions that our front line leaders are seeking.

If there is a strict protocol it would be that the meeting last only one hour, there are no bad questions, all issues are open for discussion.

In essence, the conference call presents an opportunity for first line managers to hear from the leaders of the company on how can we work more effectively together. Frequently during the conference call one PM will share experiences that are of value to another.

Often program and project manag-

ers have questions on policy issues involving contracting, financial controls, Human Resources, and training but do not know whom to contact. They can obtain answers immediately or, if not, Rodney or a corporate teammate will get back to them. Each one hour weekly session allows Rodney to share with the team what VETS is doing, where it is headed, and, perhaps most importantly, offer advice and guidance. It would be hard to participate and not come up with new information or insights. It is also an opportunity to grow professionally by seeing the big picture while looking for the experiences of others to solve a problem or suggest an approach.

Here is what several participants at the weekly "Tea" have had to say:

Dwight Cunigan, Program Manager, for several programs, Federal Civilian Programs: "Having Tea with Rodney provides an opportunity for middle management to hear the corporative perspective on situational business matters—from the top. In conjunction with that, it offers an opportunity to fortify camaraderie, trust, and loyalty---something that we middle management can demonstrate to our teams. In a sense, it brings many valuable "Leadership remind-

ers" and provides an opportunity for improving various processes."

Sharon Sabasteanski, Project Manager, Small Business Administration Hosting project: "I have enjoyed 'Tea with Rodney'. At first it was more corporately informational, but the recent format change has been more thought provoking. I have learned new approaches and styles to solving problems by listening to other PMs and hearing Rodney's insights on the topics."

Steve Jones, Program Manager, Federal Civilian Programs: "As the name implies, Tea with Rodney provides a weekly venue for the Operations Team to gather and learn from each other. By presenting 'what would you do' scenarios to the team, we learn how our various personalities and experience affect our daily decision making."

Donna Bradley, Site Manager, Texas Service Center, SCOSS Program: "Tea with Rodney has taken communications off the table as a barrier to company performance. Being able to meet with Rodney on a consistent basis has given us new ideas for improving performance and has helped us stay on board and committed to growing the business."

Bottom line: If you are a manager and do not participate in these weekly conference calls, ask your operations VP. All are welcome. It is about learning, sharing and finding innovative ways to help our customers, as well as helping our young leaders grow professionally. Our Project and Program Managers are the future of this company. "Tea with Rodney" insures they will be prepared for tomorrow's challenges.



# Creating Upward Mobility

## From Store Manger to Project Manager in 10 Years

Ms. Sharon Sabasteanski began her career in the retail market as a store manager of Sharper Image. She later became the Sprint Spectrum flagship store manager, during which time she worked to build and design for the first GSM wireless carrier in the nation during the 1990's. Thereafter, Ms. Sabasteanski began work as a Business Analyst, where she used her store management and IT procedures experience to develop leading practices within the company.

After her time with Sprint Spectrum, Ms. Sabasteanski worked with Next-Tel international in the Information Technology field to direct the Call Center and Billing Management. This work introduced her to five international markets in the Philippines and South American, with an emphasis on Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Mexico and Chile. During this time, she provided training and later became a consultant for TeraStar.

Soon thereafter Ms. Sabasteanski returned to NextTel as a Program Manager and, upon completion of her contract, stepped in as the Project Manager for the Veterans Affairs' Customer Relationship Management. More specifically Ms. Sabasteanski helped to develop upgrades for the VA's Human Resources Center and prepare future upgrades for the Health Administration Center. During Ms. Sabasteanski's year-long

employment with VETS, she was able to close out the CRM project with on-time deliverables and a fully billed contract. Currently, she is the Program Mnager for the Small Business Administration (SBA) contract.

As Ms. Sabasteanski continues to assist with tasks, such as PM templates and various SharePoint assets, she encourages VETS employees to take advantage of the tutelage and experience they are afforded in everyday situations.

"VETS will support you and give you the confidence to run with an opportunity. There will be people to back you up. But, at the end of the day, the opportunities that you are given within VETS will help you to develop your own abilities," said Ms. Sabasteanski. "The future of VETS seems very bright. This is a place where you can grow your career and develop as a professional. If you can stay flexible, you can excel". Although Ms. Sabaste-

anski's professional drive and abilities have propelled her towards success, she remains ever mindful of the "can-do" attitude that accelerates success. "You can definitely work your way up. Work hard and learn from everybody; from the retail stockers to the COO, there will always be something that you can learn. "



*Sharon Sabasteanski, VETS rising star and shining example of "from the ground up" success*



# FROM GOVERNMENT PROGRAM MANAGER TO V.P. FOR FEDERAL CIVILIAN PROGRAMS

*A closer look at the storied career of Ethel J. Anderson, VETS V.P. for Federal Civilian Programs*

After 30 years of service with the Department of Defense (DoD), and additional years with industry IT Solutions companies, Mrs. Ethel Anderson, V.P. for Federal Civilian Programs abides by several key business principles that are closely tied to those of VETS, Inc. Most valuable of these is an unflinching dedication to customer satisfaction or, more precisely, those VETS customers who strive to serve those who have served our nation.

Mrs. Anderson, mother of four and wife of a retired Naval officer, began her career in transportation with the Navy in Jacksonville, Florida in 1973, while obtaining both her Associates Degree in Transportation and Traffic Management and Certification from the Advanced College of Traffic Management in Chicago, Illinois. After moving to the DC Metro area in 1977, she began her work at the Naval Air Facility at Andrews AFB, MD before accepting a position as a Transportation Industry Analyst with the Federal Maritime Commission in Washington, DC. Mrs. Anderson completed her undergraduate degree at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia.

During the 1980's, Mrs. Anderson worked with the Military Traffic Management Command- later to become the Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC)- before military orders moved she and her family to San Diego, California, where she assumed the position of Traffic Manager at the Naval Air Station, North Island.

After rejoining the SDDC in the DC Metro area under new military orders, she resumed her role as a Transportation Subject Matter Expert (SME) in support of the Continental United States (CONUS) Freight Management System, Project Office.

In 1992, Mrs. Anderson enjoyed a special, year-long assignment with the Department of the Army Headquarters, supporting the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistic (HQDA, DCSLOG) at the Pentagon as a DoD logistics subject matter expert, where she worked on an effort to modernize Army Installation Transportation Offices. During this tenure, her highlights include accompanying U.S. military generals and senior executives by helicopter to other military installations.

From this vantage point, Mrs. Anderson transitioned back to SDDC in the field of Information Management Technology, supporting system integration efforts as a SME on numerous initiatives under the United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM). During this time, she met now CEO and President of VETS, Inc., Mr. Jim Moody, during which time he supported SDDC as an IT contractor.

Among her various positions throughout the years, Mrs.

Anderson recounts the principals of transportation and logistics for moving supplies and equipment, From Factory to Fox hole as a cornerstone of her DoD and IT career; these efforts were instrumental in assuring that soldiers had everything that they needed to complete their mission. She ended her Federal Career as Program Manager and Chief of the Passenger and Personal Property System Branch with oversight of 50 civilian and contractor personnel and over 20 system applications.

As the V.P. for Federal Civilian Programs, Mrs. Anderson currently has oversight of nearly 30 separate projects - in locations such as Austin, Texas, Oakland, California, Hines, Illinois, Boston, Mass., Tampa, Florida, Washington, D.C. Fredericksburg, Virginia and Frederick, Maryland.

Mrs. Anderson is reminded of the stake that she and all VETS employees have in the support, success and welfare of U.S. Veterans and others.

“Much of the work that VETS does for its customers on the Federal Civilian side is in support of the Veterans”

For instance, she references several VETS- supported programs that provide information and assistance to the Veteran in several areas, which include training programs, entitlements, benefits, claims processing, to name a few

Mrs. Anderson suggests that employees of VETS look at their efforts as a greater contribution to this na-



*Ethel J. Anderson, VETS Vice President for Federal Civilian Programs*


tion's Veterans and servicemen alike. “You are working with customers that support greatly needed programs; through VETS - through your support of a customer- you also provide a service to your country.”

“Even if you haven't served in the military, you are indirectly serving your country. If you love what you do, you never really work a day in your life”.


“We want to strive for forward progression- there is a pattern of growth and movement within the company. But we cannot forget that VETS employees are our most critical asset. You know the saying, ‘To lead people, walk behind them.’ I uphold this principal; I will continue to look to our employees, who will guide this company to the next level.”



# VETS KUDOS AND ACCOLADES




PHOENIX, Az., The VETS Team was honored at the Inc. 500|5000 Conference & Awards Ceremony in beautiful Phoenix, Arizona. This annual three day event brought the nation's brightest, most successful business minds together to celebrate the remarkable achievements of the companies that appear on Inc. Magazine's prestigious ranking of America's fastest-growing privately held companies.



WASHINGTON, Dc., Maroa Gikuuri, Project Manager of the Section 508 Compliance Team wishes to acknowledge Olga Chandran, a recipient of the project's October Employee of Quarter Award. Mr. Gikuuri went on to comment that, as a Section 508 Tester at the VA, "Olga has shown great initiative, communication with her customers, teammates and PM, and quality of deliverables".








Steve Andricos, of the VA's Office of Information Technology (OIT) I work on the VRM Initiative providing Program Management Office and the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the VA (CHAMPVA) project, "wanted to reach out to let you know what a fantastic job Jay Tanner did during the CHAMPVA project."

"I know people don't often take the time to acknowledge the positives or exemplary effort, but I wanted to reach out and let you know how much I respect Jay and his effort leading the VETS Inc. team on CHAMPVA. They were the best and most responsive developer team I have worked with during my two and a half years on VRM and I am disappointed that extenuating circumstances have led to the project not being able to be fully completed."


"The VETS Inc. team is held in high regards for their efforts on CHAMPVA and I know many people in VRM would be excited to work with Jay again in the future. I worked closely with Jay and your team through most of the CHAMPVA project and I just wanted to pass along my two cents, for whatever it is worth."



RESTON, Va., On October 1, 2012 Veterans Enterprise Technology Solutions Inc. announced the awarding of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) contract to provide Information Technology (IT) services to support and execute the migration of all document from the legacy Virtual VA environment into a consolidated Virtual VA document repository in the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS). This single-award, prime contract is for a one-year period of performance with a contract value of more than \$4.6 million.


Mr. Jim Moody, VETS President and CEO, said "we are pleased to have the opportunity to continue our support to the VA and specifically assisting the VBA in accomplishing their mission."

"VETS and Duty First have a long and proud history of providing necessary technology services that support the delivery of benefits to our honored Veterans. We look forward to providing innovative solutions to the VBA."



AUSTIN, Tx., The Analytic Sciences Corporation (TASC) management team, who serves as the prime contractor on the Financial Services Center, Program Management Support Service contract in Austin, Texas, recognized VETS employees for their efforts during the first successful year of the contract. Each received a framed certificate from TASC.

Gurjeet Gill was recognized for her Agile Leadership efforts; she was the first BA to run an Agile project for the PMO and did an excellent job. Don Erminger was honored for his proactive configuration management efforts. Sweta Rani received acclaim for her continued testing efforts supporting the RBPS project



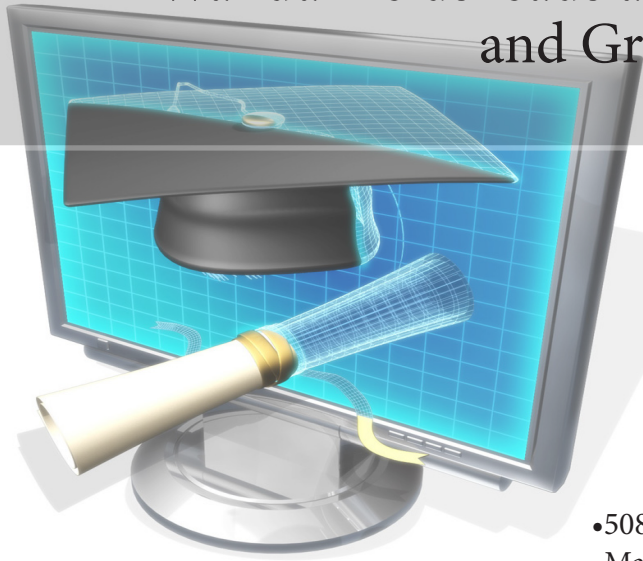
John Gulisano, FAA Messaging Program Manager within the IT Infrastructure Optimization Branch noted that, over the last six months, two VETS employees helped with the award process.

Mr. Gulisano went on to describe these two VETS employees in some detail:

"Stewart Gosney has a unique ability to read and listen to what his customer is crafting and saying and extract those requirements into something that is much more consumable to potential vendors. He really understood the business problems and needs of my program along with understanding the extreme political complexities that are the FAA."

"Claudia Moore is probably one of the easiest going and most helpful people I have worked with in my tenure at the FAA, all while keeping us on task and schedule and managing all of the associated deliverables."

## Wanda Fields leads a VETS team of Curriculum Developers and Graphic Artists in Frederick, Maryland at the VA Acquisition Academy



- Adult Learning Theories (Bloom's Taxonomy, Problem-based Learning, etc)
- Adobe Connect Pro
- Captivate
- Blackboard
- Virtual Learning
- 508 Compliance
- Mac OSX Operating System
- Microsoft Office 2007 with advance skills in PowerPoint
- Adobe Creative Suite and eLearning Suite
- WBS Chart Pro

In each issue of the VETS Quarterly Newsletter, we try to identify one of our current programs to inform those on our team of the nature and diversity of our work. In addition, we want to inform all on our team of possibilities to leverage talent, expertise and skills from one project that may be useful to other projects. Feel free to reach out and engage our project leads and/or program managers should you wish to know more.

This quarter we would like to highlight our work at the VA Acquisition Academy in Frederick, Maryland where we have a team of 19 curriculum developers and graphic artists. Our Project Lead is Wanda Fields and she can be reached at (wanda.fields2@va.gov/202-461-0713).

The scope of work for Curriculum Developers and Graphic Artists is to support the Veterans Affairs Acquisition Academy (VAAA) Program Management Training Programs.

Of the 19 people on our team, 16 are Curriculum Developers and 3 people work as Graphic Artists. Each has experience using the following:

Our team works alongside the VA team using an Agile ADDIE ISD methodology to develop instructor-led virtual courses that uses the distributed learning method, ensuring a high level of interactivity. The courses are presented through a virtual learning environment called Adobe Connect. The virtual platform, Adobe Connect, has received a 4.5- 4.75 out of 5 in user reviews for content and interactivity.

The VETS contractors have done work on many projects, one of which is the Federal Acquisition Certification-Contracting Officer's Representative (FAC-COR) Level II course. This is a 32-hour course that was developed in approximately three months, surpassing industry efficiency standards by achieving a development ratio of 90 hours for each one hour of content. VAAA product owner Deborah Gadsden commented that the

VETS team "brought a level of creativity beyond imaginable" to FAC-COR Level II. The course features many interactive games as a way to review content, lending an element of fun to the content-heavy, user-focused course. Due to the creativity of the VETS contractors, this course received the "Chief Learning Officer Learning in Practice GOLD Award for Blended Technology."

In addition to the FAC COR Level II course, the VETS team has developed other interactive courses and web-based training, as well as adapted existing VAAA courses to 508 compliance standards. Some of these courses include: Independent Government Cost Estimate (IGCE), VA Deputy Secretary Acquisitions Seminar, Customer's Role on the Acquisition Team, Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) Series, and Life Cycle Cost Estimate (LCCE).

In conclusion, these courses were developed to provide individuals the knowledge and skills needed to properly execute responsibilities such as: acquisition planning, market research, contract and performance management. The courses provide personnel the knowledge and skills to conduct cost estimating and prepare cost estimates across the life cycle. Individuals taking these courses will gain necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to apply best practices in real world situations. The VETS contractors are constantly meeting the ever-dynamic needs of the VAAA.