



3RD CONSECUTIVE
YEAR

INC.
500 || 5000

**FASTEST GROWING
PRIVATE COMPANIES**

**Nº. 160
OF 500**



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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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PRESIDENT AND CEO ADDRESS



VETS CEO & President, Mr. Jim Moody

I have incredible news to share with you. For the third year in a row, our company has been named by “Inc. 500/5000” as one of the fastest growing private companies in the United States. In 2011, we ranked # 383 among the 500 fastest growing companies across the nation; this year (2012) we have been named #160! In addition, we have also been named the twelfth fastest growing company among all small business in government contracting. This is an unbelievable achievement and is only possible because of your dedicated and quality work. Yes, each and every one of you deserves to be commended. YOU are the reason we have received this great honor. I thank you from the bottom of my heart!!!

As I look to the future, I must admit that tomorrow looks very bright for our company. We continue to evolve, expand and seek new horizons. My top priorities have been and will continue to be customer and employee satisfaction. We succeed because we care for and attend to the needs and requirements of our clients. We must never back away from providing quality products and services. In addition, I am ever so sensitive to the needs of our employees: I pledge to you to continue to search for ways to improve in this area. As projects come to an end, we are constantly looking for new opportunities. We want you to be a part of our great team for years to come. We could never achieve our goals without your support.

Preparing for the future: We must never stop improving our qualifications, our skills base and our attention to future innovations. To that end, we have embarked on a program to strengthen our credentials through the adoption of two great Quality Management Systems - ISO 9001 and CMMI. ISO (International Organization for Standardization) is a Quality Management System used to help us organize and standardize our procedures and processes within the overall corporation. CMMI (Capability Maturity Model Integration) is a process improvement procedure to help us improve our performance on individual processes. Overall, when these two innovations are put into place, we will become more streamlined, more efficient and more competitive in the information technology arena. We are shaping our future! And to do so, we must continue to think strategically, think critically and think long term. We are not waiting for tomorrow to come, we are creating it today from within. It has been a great year for our company and I am so very proud to know and work with each of you.

ZOWIE LANKFORD: OFFERING INNOVATIVE PERSPECTIVES

INSIDE THIS
INTERVIEW,
MS. LANKFORD
LEND'S HER
**WEALTH OF
KNOWLEDGE**
IN AN
EFFORT TO
HELP THE
VETS TEAM
NAVIGATE
THE CHALLENGES
THAT LIE AHEAD.

**MS. ZOWIE LANKFORD, SENIOR
VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS,
RECENTLY JOINED THE VETS TEAM
AHEAD OF A FAST APPROACHING
GRADUATION FROM SMALL BUSINESS
STATUS.**

**MS. LANKFORD'S STELLAR RECORD
OF PAST PERFORMANCE, BOLSTERED
BY HER PROFESSIONAL VIGOR AND
HANDS-ON APPROACH, MAKES
HER A **GREAT ADDITION** TO VETS
LEADERSHIP.**

Ms. Zowie Lankford, Senior Vice President for Operations, has been described as a woman who “thrives in dynamic and fluid environments while remaining pragmatic and focused” and those who have had the pleasure of meeting this future-focused powerhouse would certainly agree.

This mother of five and active member in her church and her community, started in a small company like VETS and worked her way up through the corporate chain, from IT Documentation Specialist to Executive Vice President, over the course of 18 years. She has several degrees to her name, including two Master's degrees in National Resource Strategy and Software Engineering, Project Management Pro-



professional Certificate and a Graduate Certificate in Supply Chain Management from the very selective and prestigious National Defense University.

With ample personal experience and professional know-how, Ms. Lankford is already hard at work. "I'm looking forward to working with everyone, this is a very exciting time," says Ms. Lankford, who came aboard in early May of this year. "I'm hoping that my presence here will facilitate efficient operations, increase customer satisfaction and increase business services." And with her expectations to meet and exceed VETS goals that are already in place, Ms. Lankford is aiming high. "My goal for VETS is to ensure operational excellence and to help the company develop key processes as we graduate from a small business; this is especially necessary when a company grows this quickly."

Yet, as Ms. Lankford notes, this rapid, company-wide growth is

impossible without the contribution of every member of the VETS Team. "If you're willing to be honest with yourself- where you excel and where you can use some work- you can learn a lot. Develop a plan and stick with it. Have an open attitude and embrace the change that's coming. Look forward to how this will impact us all." Over the course of Ms. Lankford's career she has found that stepping outside of one's comfort zone is another way to improve and excel.

"I volunteered in different areas of the company. I wanted exposure; I was curious and I was willing to be exposed to the challenges. You tend to learn more from mistakes than you do from success. 'I said, 'Well, I'll only know if I have the chops if I try', so I threw myself in. Don't limit yourself. You may not see the immediate payoff, but it will pay off in the future."

While following the company mantra, Ms. Lankford also acknowledged

es that the best way to prepare for continued and enhanced company successes is to remember the golden rule: Customer Satisfaction.

"Read the professional periodicals that your customers read; become familiar with the customers. Know the organizational chart- both structural and political. Be naturally curious and be able to interact. You have to be a people person if you want to be a leader."



*Ms. Zowie Lankford,
Senior Vice President of Operations*

**"I'M ALWAYS LEARNING. YOU HAVE TO CONTINUE TO LEARN."
-- ZOWIE LANKFORD, SENIOR VP OF OPERATIONS**

ZOWIE LANKORD'S READING LIST

**STAY ON TOP OF
INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS
INNOVATIONS WITH THIS
QUICK LIST OF
MUST READS**

- ☐ **FEDERAL COMPUTER WEEK**
- ☐ **GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY REVIEW**
- ☐ **GOVERNMENT COMPUTER NEWS**
- ☐ **CIO**
- ☐ **PC MAGAZINE**
- ☐ **WIRED**
- ☐ **MAXIMUM PC**
- ☐ **HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW**



A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

THERE'S NO QUESTION THAT THE **CONTACTS AND PRICING DEPARTMENT** PROVIDES AN INVALUABLE SERVICE TO THE CONTINUED GROWTH OF VETS.

LEAD BY MRS. CHRISTINE BEAMER, THIS FOUR-PERSON TEAM WORKS IN TANDEM ACROSS HUNDREDS OF MILES.

It's 8:20 a.m. and the highway has been gridlocked for hours with no end in sight; sometimes the commute to and from work feels like a job in itself.

Sound familiar?

As means of communication continue to evolve, the VETS Contracts and Pricing Department is staying on the cutting edge of doing business by collaborating remotely. In fact, the closest distance between any one of the four team members is 90 miles. With two members located in Virginia, one in St. Louis and the Vice President of Contracts and Pricing, Mrs. Christine Beamer, in Chattanooga Tennessee, VETS utilizes efficient telecommuting in a truly essential department.

Mrs. Beamer has lived in Chattanooga, Tennessee for the past five years, though she grew up in the

Maryland area. Five years ago, Mrs. Beamer began her work with Mr. Jim Moody, and became the VP of VETS Contracts and Pricing in February of 2011. She has worked for a total of 30 years in government contracting for both small, startup companies and larger companies like General Dynamics.

"I basically started in the Accounting Department and learned the ropes; my background has been back and forth between government cost accounting and contracts. So that has pretty much brought me full circle into the world of pricing and contracts."

Working remotely, Mrs. Beamer and her team orchestrate the dealings between the government, VETS, subcontractors and other customers. "There are some legalities, but it's largely based on communication and relationships." Among several other duties, the Contracts and Pricing Department provides guidance on contract matters including training to new project managers and other employees and develops and implements procedures for contract management and administration in compliance with company policy. To that end, Mrs. Beamer notes that, "as a growing company, we will need to implement new processes and procedures to become more innovative" and a large part of that innovation depends on cross-departmental collaboration.

"What's great about the VETS team is our ability to work be-

tween departments with camaraderie." For instance, the Contracts and Pricing Department works with the Accounting/Finance Department to ensure adherence to broader finance and risk requirements, such as revenue recognition, pricing and discounting policies.

With the dispersed Contracts and Pricing team, Mrs. Beamer notes that the flexibility involved in working remotely fosters excellent communication and credits the professionalism of all those involved. "We use a central repository and we have conference calls weekly, sometimes even daily. It's not visible to the rest of the company, but we work together efficiently."

While some may find it difficult to thrive with a team that rarely works face to face, the Contracts and Pricing Department performs fluidly to keep VETS moving forward. And, as Mrs. Beamer puts it, "less time in the car means I can get more done."



*Mrs. Christine Beamer,
Vice President of Contracts and Pricing*

OTHER CONTRACTS AND PRICING DEPT. ROLES

- Monitor competitive terms. Monitor customer satisfaction to insure we meet the terms and conditions of contracting practices.
- Ensure that signed contracts are communicated to all relevant parties to provide contract visibility and awareness, interpretation to support implementation.
- Handle on-going issues and change management
- Monitor transaction compliance (milestones, deliverables, invoicing etc.)
- Oversee Service Level Agreement Compliance
- Ensure contract close-out, extension or renewal.
- Drafting, Evaluation, Negotiation and Execution of Contracts, i.e., Non Disclosure Agreements, Teaming Agreements, Sales / Purchasing Agreements, Subcontracts, Consulting Agreements, Licensing Agreements, Master Agreements
- Serve as the point of contact for customers on contractual matters. Act as contractual "middleman" between company employees and customers, ensuring timely review and approval / reconciliation of variations.
- On all standard and nonstandard contracts, provide redlined recommendations and negotiate with customer
- Maintain contractual records and documentation such as receipt and control of all contract correspondence, customer contact information sheets, contractual changes, status reports and other documents for all projects.

INTRODUCING

THE VETS EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PROGRAM

PURPOSE: The purpose of the VETS Employee Recognition Program is to recognize and honor employees and/or teams that exhibit outstanding examples of business innovation, inspirational leadership, outstanding commitment to work and community, make an exceptional impact and demonstrate that they care about others.

VETS 360 Degree Honor Award: The “360 Degree Honor Award” is unique and very special. Three awards could come from this category: an award to someone based on the nomination of her/his peers; an award based on the nomination of subordinates; and an award based on the nomination of superiors.

ELIGIBILITY

Forms of recognition will include certificates, plaques, monetary awards, and company service pins. The nomination process is open to any full time employee to submit an employee (subordinate and/or supervisor) or a team for one of the identified award categories. There is a form to complete which is available on the VETS website, which includes additional information and instructions.

TIMING OF AWARDS AND DECISION PROCESS:

The period of performance/timeframe is from September last year to September of this year. September and October of each year are open for nominations. November 1st is the closing date for all entries.

In early January the CEO/President of VETS will announce award winners. In the January/February timeframe award ceremonies will be hosted in Clarksville at corporate headquarters and in the Washington, DC area.

TYPE OF AWARD/HONOR

President's Award for Excellence in Innovation: Something an employee has done to foster the entrepreneurial spirit.

President's Award for Inspirational Leadership: This award will recognize someone who has inspired others in the workplace or outside the workplace in such a way that is truly amazing.

Chief Operations Officer Award for Outstanding Commitment: This award will pay tribute to those who deliver on promises to customers, partners, or our team.

Chief Operations Officer Award for Exceptional Impact: This award will honor an individual or team that has had a significant impact on our business.

VETS Humanitarian Award for Giving to Others: This award is to celebrate selfless giving of oneself to help others.

CTO REPORT: LYNC, TALEO AND SHAREPOINT

Lync 2010: Lync 2010 is our instant messenger and web conference server that will allow us to communicate in a more efficient way. The messenger client is available for PC, Mac and mobile platforms and will allow us to communicate instantly with any connected VETS team member. Installation is complete (August 2012) and we are currently testing client installation and performance; we will send out an email and post in-

formation on the VETS SharePoint IT site when we're ready for everyone to join in.

SharePoint Workspace 2010: SharePoint workspace is an Office application that will allow automatic synchronization with the VETS SharePoint site. This means that you will automatically get new documents and information from any VETS SharePoint site – your project file will be available in a folder on



CTO REPORT CONTINUED

your PC instead of going through the process of downloading, editing and uploading your changes. You can open the document directly from your local folder, edit and save. The SP Workspace will also handle the updates to the SharePoint site. Email us at help@vets-inc.com if you need, want or must have SharePoint Workspace! It's available now and is covered by our Microsoft Volume License Agreement.

Deltek / Taleo: The IT team is working with our timekeeping (Del-

tek) and our recruiting / onboarding (Taleo) systems to integrate seamlessly into our VETS processes. Information will flow automatically from Taleo (new recruit / employee information) and into Deltek as well as our VETS SharePoint onboarding checklist. Only candidates applying for job openings will have to manually enter information, which will reduce any input errors and allow information to flow between systems without intervention. Our target timeframe for this integration effort is between September and October.



HR UPDATES: EMPLOYEE AND SUPERVISOR'S HANDBOOK



Health Care Reform and Your VETS Coverage: On June 28, 2012, the Supreme Court ruled on the legal challenges to the health care reform law and decided to uphold the entire law. The major issue the Supreme Court reviewed was the individual mandate – the part of the law that will require all individuals to have health

insurance or pay a penalty beginning in 2014. The Supreme Court decided that Congress had the authority to require everyone to have health insurance.

You will not see any changes to your health care benefits as a result of this decision. All changes that have already been made – such as coverage for children up to age 26 – will remain the same.

Future provisions of the law will be implemented as they become effective over the next several years.

Feel free to contact HR if you have any questions.

VETS Timekeeping Practices: VETS is committed to meeting all of its obligations as a responsible government contractor. Accurate reporting of labor is a critical component in meeting these obligations. You are expected to contribute to the efforts of the Company in

this regard by exhibiting extreme diligence in charging your labor accurately.

Supervisors and employees must remain familiar with time reporting procedures at all times. The Company provides email notification regarding timekeeping procedures and rules to new employees upon hire. Contact your supervisor if you have questions regarding time reporting procedures. For more information, please refer to Section 7: Time Reporting and Paydays in your Employee Handbook.

Checking Your VETS Email Account Daily: Important documents and information are sent to your VETS email account, such as health benefits information, manuals, timekeeping practices, and other employee related notices. Please be sure to check your VETS email account daily.

A grayscale background image of the Statue of Liberty, with the title text overlaid on it.

SCOSS MAKING A LIFE-CHANGING DIFFERENCE

**SUBMITTED BY
CAROL DEWEY**

FACTOID: There are many slang terms in both English and Spanish that are used in the immigration arena that are often assumed to be derogatory.

The term “gringo”, for example, originally used by Mexicans as a designation for cowboys north of the border has its origins in the song, “Green Grow the Lilacs.”

It was a favorite camp-fire song in cattle driving days and cowboys could even be heard singing it to the herd to quiet the cattle down for the night. To the Mexicans it sounded like “Gringo dee- likes” and those that sang the song became “gringos.”

VETS performs some unique tasks on United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) Service Center Operations Support Services (SCOSS); tasks that profoundly affect the lives of thousands of people from all over the world.



FACTOID: Similarly, in Mexico the Spanish term “Migra” is used to describe immigration law enforcement officers of the United States Government, most notably the Border Patrol Agents of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Agency (CBP) and the Special Agents of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE). Rather than the derogatory term it is assumed to be, it is merely the middle syllable of “Immigration.”

The Nebraska Service Center processes the entry paperwork for all refugees who come to the United States. These are individuals who, for reasons of extreme hardship, can no longer live in their country of origin. They frequently reside in refugee camps around the world, often waiting years to be allowed to come to the United States. Think of the children who fled the Sudan and the ongoing tragedy in Darfur and you will see the faces of today’s refugees. Currently, thousands are fleeing Syria for refugee camps in Jordan. In decades past their number included Eastern Europeans and Russians. The accurate processing of their paperwork to include error free data entry is the first step toward documenting their road to permanent residence in the United States. These individuals are perhaps the least able to untangle any paperwork errors caused by inaccurate recording of their entry into the United States and accurate processing of their paperwork is that much more important. Imag-

in and remain in the United States!

The Nebraska Service Center also processes all applications filed by U.S. military personnel who are applying to be citizens of the United States. Legal permanent residence is required to serve in the Armed Forces of the U.S. but citizenship is not. When these individuals apply for citizenship it is frequently an extension of their intense desire to serve and defend the United States. The Nebraska Service Center is responsible for rapidly processing their applications, ensuring they are ready to be adjudicated and mailing the adjudication results to the applicants. These individuals are sworn in as citizens of the United States in ceremonies that take place, not only in the United States, but wherever in the world they may be serving.

The Texas Service Center is responsible for processing the visas of all individuals who are immigrating to the United States. There are many categories of individuals

port of entry; this includes all land border crossings, all international airports, all ports in U.S. Territories like Guam, Puerto Rico and the Marianna Islands and certain overseas locations where individuals are pre-inspected for admission to the United States, such as Shannon, Ireland and Toronto, Canada. Visas are issued by the U.S. Department of State and presented to a U.S. Customs and Border Inspections’ Immigration Inspector at an officially designated port of entry. The visas are then mail to the Texas Service Center where they are processed. The processing must be done within two days of receipt. This includes the day of receipt. The Center then scans the biometrics and generates the electronic request for a Lawful Permanent Resident Card, the I-551. This is the document that is commonly called a “Green Card” though it hasn’t been green for decades.

The Texas Service Center receives approximately 39,000 visas every month. The timeliness and accuracy with which the Center processes the visas is essential to getting proper documentation into the hands of legal immigrants expeditiously. As with refugees, certain classes of individuals wait years to receive a visa to immigrate to the United

States and it greatly facilitates their transition to receive the documents that they need as soon as possible.

“Think of the children who fled the Sudan and the ongoing tragedy in Darfur and you will see the faces of today’s refugees.”

ine the relief and joy they experience when they receive documents in the mail that allow them to work

that are permitted to come to the United States permanently. They enter the U.S. through an official

VETS KUDOS, ACCOLADES AND CONGRATULATIONS



(Three ladies in blue shirts) (Top L-R)
Sheila Vyraupillai, Litha Kantamneni
(Front) Sharon Sabasteanski



(L-R) Sweta Rani, Victor Guzman and
Karen Morris



(L-R) Edwin Ayala and Goran Kovac

VETS team members **Sheila Vyraupillai**, **Lalitha Kantamneni** and **Sharon Sabasteanski** were recognized in the Health Resource Services newsletter, which cited their ability to “provide the best customer service to our Veteran callers during the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) upgrades and enhancements implementation.”

Sharon Sabasteanski and team received an “atta boy” from Karyn Barrett, Veteran Affairs Health Resource Center Director, for their exceptional work within the Human Resources Command.

Sweta Rani, a Veterans Administration Financial Services Center (VA FSC) Quality Assurance (QA) Tester, was commended for her “dedication, professionalism and Team spirit” during the Risk Based Performance Standards testing by Kenneth W. Singleton, Test Manager within the Project Management Office.

Victor Guzman, a VA FSC QA Tester, was recognized by Director Terry Riffel for his contribution on the Referral and Authorization System (RAS) Module project.

Karen Morris, our VA FSC Site Lead and Lead Business Analyst, and team were commended for all of their hard work in preparation for a requirements lockdown by Kristine Adamo, of the Financial Services Center in Austin, TX.

Edwin Ayala Edwin Ayala received an Outstanding Customer Service award from Linda Kintz, Director of Release Management Service within the Hines Information Technology Center, who expressed her desire to “recognize how much we appreciate his work.” Furthermore, Ms. Kintz stated that “Edwin has been an asset in our migration from Windows XP desktops to Windows 7” and is “quick and efficient in responding to Help Desk tickets and troubleshooting problems.”

Goran Kovac received the “Above & Beyond” certificate “for going above and beyond and [exceeding expectations].” Linda Kintz, Director of Release Management Services within the Hines Information Technology Center noted that “Goran is a great Team Leader and a true asset to the Release Management Service.”

Congratulations to **Ashley Lenzi** who gave birth to a healthy 6 pound, 8.9 ounce girl. Elizabeth Victoria Grace Lenzi was born on Tuesday, July 24th at 11:48 am; both mother and baby are doing fine.

Mr. Jeffrey M. Kachik of the VA Acquisition Academy gave kudos to **VETS team members** who worked **on the Orientation for Non-Procurement Members project** and Executive Director and SES Executive Ford Heard gave his personal thanks to the team, which Mr. Kachik noted “is very rare and to be considered quite outstanding.”

