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# *The Cutting Edge*

**Veterans Enterprise Technology Solutions, Inc.**  
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John Rose  
Dr. Greg Randall  
Melissa Chumney



# A Holiday Message

## from President and CEO, *Jim Moody*

The holiday season is upon us and it is time to reflect on our successes and challenges for this past year and prepare for 2015. While I am sure we all have both success and challenges to reflect on, we must never forget the grace the Good Lord has provided to us all. Whatever your religious beliefs and spiritual direction, this is the time of year where we all need to reflect on those things that are truly important---family, friends, co-workers and those that serve our great nation either in the military or in a dedicated civilian capacity. To our dedicated public servants, I extend my warmest thanks and appreciation for all you do every day to keep our country safe, our values protected and our dedication to serve in the highest regard.

From the bottom of our hearts, Mona and I wish to extend to all VETS employees, our partners, teammates, and family members, our warmest wishes for the best that life has to offer, be it good health, happiness, success in your work and your lives.

While we bring 2014 to a close and prepare for a new adventure, I am reminded of a parable that reflects where we are as a company entering a new year with new challenges and new opportunities.

“There was a highly respected elder standing on the edge of a huge cliff overlooking dangerous and rapid water below. In a distance stood his followers. He asked them to come to the edge of the cliff. They said in response, “No, it is dangerous”. He again asked his followers to come to the edge and again they responded, “No, we are afraid.” For a third time the elder asked his team to come to the edge. This time they came to the edge. He pushed them, and they flew.”

VETS as a company is at the edge of our adventure moving from a small company to where we must compete with the medium and large companies on the block. We have choices to make, paths to take, issues to discuss, challenges to face. We are at the edge of future success. Come with me, we will fly!

Mona and I wish all of you in our VETS family a very Merry Holiday Season, a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year and all the blessings that have been bestowed on our great nation .

*Jim Moody*





Brian Church joined VETS in September of 2011 and is currently working as a Certified SharePoint Developer at our corporate office in Clarksville, Virginia. He is primarily responsible for managing, maintaining, and developing the VETS Corporate SharePoint Portal. He is also responsible for maintaining SharePoint security access for all our users. As a SharePoint Developer, Brian has developed multiple custom sites and workflows including the Project Portals, Proposal Portals, and the corporate Employee Onboarding Checklist Form and workflow. Most recently, he has worked with the VETS Accounting and Operations Departments, to develop custom workflows in the Project Portals to allow Project Managers to approve invoices from within SharePoint. Brian also works on other IT Department tasks including maintaining and updating the VETS Corporate Website. In November, Brian spent a few days in the VETS Washington, DC office where he continued his skills development with our FAA eFAST SharePoint team.

Before working as the SharePoint Developer at VETS, Brian worked as a Database Developer/Analyst on a project for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. On this project, Brian designed a MS SQL Server Database for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to collect, track, and continuously monitor utility meters and compare utility consumption to baseline data to show savings over time. Prior to joining the VETS Team, Brian spent over 3 years working as the Database Administrator with local county school systems. During his time at the school system, Brian successfully helped the school district migrate to a new Student Information System as the lead project manager. He also developed multiple reports and developed scripts using Procedural Language/Structured Query Language (PL/SQL) to automate processes that were formally performed by hand.

Brian also worked as a Program Analyst for Cessna Aircraft in Wichita, KS. There he developed and maintained code for a Client/Server application with approximately 1000 users, built using Sybase's PowerBuilder. During his time with Cessna Aircraft, Brian also assisted in the design for a major new enhancement to the Marketing Department's customer and lead tracking system. Brian was responsible for the Database Schematic of the current database as well as the design of new tables required for the project. Brian was also a key team member in the redesign of the Single Engine department's website. His primary tasks were: design of the content management systems database and PHP programming of the content management system. (PHP is a server-side computer programming language used primarily for web development.) In addition, Brian was a member of two Cessna Six Sigma Green Belt teams.

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Continuation: BRIAN CHURCH,

VETS Corporate Certified SharePoint Developer

Brian earned a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Computer Information Systems with a minor in Business Information Systems and Math from Newman University in Wichita, Kansas, in 2005. In 2004, while at Newman University, Brian earned a Six Sigma Green Belt certification.

Brian never stopped his desire to improve his professional skills. In 2013, Brian was awarded a Microsoft Certified Professional Developer certification.

As Brian continues his professional development, his goal in 2015 is to gain experience from which he can qualify to become PMI PMP Certified and ultimately earn a Scrum Master certification as well. Brian is using the Learn Smart PMP coursework to begin his quest.

Anyone in contact with Brian knows his focus is to never stop learning, never stop improving, never stop being the best he can be!



Brian lives in Clarksville with his wife Annette and their ten year old son, Aaron. Brian and his wife met at Virginia Tech and are avid Hokie fans! Brian and his family enjoy spending time together and love their three dogs, Pepe, Tibby, and Maggie. Brian also enjoys reading and playing board and card games with his family. We are delighted and very lucky to have Brian, Annette, Aaron as well as Pepe, Tibby and Maggie on the VETS corporate team.

If anyone has questions about SharePoint and its value and utility for our work, please feel free to reach out to Brian.

### Brian Church

Certified SharePoint Developer

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# SUE SETTELL

## For her PMP Certification and Contributions to the SCOSS Team

Sue Settell is the HR Manager on the Service Center Operations Support Services (SCOSS) contract. SCOSS provides records management services to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) at the Nebraska and Texas Service Centers (NSC / TSC). Sue has worked on the contract since 2007, and joined VETS as their HR Manager in 2011. She brought to VETS a wealth of Service Contract Act (SCA) knowledge. Sue manages the HR needs of VETS' 340 SCA employees in five locations, at the Nebraska and Texas Service Centers.

In a recent interview we asked Sue to comment on the value and importance of her work. Sue noted, "I love being part of the VETS Team. I enjoy working for a company that genuinely cares about its people and is focused on integrity throughout the work force. These features are important to me. It is why I believe VETS is the perfect home for me."

Sue has a fascinating background that includes more than twenty-five years of experience formulating and implementing internal and external communications, public relations, and special events in public and private sectors. Sue worked twelve years with hands-on work in public administration with The State of Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs. In this capacity, she excelled at working with state and federal agencies on intergovernmental relations, public affairs, and community relations. For ten years, Sue worked as a freelance events management expert that includ-



ed hosting national conferences. In addition, she spent ten years in the print industry and four years as a Licensed Realtor®.

Sue received her undergraduate degree in Organizational Communication from Doane College, graduating Summa cum Laude. She was awarded her Master of Arts in Management (MAM) with an emphasis in Leadership in 2012. Her Master's degree taught her an interdisciplinary approach that promotes the development of students as both leaders and managers. Sue highly recommends the program for anyone looking to develop, enhance and practice leadership skills.

During her career and education, Sue informally employed many of the principles of a Project Management Professional (PMP). Last year, she made the decision to pursue her formal PMP Certification. When we asked Sue why she pursued her PMP, she gave two reasons. Firstly, she is a huge advocate of life-long learning. Sue said she enjoys the challenge of growing, both personally and professionally. A quote by Oliver Wendell Holmes sums up her belief in education, "A mind, once expanded by a new idea, never returns to its original dimensions". Secondly, Sue said it was an opportunity to grow workwise and hone her technical skills.

We asked Sue how she prepared for the exam. She smiled, and said she should first tell us what not to do to prepare. #1 on that

Continued on next page.

list – don't take too long to study... and, yes, there is such a thing! Once she figured that out, the real work began. Sue first used the SkillSoft tool, before VETS contracted with Learn Smart, to read through their course materials. The "Rita" book was an essential study tool and Sue read through it several times. Sue also shared with us that as a visual learner, she created flip charts throughout her house; periodically, as she was moving from one room to another, she would stop and write the Process Groups and Knowledge Areas; from there, as quickly as she could, Sue filled in the chart. She kept doing that and, after a while, she was able to fill it in more and more quickly. Sue said she felt being able to recreate that chart right before taking the test helped her figure out where she was at in the process and what step came next. Sue stated, "I believe it made the critical difference in getting the correct an-

swer on several questions, allowing me to pass the exam on my first try."

Sue was the recipient of VETS' Chief Operating Officer Award for Exceptional Impact in 2012. She participated in the YWCA Women's Leadership Circle. Sue is a member of the Lincoln Human Resource Management Association's Diversity Committee, sitting on its board since 2009.

Throughout her professional career, she volunteered her time and talents to promoting diversity and issues impacting women, children, and the disenfranchised. She is a proponent of financial literacy and the opportunities that knowledge affords families.

Sue is the mother of two children, Jessica and Nikkolas. "Jes and Nikk are both compassionate, caring young adults with a strong sense of activism; I'm so proud of them both," she recently noted. She

comes from a large extended family, which is a very important part of her life. She has a three-year-old pit-lab mix, Claire, who her family rescued from the Humane Society. Sue enjoys traveling, reading, painting, and photography; she is currently looking into taking a class on photography. Activities such as these are essential, Sue believes, to maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

Sue is a special part of the VETS team. What marks Sue as an exceptional person is her dedication to family, to giving back to the community in numerous volunteer activities, and being fully committed to those she serves on the SCOSS team. The success of her recent challenge--the PMP certification exam---further attest to her desire to continuously improve and serve at higher levels. We are proud to have Sue on our team. She is a friend to everyone she meets.

### **VETS' eFAST support team celebrates the Government's Fiscal New Year!**



Pictured L to R: Curtis Keys, Ed Cotto, Frank Hale, Adam Knudsen, Charles Cole, Andy Cheung, Igor Baklikov, Roland Buskirk, Nana Osafo-Mensah, Jasmine Au, Pamela Cheung, Av Ibrahim, Eugene Qi, Trang Cang, Sheila Joseph, Stephen Zebrak, Kathy Saycocie, Ja'Net Lyons, Eleanor Luu, Lynda Tran, Radhika Somarouthu, Joye Sims-Henry, Patriana Paago, Candice Cantrell, Farrah Dang, Emily Mudede, Krystal Au, Christina Choe, Monica Rubiano, Villie Thamvongsa, Claudia Moore, John Rose, Ingrid West, Sandy Ibrahim, Archana Sahai, John Sella

Not pictured: John Sheehan, Rafael Fugundo, Bill Wood, John-Paul Mensah (photographer)





Texas Service Center employees participate in "Purple Stride" near downtown Dallas, Texas on Saturday, Nov 8<sup>th</sup> with former VETS Team supervisor, Wade Terry. Purple Stride is a 1 mile walk/5k run event set up to raise awareness and fund research for Pancreatic Cancer.



L to R Back: Dung "Matthew" Nguyen, Thomas John, Michael McComas, Wanda Larkin, Sheena Thomas, Wade Terry, Donna Bradley, Jeremy Bradley  
L to R Front: Jose "Ray" Olivas, Shernett Morris, Ellen Hart Bradley, Anila Cherian



Wade Terry, fighting the fight!



L to R : Jose "Ray" Olivas , Dung "Matthew" Nguyen, Wade Terry, Paula Terry, Laura Fruin, Anila Cherian, Shernett Morris



L to R : Michael McComas, Wanda Larkin, Sheena Thomas, Donna Bradley



L to R : Donna Bradley, Wade Terry, Paula Terry



L to R : Anila Cherian, Paula Terry, Wanda Larkin, Sheena Thomas



L to R : Dung "Matthew" Nguyen, Wade Terry, Paula Terry



L to R : Wade Terry, Michael McComas



## VETS SECRET WEAPON:

*Marianne Good*

VETS has a secret weapon, do not tell anyone!

If people knew the true value of Marianne Good's contributions to our bottom line, our top line and to our overall success, she would be out there with Sheryl Sandberg (CEO of Facebook and author of LEAN IN FOR GRADUATES) running a Fortune 500 company. Yes, she is that skilled, knowledgeable, talented, detailed, and just a wonderful person to be around. People that work with Marianne know how invaluable she is to our team.

Dawn Lewandowski, VETS VP for our VA business account, recently noted:

"I have worked with Marianne for several years at both VETS and her previous employer. She is an incredible team player. She goes the extra mile with her assignments and is highly responsible for her tasks. She has an eye for detail that is unmatched in anyone I have ever known. I look forward to working with Marianne for many more years. "

John Folino, VETS VP for Civilian Programs, who just finished working a proposal with Marianne also noted:

"Marianne is our go-to person for review of complex financial analyses. She also provides exceptional support for proposals including detailed compliance reviews. She is outstanding!"

Marianne Good joined our Accounting and Finance team in May 2014. In her position as Controller, Marianne works closely with VETS' Corporate staff, Program Managers, and Subcontractors to help ensure the integrity of VETS' accounting controls and procedures. Her work is critical. To Marianne it is not simply a numbers game. Certainly numbers do count but people count more and that is where Marianne excels. Few can run the numbers and reach out to our managers to correct, adjust and advise people as she can. As others have said, "When Marianne talks, people listen!"

A veteran of the U.S. Air Force, Marianne graduated from James Madison University, located in her hometown of Harrisonburg, Virginia, with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Accounting. In 2006, Marianne began pursuing a Master of Science degree in Accounting from Liberty University and earned this degree in 2008.

Prior to joining VETS, Marianne worked for Serco for more than 12 years. She began her career with Serco in 2001 as an accountant and in 2009 transitioned

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Continuation:

VETS SECRET WEAPON: MARIANNE GOOD

to the position of Project Control Analyst and later to Production Manager supporting the USCIS Service Center Operations Support Services (SCOSS) project. While on the SCOSS Team, Marianne had the opportunity to pursue certification as a Project Management Professional which she achieved in 2009. In addition to her accounting experience, Marianne has worked on several large USCIS proposal efforts as a writer and editor and brings this experience to VETS.

Marianne loves dogs and currently has four canine family members: Moby, Echo, Ladybug, and Otis, who joined his new family in June 2014. In her spare time, Marianne enjoys spending time with her family, participating in her church, walking her dogs, and home improvement projects. Marianne is excited about being a part of VETS' Team and appreciates the support she has received.

We at VETS are very fortunate to have Marianne on our team. Now you know our best kept secret.



## **Period of Employment Award**

**Congratulations to Kendele  
Underwood for receiving  
her 5 Year Period of Em-  
ployment Award on October  
19, 2014.**





# The Leadership Corner: Work-Life Balance

By John P. Rose, Ph.D

## No amount of success on the job can make up for failure in the home!

This is the real implication of a broken “work-life balance.”

This article was written to share insights and resources that can help us all make good choices for our lives. Our choices do matter.

As we reflect on where we are in our career and if we have given sufficient attention to this issue called “work-life balance,” we should recognize that WE determine time spent working and time with family. There will be times when work will take priority and times when family clearly must have our undivided attention. I am not saying that the two cannot get along or need to be in conflict. The two have to be managed. Do not expect someone else to make those decisions.

Some say that on a given day or at a given time “I will spend quality time with family, children and/or my spouse.” The notion is that we can script meaningful time with family. I have never bought into the “quality time” argument. Life does

not work that way and if you think it does, you are only kidding yourself.

Don’t find yourself in 15-20 years wishing that you had spent more time with your children and your spouse. Don’t let your children ask, “Where were you when we were growing up?”

Work-life balance is about compromise, not about all work and no play. I suspect that most of us are caught in an environment of personal ambition and the pressure of family obligations all within the accelerating pace of technology in which we live. New technologies make it possible to maintain contact with work, after work. Is that the fault of the computer, the smart phone or the internet? Just because we “can” does not mean we “must.” There may be a blurred line, but whose at fault?

It is important for all of us to be part of our family’s lives. If you are not there to guide and shape the thinking, direction and attitude of your children, then you defer the teaching of those values to someone else, who may not share your

values or even teach morals that are totally different from your world view.

What about support to an elderly parent? If you are not there to support them, do you defer their life and care to an unknown person at an assisted living facility? Have you ever visited someone in an assisted living facility? Have you ever taken a parent out of their home unwillingly? It’s hard. I did it and regret what I did to this day.

This leads one to ask, “How does one prioritize between career ambitions, family, health, leisure and even spiritual issues?” Each of these issues requires our time and attention. What is the ideal for you, your spouse, children or your work? What are the consequences of an imbalance? What can one do to create a better “work-life balance?” Don’t ever forget that if you run yourself into the ground working, you are of no value to anyone. Taking care of yourself (body, soul, spirit) must be a priority.

There are a number of issues surrounding “work-life balance” that deserve discussion and debate.

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THE LEADERSHIP CORNER: WORK-LIFE BALANCE

They include: paid parental leave on the birth of a child, a reduction to the 40 hour work week, a solution to stress in the workplace, the Family and Medical Leave Act, temporary disability insurance or flexible working arrangements (part time, casual or telecommuting work).

All of these topics are important, bear discussing and need to be addressed.

While this article was not written to address these issues, there are things you can do now for a better work-life balance. Jen Uscher has highlighted the work of psychologist Robert Brooks, Ph.D., co-author of THE POWER OF RESILIENCE: ACHIEVING BALANCE, CONFIDENCE, AND PERSONAL STRENGTH IN YOUR LIFE, and noted five ways to immediately carve out a better “work-life balance.”\*

Listen up---following this advice could change your life.

Her simple and direct suggestions include:

- 1) Build downtime into your schedule,
- 2) Drop activities that sap your time or energy,
- 3) Rethink your errands,
- 4) Get moving,
- 5) Remember that a little relaxation goes a long way.

Wherever you are in life—single, married, with or without children, issues of “work-life balance” are relevant as is your social, mental, physical and professional well-being. It begins with taking care of yourself first, and extends to responsibilities at work and your family.

Do you feel “work-life balance” issues are a problem? What would you like to see VETS do in this area? If

you agree that you are in charge, then what are you doing about it?

After reading this article you may be disappointed that I cannot give you a foolproof formula for success or clear answers to the challenge of a good “work-life balance.” Only YOU can address that issue. Only YOU can decide the correct balance. No one can do this for you. Not me. Not VETS. Certainly there are things any given company can do to help but the actions we take are our responsibility.

Let’s start a conversation. Send your thoughts to the editors of this newsletter (Melissa Chumney (mchumney@VETS-Inc.com) or John Rose (jrose@VETS-Inc.com)). We will air your concerns in future editions of the newsletter. We welcome your thoughts. Don’t be shy.



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\* If you wish to know about Jen Uscher’s article, go to: “5 Tips for Better Work-Life Balance: Beat Burnout by Making More Time for the Activities and People that Matter Most to You” by Jen Uscher, and reviewed by Hansa D. Bhargava, MD at <http://www.webmd.com/health-insurance/protect-health-13/balance-life?page=2>.



# *The Chaplain's Corner*

I was visiting someone recently at a large hospital. I was unfamiliar with the layout of the hospital and I had to ask for directions a couple of times. When I got to a set of elevators, I asked a doctor if this was where I needed to be. She confirmed it was, and I thanked her and said, "I seem to be having a hard time finding where I am supposed to be." She replied, "Don't feel bad. I work here and I was lost earlier today."

Finding my way to a hospital room is challenging for me, since I don't have much of a sense of direction. Making sure I reach the goals I have set for myself in my life requires some of the same practices I used to find my way around the hospital. Following a few simple steps can help us reach our goals and stay on course.

*Stop and get your bearings.* Going constantly does not get us to where we need to be. Set aside some time once a quarter (or more often if you can) and reflect on your goals and see if you are doing what you need to do. Reflect on some of your recent decisions to see if those choices helped you get closer to your goals.

*Ask for help.* Seek out people who have achieved what you are working for and learn from their journey. Educate yourself through books, classes and other opportunities that present themselves. Successful people are always willing to invest in education.

*Find companions who are going the same way.* A few good companions along the journey makes the path much easier. Touch base with them often and share your successes and failures. Encourage each other and remind each other of the importance of achieving your goals.

I'm planning on a great 2015. May your journey in the new year be full of peace, hope, and joy!



On the journey together,

*Greg*

Dr. Greg Randall

VETS Corporate Chaplain

*You can contact Greg via e-mail at [chaplain@vets-inc.com](mailto:chaplain@vets-inc.com). Feel free to send a prayer request or ask a question anytime.*

*To speak to Greg, call 855-483-8746 ext 121. Please leave a message if you get the voice mail, and the chaplain will return your call.*

*Greg is available to talk with you about spiritual issues, family issues, relationships, stress, grief, or any other area that is a concern for you. All chaplain services are voluntary and at the employee's direction and initiative, and the chaplain does not favor or promote one expression of faith over another.*



## **NEWS BULLETIN**

In our partnership with Learn Smart for e-learning and skills improvement, the Learn Smart team is excited to announce that their new "Show Me" & "Test Me" exam courses are out! These replaced the outdated "printable practice exams".

These courses are searchable via the course ID numbers as well as the course names.

IT catalog:

1713	Show Me: Designing and Implementing Identity and Access Solutions
1709	Show Me: Managing and Maintaining a Server Infrastructure
1711	Show Me: Planning and Implementing a Highly Available Infrastructure
1712	Show Me: Planning and Implementing a Server Virtualization Infrastructure
1801	Test Me: Microsoft Exam 70-413
1804	Test Me: Microsoft Exam 70-414
1835	Test Me: Microsoft Exam 70-412
1843	Test Me: Microsoft Exam 70-410
1663	Test Me: CompTIA Exam Server+ SK0-003
1660	Test Me: CompTIA Exam A+ 220-801 & 220-802
1662	Test Me: CompTIA Exam Network+ N10-005
1845	Test Me: Microsoft Exam 70-411

And more are coming.....

PMP catalog:

1837	Test Me: PMI Exam Project Management Professional (PMP)®
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In addition, Windows 8 is scheduled for release in early December 2014.

Learn Smart also has a YouTube link that you should check out. It offers professionally done video promos about up and coming products and gives information about specific series offered by Learn Smart. The latest promo is the Windows 8 course.



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Continuation:

LearnSmart News Bulletin

You can "subscribe" to the Learn Smart YouTube channel and receive email updates. Check it out below and feel free to pass it around.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/learnsmartsystems>

We hope your use of the Learn Smart tool is of value to your professional growth. Feel free to give us feedback. We want to know your problems and successes. Is it easy to use? What can we do to make it of greater value to you? We truly value your thoughts and experiences. Send a message via email to either of the editors of this newsletter.

If you were to inquire about use of Learn Smart programs by VETS employees over the past several months, I would highlight the two graphics below.

Here is what you discover:

- ◆ Of 125 employees with access to Learn Smart, hardly anyone used this resource in the October 2014 timeframe.
- ◆ In the August/September 2014 timeframe a high of 22 out of 125 employees actually logged on to the Learn Smart site.
- ◆ When employees did log on to the site they were not on for very long.
- ◆ The message is clear: VETS employees with access to Learn Smart are NOT using this resource.



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LearnSmart News Bulletin

**Number of Members Training**



The message to all with Learn Smart access is clear: Either we use the tools and resources available or we risk losing our investment. It has been made available to improve the professional skills of our employees. We urge you to take advantage of this professional development opportunity.

VETS has partnered with Learn Smart to provide our employees with a powerful Learning Management System which offers access to a wide range of courses to assist you in your professional development.

VETS employees wishing to use the Learn Smart learning management system to improve their professional skills must have the approval of their line manager/Program Manager and approval of their supervisory Vice President.

Once approved and access granted employees will be provided instructions on how to access your new training and a brief video walkthrough that demonstrates the basic features of the system.

If you have any questions about training opportunities, please contact your supervisor or your organizational Vice-President.



## VETS Critical Work for the Small Business Administration Office of Disaster Assistance

As the title of this article suggests, our VETS Team is doing critical work for the Small Business Administration Office of Disaster Assistance headquartered in Washington DC.

Our customer is the Office of Disaster Assistance (ODA) Disaster Credit Management System (DCMS) of the Small Business Administration (SBA). ODA has 5 service centers located throughout the United States to support disaster survivors and Herndon, Virginia is the location of the DCMS Operations Center.

The DCMS Operations Center is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the Disaster Credit Management System, along with its sub-systems (ELA, MTRP/LV and DFAR) and a number of interfaces to external systems. DCMS is a Web-enabled system that was implemented in 2004 to support ODA loan processing activities, including disaster management, loss verification, legal, document management, and portfolio maintenance tasks.

VETS, Inc. is the prime contractor for the SBA Hosting Services along with our teammate, SRA International. Our eleven member team has been pleased to provide support on this project for the past three years.

Our team lead is Ms. Charmaine Flowers who joined VETS in June 2013 as a special assistant to the Senior Vice President for Operation at VETS, Ms. Zowie Lankford and in December 2013 was asked to serve as the



**VETS SBA Team**

Back Row (left to right) – Brendan Nary, Nick Kappatos, Charlie Duan, Homer Wang and Parris Townes

Front Row (left to right) – Charmaine Flowers, Nikki Dinh, Diane Cameron, Amir Fadaghi and Khoa Hoang

VETS Project Manager for this task. Charmaine is PMI PMP certified, an eight year U. S. Army veteran and former employee of ITS, Lockheed Martin, Houston and Associates, and CSC. Charmaine has worked as a Hardware and Software Engineer, Systems Administrator, Network Engineer, Configuration Manager, Project Technical Lead, Project Manager and Consultant. Academically, Charmaine has earned a University Bachelors Degree in Computer Information Systems from Park University and a Masters Degree from Strayer University, in Information Systems.

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VETS Critical Work for the Small Business Administration Office of Disaster Assistance

At the DCMS Operations Center in Herndon, Virginia our VETS—SRA team provide assistance to business and individuals in the form of low interest loans to survivors of natural disasters. The government furnished equipment that support this work is located in the Century Link Data Centers in Sterling, Virginia (Primary Site) and Irvine, California (Backup Site).

The VETS Team provides 24x7 services on the contract. Specifically, we provide:

- Comprehensive Network Engineering, Systems and Database Administration services support for the Disaster Credit Management Systems (DCMS) and the Joint Administration Accounting Management System (JAAMS) network infrastructure and systems,
- IT security requirements across a broad spectrum of platforms and applications,
- Information assurance, disaster recovery, and continuity of operations support, and
- Level 2 and level 3 Help Desk support for the DCMS, Electronic Loan Application (ELA) and Disaster Field Activity Report (DFAR) applications.

Our work includes hardware replacement, software patching and upgrades. The team is comprised of 3 Database Administrators, Parris Townes, Sr., Changli (Charlie) Duan and Nikki Dinh; 3 Solaris System Administrators, Nickolaos Kappatos, Amir Fadaghi, Hongno (Homer) Wang; a Windows System Administrator, John (Brendan) Nary; 2 Network Engineers, Khoa Hoang and Lyndon Tynes; an Operations Support Specialist, Diane Cameron and Charmaine Flowers, Project Manager. The team is very diverse in culture and technical expertise.

The team of 11 personnel continued into option year 3, with compliments from both the Disaster Credit Management Systems Director and SBA senior management. The VETS Team was presented with the Award of Excellence from the SBA Office of Disaster Assistance for exemplary work on the DCMS Technology Hardware Refresh Project implementation completed in September 2014. The VETS Team designed a new network architecture to improve the overall network performance with high availability and scalability to accommodate future growth and to utilize virtualization technologies to improve resource allocation while reducing the Data Center foot print. The Team also assisted with procurement, installation and configured all new hardware, upgraded operating systems and software as a part of the Technology Hardware Refresh Project.

In spite of the challenges The VETS Team faces every day, the team continues to work hard to provide excellent service to our SBA customer. The VETS Team also supported the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Disaster Improvement Program (DAIP)/ ELA integration project to improve assistance for disaster victims providing centralized application process for federal disaster assistance. The Team upgraded all the Windows Server Operating Systems and worked with FEMA and the Application Development Team to successful implementation FEMA DAIP/ELA integration.

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Continuation:

VETS Critical Work for the Small Business Administration Office of Disaster Assistance

If making a difference in the lives of people in our country in need of emergency assistance is important, then the work of our VETS Team working for the SBA Office of Disaster Assistance is making a difference each and every day. We are very proud of our team and honored to be supporting this important and critical mission for the Small Business Administration.

Jim Moody, President of VETS, has stated, “the work of this team exemplifies what it means to support and help others whose lives and livelihoods have been impacted by natural disasters. There is a great sense of responsibility, pride and determination in the work this team does for others. We will continue to provide our highest quality support to the Disaster Credit Management Systems Director and the SBA Senior Management.”

## Message from Ms. Kendele Underwood, Director, Human Resources

VETS Team:

This is a reminder that you can make changes to your 401k account at **ANY TIME**. This includes initial enrollment, changing your deferral amount, redirecting your investment options, and closing your account. Instructions for online enrollment along with a Beneficiary Form that must be completed and returned to Human Resources, can be obtained from HR. MassMutual currently does not allow you to complete your beneficiary information online. If you are already enrolled, please update your beneficiary form as needed.

The annual maximum limit that you can defer for **2015** is \$18,000 plus an additional catch-up amount of \$6,000 if you are 50 or older by 12/31/2015 (total \$24,000).

You have the right to direct the investment of retirement plan contributions among the investment options offered under the retirement plan. Properly investing retirement contributions is important for planning your future retirement income. You should consider your investment direction decision carefully. The QDIA notice recently provided to you by HR provides information regarding where contributions submitted to the retirement plan for your benefit will be directed in the absence of your investment election.

The **2015** 401k Summary Plan Description (SPD) was recently provided to all VETS employees by HR. A few of the Plan highlights are listed below for your reference:

- *You have the opportunity to invest your money amongst a wide array of Mutual Funds provided by MassMutual, a leader in the 401k industry.*

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Continuation:

Message from Ms. Kendele Underwood, Director, Human Resources

- *You are eligible to contribute up to 75% of your pay to the 401k plan. You may designate these contributions as regular or Roth 401k amounts. If you designate Roth, these amounts will be withheld on an after-tax basis.*
- *VETS will match 100% of the first 3% that you contribute. The match is immediately, 100% vested!*
- *VETS Inc. retains the right to change the matching contribution formula during the plan year. If VETS Inc. chooses to do so, you will be notified with information on the change to the matching formula prior to the date of the change so that you may adjust your deferral election accordingly. VETS Inc. will contribute any matching contributions you have earned up to that point. At this time, VETS, Inc. has no such intention to change the matching contribution noted above.*
- *You have the opportunity to access and make changes to your account 24 hours day at [www.massmutual.com](http://www.massmutual.com) or 800-854-0647.*
- *You have the ability to borrow up to 50% of your account balance.*
- *Hardship withdrawals for certain extenuating circumstances are allowed from the plan.*

If you have any questions or would like to make changes to your 401k account, feel free to contact Kendele Underwood or MassMutual.

***\*\*Since you can make changes at any time, there is no deadline for enrollment/changes\*\****

**VETS eFAST pre-award procurement team members relax after completing the busiest 'busy season' within eFAST history.**



Pictured L to R: Ed Cotto, Claudia Moore, Roland Buskirk, Villie Thamvongsa, Monica Rubiano, Krystal Au, Emily Mudede, Ingrid West

**VETS post award team of Contract Specialists, Invoice Specialists, Resume Specialists, and Data Analysts enjoy the start of a new Fiscal Year.**



Pictured L to R: Patriana Paago, Kathy Saycocie, Trang Cang, Joye Sims-Henry, Lynda Tran, Eleanor Luu, Stephen Zebrak, Sheila Joseph, Jasmine Au, Christina Choe, Villie Thamvongsa, Pamela Cheung