2021
Wings of Excellence
Recognition and Awards Ceremony
Vision

The Cleveland Federal Executive Board (FEB) is the conduit through which member agencies provide cohesive, high-quality, coordinated Government services and information. These will be readily accessible, clearly understood, and appreciated by our customers. We will maximize agency resources to promote a safe, productive, and satisfying work environment.

Mission

The mission of the Cleveland FEB is to promote a unity of purpose among Federal agencies in partnership to better serve our employees and the community.

History

The Cleveland FEB was established in 1966 and serves the Greater Cleveland area. We provide a forum for cooperation, communication, and collaboration among the 95 Federal agencies, which represent 25,000 Federal employees in the Greater Cleveland area. Because of our unique alliance among the various agencies, we also provide a central focus for participation in the community, while strengthening the coordination of agency activities in support of Presidential Initiatives.

Wings of Excellence

Purpose of Awards

To recognize those employees whose outstanding performances, either on or off the job, have served as an inspiration to others and/or brought credit to the Federal service. Awardees may be recognized for on-the-job performance, community service, or both. The performance being recognized should have occurred during the past year.

Suggested Criteria

Performance Considerations

The following areas are to be considered when selecting nominees for the Wings of Excellence Award:

- Scope and Importance of Public Service
- Effectiveness Measures
- Quality of Performance
- Community Service
Federal Executive Board Policy Committee

Sandy Opacich—Chairperson
Clerk of Courts

Pamela Ashby—Vice-Chairperson
Housing and Urban Development

Cameron Brown
Federal Aviation Administration

Jill Dietrich
Veterans Administration

Robert A. Edwards
Defense Finance and Accounting Services

Michael Franczak
Federal Mediation and Conciliation

James J. Holtz
Homeland Security

Shannon Kelley
United States Department of Veteran Affairs

Heather Kilbride
General Services Administration

Bruce Mack
United States Coast Guard

Lori Manthey
NASA

Eugene Matho
Customs and Border Patrol

LaTanya McDaniel
Internal Revenue Service

Karen McDonough
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

LTC Deanne Ojeda
United States Army

Alicia L. Rauckhorst
United States Postal Service

Laurence Sivic
NASA

Eric Smith
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Special Agent in Charge

Renee Sykora
United States Attorney’s Office

Steven Yelenic
Health and Human Services

Anna Vedouras
Executive Director of the Cleveland Federal Executive Board

CONGRATULATIONS

May 21, 2021

Ms. Sandy Opacich
Chairperson
Cleveland Federal Executive Board
Anthony J. Celebreze Federal Building
1240 East Ninth Street, Room 335
Cleveland, Ohio 44119

Dear Ms. Opacich,

I extend my warmest welcome to all gathered at the Cleveland Federal Executive Board’s Wings of Excellence Recognition and Awards Program, which is being held virtually this year. During these uncertain times, I applaud the opportunity for federal workers of Northeast Ohio to gather for a celebration of excellence in civil service and to network with fellow federal employees.

Thank you for all that you do, and please accept my best wishes for a memorable event.

Sincerely,

Rob Portman
United States Senator
Welcome and Introduction
MAURY HAYMORE
Training Specialist, Defense Finance and Accounting Service

Welcome
SANDY OPACICH
15th Clerk of Court for the United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio

National Anthem
AYESHAH DOUGLAS
Executive Officer, Defense Finance and Accounting Service

FEB Overview
ANNA VEDOURAS
Executive Director of the Cleveland Federal Executive Board

Senator Message
ROB PORTMAN
United States Senator

Introduction of Keynote Speaker
MARLENA HUDSON
Chief of the Employee and Organization Development Division, NASA Glenn Research Center

Keynote Address
DR. MARLA E. PÉREZ-DAVIS
Center Director, NASA Glenn Research Center

Presentation of Awards

Recognition of 2020 Award Winners

Closing Remarks
ANNA VEDOURAS
Executive Director of the Cleveland Federal Executive Board
Kevin Harter

Kevin Harter is being recognized for his exceptional work as a Supervisory Quality Assurance Specialist for Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) Cleveland. Kevin is responsible for leading a team of technical specialists who perform quality surveillance at numerous defense suppliers across northeast Ohio. Products range from aircraft landing gear parts to armored bulldozers to ballistic goggles and spectacles to anti-g flight suits. For the aircraft landing gear procurement, Kevin successfully collaborated with his military customers to implement a cutting-edge procurement plan for risk-based oversight. This effort, which is now being shared agency-wide, has saved resources and reduced costs by holding the prime contractor accountable for controlling its vendors. Also, despite the unexpected departure of key personnel during 2020, Kevin expertly managed his available resources to successfully fulfill all mission requirements. He has also stepped forward to perform other critical duties for the command, including serving as Physical Security Officer and as the planner for Continuity of Operations (COOP). Kevin, who is a proud retired Marine Corps veteran, is richly deserving of this award in recognition of his distinguished record of public service.

Robert Sirn

Robert Sirn is being recognized for his exceptional work as an Administrative Contracting Officer (ACO) for Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) Cleveland. As an ACO, Robert demonstrates outstanding performance as he is responsible for managing 2,463 contracts, 41 contractors, and $572M in obligated dollars. Robert is the contracting lead for the aircraft landing gear procurement, a cutting-edge procurement plan for risk-based oversight, which is now being shared agency-wide. He is an innovative problem solver and serves as a mentor to other contracting professionals. Additionally, Mr. Sirn has participated in numerous Integrated Program Team by initiatives contributing his broad and deep knowledge of contract administration in support of the WarFighter. Mr. Sirn’s artistic talent has resulted in the creation of numerous logos for DCMA. His artistic flair has given many retirees a smile when they are presented with their caricature from Rob! Robert’s dedication and performance demonstrate he is deserving of this award in recognition of his distinguished record of public service.

Dr. Marla E. Pérez-Davis

Dr. Marla E. Pérez-Davis serves as the director of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s John H. Glenn Research Center in Cleveland. In this position, she is responsible for planning, organizing, and directing the activities required in accomplishing the missions assigned to the Center. The Glenn staff consists of more than 3,200 civil service and support contractor employees and has an annual budget of more than $900 million. Prior to becoming the director, Dr. Pérez-Davis served as Glenn’s deputy director.

From 2014 to June 2016, she was deputy director of the Research and Engineering Directorate. In this position, Pérez-Davis was responsible for leading, planning, coordinating, and managing all phases of Glenn’s research and engineering activities to accomplish NASA missions.

Other key leadership positions Pérez-Davis held at Glenn include director of the Aeronautics Research Office from 2010 to 2014, where she served as the focal point for aeronautics research and provided project management, leadership, and oversight in support of the Agency’s aeronautics research mission. Prior to that, she served as chief of the Project Liaison and Integration Office from 2007 to 2010, where her leadership resulted in streamlined business processes, improved contract management practices, and improved timeliness response to safety assurance activities. She also served as the chief of the Electrochemistry Branch, where her leadership resulted in strengthening the energy storage and power competencies as well as the establishment of new partnerships in support of NASA missions.

Pérez-Davis is the recipient of numerous NASA awards including the NASA Outstanding Leadership Medal and the prestigious Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious Executives. She was also the recipient of the 2015 Crain’s Women of Note; the Top 25 Elite Business Women, Hispanic Business Magazine; Women of Color Career Achievement; Distinguished Alumni Award, Alumni Association of University of Puerto Rico Mayaguez; Women in Aerospace Award for Aerospace Awareness; Women of Color Technology Award for Career Achievement; and the Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Santiago Rodriguez Diversity Award. She is also a certified NASA Lean Six Sigma Black Belt.

Pérez-Davis, a native of Puerto Rico, earned her bachelor’s degree from the University of Puerto Rico; a Master of Science degree from the University of Toledo; and a doctoral degree from Case Western Reserve University in Chemical Engineering. In 2006, she completed NASA’s Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program and the Office of Personnel Management Program.
2021 Wings of Excellence Awardees

**Brittany Celmar**

Participating with leaders across the Cleveland Federal community, Brittany’s completion of the first Senior Leaders Institute (SRI) equipped her with enhanced leader skills to support the Department of Navy Transformation initiatives. Brittany was instrumental on a multitude of system migrations to Navy Enterprise Resource Planning (NERP) for Naval Research Laboratory (NRL), Expeditionary Warfare Center (EXWC) and Military Sealift Command (MSC). Coordinating across Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS), Brittany developed key business transition plans and roadmapping migration strategies. She visited command sites to provide key advice to comptrollers on recording obligation data and manual billing during brownout. Brittany coordinated among key stakeholders at MSC, Navy Financial Management Operations (FMO) and Financial Management Systems (FMS), and DFAS mission areas to produce comprehensive documentation, process checklists, and detailed transaction tracking spreadsheets leading to the inaugural manual billing postings starting in October 2020, generating over $600M in revenue. Her efforts successfully migrated $10.5B (EXWC GF), $217M (EXWC Working Capital Fund (WCF)), and $3B (NRL WCF) to NERP.

**Rose S. Creasy**

Ms. Creasy displays superior leadership skills and impressive process improvement skills as an Accounts Payable (AP) Branch Chief. She has led her branch through many staffing and workload challenges over the past year, maintaining audit controls, and significantly reducing aged payables while keeping her team focused on accomplishing the agency’s mission. She is a subject matter expert in the Entitlements Division and is consulted by many throughout the organization for this expertise. During the past year, in addition to her assigned duties, she has worked directly with the AP analytical team, Defense Finance and Accounting Service Management, and Navy Leadership to track, resolve, and communicate information to resolve both a $10M backlog of transportation payments and a $400M backlog of purchase card payment to U.S. Bank. Her efforts were instrumental in reducing the transportation payment backlog to less than $10K and the purchase card payments to less than $50K by end of fiscal year 20.

**Darlene Asberry**

Darlene Asberry provides exemplary Military Pay analysis, audit support, and problem solving. Darlene led the development of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) Military Pay Navy audit support package creation, establishing a plan of action that ensures that both internal and external customers receive the highest quality audit packages. She created over 2,000 original key supporting documentation products and provided training to internal and external teammates and spends countless hours assisting technicians with non-audit U.S. Navy payroll issues. Darlene takes on the hardest challenges with enthusiasm and provides expertise to both Sailors and technicians at DFAS as well as internal and external attest or audit requests. She routinely manages up to five audit efforts at any given time, such as SSAE–18, Navy Financial Statements Audit, Navy and DoDIG audits, Navy Fraud Risk assessment, and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) A–123 audit. She consistently provides high-quality support on time or ahead of time.

**Steven Caldwell**

Steven Caldwell symbolizes dedication, resilience, and perseverance in both his professional and personal life. Steven improved agency operational health for the Defense Finance and Accounting Service by implementing a process efficiency for the newly implemented E-Billing process in Accounts Receivable. This new process allowed over $21M to be collected within days versus weeks. These collections reduce errors by 99.6 percent, reduce paperwork in the field by 20 percent, and reduce manual intervention by 100 percent. Steven enjoys being involved with his children and demonstrates leadership as coach of the trap team and as a band booster, parent, and volunteer for the local high school marching band. He also contributes time as a Boy Scout leader. As a retired U.S. Marine, he volunteers yearly for the Toys for Tots campaign. His contributions show his continued dedication to Federal services, to the armed forces mission, and to the development of character for the younger generation.

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2021 Wings of Excellence Awardees

**Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS)**

**Bridgette D. Jamison**

Bridgette D. Jamison took the helm as Director of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) Cleveland Customer Care Center (C4) in January of 2020. She quickly realized that a functioning virtual workplace was not an abstract future goal. It was an operational necessity due to the unprecedented COVID–19 environment. She led this transition of 320 employees, in the midst of our tax season surge, to a functional, successful virtual workforce. With continued focus on providing world-class customer service to the Warfighter and their families, C4 handled 953,131 customer inquiries during the extended tax season, from January through July 2020. For the period of February through July 2020, we met or exceeded all performance metric goals. Mrs. Jamison’s championing of this transition and incorporation of the lessons-learned as part of our long-term strategy puts C4 at a strategical advantage, now and when our offices reopen.

**Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS)**

**Gary Franklin, Jr.**

Gary Franklin exhibited his dedication to maximizing customer service as a leader and project manager to eliminate the Defense Cash Accountability System (DCAS) Overlay, Notice of Findings and Recommendations (NFR) 2018-0007-FIN-GF, one of the Department of Navy’s highest audit priorities. Gary persevered through multiple obstacles, such as coordinating complex testing strategies and overall process implementation for nearly 100 employees. While organizing internally to Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS), Gary also exercised clear and concise communication to keep the U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Navy in lockstep throughout the initiative. As a result of Gary’s leadership, DFAS eliminated the process and 41,000 unsupported system-generated journal vouchers (JVs) totaling $3.1T annually and stood up a new process to record approximately 250 manual JVs for over $2B monthly, ultimately eliminating the audit issue. Gary additionally led efforts to enable the Navy to accurately report Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding and execution, as mandated by OSD, and led the department to quickly start posting over 90 JVs exceeding $556M on a monthly basis.

**Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS)**

**Ramona Kilzer**

Ramona Kilzer is an outstanding supervisor, always attending to the mission and her employees while looking for process efficiencies and ensuring customers’ needs are met. On her own initiative, she collaborated with Navy to explore the option of bringing a Treasury-owned collection process to Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) Cleveland Accounts Receivable to electronically expedite the collections of private party payment owed to various Government operations. She implemented the first cycle successfully with a Navy command and has since expanded the program to four other commands, and additionally has added the U.S. Marine Corps to the program. The success of the program has helped Accounts Receivable to remediate an audit finding and reduce the collection process from 2 weeks to 3 days. These improvements have garnered much attention from senior management within DFAS, who have mandated that the program be implemented across all DFAS sites.

**Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS)**

**Michelle Hoffman**

Calculating accurate and timely compensation for disabled veterans who are also military retirees requires significant collaboration and information sharing between the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA). As part of normal business, DVA makes retroactive changes to veteran/retiree disability ratings, and then DFAS Retired and Annuitant (R&A) Pay Department performs a host of difficult and time-consuming reconciliations to accurately compute the pay. Michelle successfully led a Lean 6 project to streamline this process and increase automation to deliver accurate pay faster. This project resulted in the reduction of manual computation workload by over 30 percent, a reduction in average turnaround by 40 days, and a savings of 8.3 full-time-equivalent employees (over $500k/year in DFAS technician labor). It also yielded the ability to eliminate manual errors and implement more timely weekly reporting from DFAS to DVA.

**Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS)**

**Michael Franklin, Jr.**

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2021 Wings of Excellence Awardees

Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS)

Valerie A. Street

Ms. Street is Defense Finance and Accounting (DFAS) Retired and Annuitant Pay’s subject matter expert on the Military Retirement Fund (MRF) audit. She independently facilitated the annual MRF, led virtual walkthroughs, challenged discussions with auditors, and coordinated with process partners. She was a guiding force in understanding repeat control failures noted in the Annual Statement of Assurance (ASA) and the subsequent redesign of those controls. When a state tax issue arose, she collaborated with DFAS Cleveland Disbursing and Indianapolis Trust Fund to establish a way forward. This included educating partners on R&A’s 3-point reconciliation and its role in preventing future tax underpayments. The support and information she provided offered assurance that taxes had not been paid previously and helped position the Indianapolis Trust Fund team to issue a lump sum payment for prior year taxes. Due to Val’s vigilance, three of the five identified Notices of Findings and Recommendations (NFRs) from the prior year were closed.

Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS)

Jeff Strohmenger

Jeff Strohmenger demonstrated outstanding leadership and technical skills supporting the Department of the Navy and the Marine Corps. He served as a subject matter expert for both the Naval Facilities Engineering and Expeditionary Warfare Center (NAVFAC-EXWC) and Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) legacy system conversions. He took ownership of the migrations, developing business plans and drafting white papers to post complex conversion brownout journal vouchers. He worked closely with Navy customers at the Expeditionary Warfare command, the NRL, and IT project leaders to determine the proper beginning balance adjustments. These efforts ensured the Navy’s business ($217M for EXWC Working Capital Fund (WCF) and $3B for NRL WCF) is reported in a more auditable format with improved data integrity, supporting the Navy’s Financial Management (FM) Transformation initiative. His involvement in these projects guarantees success for other commands converting. Military Sealift Command, Naval Fleet Readiness Centers, and the Marine Corps Working Capital Funds will utilize the tools Jeff implemented to aid in their conversions in fiscal years 2021 and 2022.
2021 Wings of Excellence Awardees

Danyelle Wanton

The 2020 National Defense Authorization Act provided a reduction in the Dependent and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) offset of Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) payments to annuitants from Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS). Danyelle contributed to the effort to perform analysis, update requirements, and test results to implement system enhancements necessary to deploy the reduced offset. Danyelle also trained and mentored a new employee to assist with this project as it was being carried out. Danyelle and the team identified a flaw in the system during the project that would have prevented 19,117 annuitants from receiving nearly $4 million in payments from this change. They quickly resolved the problem and implemented a solution in time to ensure everyone received their proper pay. The final result of the project was a combined increase in monthly pay of $16.2 million for 48,184 annuitants and ensured DFAS complied with the new legislation.

Carol Brown

Ms. Brown's role oversees and delivers the NASA Glenn Research Center Privacy and Information Protection Program services portfolio, including the execution of Sensitive Information E-Discovery service, leading Privacy management efforts, consulting with NASA Missions and Programs regarding the protection of sensitive but unclassified information, and coordinating Cybersecurity Privacy and Information Protection training, outreach, and awareness campaigns. Over the past 2 years, as a result of Carol's leadership and dedication, Glenn has seen numerous sensitive data risk mitigations, successful execution of 2020 Cybersecurity Awareness Campaigns, and the successful improvement of Sensitive Data management processes. Ms. Brown's caliber of performance, commitment, and results as Glenn's Privacy Manager and Information Protection Lead truly benefits the agency she serves, and in the best interest of the Nation.

Stephanie Toomey

Stephanie Toomey symbolizes the pairing of skill, drive, and dedication in the pursuit of excellence. She makes it her personal mission to provide solutions for the many Navy initiatives involving Cleveland Accounts Receivable (AR). Stephanie was an integral piece in the overall Defense Finance and Accounting (DFAS)-Cleveland success in migrating the accounting platforms for three major Navy Commands to Navy Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP). Her leadership, unquestioned knowledge of Navy ERP and the customer billing process, and the ability to deftly communicate and build rapport provided Commands confidence they would succeed. The Comptroller for Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) publicly praised Stephanie, citing her hands-on guidance and willingness to make time in her schedule to provide assistance or answer questions as a major reason they now view DFAS as a valued business partner. Stephanie's personal drive and dedication to find ways to improve the service we provide our Navy customers will ensure continued success for the agency.

Ginger D. Townsell

Through her dedication, willingness to learn, and collaboration with the Defense Finance and Accounting Service’s Congressional Liaison Office (CLO), Mrs. Townsell led her team to complete 2,400 congressional letters with a turnaround time of 9.4 days in calendar year 2020, compared to 36.83 days in 2019. This is a reduction of 74 percent. In addition, Ginger was instrumental in delivering a 34-percent reduction in inventory for the Retired and Annuitant Pay Department (R&A) Congressional office. Her collaboration with the CLO has allowed the team to process “vanilla or easy replies” through email, enabling 24-hour turnaround for these cases. Mrs. Townsell goes above and beyond her work area to ensure the R&A mission is met. Having no prior knowledge in Continuity Planning, she met with the Continuity group, identified training and documentation needed, developed the original continuity plan, and facilitated the exercises with MilPay Indianapolis to ensure pay functions continue at all times.

NASA Glenn Research Center

Carol Brown

Ms. Brown's role oversees and delivers the NASA Glenn Research Center Privacy and Information Protection Program services portfolio, including the execution of Sensitive Information E-Discovery service, leading Privacy management efforts, consulting with NASA Missions and Programs regarding the protection of sensitive but unclassified information, and coordinating Cybersecurity Privacy and Information Protection training, outreach, and awareness campaigns. Over the past 2 years, as a result of Carol's leadership and dedication, Glenn has seen numerous sensitive data risk mitigations, successful execution of 2020 Cybersecurity Awareness Campaigns, and the successful improvement of Sensitive Data management processes. Ms. Brown's caliber of performance, commitment, and results as Glenn's Privacy Manager and Information Protection Lead truly benefits the agency she serves, and in the best interest of the Nation.
The document contains several paragraphs describing the contributions of different individuals. Here is a transcribed version of the text:

**2021 Wings of Excellence Awardees**

**Louis R. Galmarini**

Mr. Galmarini has distinguished himself in assuring workplace fire and life safety criteria exist to prevent injury to employees, customers, and Center guests. Louis showed exemplary leadership by reducing the number of overdue facility discrepancies by more than 60 percent. As a key member of the Center’s Emergency Response Team, Lou’s quick actions have prevented further damage and reduced injury risk to personnel. Lou’s home community Fire Department also seeks his expertise to assist incident commanders on calls involving hazardous materials. As a board member of the West Park Historical Society, Lou authored several articles and contributed to scholarly materials preserving the rich history of this community’s unique and storied past. Lou regularly helps organize community events, including annual street fairs and Frog Jump contests. Lou’s dedication to safety, volunteerism, and community service has brought credit to Federal service and made him an inspiration to others.

**Natalie L. Henrich**

Ms. Natalie Henrich has demonstrated consistent outstanding performance, coordinating critical support services enabling mission essential activities at the NASA Glenn Research Center. During the pandemic, she is the point of contact for supplying personal protective equipment, janitorial services, waste management and recycling, comprehensive logistics support, and calibration services, providing the resources employees need to perform operations onsite safely and successfully. Her dedication and initiative is an inspiration to others. In response to changes in the weather, and with a limited number of employees approved for onsite work, she worked to provide a warm, socially distanced eating area that could be reserved, managed, cleaned, and used safely. Through collaboration with other organizations across the Center, she has provided protocols for facility usage, an online registration tool, designated parking, internal communications, and signage to make mission support a success. Through these efforts, in addition to countless others, she brings credit to the Federal service.

**James P. Burke**

Mr. Burke has delivered unprecedented results in the defense of NASA as a skilled litigator and procurement attorney. Jim has successfully assisted NASA in the acquisition of over $1 billion of goods and services. Jim’s expertise is routinely sought for high-visibility procurements. Jim serves as the Lead Attorney for the Artemis Lunar Gateway Power and Propulsion Element, the key component upon which NASA’s lunar Gateway outpost will be built and the cornerstone of NASA’s sustainable Artemis exploration architecture on and around the Moon. Additionally, Jim works closely with the Department of Justice to defend the agency in complex lawsuits that require heightened sophistication and legal expertise. Jim’s acumen and ethical professionalism, as well as his uncanny abilities to grasp complex technical and contractual issues, are to be commended. With great admiration and appreciation, Jim’s outstanding service is hereby recognized.

**Rochelle Gallagher**

Ms. Rochelle Gallagher has demonstrated outstanding performance as NASA’s Safety and Mission Assurance Technical Excellence Program (STEP) 2020 Program Manager supporting the NASA Safety and Mission Assurance community. Rochelle provided outstanding leadership in the design, update, and launch of the STEP 2020 program. This agency training program contains eight safety and leadership curriculums, hundreds of online classes, and over 4,000 active users. She has worked tirelessly ensuring STEP has improved program capabilities and user experience for all NASA learners. Rochelle has created an environment that fosters teamwork by supporting collaboration, continuous learning, and openness to innovation and new ideas. Rochelle has contributed to the community by developing NASA’s Rocket U and NASA’s Women in STEM Leadership Development Programs and by continuing to participate in them in 2020.

**Natalie L. Henrich**

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Jonathan L. Kratz
Mr. Kratz is a researcher in the Intelligent Control and Autonomy Branch at the NASA Glenn Research Center where he regularly exceeds performance expectations. His innovative research in Turbine Electrified Energy Management (TEEM) will allow reduced aviation emissions. Major industry partners are considering TEEM for future commercial aircraft. Mr. Kratz also helps coordinate Young Astronauts Day, an annual event where hundreds of regional students explore the field of aerospace. During the COVID–19 pandemic, he transformed several science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) activities to virtual events and received feedback that those events “inspired creativity and enthusiasm for science.” Mr. Kratz’s significant research and dedication to STEM outreach makes his public service exemplary.

Gretchen Morales-Valle
Ms. Gretchen Morales-Valle is an engineer at the Icing Research Tunnel supporting NASA’s aeronautics aircraft safety research mission. She provides test facility planning, model installation, and test support to ensure high-quality data for test customers. Since graduating from Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico, Gretchen has had a passion for giving back to future generations by supporting student science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) career outreach activities. Gretchen has volunteered to work on multiple panels sharing her career experiences and STEM opportunities with students. Gretchen participated in the presidential transition team panel to discuss challenges minority groups face and how to better attract and retain employees. Gretchen is currently the co-chair of the NASA Glenn Research Center Hispanic Advisory Group, which supports missions of the Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity. Gretchen is a NASA Glenn NextGen Ambassador, a program created to strengthen NASA and community outreach activities.

Kelly Ison
As Administrative Officer, Ms. Kelly Ison consistently utilizes her skills and expertise to develop creative methods and efficient processes supporting Directorate programs and objectives. In that regard, Ms. Ison has implemented innovative approaches in the NASA Space Technology Research Fellowship (NSTRF) Program impacted by mandatory telework conditions due to the COVID–19 pandemic. As an Ambassador for NSTRF under these conditions, her role evolved from coordinator to lead communicator. She reached out to 23 graduate students to discuss their individual situations and develop alternate plans to support their Virtual Technology Experiences. Ms. Ison successfully transitioned over half of the fellows to complete experiences remotely, collaborating with Glenn’s security team to get the access they needed, and helping others delay their onsite research for the benefit of the fellow and the program. Without Ms. Ison’s intervention, the fellows would have missed the opportunity to complete required experience that would have affected their university graduation.

Charles Hoff
Charles Hoff has provided outstanding leadership and expertise to advance the technical capabilities of the NASA Safety Center (NSC). His efforts have been instrumental in establishing the NSC as a trusted and innovative partner in several initiatives, including the Enterprise Video Content Delivery Network and Microsoft HoloLens projects. His work to define requirements and pilot extended reality (XR) tools to perform NSC audits not only reenables a capability lost due to current remote work requirements, it revolutionizes current business practices, optimizes utilization of resources, and results in potentially significant cost savings. Mr. Hoff’s ability to spearhead initiatives and push the envelope is an inspiration to others. His commitment extends to personal activities, including his participation in the Empire State Ride, an annual fundraising event and 500-mile bicycle ride, to advance cancer research.

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Ms. Gretchen Morales-Valle is an engineer at the Icing Research Tunnel supporting NASA’s aeronautics aircraft safety research mission. She provides test facility planning, model installation, and test support to ensure high-quality data for test customers. Since graduating from Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico, Gretchen has had a passion for giving back to future generations by supporting student science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) career outreach activities. Gretchen has volunteered to work on multiple panels sharing her career experiences and STEM opportunities with students. Gretchen participated in the presidential transition team panel to discuss challenges minority groups face and how to better attract and retain employees. Gretchen is currently the co-chair of the NASA Glenn Research Center Hispanic Advisory Group, which supports missions of the Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity. Gretchen is a NASA Glenn NextGen Ambassador, a program created to strengthen NASA and community outreach activities.
Elaine A. Pappas

In Ms. Elaine Pappas’s role as a Program Specialist and Contracting Officer’s Representative within the Research and Engineering Directorate at the NASA Glenn Research Center, Elaine administers several Glenn contracts, including one of the Center’s largest contracts. Elaine performs her position in a highly capable and professional manner. She expertly helps Glenn contract customers with the utmost integrity and provides trusted advice on how to order contract services, communicates contract processes and requirements, and instructs in automated system use. She continually looks to identify and implement efficiencies through inquisitive questions, forms codification, and improving efficiencies and communication across numerous organizations. Elaine eagerly seeks new responsibilities and has also served as a mentor in the NASA mentorship program, ensuring a valuable work experience for future employees. She is also a member of the Glenn Speakers Bureau and participates in public outreach events inspiring the next generation of potential NASA researchers and engineers.

NASA Glenn Research Center

Christine C. Staschiak

Ms. Staschiak provided exceptional leadership to the NASA Natural Resources Council. She led the development and implementation of the Council for the protection and enhancement of NASA’s natural resources. As the Council’s first chairperson, she was instrumental in creating a sustainable, effective, and efficient initiative that has improved agency compliance and reduced costs. The Council brought together NASA experts across the country, creating a platform of collaboration and coordination on issues such as endangered species. Ms. Staschiak crafted precise training and communications to meet technical requirements and inform senior leadership of NASA’s extensive compliance and species management obligations. Under her leadership, the Council exceeded its performance objectives and became a model for how agency-wide environmental teams could be implemented to optimize investments in personnel and projects.

NASA Glenn Research Center

Angela D. Windau

Ms. Angela Windau has distinguished herself through exceptional service ensuring the workforce is safe and healthy through a global pandemic. Angela is a leading voice at Glenn Research Center by presenting safety and health information at the Center Director’s weekly Town Hall meetings, communicating extremely important information to employees, and providing technical expertise to answer questions and concerns. Angela has been instrumental in ensuring a safe workplace by leading a team of medical professionals performing contact tracing, overseeing vaccine administration, and developing resources to provide Coronavirus-related material. Angela advocated for additional Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Funding to help support increased staffing levels at the Medical Clinic, ensuring Glenn Research Center employees have access to medical care in the midst of a global pandemic. Angela’s commitment to public service has been an inspiration for others to follow.

NASA Glenn Research Center

Bradley Ashworth

Petty Officer (PO) Bradley Ashworth served aboard U.S. Coast Guard Cutter (USCGC) NEAH BAY as an Engineering Officer of the Watch. As an Electrician’s Mate Third Class, PO Ashworth was an exceptional asset to the cutter, bringing reason, outstanding technical skill, and judgment to his division and crew. He demonstrated unrivaled commitment to developing himself and others, frequently remaining available after normal working hours to ensure mission readiness and personal professional development and assisting other members obtaining their qualifications. He exhibited commendable attention to detail in his duties as Engineering Log Auditor. He rapidly achieved his personal professional development goals and demonstrated readiness for the responsibilities of a higher pay grade. His pattern of exceptional performance has been consistent since his arrival and has overcome numerous professional and personal challenges. PO Ashworth was recognized by his shipmates as NEAH BAY’s Sailor of the Quarter and continues to deserve high recognition.

U.S. Coast Guard
Ian Duthie

Shortly after reporting, MORRO BAY entered a comprehensive dockside availability to perform $400,000 in upgrades and repairs. Chief Duthie quickly familiarized himself with over 34 work items. He was required to review specifications, identify areas of improvement, and train the crew on proper inspection procedures. His efforts allowed for the aging cutter to remain ready, relevant, and responsive to her critical ice breaking and law enforcement missions. Prior to Chief’s arrival, MORRO BAY was plagued by unreliable electrical service from the #1 Ships Service Diesel Generator. Chief Duthie meticulously troubleshooted the problem to a faulty governor linkage, restoring the full operation of the Cutter’s electrical plant. As a member of MORRO BAY’s Onboard Training Team, Chief Duthie enthusiastically demonstrates emergency procedures and best practices to junior crew members. His diligent work ethic is a model for the crew to emulate and has been instrumental to successful mission execution.

Lee E. Gibbs

Serving in the Ninth District Command Center, Petty Officer Gibbs provided superior oversight in the execution of over 600 search and rescue, maritime safety and security, environmental protection, and law enforcement cases, resulting in 813 lives saved or assisted and $5 million in property preserved. In response to COVID–19, she helped alleviate economic hardship for families across northeast Ohio by preparing 1,495 school lunches and 160 backpacks for the 2020 to 2021 school year. Leading by example, she organized and managed a team of Coast Guard personnel in sorting and distributing 4,600 pounds of dry goods during a single 12-hour food drive. Throughout the COVID–19 pandemic, she volunteered at multiple emergency distribution drives, disseminating over 226,000 pounds of food and emergency supplies to 25,400 families in serious need. Most notably, her tireless efforts resulted in the distribution of over 8,200 masks and hand sanitizing products to approximately 5,800 residents in need.

Keith Ayotte

As Base Cleveland’s Electronics Maintenance Control Officer, Master Chief Ayotte skillfully managed a team of 50 electronics technicians geographically dispersed throughout the Great Lakes region. Applying tremendous diligence, technical expertise, and leadership ability during the COVID–19 global pandemic, Master Chief Ayotte overcame budget and travel restrictions, effectively balanced safety of personnel, and directed the on-time completion of all mission-critical electronics maintenance for over 380 assets in the region. He also oversaw the installation of the Coast Guard’s next-generation navigational system on 12 small boats. The Coast Guard’s technical authority for electronics maintenance has recognized Master Chief Ayotte as the most accomplished Electronics Maintenance Control Officer having achieved the best maintenance compliance rates within the organization. Additionally, Master Chief served as the Chief of the consolidated mess for northeast Ohio, guiding the leadership development of new Chiefs and orchestrating events in support of several local charitable causes.

Ron Baron

During 2020, Mr. Ron Baron has continued to lead the Civil Engineering Unit (CEU) Cleveland Facility Planning Team via working on high-level organization initiatives that have direct operational impacts. These initiatives include but are not limited to homeporting Fast Response Cutters at Sitka and Seward, Alaska, where land is limited and there is an abundance of unique environmental and logistical challenges. Mr. Baron masterfully orchestrated three consecutive Planning Proposals in North Carolina at the Fort Macon facility that consisted of a new station building, an additional 87-foot patrol boat, and optimization of the Sector personnel; these all had alternatives that coincided with each other. Furthermore, Mr. Baron mentored a new civilian employee on the planning process. Mr. Baron continually operates well beyond what is expected as a Facilities Planner and has made a lasting impact on the face of the Coast Guard.
2021 Wings of Excellence Awardees

United States Coast Guard

Theresa Henry
Mrs. Theresa Henry, the Coast Guard-wide Educational Services Officer (ESO) of the Year, is known for her wise counsel so members can be their best within the Service and outside it. Serving at Base Cleveland as the Regional Education Services Officer, Mrs. Henry ardently supported the formal education of Coast Guard members throughout the Great Lakes. She also provided orientation and training to new ESOs, setting expectations and preparing them to support the field. During the past year, Mrs. Henry processed 59 Coast Guard Mutual Assistance Education Grants and counseled numerous members on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, provided information on Pell grants, scholarships, and alternative funding sources in light of the reduction of tuition assistance. Mrs. Henry fiercely worked to assist in the Coast Guard’s Child Care Subsidy policy, which resulted in the reduction of out-of-pocket costs for members currently in unexpected financial hardships.

United States Coast Guard

Stephen T. Lynch
As the Ninth Coast Guard District Legal Assistance Attorney, Mr. Steve Lynch served as the primary legal advisor to thousands of active duty, reserve, dependent, and military retirees, for both the Coast Guard and our sister services, throughout the Great Lakes. Doing more with less is a Coast Guard tradition, and he truly embraced that adage across his eight-state area of responsibility. In calendar year 2020, he expertly handled 1,101 distinct legal assistance matters. Rising above the COVID-related challenges of in-person meetings, he demonstrated unparalleled commitment by exceeding previous years in terms of number of clients serviced and overall support provided. What is more, he further strengthened his already outstanding relationships with nonprofits, pro-bono counsel, and similar Government providers, both locally and throughout the Great Lakes. Finally, Mr. Lynch voluntarily spent significant time mentoring and supervising law students who intern in the legal office.

United States Coast Guard

Aliah J. Munroe
Petty Officer Second Class Aliah Munroe is assigned to the Base Cleveland Personnel and Administration Office where she provides administrative support and counseling in career development, pay entitlements, incentive programs, and retirement and veterans’ benefits to 175 active and reserve Coast Guard members. In addition to her normally assigned duties, she serves as the President of northeast Ohio’s chapter of the Coast Guard Enlisted Association and Vice Chair of the Coast Guard Ninth District’s Leadership and Diversity Advisor Council, through which she champions respect and empowerment to promote a positive workplace environment where everyone is encouraged to apply their unique talents and skill sets to achieve their full potential and maximize their contribution to the Coast Guard.

United States Coast Guard

Paul Pleiss
Chief Petty Officer Paul Pleiss demonstrated exceptional initiative and leadership while serving in the Ninth Coast Guard District’s C5I Branch. As the COVID-19 pandemic reached the United States, he recognized the need for more telework capabilities, promptly acquired 88 peripheral devices, and managed distribution of 86 remote access-capable laptops for the District Staff. As requests for assistance with video-conferencing capabilities poured in, he established an effective scheduling system relied on by all Coast Guardsmen across the Great Lakes region and coordinated 633 virtual meetings and teleconferences. When the District Staff was faced with an unexpected vacancy, he promptly volunteered to become the Assistant Key Management Infrastructure Manager supporting 21 sub-units. He fervently led others as the Command Drug and Alcohol Representative and Command Financial Specialist and coordinated morale-building events within the Chief Petty Officer’s Mess. Chief Pleiss’ leadership and vision served as a model for others to follow.
2021 Wings of Excellence Awardees

Donald S. Yarab

Mr. Donald S. Yarab is being recognized for his extraordinary service to the United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR). Mr. Yarab has served OCR with dedication and commitment for 30 years. For nearly half of those years, he has been a team leader and supervisory attorney, and prior to that, a civil rights attorney. During his tenure, Mr. Yarab has either overseen or personally investigated thousands of civil rights investigations and provided critical training, mentoring, and leadership development for staff and managers alike. He assisted with the hiring of scores of OCR employees, helping shape the agency for a generation. Mr. Yarab is a nationally recognized expert in civil rights cases involving students with limited English proficiency and students with disabilities. He is also an expert on Federal Government obligations under the Freedom of Information Act. He forged deep, long-lasting relationships with stakeholders at state agencies and school districts across Ohio and Michigan that resulted in direct impact in services to thousands of students. Finally, he is a leader in labor management relations for the agency. The quality of his work, and the dedication he brings, motivates his colleagues and brings credit to the agency, the Department, and the Federal Government. Through his career, Mr. Yarab has personally affected greater equity in our educational system in service to OCR’s mission.

Erin Brown

Erin Brown is a Supervisory Attorney Advisor within the Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals (OMHA), Central Operations Division. Throughout the 2020 calendar year, Erin consistently provided outstanding leadership and oversight on all legal matters, escalations, problem resolution, desktop protocols, training, OMHA’s Electronic Case Adjudication and Processing Environment support activities, service request mailbox inquiries, and special initiatives. In addition, she assisted and advised the Director in significant workload transitions. Erin acted as second in command in the absence of the Director and used sound judgment when making decisions. She also led pivotal changes within the Division’s operations, allowing all appeals and documents for OMHA’s Field Office staff to be managed electronically during the agency’s pandemic telework posture. Erin consistently used her expert legal knowledge and skills to resolve case issues from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Departmental Appeals Board, OMHA’s Field Office staff, and other external partners.

Zechariah C. Taylor

Boatswain’s Mate Second Class (BM2) Zechariah C. Taylor was instrumental in the rescue of two children stranded atop a derelict concrete pad at the base of a cliff on Lake Erie. Initially, he had scant information on the situation, but after a short search, he quickly located the children and several police officers who were unable to get to them. The children, not wearing life jackets, being battered by waist-high waves and terrified, were desperately clinging to one another just to keep their footing. Surrounded by rough water, rocks, and a steep cliff, rescue options were limited. Undeterred and despite the danger the 5-foot waves posed to his rescue boat and crew, BM2 Taylor transferred one of his crewmembers onto the slippery concrete pad. From there, BM2 Taylor guided his crewmember and the children across a treacherous gap of water back to safety. Once ashore, local police returned them to their parents, frightened but unscathed.

Thomas Wallace

Serving as a Contracting Officer on the U. S. Coast Guard Civil Engineering Unit Cleveland team, Mr. Thomas Wallace made significant contributions to the successful procurement efforts that improve safety, and quality of life of personnel, enabling frontline operations. In 2020, he executed 21 contracts totaling $11 million in expenditures to repair critical infrastructure, making him one of the most productive Contracting Officers in the Civil Engineering Program. He worked diligently as the Procurement Card Manager. Despite Coronavirus constraints, he assisted the staff with processing of invoices to ensure that Contractors could perform. He assumed the Environmental Program’s contracting after a sudden staff vacancy. His personal efforts contributed to the unit’s larger success in execution of an annual program of $45 million. Mr. Wallace’s staff mentoring, work ethic, expertise, and enthusiasm all contribute toward noteworthy results and are a credit to him, the Civil Engineering Unit, and the U.S. Coast Guard.

2021 Wings of Excellence Awardees

United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals

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2021 Wings of Excellence Awardees

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals**

**Rachel H. Maxwell**
Legal Assistant Rachel H. Maxwell provided outstanding public service with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals, Cleveland Field Office. Throughout calendar year 2020, while continuing to provide comprehensive legal services to her assigned Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) team, Ms. Maxwell was one of a very select few who volunteered from the beginning of the 2020 COVID–19 virus pandemic to carry out essential agency functions that could only be provided at the field office location. Notwithstanding personal exposure risks, Ms. Maxwell provided essential legal services to 18 ALJ teams adjudicating Level III Medicare appeals on behalf of the Department, resulting in over 18,860 appeals containing 56,570 claims being decided and closed. The sustained level of professionalism and public service excellence exhibited by Ms. Rachel Maxwell brought great credit upon herself and the Department of Health and Human Services.

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals**

**Colleen C. O’Malley**
Legal Assistant Colleen C. O’Malley provided outstanding public service with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals, Cleveland Field Office. Throughout calendar year 2020, while continuing to provide comprehensive legal services to her assigned Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) team, Ms. O’Malley was one of a very select few who volunteered from the beginning of the 2020 COVID–19 virus pandemic to carry out essential agency functions that could only be provided at the field office location. Notwithstanding personal exposure risks, Ms. O’Malley provided essential legal services to 18 ALJ teams adjudicating Level III Medicare appeals on behalf of the Department, resulting in over 18,860 appeals containing 56,570 claims being decided and closed. The sustained level of professionalism and public service excellence exhibited by Ms. Colleen O’Malley brought great credit upon herself and the Department of Health and Human Services.

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals**

**Steven M. Yelenic**
Steven Yelenic is the Hearing Office Director with the Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals. Throughout his tenure, the agency has consistently recognized the Cleveland Field Office as the highest performing Hearing Office in the country. This sustained achievement has been due to Mr. Yelenic’s steadfast leadership, hands-on management style, and unconditional commitment to public service. In this way he personifies the agency mission to contribute to the public good via responsiveness, fairness, innovation, and resiliency. Through his example, Mr. Yelenic unquestionably inspires hard work and accountability in others. Moreover, he invests in our shared success by promoting growth for those working under and around him, a practice that fosters loyalty and a deep sense of office pride. In fact, Mr. Yelenic’s executive leadership has not merely been important to the agency’s success this year; when faced with the unique challenges of a global pandemic, it has been essential.

**U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Attorney’s Office, Northern District of Ohio**

**John L. Flanigan IV**
Under the direction of Michael Godshalk, the United States Attorney’s Office’s Information Technology team of John Flanigan, Robin Mesenger, Betsy Nickoloff, Jeff Oleyar, and Randy Smith routinely provide exceptional, round-the-clock support to approximately 260 attorneys, employees, contractors, and law clerks. Structured to provide onsite assistance and to facilitate courtroom presentations, the IT department restructured itself almost overnight to move office personnel to nearly full-time remote work and virtual court hearings. This resulted in a total of 6,700 IT support requests, which was 1,500 more requests than the previous year. During the same time period, they replaced 230 eVoIP desktop phones, 250 computers, and 126 iPhones. With public safety and securing the financial interests of the United States at the forefront of our mission, a fully engaged and professional IT department is a critical part of what the Office accomplishes on an average day. This last year was far from average. The Office’s ability to continue its mission without missing a step is due to the dedication of the IT Unit.
2021 Wings of Excellence Awardees

U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Attorney’s Office, Northern District of Ohio

Michael S. Godshalk

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Elizabeth Nickoloff

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Robin L. Mesenger

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Jeffrey Oleyar

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Deanna R. Jackson

Deanna R. Jackson is a staff Mediator for the Cleveland Field Office of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Program. Ms. Jackson routinely demonstrates an outstanding dedication to eradicating discrimination in the workplace through mediation. She regularly exhibits incredible professionalism, competence, and skill. Her keen negotiation skills contributed to a resolution rate of over 83 percent for all cases in ADR. No task is too big or too small—Ms. Jackson always rolls up her sleeves to seek solutions. She is a “can-do” person and her positive attitude is evident in all she does, and it positively impacts the EEOC’s Cleveland Field Office. Most notably, Ms. Jackson is routinely commended for her professionalism and ability to handle the most complex cases, diffusing emotional parties and securing resolutions in the toughest of cases. She is a remendous team player who is deeply dedicated to the resolution of charges of discrimination and routinely demonstrates her commitment to excellence in utilizing her creativity and superior negotiation skills to “get the job done.” She never works without her “wings of excellence”!

Sal Lopez

Mr. Sal Lopez is a Federal Investigator for the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Cleveland Field Office. Mr. Lopez demonstrates a firm grasp on civil rights compliance and is truly dedicated to ensuring civil rights protections are in place in the workplace. He is not only remarkable in his passion for the agency’s mission and work but in his ability to bring early resolution to cases through alternative dispute resolution methods. Mr. Lopez has also volunteered and been trained in our agency’s mediation program and was recently selected to cross-train in our mediation program. In short, Mr. Lopez is truly deserving of this recognition.
2021 Wings of Excellence Awardees

United States General Services Administration

**Evan Shooltz**

In March 2020, in response to COVID–19, the Anthony J. Celebrezze (AJC) Federal Building was closed to the public and property management quickly shifted to remote operations. Despite these unprecedented working conditions, Evan immediately evaluated building operations and instituted wayfinding, security, and CDC/Ohio Department of Health protocols in advance of any regional or national guidance. He also adapted protocols as state and Federal guidance warranted. Evan is also to be recognized for his extraordinary efforts in the discovery and mitigation of lead in the drinking water system that resulted from low building occupancy due to COVID–19. He expertly managed the issue from the operational side and provided invaluable insight and recommendations to the General Services Administration (GSA) Regional Facilities Management team (FMSP) in response to the issue. His discovery of this condition at the AJC expanded GSA’s Regional FMSP awareness to the potential for similar conditions at other Cleveland Federal buildings and throughout GSA’s national portfolio. National guidance was developed and issued in large part as a result of Evan’s efforts.

United States Postal Service

**Vince Barber**

Vince Barber is a glowing example of an exemplary postal employee. He is hardworking, intelligent, leads by example, is a team player, and is liked by all. Vince has served the community in which he lives. He has been with the U.S. Postal Service for over 33 years, and during that time he has worked as a letter carrier for the Lakewood Post Office. Few can match Vince’s accumulated sick leave record, as he has banked over 2,800 hours of sick leave. Vince has been called upon from time to time to face a new challenge, expand his knowledge base, and work in a different capacity. Whether serving in a detail capacity as an Operations Programs Specialist, Address Management System (AMS) Technician, or AMS Manager, or in a full-time capacity as a City Carrier or Product Information Quality Analyst, Vince has always done his best and has been successful!

United States Postal Service

**Dawn Jerson**

The year 2020 was difficult for everyone, but some people made it more bearable with their optimism and sense of hope. Dawn Jerson is one of these bright lights. Dawn presented dozens of presentations to Boards of Elections across the country. Her thoughtful presentations helped customers navigate the mailing process. It is more difficult to deliver a presentation virtually, because you do not have the contact with your audience to ensure that they remain engaged with the material. Dawn interacted with her audiences through the chat box and question-and-answer sessions to make sure they understood the mail process. Despite the record number of ballots mailed, there were very few issues with the mail. A large portion of this success is due to Dawn’s presentations. She made sure the mailers understood the process, she had resources to help them with any issues, and she was always available to listen.

United States Postal Service

**Michael Calvey**

Budget Analyst Michael P. Calvey has over 19 years tenure at the U.S. Postal Service and is a veteran of the U.S. Army. He has excelled in his ability to oversee the Northern Ohio District’s budget and is readily available to assist internal customers (approximately 640 sites) on a daily basis. He also developed a budget tracking log that allows manager to be proactive in scheduling employees according to their allocated work hours. Michael has a welcoming personality with an eagerness to fulfill his duty and shows ongoing initiative, dedication, and willingness to take on a leadership role when required. A major contributor to the training for the Time and Attendance Collection System, Michael has trained over 900 employees and approximately 275 new supervisors on “Time is Money” and “Managing Time and Attendance.” He is a great asset to the U.S. Postal Service and continues to go above and beyond his call of duty. He is Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt certified and has obtained a facilitator certificate. Michael is married and has two children, and he and his wife play an active role in their academics and physical education. He volunteers his time to assist the Athletic Department by providing visiting teams and referees with exceptional hospitality. In addition, he assists coaches with team building and serves as a mentor to all players.
2021 Wings of Excellence Awardees

United States Postal Service

Floyd Kline

Floyd Kline daily demonstrates his dedication to our northern Ohio U.S. Postal Service (USPS) team. Floyd is relentless in his dedication to making sure the Cleveland Postmaster and her team are successful. One of the projects Floyd has taken the lead on is making sure all craft grievances are timely processed and settled at the lowest cost. Through his efforts, the Cleveland Postmaster is always in compliance with the 56-day timeline. His work with the union has also improved labor/management relations. One of our biggest challenges in the past year has been the pandemic. The pandemic has caused major employee staffing issues. Floyd conducts a daily staffing telecom with the Post Offices to discuss the staffing issues they incurred that day and what the next few days look like. Floyd assists in sharing and moving resources across all post offices to ensure all mail is delivered. It is because of this effort our letter carriers are on the street in a safe and timely manner. Another project that Floyd champions is identifying and developing the future leaders of the USPS. We have Managers and Supervisors that retire after years of dedicated service. When these employees retire, we lose years of experience. It is crucial that we find and develop our employees who can step into these leadership positions. Floyd has been instrumental in this process.

Roselyn Street

Ms. Street has been a Postal employee for 26 years. For the past decade or more, she has been an undeniable part of the success and increased revenue for the Postal Service. It is through her tireless efforts in the “Connects”–Business Connect, Customer Connect, and Clerk Connect—that the northern Ohio offices have such great achievements in revenue generation. She sacrifices her personal time and lots of mileage to reach out to every postal facility and employee to educate them and encourage them to make money for this business that will secure their future. Have a question? Call Rose. Need literature for a potential lead? Call Rose. Have a coordinator that needs a boost of confidence to reach out to businesses? Call Rose. Need a different voice to speak to the employees? Call Rose. The passion and dedication that she has for not only this program, but the success of the Post Office, is admirable, to say the least. She has not only dedicated herself to the business but also managed to find time to raise a family and spend time with them and support all their pursuits.

United States Postal Service

Charles Riley

Charles Riley has been a loyal, self-motivated employee of the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) for almost 16 years. He was hired as a letter carrier in 2005 but has been in a managerial position since 2007. It was apparent from the very beginning of his career that he had much to offer. Mr. Riley serves as the manager at the South Arlington Post Office and the role of Scanning and Function 2 Operations Champion for Akron City. He took the lead in our historical Peak Season 2020 by volunteering countless hours processing and transporting parcels for Plant partners and distributing to all local eight offices. He has implemented scanning processes that have improved our performance in scanning scores and service to our customers. Charles has a deep and abiding commitment to excellence in service and a genuine depth of caring about the organization and the people the organization serves. He has shown his dedication through his determination of driving his unit and team members to efficiencies that lead to excellence. He not only completes what is expected of him but finds innovative ways to improve methods and services for the USPS and the people it serves. Charles is dedicated to his work performance while balancing his commitment to his family. He is active in his community and volunteers his time to coach his children’s soccer teams for the last 6 years. He has earned this recognition for what he has contributed and accomplished.

Gil Goldberg

Throughout his illustrious 27-year career as the head of the Small Business Association’s Cleveland office, Gil Goldberg has been one of the area’s most prominent advocates of northern Ohio’s small business community. He has been instrumental in implementing many changes that led to improvements in the efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity of the agency. He is looked upon to help mentor and grow other leaders in the agency by performing Financial Accounting and Report (FAR) Exams in the Leadership area. His leadership skills and dedication ensure that he always gets the job done in an efficient and successful way. He has always cultivated a culture of private–public collaboration, perhaps best illustrated by his Municipal Small Business Initiative, combining local, Federal, and private sector funding to help the underserved community gain access to small business financing.

United States Postal Service

United States Small Business Administration
2021 Wings of Excellence Awardees

United States Small Business Administration

Gary Pendleton II
A proud U.S. Army veteran, Gary Pendleton II joined the Small Business Association (SBA) Cleveland office in May of 2020 to help support its efforts to assist small businesses impacted by the pandemic. Gary quickly became the office expert on the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) Program, which is designed to provide economic relief to small businesses and nonprofit organizations experiencing a temporary loss of revenue due to the pandemic. Gary became the liaison between northern Ohio EIDL small business applicants and the SBA’s EIDL loan processing center. Gary became coach to many small business owners who needed a live person to help assist them through the EIDL approval process. Even when he was unable to help them with EIDL, Gary still did his best to help by referring business owners to other potential sources of assistance. Gary proved to be the model of civil service at a time when it was most needed by the small business community.

Kristina M. Angel
Ms. Kristina Angel is a Nurse Manager at the Akron facility. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, she has led the way for setting up the vaccine clinic in the southern tier of the service area. Ms. Angel works along with staff to call patients, give vaccines, manage schedules, cover weekend shifts, and step into any role that is needed. She is an example of a leader who looks out for her staff and patients alike. Her caring comes through as genuine and supportive. Ms. Angel’s motto during the COVID-19 crisis has been “I would never ask of you to do anything that I would not do myself.” Ms. Angel has lived up to that motto, and we recognize her as not only our leader but our friend, and foundation of the vaccine clinic.

Veterans Administration (VA) Northeast Ohio Healthcare System

Mark Bell
Mr. Mark Bell serves as the Administrative Officer for Community Outpatient Service (COPS). The service is responsible for over 900 employees across 13 locations of care. For the past 5 years, Mr. Bell has spearheaded the Employee Appreciation events at each of the 12 outpatient clinics. This included setup/teardown and working with Canteen Service for food, drink, and supplies. Mr. Bell coordinated with COPS management to do the cooking and serving of food to each outpatient clinic.

Steven K. Brown
Mr. Steven Brown is one of our hardest-working and most dedicated employees within the Sterile Processing Service. While acting as Lead Sterile Processing Technician, he was well respected by his coworkers and was viewed as a pillar of excellence related to teamwork. Mr. Brown voluntarily comes in early on Monday mornings to meet the needs of the department and our Veterans. He volunteered to be the preceptor for new employees in the department. During his daily duties, he exceeds all Sterile Processing Quality Standards, including assembly and sterilization documentation. Mr. Brown’s performance and accomplishments serve as an example of what a Sterile Processing Technician/Medical Supply Technician should be within the VA.
2021 Wings of Excellence Awardees

Veterans Administration (VA) Northeast Ohio Healthcare System

**Autumn D. Conley-Clark**

Ms. Autumn Conley-Clark has an outstanding commitment to our women Veterans at the Mansfield VA Outpatient Clinic. In the last year, she has done numerous projects aimed at improving their overall feeling of being valued by the organization. These projects ranged from a perfume drawing for Valentine's Day in which multiple women received perfume, recipe booklets for heart health, and a Women's Directory of services that provides our female Veterans with local resources for a variety of issues, including local art, exercise, and children's services, among others. Everything she developed is aimed at addressing the multiple facets of the female Veteran and the many hats that they wear. Autumn is an outstanding advocate for our female Veterans in Mansfield. Her resource booklet has been shared at the Medical Center level as an outstanding tool.

Veterans Administration (VA) Northeast Ohio Healthcare System

**Brooke J. DeVito**

During the COVID–19 pandemic, eight outpatient clinic locations were closed, leaving many Veterans without local clinic access. The clinic closure especially affected Veterans who received monthly long-acting mental health (MH) injections for treatment of severe mental illness. Many of these Veterans were considered at high risk for mortality and morbidity related to COVID–19 if they were to become ill. Ms. DeVito organized education and training for several Home-Based Primary Care nurses to provide these injections to the Veterans in their own homes. When the number of Veterans needing long-acting MH injections increased to over 100, Ms. DeVito facilitated education and training for in-home vaccinations, personal protective equipment, vital sign monitoring, and homecare hygiene to nurses from other departments who had never provided this type of care before. She attended weekly planning meetings and provided oversight and guidance to the initiative.

Veterans Administration (VA) Northeast Ohio Healthcare System

**Maya L. Davis**

As our healthcare system was hit by the COVID–19 pandemic, many new leaders emerged and performed at elite levels. Ms. Maya Davis left her permanent position as the Assistant Fisher House Manager and stepped into various leadership roles to ensure our hospital was well positioned to combat the challenges that COVID–19 created. As the Acting Assistant Chief of the Patient Transfer Center, she ensured all ward clerk staff understood all protocols in place and had all the proper personal protective equipment. She played critical roles in standing up the COVID–19 pre-procedure Swab Clinic, COVID–19 Vaccine Clinic, and various drive-through clinics. Lastly, she built a team of schedulers that worked in the evenings and on weekends to ensure a large volume of Veterans were being scheduled for their COVID–19 vaccines as well as other critical appointments. Ms. Davis has demonstrated a true commitment to our organization and the Veterans we serve.

Veterans Administration (VA) Northeast Ohio Healthcare System

**Jessica C. Ellis**

Ms. Jessica Ellis is a Telehealth Clinical Registered Nurse who has handled the increased COVID–19 workload by cross-training Telehealth Technicians and Registered Nurses to cover all Telehealth modalities. Ms. Ellis leads the team in screening 10 percent of the more than 2,300 COVID consults and enrolled over 900 patients since March 2020. She has assisted with 155 in-clinic specialty video appointments. She volunteers for weekend COVID–19 telehealth and vaccine clinic coverage. Ms. Ellis developed an educational course for nurses incorporating VA Video Connect that is being implemented into Federal Talent Management System courses. Ms. Ellis demonstrates great adaptability and flexibility in her role, which makes her deserving of the Wings of Excellence award.
**2021 Wings of Excellence Awardees**

**Veterans Administration (VA) Northeast Ohio Healthcare System**

**Natalie A. Mandel**

Ms. Natalie Mandel is the most dedicated Mammography Technologist that I have ever worked with in my professional career of almost 30 years. As the only Mammography Technologist onsite for the past 3 months, she continued to maintain the highest quality and the same volume of examinations that were performed with two full-time technologists. Despite the workload, she continues to perform with an energetic and pleasant demeanor without complaint. She is solely responsible for all clinical/administrative work within her division, including Quality Assurance and Control protocols, mailing result letters, maintaining practice audits, and overseeing annual Mammography Quality Standards Act inspection for which, under her guidance, the facility received an exceptional 100 percent score for the last 3 years. Without Ms. Mandel, we would not be able to provide Mammography services over these past months. Ms. Mandel is the driving force behind Mammography, and it is a true honor to work with her.

**Darrel Oden**

Mr. Darrel Oden has exceeded all expectations amidst a year riddled with challenges fueled by the COVID-19 pandemic. As the Environment Coatings Shop Supervisor, he handled all new COVID-related requirements by assembling cross-functional teams to complete the jobs in an expeditious and safe manner. Mr. Oden may function behind the scenes, but his department’s work can be seen in every area of the hospital. A prime example of his work is the freshly painted crosswalks and high visibility of curbs to potentially limit and prevent slips, falls, and trip hazards, providing a safe path to the hospital. He has mentored and advised others on the benefits of public service by taking on projects such as overseeing the external painting and beautification of the Transitional Residence House, a 100-year-old facility, while saving money for the community. Mr. Oden leads by example with his work ethic, reliability, and dedication to our Veterans.

**Alice D. Pescrilli**

Ms. Alice Pescrilli’s exceptional initiative, impressive work ethic, and dedication to process improvement ensure delivery of world-class healthcare to over 108,000 Veterans supported by the VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System. As a supervisor in Nutrition and Food Service in 2018, she aggressively pursued and implemented a Lean Six Sigma project that overhauled food tray system deliveries. That enhancement garnered valid success and is currently still in place. Serving as Logistics Service’s Non-Expendable Equipment Supervisor, Alice’s efforts were instrumental in driving accountability for over 56,000 pieces of equipment. She was pivotal in driving the inventory accuracy metric from 87.53 percent to an impressive 98.33 percent. Additionally, Alice is key to the evaluation and implementation of a new Tracking/Scanning platform that facilitates critical visibility of over 9,000 packages weekly, from receipt to delivery in the Warehouse. Alice’s potent contributions reflect her robust dedication to service and our Veterans.

**Lindsay N. Roberts**

As a Primary Care Social Worker, Ms. Lindsay Roberts has demonstrated an outstanding dedication during the past year, providing social work coverage for both the East Liverpool VA Outpatient Clinic and assisting with coverage at the Mansfield VA Outpatient Clinic location. Ms. Roberts volunteered to take donated bags of food to Veterans during the pandemic. In addition, Ms. Roberts made cloth masks, which she provided to both staff and Veterans. Ms. Roberts has established and continues to coach a baseball team for children with autism. She is a voice and role model for the lesbian and gay community and shares her personal story to foster understanding of the trauma many gay service members endure. Ms. Roberts has been an inspiration to her community and peers.
2021 Wings of Excellence Awardees

Veterans Administration (VA) Northeast Ohio Healthcare System

Delmas E. Stubbs
Mr. Delmas Stubbs, a Rehabilitation Counselor, is well known for his Veteran advocacy and the coordination of a free dental program for Veterans within the Mercy Healthcare System. Mr. Stubbs has played a critical role in coordinating and conducting the largest food distribution in Mahoning Country. Throughout the pandemic, Mr. Stubbs worked with private donors to provide holiday meals of turkey and ham dinners. He also helps to provide additional food resources for Veterans throughout the year. As a member of the clothing program called “Dress to Succeed,” he acquired and assisted with clothing donations for Veterans in need. He has also acquired furniture and new mattress donations for Veterans and helped Veterans with their Benefits Administration claims. Continually Veteran-focused, he advocates for the Veteran and assists to eliminate barriers that they may encounter. Mr. Stubbs is a role model for the community and deserving of this award. (Awarded posthumously)

Mike Tiedt
Mr. Mike Tiedt was the Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Shop Supervisor. His knowledge of the HVAC systems and his creativity were instrumental in helping the medical center prepare for the care of COVID–19 patients. He tirelessly researched solutions to convert many typical patient rooms into negative air pressure rooms, enabling the medical center to treat the growing number of COVID–19 patients. Mr. Tiedt’s guidance and expertise in his craft were invaluable to the medical center. He worked tirelessly to maintain a safe and world-class healthcare environment for our Veteran patients, clinicians, and employees. Mr. Tiedt was a true all-star performer and problem-solver who made a difference every day at the VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System. (Awarded posthumously)

Lawrence A. Schmidt
Mr. Lawrence Schmidt is deserving of this award because he was among the few volunteers who braved the pandemic to take care of our Veterans Medical Intensive Care Unit, which is a critical in-patient ward that gets busier than most wards due to it being an Intensive Care Unit. Mr. Schmidt sanitizes and cleans his rooms so well that the infectious control test, Adenosine Triphosphate Contamination Monitoring System, was questioned about its accuracy. This is just the way Lawrence cleans, completely and thoroughly. He takes his time and pays attention to the small details. He is dependable, self-motivated, communicates well, and is deserving of this award.

Mark F. Simmons
Mr. Mark Simmons always goes above and beyond to provide outstanding care to our Veterans. As a prosthetics technician who repairs and fabricates orthotics and prosthetics, he always does what is needed to provide excellent and timely care. Mark worked diligently to reorganize the prosthetics laboratory to improve efficiency, minimize waste, and maximize cost savings. He always aids wherever he is needed, such as filling in at the scheduling desk to ensure Veterans receive their prosthetic supplies in time, assisting in providing wheelchairs and walkers, or helping with repairs to these items. Mark also has remarkable rapport with Veterans, always willing to speak with them and often sharing his own experiences as an amputee to answer any questions they have or to ease their fears. Even though performing so many tasks can be demanding, Mark always does them with a positive attitude.

Veterans Administration (VA) Northeast Ohio Healthcare System

2021 Wings of Excellence Awardees
2020 Wings of Excellence
Award Winners

Defense Contract Management Agency
Robert D. Buzzelli
Bryson "Jack" Twigg

Defense Finance and Accounting Service
Cori Sykes
Elizabeth Price
Jevin Lewis
Ronald Webb
Bryan Vitantonio
Phyllis Trefney
Lamar Sykes
Lauren Hyre
Lisa Evans
Timothy Bright
Kevin Bianchi
Lisabeth Albrecht
Christopher Joseph
Kari Kuenzer
Danae Brown

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Marvin Patten
Luisa Burgos

Federal Aviation Administration
Gary Marshall
Steve Mellott
Eric Cleavenger
Donald Tatter
Melvin Griffaw
Julian Garcia
John Hines
Benny Perez
Steven Holderness
Christopher Reyes
Robert Harper
Scott Baisden

Health and Human Services - Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals
Karen Lutz
Jennifer Troutman

Internal Revenue Service
Taria M. Cooper
Christine Kovacevic
Charles W. Britten
Jessyn M. Brooks

NASA Glenn Research Center
Lindsey Wilford
Steven R. Oleson
Zachary D. Lucas
Sam D. Hensley
Nancy Isabel Hall
Les Parkas
Jennifer Downey

U.S. Attorneys Office - Northern District of Ohio
Jeanette M. Albrecht
Michelle M. Baeppler

United States Coast Guard
BMCM Andrew S. Thompson
Matthew Hutchins
LT Abigail Caldwell
LT Josh Valdivia
Cara B. Ryser
Jason P. Klauser
Anthony D. Danicki
Guy J. Garramone
Raymond J. Prell
Lieutenant Jake D. Mueller
ITCS Erik Wissmann
Juan R. Perez

United States Postal Service
Arnette St. Clair
Cynthia Mavec
Daniel Brindza
Davis A. Woods
Lillie P. Paige
Mark Venis

United States Small Business Administration
Mark C. Hansel

Veterans Health Administration - Louis S Stokes VA Medical Center
Betsy Amey
Jennifer Blatnik
Robert Bradford
Brian Brooks
Rose Burleson
Kimberly Fox
Marguerite Haas
James Moore
Alice Muha
Jessica Tindle
Tanika Whatley

Veterans Benefits Administration - Cleveland Regional Office
Scott Boros
Duane B. Evans Jr
Rebecca Arterburn
Robert Vavra
Simone Menefee

General Services Administration
Jack Malone
Maureen K. Michael
Heather Kilbride
Sarah E. Jayjack

Department of Education - Office of Civil Rights
Denise Vaughn Byrd

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