



**Ms. Michelle LoweSolis**  
Human Resources Functional  
Community Manager

## Message from the Human Resources Functional Community Manager

### Strategically Pressing Forward with Development and Modernization Initiatives

**Hello Everyone!** I hope you had a chance to join us for our first-ever virtual Worldwide and heard directly from Civilian Personnel Policy (CPP) and Defense Human Resources Activity (DHRA) leadership as well as the DCPAS experts about how we're executing the Department's human resources (HR) strategy – the Human Capital Operating Plan (HCOP). If you didn't have an opportunity to join, I invite you to review all the videos and Q&A's on the MilSuite

site at <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/wwhrte>.

In the last HRFC newsletter, I shared three of our six DCPAS priorities – Strategic planning, HRFC development and Going Digital. In this newsletter, I share the final three – Strategic Outreach, HR Transformation and Enabling the Team.

**Strategic Outreach** – DoD has over 900K civilian employees if you include Nonappropriated Fund and Local National employees. We are one of the biggest employers in the nation – only Walmart and McDonald's are bigger. The average citizen has no idea that you can be a civilian employee in the Department of Defense – no uniform required. Less than 20% of college students understand that there's opportunity in DoD outside the military. Clearly, this disconnect needs to be addressed as we are in a battle for talent. How can the student at Stanford find out about the really cool jobs in Army Cyber Command? I recommend you check out the MilSuite site for what we're doing in this area ([DoD Civilian Employer Branding](#)).

**HR Transformation** – HR transformation is about reaching across the aisle and making sure you exchange valuable information. DCPAS led a working group to establish enterprise time-to-hire metrics. What's one of the biggest issues in time-to-hire? If you said security clearances, you are correct. And what do we tend to do when a process falls outside our area? We map out the civilian personnel processes in detail and then draw a box that says Security Clearance process. If we really want to make meaningful change, we need to bring that party to the table. We've done that with the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency – the organization that picked up the background investigation work from the Office of Personnel Management. We joined forces and began to understand how we can help each other – they need the data we collect in the onboarding process. And we want transparency on security clearance status. We now get data from them on timeliness of the security clearance process. That's step 1 of getting to integrated end-to-end processes and transforming HR.

But HR Transformation is more than that. It's also about reducing complexity. And, as you know, we are in an extremely complex business. The Department has received multiple direct hire authorities (DHAs) from Congress to help with our battle for talent. In fact, we had two dozen such authorities, but they covered different occupations and had different rules, making use of these DHAs very complex. In fact, DCPAS built a matrix for enterprise-wide use to assist HR specialists. Then the CPP/DCPAS team worked with Congress to collapse these into a single streamlined DHA that covered the same occupations with one ruleset. We received the streamlined DHA in the FY20 NDAA. Reducing complexity can also transform HR.

**Enabling the team** – At the end of the day, you are the one who gets the HR mission done. Whether it's filling jobs or counseling employees or working with the union – you are the key. As HR leaders, we need to make sure you have what you need to get the job done. Please take a look at the HCOP to see what we're doing to do just that! ■



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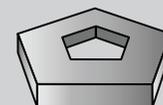
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## WWHRTE 2020 Summary

*Success! DoD Executes Its First Virtual WWHRTE!*



On 15-16 September 2020, the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Civilian Personnel Policy and Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service (DCPAS) hosted our first ever 2-day virtual Worldwide Human Resources Training Event (WWHRTE). Attendees were provided an invaluable opportunity to hear from key leaders on efforts directly impacting DoD's HR community.

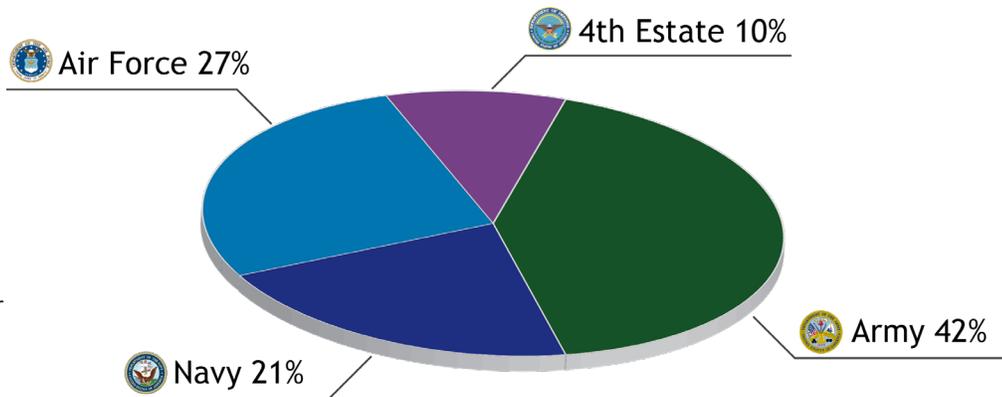
Historically, this biennial event has been constrained by facility size; however, this year's virtual platform allowed for a much larger audience to participate. More than 1300 individuals preregistered to participate in this event, and by kickoff of the first day, a surge of last-minute participants brought our total attendee number to more than 1600! Thanks to everyone who registered and who participated.

During the 2-day event, attendees heard from some of DoD's top civilian HR leaders and executives, to include Ms. Anita Blair (Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Civilian Personnel Policy), Mr. William H. Booth (Director of DoD Human Resources Activity), and Mr. Cyrus Salazar (Director of DoD's Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion). Ms. Michelle LoweSolis (Director of Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service, your HR Functional Community Manager) also shared insights into the future of DoD HR and how our work is changing to meet DoD's critical talent requirements.

Presentations included discussions on Civilian Workforce Analytics, DoD's HR Response to COVID-19, Improvements in Civilian Hiring, DoD Employer Branding, upcoming efforts in your HR Functional Community, and DoD HR's major IT transition to the new Defense Civilian Human Resources Management System (DCHRMS), to include insights into the new Performance Management module. We received hundreds of questions from our participants, and did our best to answer as many as we could during the event.

If you missed it, don't fret! All WWHRTE presentation slides and video recordings of all presentations can be found on the WWHRTE milSuite site at <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/wwhrte>. We have also posted Q&A's, where we have provided responses to all of the questions we weren't able to answer "on the air". Based on the feedback we've received so far, it is clear that virtual events such as this one should be a more frequent occurrence. We couldn't agree more! Thanks for making this one a success, and we look forward to "seeing" you at another virtual event in the future. ■

### Attendance By Component



## Highlight from the Executive Council

In order to guide the development of the HR Functional Community (FC), DoD HR leadership recently established the Executive Council. The goal of the HRFC Executive Council is to institutionalize effective, enterprise-wide, and technical certification programs for HR professionals, and provide support and advocacy for DoD-wide HR priorities.

The HRFC Executive Council met most recently in August 2020. A key action from the Council is the need to define competencies for the HR strategic advisor. We have been discussing the need to build strategic advisors, but what does that mean? We are kicking off a series of workshops beginning in November to identify the competencies for a HR strategic advisor. This is an important first step from training and development requirements for HR professionals. Stay tuned for updates to this important initiative in future newsletters! ■

## Department of the Air Force – Career Broadening: A Chronicle for Success



*Stacia Thompson  
Human Resources Specialist  
(Performance Management)  
Air Force Civilian Senior  
Executive Management Office,  
Headquarters U.S. Air Force*

Career broadening is the ‘purposeful expansion’ of an individual’s capabilities and knowledge through planned opportunities, internal and external to the DoD, throughout one’s career. This happens through intentional developmental and educational experiences in different organizational cultures and environments. One such career broadening expert is Ms. Stacia Thompson, a Human Resources (HR) Specialist (Performance Management) with the Air Force Civilian Senior Executive Management Office. We connected virtually with Ms. Thompson to discuss her career broadening experiences. For clarity and formatting purposes, this conversation is abbreviated.

### ***What experiences and behaviors are respected by your leadership that make you a recognized leader?***

The Air Force molded me with its structured environment. As we know, no organization trains better than the Department of Defense. Being organized, punctual with suspense dates, and being a subject matter expert (SME) have made me a recognized leader. When I started working in executive performance management, I was very knowledgeable about rules and regulations for processing civilian senior executive personnel actions, but a novice of the front-end processes. I immediately read everything I could get my hands on to successfully conduct pay pools and the performance review board. Learning a new job as quickly as possible to provide exceptional customer service has made me a recognized leader.

### ***Were there any experiences that were unusual in your career you would like HR professionals to know about?***

The Department of the Air Force has an awesome development program called the Career Broadening Program. I applied for the program during a civilian development call and was selected in 2017. Until I learned about the Career Broadening program, I was satisfied doing my staffing job. It was the broadening opportunity that provided unusual experiences by working positions that I would not have access to wearing my HR hat. If someone is working in an agency that does not have this type of program, they may need to take the steps to broaden on their own by seeking a detail, shadowing someone else, volunteering for new duties and projects, or taking a change to lower grade to obtain the specialized experience they desire. It is your career; test the waters whenever and wherever you can until you find a new HR path you want to take.

### ***What attributes from your professional journey helped you understand career broadening prospects for HR Professionals?***

The main attribute from this professional journey was being flexible and embracing change. There are so many facets of HR and being flexible allowed me to become proficient in a number of HR specialty areas. In each one, becoming a SME and being able to provide premier customer service placed me in front of leadership who appreciated my knowledge and expertise. As a briefer or as a SME, I was included in meetings I had never dreamed of attending.

### ***How has your prior experience contributed to your success in career broadening?***

Since I worked at the Air Force Personnel Center for over eight years, I had great working relationships and points of contact within the center fostered during training events or Wingman days where we came together for team building events. Being comfortable with change also contributed to my success. Because I strive to be a SME, not immediately knowing my duties bothered me and dissuaded me from volunteering for projects. Colleagues and some former career broadeners pushed me to come out of my shell and helped me realize that this was my chance to try new duties, learn from them and excel. This broadening opportunity encouraged me to not fear failure and I was able to develop new skills as a result.

### ***Are there crucial technical competencies needed when seeking career opportunities?***

Although career opportunities come with valuable lessons, a working knowledge and skills in Microsoft Office definitely helps. Going back to that flexible attribute also helps because you may have to use software and databases you’ve never used before. If you are not acquiring these skills in your current position, seek out any training opportunities you can or do some self-development if your agency has E-learning, which has free training info and lessons.

*Ms. Stacia Thompson is a Human Resources Specialist (Performance Management) for the Air Force Civilian Senior Executive Management Office, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C.. As the Air Force’s senior consultant, Ms. Thompson provides high-level policy advice and expertise for executive performance management and compensation. Prior to her current assignment, Ms. Thompson was a Resource Management Specialist assigned as an action officer in Force Development Integration Division and Air Force Talent Management Innovation Cell, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C. via selection into the highly competitive Air Force Career Broadening program. ■*

## Spotlight on Success



### Victoria Bowens

#### *Diversity and Inclusion – A Quest for Mindfulness*

*Victoria Bowens  
Associate Director of Diversity  
and Inclusion, Diversity  
Management Operations Center*

Building a workforce that focuses on diversity and inclusion is a key priority for the Department of Defense (DoD). Recruiting from a diverse pool of candidates means a more qualified workforce, and diversity fosters a more creative and innovative HR professional community. Victoria Bowens is leading this effort for the Department, and her varied professional experiences in the military and civilian worlds along with her passion for diversity and inclusion is leading the human resources (HR) community on this journey.

Ms. Bowens, an Associate Director of Diversity and Inclusion for the Diversity Management Operations Center and retired Air Force Colonel, faced many challenges in her military and civilian careers. “Because I am a minority and a woman, I unfortunately was required to prove myself more than my male counterparts. These experiences prepared me to overcome and conquer all challenges,” she says. Ms. Bowens’ ability to overcome these barriers has spurred her passion to ensure DoD operational direction and policy attracts,

develops, and retains a diverse workforce who are qualified with unique skills that strengthen the mission of DoD.

In Ms. Bowens’ 27 year military career, including experience in HR and manpower domain functions, she learned from the support of mentors and coaches, and from senior leadership. She served with senior leaders as the Senior Military Advisor at the Office of Diversity Management and Military and Equal Opportunity and then as the Director, Diversity and Inclusion for the Department of the Navy. Both positions provided strategic and operational grounding where Ms. Bowens saw first-hand how senior leaders conduct themselves in high-impact situations. “I learned that successful leaders maintain competencies such as business acumen, strategic communications, and strategic leadership to demonstrate the value of the HR craft,” Ms. Bowens says.

Ms. Bowens is a collaborative leader who is comfortable making tough decisions. She learned through her career that this helps her incorporate diversity and inclusion goals into her daily work. Being open-minded and non-judgmental helps her accept others’ perspectives and opinions that are different than her own. With the DoD goal of Diversity and Inclusion, Victoria Bowens takes the team to a new level. “Be comfortable with being uncomfortable in your position,” Ms. Bowens says. This attitude made her a sought-after candidate for her Associate Director position.

Ms. Bowens’ career continues to soar because she has embraced training and development throughout her storied career. She benefitted from technical training and developed the competencies needed to support the long-term objectives of DoD. Her training included professional military education schools, training seminars/conferences, and practical application from her work. She became an effective HR leader through training she received, and by leveraging opportunities to expand her competencies and proficiency in the jobs and roles she’s held. Ms. Bowens’ journey illustrates the value and importance of the goals that the DoD and HRFC have for the HR professional community: investment in your development pays off!

*Victoria Bowens is the Associate Director, Diversity and Inclusion for the Director, Diversity Management Operations Center, Department of Defense (DoD) with over 30 years of experience in the Human Resources domain spanning across a myriad of human resources and manpower management programs in the areas of strategic planning; training and development; program and project management. Previously, Ms. Bowens served as the Director, Diversity and Inclusion for the Department of Navy. Ms. Bowens graduated from the University of Akron, Ohio, and was commissioned through the Air Force Reserve Officer’s Training Corps as a distinguished graduate, earning a Bachelor of Science Degree in Industrial Management; a Master’s of Arts Degree in Administration from Central Michigan University; and a Master’s degree in Military Operational Art/Science from the Air Force’s Air University.*

*Ms. Bowens’ awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Force Meritorious Service Medal with five oak leaf clusters and the Air Force Commendation Medal. In 2018, she was recognize by Wonder Woman Tech as a Black Innovator in STEM + Arts. ■*

## Spotlight on Technical Success



### Mr. Chris Inserra *Injury Compensation - Learning for Achievement*

*Mr. Chris Inserra  
Chief, Injury and Unemployment  
Compensation  
Defense Civilian Personnel  
Advisory Service*

Mr. Chris Inserra is the Branch Chief for the Injury and Unemployment Compensation Branch within Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service (DCPAS). As the Injury Compensation Program Administrator (ICPA) at the agency-level, and as a DCPAS Advisor providing technical guidance and advice to ICPAs, the need for training was evident to Mr. Inserra. "I realized the need for individuals in the field to be given opportunities to learn. As an Advisor, I recognized that there were gaps in knowledge, and I am working to fill in those gaps."

Mr. Inserra holds a Bachelor of Science in Education specializing in Technical, Trade and Industrial Education. Experience from different roles he held in the workers' compensation field allowed him to design learning and structural methods for training program development. His proficiencies, gained through training, education and applying them on the job, enabled Mr. Inserra to make a very positive impact on the HR community. "The best program is worthless if it does not provide the target audience with the knowledge

and skills they need to do their job," explained Mr. Inserra. He also emphasized, "Experience is the greatest teacher so opportunities to work with groups that are developing or have developed a credentialing program would be very beneficial. Reading about developing a program versus actually experiencing the development of a program are two completely different things." This experience lends itself to a successful credentialing program.

The Injury Compensation Credentialing Program was developed to fill gaps in knowledge and provide consistent essential competencies to IC Specialists throughout the Department. New workers' compensation specialists receive expertise handling day to day tasks. The workers' compensation field has traditionally been one of high turnover. Providing a solid foundation for new Specialists will ensure success. Mid-career Specialists acquire skills to recognize fraud. Filling the skills gap enables the Specialist to become a subject matter expert and advisor. The intention is to create an attractive and viable career path for Injury compensation specialists so the Department can retain the best in the field.

The importance of credentialing is clear when we note the Department's workers' compensation bill for 2020 that totaled \$439.7 million. The Department has less than 900 Specialists to manage over 27,000 claims for benefits paid during 2020. This is significant. The individuals that manage an agency workers' compensation program have influence on the cost of the program. Timely claim filing of on-the-job injury to communication with the involved parties (injured employee, treating physician, supervisor, Department of Labor) to returning the employee back to work, impact the Injury Compensation Specialist's managed program. An injured employee that does not return to work can receive over a million dollars in worker's compensation benefits over their lifetime. The knowledge and skill the Specialist attains and effectively utilizes can save their agency millions in workers' compensation costs.

*Mr. Chris Inserra started his career with the Federal government and DoD in 1985 when he joined the Navy. He was stationed onboard ballistic missile submarines out of Kings Bay GA. Mr. Inserra left the Navy as a Chief Petty Officer after 10 years. He then worked as a civilian at Trident Refit Facility in Kings Bay. It was there that he was provided the opportunity to manage the facility's workers' compensation program. He was the Injury Compensation Program Administrator for five years (1996-2001). He then joined the Civilian Personnel Management Service (then CPMS now DCPAS) in July 2001 as a member of the Injury and Unemployment Compensation Division. Within ICUC, Mr. Inserra was an Injury Compensation Advisor, Action Officer, Advisor Supervisor, and then Branch Chief. ■*

2020

Office of Personnel Management



Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey

Empowering Employees. Inspiring Change.



Let your voice be heard! The 2020 OPM Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) has launched and we want YOU to share your opinions and perceptions regarding your work experiences. This annual survey provides key input for advancing Government-wide human capital management. The survey will be emailed to all eligible DoD employees.. New this year is a series of questions addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on the workforce. For more information, visit us at <https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/PA/FEVSsurvey> . ■

## Department of Defense (DoD) Injury Compensation Program Administrator (ICPA) Credentialing Program (Level I & Level II)

DCPAS is proud to present the Injury Compensation Program Administrator (ICPA) Credentialing Program. Beginning in January 2021, Human Resources Specialists will have the opportunity to begin their journey toward earning a DoD Injury Compensation Technical Advisor (DoD ICTA) Credential!

Earning the ICTA credential denotes a level of professionalism that exemplifies achievement within the Federal and DoD HR Community. Recognition is earned from your organization, peers, and the employees seeking guidance on matters that will impact their lives throughout their years of service. You will be recognized as having mastered the technical knowledge within the IC Specialty with the credential, DoD ICTA, after your name.

Participation in the DoD ICPA Credentialing Program starts by attending the Injury Compensation Program Administrator (ICPA) training course for Level I (Beginners), followed by Level II (Intermediate). Students will receive credit by passing the course post-test with an 85% or better score, at which point, you will be eligible to register to take the corresponding credentialing exam. You will use the training course materials as your study guide to prepare for the ICPA Level 1 and Level 2 credentialing exams. The passing score on all credentialing exams is also 85% or higher, and successful achievement on both exams will result in your earning your DoD ICTA credentials!

The credentialing exam is proctored and contains all multiple choice questions. Immediately after testing, you will be provided your score. Your certificate will be sent via mail within 2 weeks from exam completion. In the event a passing grade isn't achieved on the first attempt, there will be opportunities to retake the exam at a later date.

For more information contact the ICUC Branch via E-mail at [dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.icuc-contact@mail.mil](mailto:dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.icuc-contact@mail.mil) or by calling (703) 882-5197 or DSN 381-517-9197. ■

## Defense Senior Leader Development Program



The Defense Senior Leader Development Program (DSLDP) is the Department of Defense (DoD) enterprise program to develop senior civilian leaders to excel in the 21st century joint, interagency, and multi-national environment. The program provides learning opportunities to enable the deliberate development of a diverse cadre of senior leaders with the enterprise-wide perspective and competencies needed to lead organizations, people, and programs and achieve results in the joint, interagency, and multinational environment. DSLDP is designed to prepare high performing civilian leaders, in grades GS14/15 or equivalent, who possess the potential, aspiration and motivation to serve as senior executives, with a competency-

based approach for the deliberate development of experience and capability for enterprise-wide success. The program elements include a Professional Military Education at a Senior Service School, Defense-Focused Leadership Seminars, and Individual Development opportunities that include executive mentoring, coaching, assessments, and experiential assignments. DSLDP has adapted the COVID-19 environment through remote delivery. Visit <https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/CTD/Training> to learn more about the program or to apply! ■

## Do You Know Where to Go to Find the Latest News About the Human Resources Functional Community?



Be sure to check out milSuite and look for the DOD Human Resources Functional Community page (<https://www.milsuite.mil/book/community/spaces/dodhrfc>). This page is continually updated with the latest data decks, DCPAS messages, and other useful information. We hope you will visit soon, get to know your community, and join the conversation! ■