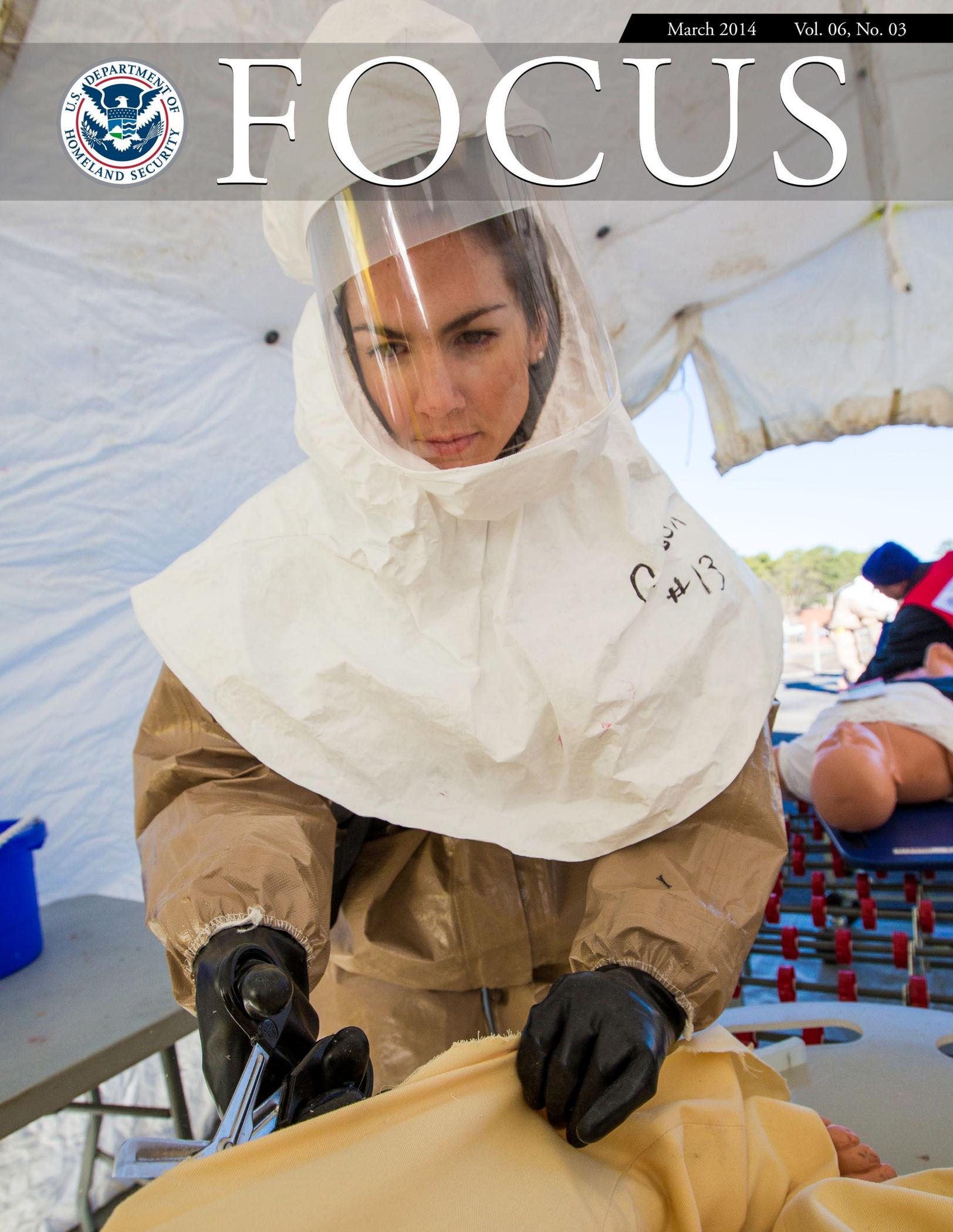




FOCUS





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Mike King (left) presents Atlanta Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran a commemorative plaque.

Story by Wendi Feazell Photo by Benjamin Crossley

The CDP hosted its Black History Month observance, Feb. 27, to recognize the achievements of African Americans.

Chief Kelvin Cochran of the Atlanta Fire and Rescue Department served as the keynote speaker at the CDP All Hands meeting attended by more than 300 CDP personnel.

Cochran spoke on the topic of “America the Promised Land.”

“The full value of African American History cannot be fully appreciated without considering it in the greater context of American History,” said Cochran during his speech. “America is truly the greatest country in the world. We may complain about our taxes, but in some countries the citizens can only wish they had a system or even the means to pay taxes to improve their quality of life... I am proud to be an American. America is the Promised Land. But more than that – I am proud to be a descendant of African slaves”.

“Thirty something years of hearing Black History Month speeches, this was the best I’ve ever heard,” said Patricia Robinson, Director of Special Programs.

Focus Newsletter accepts suggestions and submissions in writing. All submissions must be submitted by the 1st of the month prior to publication. All submissions are subject to review and screening. “Focus” is an authorized publication for Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP) employees and families. It occasionally includes articles expressing views and analyses by individual authors. The contents of those individual articles do not necessarily reflect the official views of the U.S. Government, the Department of Homeland Security, or the Center for Domestic Preparedness and publication herein does not imply endorsement.

ON THE COVER:

The Hospital Emergency Response Training for Mass Casualty Incidents (HERT) course prepares healthcare staff and agencies to conduct safe and effective emergency medical response to a mass casualty incident.

The HERT course requires hospital employees—anyone on staff—to become familiar with decontamination procedures. These procedures not only protect the employees and patients, but also prevent a hospital from the cross-contamination that occurs when disaster survivors enter a hospital before decontamination.



Rick Searcy takes top award

Story and Photo by Benjamin Crossley

Law Enforcement course instructor Rick Searcy was named the 2013 Instructor of the Year at the CDP, Feb. 6.

Leidos instituted the instructor recognition program to highlight top performers as well as give other instructors something to aspire to.

“There are a lot of good instructors here, so I was surprised to be chosen,” said Searcy, Leidos instructor. “If you look around at some of the instructors here, you pride yourself on the people you work with and we have some of the best in the country.”

Selection for Instructor of the Year employs very strict criteria and includes a rigorous process that involves participation from Course Management, Facility Management, Staff and Instructor Peers.

Searcy was also selected as Instructor of the Quarter for the first quarter of 2013.

“A recipient of the Instructor of the Year award is not only an excellent teacher, but one who is considered a well-rounded employee that is dependable, flexible with change, professionally credible, versatile with skills and involved with our training program as a whole,” said Stephanie McLendon, Professional Standards manager (the Leidos department that coordinates the awards program).

Of the seven law enforcement courses offered at the CDP, Searcy instructs five.

“He instructs not only the law enforcement classes but numerous other classes for all of the other entities at the CDP,” said Gary Pippin, senior subject matter expert for law enforcement courses and Searcy’s supervisor. “He is such a diverse guy that he can teach it all.”

With 11 years of experience teaching at the CDP, Searcy has

proven to be an essential instructor for multiple classes.

“I know a little bit about a lot of stuff,” said Searcy. “I am a good substitute when they don’t have the A-team in.”

Searcy is able to assist in instructing eight different courses in other disciplines. His favorite non-assigned course to teach is Standardized Awareness Authorized Training Program (SAT).

“They (SAT students) do not have the experience yet,” said Searcy. “They are unlike anyone we teach as they are still in training to be nurses and haven’t seen some of the hazards that we train for. Once they leave, they are ready for what’s thrown at them.”

Searcy began his professional career as a reserve deputy for the Cleburne County (Ala.) Sheriff’s Department in 1984. He served his last eight years as the chief deputy. In March 2003, Searcy started his career as a CDP instructor.

“I love teaching,” said Searcy.

“There’s nothing like it. You’re not really teaching. You are just working with the classes. It is an exchange of information.”

Searcy’s career in law enforcement was essential in his ability to communicate and engage with students.

“His knowledge of all the courses, his preparation for all of the modules that he teaches and his extensive background in law enforcement made him eminently qualified to teach,” said Pippin.

Becoming a good instructor starts with analyzing how best to structure and organize the curriculum, said Pippin. Searcy pulled from his years of experience in law enforcement training to create a classroom setting he thought would benefit the students.



Eddie Hulsey, Leidos Program Manager, (left) presents Rick Searcy the Instructor of the Year award for 2013.

“I try to look at it the way I like classes,” said Searcy. “If it is long, boring, monotonous, I do not get anything out of it.”

Searcy also learned to be a better instructor from the course critiques offered by students. The assessments would come back with descriptors about Searcy like “entertaining and informative.” Searcy would use those comments to improve.

“If they are entertained and watching you, they are going to learn something,” said Searcy. “I keep them guessing, keep them entertained, so they are bound to learn something.”

It is Searcy’s humor that helps him engage with his audience, according to Pippin. Searcy brings his dedication, knowledge and – most of all -- humor to the classroom.

Despite joking with classes, Searcy is very serious about his mission as a course instructor. The training he facilitates is vital for the safety of the students.

“If they only learn one thing that helps them recognize a danger that they normally wouldn’t have and could potentially save their lives, I’d be happy,” said Searcy.

Outside of the CDP, Searcy is often hunting, fishing or gardening. Most of his time is spent with his 4-year-old grandson.

Safety and Welfare Mission:

How Our Medical Support Staff Operates



(From left to right) Jason Hail, Kendra Cobb, Derick Reaves, Jon Collins, Kristy Bowling, Josh Stearns, Jodi Roberts, Chris Harper, Ashley Newton and Jeremy Brown make up the full-time paramedic team.

Story and Photos by Benjamin Crossley

The safety and welfare for more than 200 students and 800 federal and contract employees throughout the week is no easy task. SMRC is up to the challenge.

The medical support services staff is made up of a project manager, deputy project manager and a quality manager, as well as four medical lab technicians, 10 full-time paramedics, a nurse practitioner and a physician who serves as the EMS Medical Director.

Medical lab technicians Jackie Morgan, Marilyn Myles, Barbie Howard and Tina Northard operate the CDP Cholinesterase laboratory. All are skilled at collecting blood specimens from students who will and have entered the toxic-agent environment. They also analyze the blood to ensure that there was no inadvertent exposure to the nerve agent during the course of training, said SMRC Project Manager Thomas Buzan.

“On average, we do about 120-

150 samples a week in support of the courses,” said Morgan.

Nurse Practitioner Mindy O’Bryant and Dr. William Bohannon consult with the medical staff whenever assistance is required over the course of caring for a patient, added Buzan. Examples include paramedics contacting Bohannon as part of the patient-care process to receive medical orders or contacting

O’Bryant due to a student’s vital signs being out of the normal range for students intending to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) during training.

The paramedics provide full-service medical support to students and staff at the CDP. Their duties include surveillance of training operations, vital-signs assessment before and after PPE is worn,



Jodi Roberts and Jeremy Brown pose with one of the new ambulances.

palliative-care assessment and management (over-the-counter medication distribution and minor-wound care) and life-saving, emergency treatment of medical and trauma-related illnesses and injuries.

Working closely together is beneficial in creating a team atmosphere but it seems to be more than that for the medical staff.

“We really think of each other as family, our work family,” said Derick Reaves, a full-time paramedic.

Knowing everyone and how they operate makes for an effective and cohesive working environment better suited to the needs of the patients.

“We work really well together because we know each other so well,” said Morgan. “We can anticipate each other’s needs and assist them wherever possible.”

“Aside from the challenges faced by all emergency workers – environmental hazards, emergency driving conditions and other operational challenges – paramedics at the CDP perform a hazard assessment on each student who trains at the CDP,” said Buzan.

By considering where they are from (i.e. extremely cold climate), as well as other health-related risk variables, the department realizes a better strategic and tactical approach to all-inclusive patient care, added Buzan.

“One of the biggest challenges for me is seeing so many new faces every week,” said Reaves. “It’s wonderful to interact with people from all across the country and the world that are from numerous different (emergency response) disciplines.”

To make sure students and employees have the best care all paramedics are active members of the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians and are fully-licensed by the State of Alabama.

It’s not just excellent training keeping the paramedics at the top of

their game, but excellent equipment, as well, Buzan said.

“CDP paramedics – part of the Medical Support Services team – have recently taken delivery of two brand-new ambulances as part of a plan to replace the aging fleet that has been in service since about 2003,” said Buzan. “Both new ambulances are equipped with state-of-the-art technology, including temperature-controlled medication storage compartments, backup/rearview cameras and cab monitors, digital oxygen delivery monitoring and delivery devices, LED lighting and much more.”

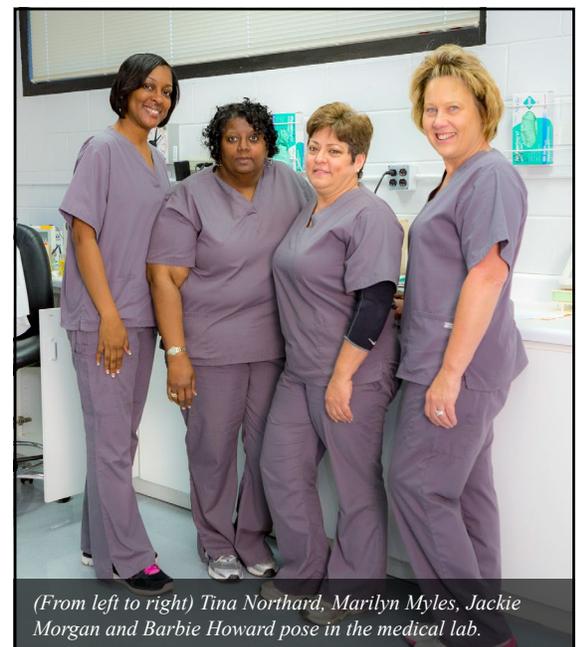
The ambulances have been equipped with some of the best medical equipment on the market today, said Buzan.

The ambulances are also equipped with a cutting-edge technology known as DEF that ensures much lower diesel exhaust emissions, making them safer for the environment. They are very roomy inside, which allows the paramedics plenty of room to move around and provide the highest quality of care possible to those experiencing medical or traumatic emergencies, added

Buzan.

“Medical Support Services is proud to provide highly-trained paramedics who have the best equipment available at their disposal,” added Buzan. “These new ambulances allow our paramedics to maintain an even higher standard of care to CDP students, visitors and staff.”

Buzan also extended an invitation to the CDP staff. “The paramedics would be delighted to show off the new ambulances,” Buzan said. “If you are nearby any of the medical rooms or see medical support staff patrolling the hallways, please do not hesitate to ask for a VIP tour.”



(From left to right) Tina Northard, Marilyn Myles, Jackie Morgan and Barbie Howard pose in the medical lab.



Kristy Bowling and Chris Harper pose on the back of a new ambulance.



Rick Dickson (left), Stephanie Herrick and Ramon Nelson were awarded the Administrator's Award for work on FEMA Incident Management Assistance Team Academy.

Three receive the Administrator's Award

Story by Lisa Hunter Photo by Benjamin Crossley

Three CDP employees are among the select group who received FEMA's highest award for their work with the FEMA Incident Workforce Management Division (IWMD) to make the first FEMA Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT) Academy a success.

The Administrator's Awards are bestowed upon individuals and teams for achievements that exhibit unparalleled service and contributions toward accomplishing the FEMA mission and supporting the larger emergency management community. Individuals and teams have been selected for Innovation, Outstanding Survivor Service and Exemplary Emergency Manager Awards.

Rick Dickson, the director of Mission Readiness Integration; Ramon Nelson, the program specialist for Mission Readiness Integration; and Stephanie Herrick, a financial management specialist in the Business Operations Directorate, are three of the 23 employees who collectively received the FEMA Administrator's Award for Exemplary Emergency Managers, Feb. 27.

From March through July 2013, Dickson and Nelson provided logistical and administrative support to the IMAT staff. The process started with the screening of 211 candidates who had applied to serve as IMAT team members.

"Hosting the first IMAT Academy at the CDP was

quite a privilege," said CDP Superintendent Mike King. "To have members of the CDP staff recognized by Administrator [Craig] Fugate for their effort is an unexpected honor. It means even more that these individuals were included in a nomination of a group of FEMA staff members from multiple offices that collaborated to make this program a success. We always welcome the opportunity to support FEMA's training initiatives and look forward to more cooperative ventures in the future."

In all, 72 students – who make up two national teams and one regional team – attended the academy. Dickson and Nelson spearheaded the logistical and administrative support for the entire four-month academy. They also coordinated two focus groups in support of the IMAT Academy. In addition, Dickson and Nelson also provided support that enabled 159 IWMD staff members to receive FEMA Qualification System training at the CDP.

While attending the IMAT Academy, the students took their training on the road to Washington, D.C. and New York. Herrick was responsible for processing all of the travel vouchers for the students. She ensured that all of the contracts that supported the students were funded. In addition, she tracked all of the costs for the students' lodging, food, student support services and training.

Behind the Scenes

with **Michael Yim**

Story by Lisa Hunter Photo by Benjamin Crossley

Federal discrimination laws cover all FEMA employees and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) counselors are assigned to every FEMA agency to act as the neutral party whose function is to make inquiries and uncover the facts when an allegation of discrimination arises.

At the CDP that counselor is Michael Yim, who has served as the CDP's EEO Collateral Duty Counselor for four years.

"As a Collateral Duty Counselor, I serve as a neutral party to informally resolve workforce conflicts," Yim explained. "I advise people about the EEO process, provide counseling, seek to resolve informal complaints at the lowest level and encourage filers to use the alternative dispute resolution process. I am also required to document any resolution or advise the individual of his or her rights to

file a formal complaint."

Yim provides regional EEO support to FEMA employees outside the CDP as well.

To qualify for his position, Yim completed a 40-hour initial training course and he annually completes a 36-hour refresher training course. He can counsel any federal employee who has an EEO complaint. He can also counsel contractors if the contractor's complaint concerns a federal employee. If the complaint solely involves contractors, the individual must contact his or her contractor Human Resources department.

Yim has worked as a supply technician at the CDP for 10 years. He spent his youth in Huntsville, but moved around a bit while his father was in the military. If you require EEO counseling, you can contact Yim



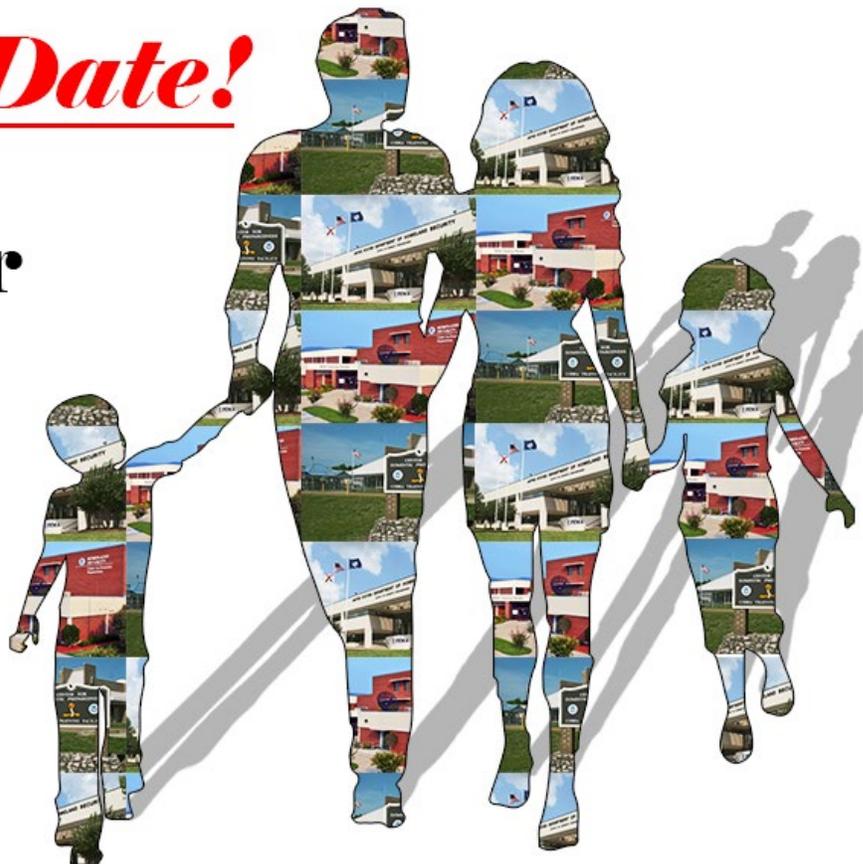
at (256) 847-2381 or by e-mailing him at michael.yim@fema.dhs.gov.

"I will be happy to speak with anyone about any EEO concerns they may have," Yim said. "And, I will maintain your confidentiality to the fullest extent that I am able."

Save the Date!

Bring Your Family to Work Day

Tuesday July 1



WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Celebrating Women of Character, Courage, and



Commitment

Each year, we take time to reflect on and celebrate the tremendous contributions women make to our great Nation. In honor of their collective and individual accomplishments, March is designated as Women's History Month.

The observance of Women's History Month began in 1980 when President Jimmy Carter issued a Presidential Proclamation declaring

the week of March 8th "National Women's History Week." That same year, Congresswoman Barbara Mikulski and Senator Orrin Hatch cosponsored a Congressional Resolution for National Women's History Week in 1981 to celebrate the achievements of American Women.

The week-long observance has continued annually. By 1986, 14 states had declared the entire month of March Women's History Month.

That momentum was the impetus to lobby Congress to identify the month of March 1987 as "National Women's History Month." That year, Congress declared March as National Women's History Month in perpetuity.

American women have been instrumental in shaping our great nation since its inception. During March, we take a moment to recognize all of their achievements.



The 4th Annual CDPEA 5K

in partnership with the CEA and CWBB

Saturday | April 19
Noble Training Facility on McClellan
Race Begins 8 a.m.

Fees (before 4/4) : \$20 - Adult | \$10 - Kids (≤14)
Fees (after 4/4) : \$25 - Adult | \$15 - Kids (≤14)
Fees : For Children 10 and under - Free

Questions | Amanda Stewart : 256-240-7532 | Melissa Remington : 256-847-2354 | Mallory Lowe : 256-249-7539

The 4th Annual CDP Family Fun Day

Saturday, May 3

10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Corner of Goode & Freemont Rd
across from Noble Training Facility

All CDP Staff & Families
are Invited to Enjoy
Games, Food, & Fun!



RSVP

Neal Morrison : 256-847-2060, neal.morrison@fema.dhs.gov

Amanda Stewart : 256-240-7532, amanda.stewart@fema.dhs.gov

Melissa Remington : 256-847-2354, remingtonm@cdpemail.dhs.gov

WHAT IS YOUR IDEA OF A DREAM VACATION?



Peggy Luallen
Program Analyst/
COR, FEMA

“Two weeks in Costa Rica. I’ve always wanted to zipline through the jungle, deep-sea fish off the coast, and eat the local seafood cuisine.”

“My dream vacation would be for my wife and I to spend a few days on the white sand beaches of Panama City Beach, Fla. doing nothing but burying my feet in the sand and listening to the surf.”



Kevin Bacchus
Instructor, Leidos



Dennis Parker
Security Guard,
G4S

“The Tatra Mountains in Poland, because it is beautiful, spacious and the people are very nice.”

“My dream vacation would be to travel to each state in the USA in an RV and see all the sites.”



Matthew Pruitt
Web
Administrator, VIP



Ryan Freeman
Management
Analyst, FEMA

“Spending a couple of weeks cruising the Mediterranean island hopping.”

“Cabo San Lucas! I’d love a resort where I am waited on hand and foot. A week of being pampered is exactly what I want.”



Jill Prickett
Procurement
Clerk, HME