



# Recognizing DoD Workforce Development Efforts

**H**ow are Department of Defense acquisition, technology, and logistics organizations taking care of their people?

Warner Robins Air Logistics Center, in partnership with the state of Georgia, established the Middle Georgia Work Ready Aerospace Partnership. The center assessed its future workforce needs and designed a workforce development pipeline and road map. Among the partnership's initiatives are expanded student hiring, youth apprentice programs, and mentoring programs.

A shortfall of 1102-series contract specialists led the Contracting Department, Fleet and Industrial Supply Center-Norfolk, Naval Supply Systems Command to launch a concerted effort to recruit interns from a pool of highly qualified individuals. Members of a recruiting team contacted college placement offices, attended job fairs, and made personal contacts to expand the pool of potential candidates.

Those are just a few examples of workforce development initiatives, and both organizations were recognized as gold award winners of the 2008 Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Workforce Development Award.

Eight winning organizations received the 2008 Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Workforce Development Award in recognition of their accomplishments in developing innovative, comprehensive learning and development programs for their workforces. The then-Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology James I. Finley presented the awards to the winners at a luncheon held in conjunction with the Program Executive Officers/Systems Command Commanders' Conference at Fort Belvoir, Va., Nov. 4, 2008.

## **Award Background**

The USD(AT&L) Workforce Development Award program was established in 2004 to recognize organizations that are achieving excellence in learning and development for their employees.

"This program recognizes AT&L field organizations that have made exemplary contributions to the career-long learning and development of their workforces," said John J. Young Jr., under secretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics, in a memo released April 15, 2008. It is specifically geared to identify organizations that have promoted the objectives of the USD(AT&L) Strategic Thrust 3: Take Care of Our People.

A panel of seven judges from academia, industry, and corporate learning institutions independently conducted the award evaluation process. The judges were Karen Barley, president and co-founder of Corporate University Enterprise Inc.; Robert Mosher, global chief learning and strategy evangelist, LearningGuide Solutions; Dr. Michael Echols, executive vice president and director, Human Capital Lab, Bellevue University; Dr. Paul Alfieri, program director for research, Defense Acquisition University; Wayne Glass, program director for strategic partnership, DAU; Dr. Christopher Hardy, director of the e-Learning and Technology Center, DAU; and Garry Shafovaloff, special assistant to the president for human capital initiatives, DAU.

The judges ranked each submission based on the workforce development program's objectives, best practices, and the benefits realized. The submitting organization is also ranked on its workforce development climate, training offered, academic affiliations and partnerships, and alignment of workforce initiatives with the organization's mission. In 2008, a record 41 nominations were received, and the judges reported

the quality of submissions was outstanding and competition for the awards was fierce.

Organizations reported establishing numerous effective best practices in areas such as recruiting, internships, retention, performance management, partnerships, organization-unique training, leadership development, succession planning, executive coaching, mentoring, job rotation, job shadowing, and knowledge sharing. Outcomes from those programs included greater organizational and individual performance, increased workforce expertise, higher employee satisfaction, and significant cost savings.

Applicants spanned the entire country, the military services and defense agencies, and many different areas of mission. Organization sizes ranged from as few as four people to more than 20,000 employees.

### **The 2008 Winners**

The 2008 award winners provide good examples of how organizations throughout DoD are taking care of their people. For instance, as previously mentioned, Warner Robins Air Logistics Center established the Middle Georgia Work Ready Aerospace Partnership. Additionally, the center, which was the gold winner for large organizations, heavily revamped its online learning management systems. The center established seven state-of-the-art training support facilities, including labs, computer classrooms, and a recently remodeled Distance Learning Center.

The leadership development program developed by Warner Robins Air Logistics Center is a two-week course that enhances current leaders' ability to build commitment toward common goals throughout the center. Five certificate programs provide customized, accelerated education for knowledge workers in high-demand fields. Warner Robins Air Logistics Center's workforce development efforts led to more than 100 engineer and more than 50 student hires in fiscal year 2008; a retention rate of 90 percent of the personnel hired since 2005; certification of 60 students, with 44 percent of them being promoted; and positive feedback in its leadership development program.

The gold winner for small organizations, the Contracting Department, Fleet and Industrial Supply Center-Norfolk, not only increased its hiring of contract specialists, but the organization also created Workforce Enrichment Days, in which the workforce provide training that shift away from traditional classroom programs and discuss things like personal finances,

teamwork and organizational identity, and how employees can make a difference. The Workforce Enrichment Days were a huge morale booster, with more than 90 percent of attendees saying they provided a valuable learning experience.

The Contracting Department has also created a workforce development coordinator who is responsible for facilitating various workforce development programs, such as arranging for subject matter experts to lead discussion, keeping variety and balance in programs, monitoring progress, and keeping people informed of upcoming events.

The overall efforts of the Contracting Department led to 100 percent of acquisition employees reaching or exceeding certification for their position, as well as the hiring of 47 new interns, which increased staff by 25 percent.

A complete list of the 2008 award winners:

#### **Large Organization Category (more than 500 employees)**

- Gold Award – Warner Robins Air Logistics Center
- Silver Award – Naval Surface Warfare Center, Corona Division
- Bronze Award – Marine Corps Systems Command

#### **Small Organization Category (less than 500 employees)**

- Gold Award – Fleet and Industrial Supply Center Norfolk Contracting Department, Naval Supply Systems Command
- Silver Award – Warner Robins Air Logistics Center, Directorate of Contracting
- Silver Award – PEO Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Intelligence
- Bronze Award – PEO Missiles & Space
- Bronze Award – Cost and Systems Analysis Office, U.S. Army TACOM Life Cycle Management Command

“Congratulations to all the winners! Your efforts have resulted in innovative human capital initiatives that all should emulate as we work to ensure that our workforce has the right skills and expertise to ensure improved acquisition outcomes,” Young said in a message to the acquisition workforce.

### **For More Information**

If you have any questions about the award or application procedures, please contact the award coordinator at [learning.award@dau.mil](mailto:learning.award@dau.mil).



**Warner Robins Air Logistics Center**  
 Gold, Large Organization  
 David A. Burger, chief, WRALC Civilian  
 Development Management Branch



**Naval Surface Warfare Center, Corona Division**  
 Silver, Large Organization  
 Left to right: Bruce Galloway, Employee Development Program  
 manager, NSWC Corona Division; and Navy Capt. Rob Shafer



**Naval Supply Systems Command Fleet & Industrial Supply Center-Norfolk,  
 Contracting Department**  
 Gold Winner, Small Organization  
 Left to right: Peter Proko; Velma Corey; Erin Kilrain; Navy Capt. Ruth Christopherson, commanding  
 officer, FISC Norfolk; Navy Capt. Asa Page; and Al Fanelli



**Warner Robins Air Logistics Center,  
Directorate of Contracting**

Silver, Small Organization

Left to right: Deborah Hall; and Mickie Cranford, chief,  
Resource Management Division, Directorate of Contracting

**PEO Command, Control,  
Communications, Computers,  
and Intelligence (C4I)**

Silver, Small Organization  
Christopher A. Miller, program  
executive officer, C4I

**Marine Corps Systems Command**

Bronze, Small Organization  
James D. Irwin, director, Workforce  
Management and Development,  
Marine Corps Systems Command



**TACOM Life Cycle Management Command, Cost & Systems Analysis Division**

Bronze, Small Organization

Left to right: Diane Hohn; David Holm;  
Richard Bazy, chief, Cost and Systems Analysis, TACOM LCMC

**PEO Missiles and Space**

Bronze, Small Organization  
Michael Hartwell, deputy PEO  
(Aviation and Maneuver), PEO Missiles  
and Space