

Wang holds first Town Hall with employees

by Joan Mier

Lt. Col. Todd Wang conducted his first Town Hall meeting with employees July 15 since assuming the District's command June 29. He began by presenting awards to District employees. R.C. Fell, Christine Redick and Bill McCall all received the Commander's Award for Civilian Service. Eddie Paulsgrove received an Achievement Medal for Civilian Service. Bill McCall and Mike Martinez both received Global War on Terrorism awards for their work in Iraq. Sgt. John Ward was recognized for receiving a promotion from Staff Sgt. to Sgt. 1st Class.

Following the awards and recognition portion of the meeting, Wang stressed how much of our work provides direct and indirect support to

our national security.

"The Corps of Engineers is executing \$400 million worth of work a month in Iraq. Our Army Chief of Staff has said that we will be in this war our entire lifetime," he said. "Our enemy is playing on a different playing field than we're used to, even in wartime situations. They are playing dirty. We are not fighting in a conventional war. It's a back alley war."

Wang added that the Corps still needs volunteers to support its efforts in Iraq but pointed out that the Corps' new Chief of Engineers, Lt. Gen. Carl Strock, has said he will not order Corps civilians overseas. "This shows his faith in our organization," he said.

Wang told employees his philosophy could be summed up with

three words – Empowerment, Team, and Pride. (Please see the Commander's Comments on page 2 for more on this.)

There was also a photo of Conchas Dam and a print of Alcatraz prison displayed at the Town Hall. Wang explained that the Corps got the military construction mission in 1939, the year Conchas Dam was completed. Alcatraz was built by the Army Quartermaster Corps. But, they lost that mission because they failed to serve the nation.

"Now the Corps has that mission. The Quartermaster Corps lost relevancy. Let this serve as a reminder that the Corps needs to stay relevant and serve the nation," he said. □

District supports employment of those with disabilities

by Frank Martin

The Albuquerque District has recruited a new engineer from the University of New Mexico through the Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP). The WRP is a Federal government initiative to increase the employment of individuals with disabilities. James Griego graduated May 15 from the University of New Mexico (UNM) with a degree in Electrical Engineering and promptly came to work for the District May 17.

"The Army Corps of Engineers is a great place to work," Griego said. Griego is employed in the Facilities Design Division and is working on building 718, the hangar and maintenance project for unmanned aerial vehicles, at Indian Springs in Clark County Nevada, and the munitions igloo and Special Forces operations project at Cannon Air Force Base in Clovis.

Eddie Paulsgrove, a regulatory project manager in the District, recruited Griego for the District office. Paulsgrove is the Chairperson for the District's Special Emphasis Committee, Employees with Disabilities, and is the District's WRP contact. He also sits on the Disability Advisory Group at the University of New Mexico. Paulsgrove was responsible for facilitating UNM's participation in the WRP.

"The Albuquerque District supports the placement of disabled individuals in the workforce. We used the program successfully about four years ago. We placed two individuals from out of state because there wasn't a local candidate pool. With UNM's participation, we now have that local pool," Paulsgrove said. "I'm currently working

with Albuquerque's Technical Vocational Institute and Southwest Indian Polytechnic Institute and hope their participation will increase candidate numbers and diversity. The WRP offers disabled college students an opportunity to showcase their skills and get work experience in a professional environment. The students we hire are proof that the disabled are a vital part of the workforce," he said.

Paul Meyer at the Department of Labor in Washington D.C., a 37-year veteran employee of the Federal Government started the WRP in 1975.

"This is the modern era of the Workforce Recruitment Program, which began in 1995 as a joint effort between the Department of Labor and the Department of Defense. It is funded by both agencies. We put a lot of management dollars into this project. As of today we have hired 332 people in the WRP this year. Getting support at the top is crucial," Meyer said. "Labor and Defense provide strong support, which is why the program works."

Applicants for the WRP must have a substantial disability, be a U.S. citizen, be enrolled in an accredited institution of higher learning on a substantially full-time basis to seek a degree or be enrolled in such an institution as a degree-seeking student taking less than a substantially full-time load in the enrollment period immediately prior to graduation or have graduated from such an institution within the past year.

For more information on the program, contact Ms. Joann Perrine, a staff recruiting specialist at UNM at 505-227-6077. (Editor's Note: Frank Martin was hired as a summer employee in the Public Affairs office through the WRP.) □