



# WHS CELEBRATES STEEL TOPPING

*photos and story by Marc Barnes  
Belvoir Integration Office Public Affairs*



At the Department of Defense Office Complex (BRAC 133) project site, the facility's steel frame – already towering 15 stories above Mark Center – may seem to belie the fact construction workers began turning dirt at the site less than a year ago.

But on Dec. 16, 2009, the project team celebrated the facility's "topping out," as workers ceremoniously placed a piece of steel atop the East Tower. A congressional deadline of Sept. 15, 2011 is the driving force behind the rapidly rising steel as the project team builds the two tallest buildings ever constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of

Engineers.

The project is averaging \$1 million in construction per day to meet the deadline,

challenging and rewarding project I've been on, for many reasons," Wachutka said, not the least of

Arlington.

He went on to praise the USACE team as the reason for ongoing success as construction remains on schedule.

"My two deputies, Joanne (Hensley) and Dan (Ward), impress me every day with their dedication and drive," he said. "They make very timely decisions based on a thorough understanding of the need to balance schedule with quality and budget. In addition, we've hired many new USACE employees from a wide variety of backgrounds. Every one of them is a star performer."



**An aerial view of the Department of Defense Office Complex (BRAC 133) project site at Mark Center in Alexandria, Va.**

according to Sean Wachutka, New York District's program manager for the \$1.08 billion complex.

"This is the most

challenging and rewarding project I've been on, for many reasons," Wachutka said, not the least of which is the confined 16.5 acre site which sits at the boundaries of three municipalities – Fairfax County, and the cities of Alexandria and

*(continued on page 10)*

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New York District

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# Colonel's Corner

Happy New Year to all my wonderful New York District teammates! I hope the holidays provided everyone with some much needed family time and pleasant memories.

During my college years at West Point, my comrades and I would consider the months following the holiday season our holiday “gloom” period. But as I’ve grown older and wiser, I’ve learned that the New Year is a time to gain better understanding of the past and a renewed sense of hope for the future. And, in the spirit of “out with the old, in with the new,” I would like everyone to consider the New Year as a time for new beginnings, new challenges and new resolutions.

New beginnings are something the Corps has always been good at. This is easily evidenced through our many environmental restoration and remediation projects.

Building new habitats and correcting mistakes of the past is what the Corps’ environmental mission is all about. Currently our District is in the process of restoring diminished wetlands in Elders Point West, improving habitat conditions for birds, plant and wildlife and we are creating better educational and recreational opportunities at Gerritsen Creek. We are conducting ongoing studies to improve the ecological conditions in Jamaica Bay and the Bronx River Basin.

Our FUDS and FUSRAP programs are also about correcting mistakes of the past and responsibly eliminating unfortunate and/or unforeseen consequences of governmental actions. Every ammunition and ordnance dug up in Raritan Arsenal and every home cleaned of hazardous waste in Middlesex or Maywood, N.J. is a chance for the Corps to make someone else’s life a little better and our community safer.

Additionally, our work with the EPA on SUPERFUND sites allows the Corps to provide a healthier environment and a fresh start for those areas listed on the National Priorities List. In Cornell Dublier, we are eliminating contaminants in the soil so that it can be used again and, come February, we will begin work on the Roebling Steel Project in Florence Township, where we will be dredging contaminants from the Delaware River and Crafts Creek.

There is always room for improvement. That’s the approach the Corps takes when we remediate some of our nation’s most troubling environmental problems and that’s the approach I want each of you to take in your professional careers. How can you become a better team member? Improving means evolving, it means taking chances, being innovative and finding new ways to inspire your subordinates and teammates.

How will you bring positive change to your office? What new ideas, projects or developmental courses could your teammates benefit from? How can we make 2010 better than 2009?

I look forward to the many challenges New York District will overcome this year and I know whatever obstacles we may face, we will prevail. Keep up the great work!



Col. John R. Boulé II  
Commander

## *Essayons!*



# FORT HAMILTON TO RECEIVE NEW ARMED FORCES RESERVE CENTER

By Mary Stavina

In today's world, one of the military's most important mandates is taking care of its Soldiers. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New York District is taking that message to heart as evidenced by the new Armed Forces Reserve Center (AFRC) being constructed at Fort Hamilton located in Brooklyn.

The project is being built in partnership with Louisville District and will realign the Active Army, Army Reserve and the Army National Guard units as directed by the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission. When completed this station will be home to the U.S.

Army, U.S. Army Reserve, Army National Guard and Recruiting Battalion.

The new AFRC will include three arms vaults, an assembly hall, kitchen, training classroom, offices, storage unit areas and locker room facilities. There will be an Army Reserve unheated, flammable and controlled waste storage building and a National Guard maintenance building. In addition, two National Guard unheated storage buildings are planned.

The contractor for this project is Pike Company, Rochester N.Y. The cost of the project is \$56 Million and is scheduled for completion April 2011.



Pre-cast exterior concrete panels are manufactured off site and trucked into the building site then dropped in place using a heavy-duty crane.  
Photo Credit: Dan Desmet, Public Affairs





# Vision Unveiled for “Mosaic of Habitats” in the New York/New Jersey Estuary

by JoAnne Castagna , Ed.D.

While underway aboard the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer’s vessel *Hayward*, the Army Corps hosted a group of waterfront leaders, including congressional representatives and other key-decision makers from over 20 organizations, during a New York/New Jersey Harbor inspection that included traveling up the Hudson River.

“Years of industrialization have considerably degraded the Hudson River that’s part of the New York – New Jersey Harbor Estuary,” said Col. John R. Boulé II, the Army Corps’ New York District Commander, as he addressed the group while standing on the bow of the *Hayward*.

The Army Corps is presently helping to turn back the hands of time on the estuary. The agency hosted this event to celebrate the unveiling of an innovative comprehensive restoration plan created in collaboration with various partners with a joint focus on restoring the estuary.

Restoring the estuary will not only create a healthier environment for fish and wildlife, but it will also provide the public cleaner waters, healthier fisheries, increased flood protection, recreational opportunities, and a boost to the region’s economy.

The primary goal of the New

York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary Comprehensive Restoration Plan is to develop a mosaic of habitats that provides maximum ecological and societal benefits to the region.

A diverse group of technical experts and consultants with the Army Corps’ New York District developed the plan as part of the Hudson Raritan Estuary Ecosystem Restoration Study with The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the project’s local sponsor.

The plan was prepared in

Estuary includes not only the harbor, but also rivers, wetlands, coastlines and open waters and is located within a complex ecological system within a metropolitan region with a population of 20 million people.

The plan’s boundary covers a large region of the estuary, which is a 25-mile radius around the Statue of Liberty National Monument

To perform restoration work in the estuary, the plan divides the estuary into eight regional areas associated with specific watersheds.

The plan includes 11 priority targets for restoration, recognized as Target Ecosystem Characteristics that include methods to restore and create habitats, ensure these habitats live in harmony and with the surrounding urban infrastructure, and to ensure the estuary is safe and accessible to the millions of estuary residents and visitors.

Just some of the plan’s short and long-term goals include creating 1,200 acres of coastal wetlands by the year 2015 and 15,200 by 2050; enhancing four or more islands for water birds by 2015 and all islands by 2050; creating or restoring 250 acres of coastal and maritime forest

by 2015 and 1,000 by 2050; and creating 500 acres of oyster reefs habitats by 2015 and 5,000 by 2050.

To learn more about the New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary Comprehensive Restoration Plan, please visit <http://www.thewatersweshare.org>



**With the skyline of Manhattan in the background, Col. John R. Boulé II, Commander of the Army Corps’ New York District addresses a group of waterfront leaders aboard the Army Corps’ vessel *HAYWARD* in the Harbor. Photo Credit: Keegan O’Connell-Lilly, Executive Office**

collaboration with the New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program and more than 60 partnering organizations, including federal, state and local agencies, non-governmental organizations and regional stakeholders.

The New York-New Jersey Harbor

# CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS

By LaDonna Davis

Since Sept. 11, 2001, more than 6,000 Corps employees have volunteered to serve over in Iraq and Afghanistan. Here at the New York District, more than 35 individuals have deployed totaling 60 deployments. Currently, there are 13 New York District employees deployed and six in the pre deployment stages.

The District is currently looking for civil, mechanical, structural and residential engineers as well as architects who are willing to deploy.

Recently, President Barack Obama ordered an additional 30,000 troops to serve in Afghanistan. With a clear focus on helping to rebuild the war torn country, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers civilian volunteers are needed now more than ever to complete that mission.

In April 2009, Kevin Bruce, a New York District biologist for the upstate regulatory field office, volunteered for a six month deployment in Iraq. There, he served as a project manager working out of Gulf Region Central Headquarters, Victory Base-Camp Liberty with projects in Anabar Province located in the city of Fallujah, Iraq.

In his own words,

Bruce explains how deploying changed his life and what the experience meant to him.

## Why did you decide to volunteer?

My main motivation was to make a contribution... to give something back to support my country. On my first deployment with the Corps in 2004-2005, I spent four months in western Anbar Province as a Project Manager. Security was very difficult in Anbar at that time and most of my assigned projects, being scattered across the westernmost regions of the province, never even broke ground. So I also wanted to go back to find out first hand what had been accomplished, maybe to see some progress that was difficult to see during my first deployment. Adventure and challenge were factors, and the money was also a factor for my second deployment.

## What was the most rewarding experience you got out of deploying?

Interactions with people... Corps folks, men and women of our armed forces, Iraqis, and people from

all over the globe working on the bases in support roles. Maybe just a brief conversation with a Soldier you happen to share a table with at mealtime...or the daily greeting and small talk with the gentleman from India who cleaned the office building...people's stories are fascinating.

"YOU PLAY A ROLE IN SOMETHING LARGER IN SIGNIFICANCE THAN PROBABLY ANYTHING ELSE YOU WILL EVER DO IN YOUR LIFETIME"

## What were some of the difficulties you faced?

It's a very challenging environment to work in. Tasks that are simple in the states can be very difficult to do, for example, making arrangements for a meeting or to visit a project site.

For operational security,

you can't just pick up a telephone or send an email and state times, dates and locations. Sometimes you had to get pretty creative. Also the day in, day out work wears on you after a while. The 2-week R&R was a welcomed break.

(continued on page 9)



Bruce takes part in a inspection of a border fort that the Corps built along the Syrian border during his first tour in Iraq between 2004-2005. This was one of a number of forts that were under construction at the time along the western border of Iraq.







# FEDERAL EMPLOYEE NEWS IN BRIEF

**FERS SICK LEAVE CREDIT:** The measure, which was included in the 2010 Defense Authorization Act takes effect immediately. FERS employees will get credit for only half of their banked sick leave if they retire before Jan 1, 2014 and those who retire after Jan 1, 2014 100 percent of their unused sick leave will be credited toward their annuities. This change puts FERS employees on par with those covered under the old CSRS system.

**THE GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION:** has lowered by five cents the 2010 mileage reimbursement rate for federal employees using private vehicles for government business. The new rate, which took effect on Jan. 1, 2010, is 50 cents per mile, down from 55 cents per mile in 2009. Unless GSA issues a mid-year adjustment, the rate will remain constant until the end of 2010.

**NSPS:** Defense Department employees now under the soon to be eliminated NSPS could see their future pay raises halved as they are transferred back to the GS system. About 4000 Defense Department employees have received large pay raises under the NSPS and because of those large raises many exceed the salary caps for the corresponding GS grade. No employee will have a pay reduction because of this transition back to GS, but for those who exceed their GS caps they will be placed under pay retention. They will receive half of the regular salary adjustment federal employees receive each January until future pay raises enable the GS pay scales to catch up to the employee.

**HEALTH CARE:** Health care reform legislation under debate in the Senate caps Flexible Spending Account (FSA) contributions at \$2,500 beginning in 2011. The House version of the bill sets the same limit, but the provision would not take effect until 2013. Currently federal employees are limited to \$5000 before tax contributions. Employees with costly chronic health conditions could see out of pocket expenses increase if the FSA contribution is capped. Approximately 280,000 federal employees belong to the health care FSAs.

**NATIONAL HEALTH PLAN:** Federal employee unions are campaigning against certain taxes and fees in the health care reform bill currently under debate in the Senate. The provisions of the bill could "devastate" the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program they claim. Citing new reports from the Association of Federal Health Organizations and Communications Workers of America, labor officials stated that the bill's excise tax on Cadillac plans and the additional fees it imposes on insurers based on their share of the market will hurt FEHBP. Though the fees and the 40 percent tax on plans that cost more than \$8,500 for individuals and \$23,000 for families would apply to insurers, employee advocates feel that the costs will be passed on to enrollees in the form of less generous benefits or higher premiums. Union officials would prefer the House measure which would fund reforms through a surtax on high-income individuals



(continued from page 6)



**Bruce stands in front of ruins that were once part of an old village on a base in western Iraq.**

### **Would you recommend deploying for others? Why?**

Yes, most of all because you play a role in something larger in significance than probably anything else you will ever do in your lifetime...and there is something very gratifying about that.



**Bruce stands in front of a cemetery on a base in western Iraq. The cemetery is believed to contain the remains of officers of the Iraqi military killed during the Iran-Iraq War.**

### **What was your work schedule like?**

Work a minimum of 10 hours every day, except Friday which was a 5 hour day.

Normal work week was 65 hours but sometimes worked additional 5 to 10 hours overtime each week.

### **Would you go back? Why?**

Yes, definitely. I enjoyed the challenge and got to meet a lot of great people from many different cultures. The money incentives are very attractive and it is a great opportunity to take an active role in a part of our world history.



**Col. Dan Anninos, District Engineer for Gulf Region District, presents Kevin Bruce with a going away plaque by the Project Management Team prior to his departure from Iraq**



**Bruce takes part of an inspection at an Iraq border crossing station.**

*(continued from cover)*

Hensley is the chief of project development, and Ward is the senior construction manager for the project. Both echoed Wachutka's comments regarding the project challenges, and the successes of the project team.

"This project is on a very tight site that includes (antiterrorism and force protection) requirements and access control points, and a tight schedule. But the great team on this project has made it one of the best," Hensley said.

"The biggest challenge for construction is the 'postage stamp' size of the site," said Ward. "It makes for a very challenging environment logistically. We have an excellent contractor that puts safety first, and we also have a superior team that works well together."

In addition to the ability of the project team to overcome big challenges on a huge project with a tight deadline, Hensley touted the project's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification – the first of its kind on a Corps of Engineers project.

"The project started out with the LEED Silver requirement, and Duke (Realty) had a visitor's center that had been planned to meet LEED Gold," Hensley said.

Design changes after the project began brought the visitor's center closer to the towers, incorporating them into the larger building's LEED Silver design, Hensley explained. When the team began working on the design credits necessary to earn the LEED rating, they realized they were one credit shy of a Gold rating, and made the necessary commitment to earn the additional credit.

"To go LEED Gold requires a strong commitment by the facilities team operating the campus after the construction is complete," Hensley said, going on to explain that Washington Headquarters Services – the customer who will manage the complex once construction is complete – is a strong supporter of LEED Gold and committed to the operating requirements which needed to be established.

The design team for the BRAC 133 project is HKS | WBA | Studios, and the construction contractor is Duke Realty, working with Clark Construction. As of the beginning of December, design stood at 85 percent, while construction was at 23 percent.

After the steel was topped out on the 17-story East Tower and 15-story West Tower, workers began placing the pre-cast façade of the building, a process that is projected for completion in early spring 2010.



A view of construction progress at the BRAC 133 project site at Mark Center in Alexandria, Va. The building under construction at the far left is the West Tower, the building in the center is the East Tower, and the construction shown at right is the Remote Delivery Facility and a small part of the South Parking Garage. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New York District is managing design and construction of the \$1.08 billion project as part of ongoing BRAC 2005 programs.



# RESTORING GERRITSEN CREEK

Photos and story by LaDonna Davis



In the midst of all the hustle and bustle in Brooklyn, N.Y. lies an aquatic and environmental refuge that houses some of our planet's most precious wildlife and provides community members with relaxing nature trails. It's called Gerritsen Creek.



**Dan Falt (right), New York District Gerritsen Creek project manager, meets with New York District Commander, Col. John Boulé at Gerritsen Creek to go over restoration plans for the site.**

Unfortunately, this once thriving park has become degraded over the years, but thanks to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New York District, Gerritsen Creek will once again be a thriving environmental park.

This past December, the Corps broke ground on an \$8 million ecosystem environmental restoration project that will renew and revitalize Gerritsen Creek's aquatic and coastal grassland habitats which have suffered severe degraded conditions due to dumping and overgrown plant life

"The site right now is almost completely covered in non-native phragmites, also known as the common reed, which takes over the whole site limiting the habitat value," said Dan Falt USACE New York District Gerritsen Creek's project manager. "Our hope is to restore the site to a more natural and diverse native habitat."

Gerritsen Creek provides a natural habitat for a very diverse group of organisms and species that all live in and around the creek.

The creek also supports multiple species of plant life, including sea side goldenrod (*Solidago sempervirens*), and ragweed (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*). Currently, the creek is overgrown with reedgrass which grows at the expense of other plant life by crowding the soil and blocking sunlight.

By removing invasive species, replanting native species and removing fill material so water can flow at salt marsh levels; the Corps will be providing the park with the natural resources it needs so Gerritsen Creek will be restored to its historical habitat.

Additionally, the Corps will be building a new walking trail so that visitors can take in the natural habitat and become educated on the different species and plant life that inhabit the creek.

The proposed project will restore 20 acres of salt marsh and 15 acres of rare coastal grassland.

"Our hope with this habitat restoration is to not only have an excellent habitat, but to also create a beautiful place for visitors to get close to natural wetland habitats," Falt said.

(continues on page 12)



The \$8 million project is part of a continuing authority cost-share agreement with the City of New York Parks and Recreation with the Corps contributing \$5 million and the city contributing \$3 million. Gavlin Bros. is the contractor. The project is projected to take one year to complete.

As part of the Gerritsen Creek's restoration project, The Corps of Engineers New York District plans on redesigning the trails so that park visitors can experience all the education opportunities the site has to offer.

## Corps Begins Construction on Picatinny Arsenal Fuze Engineering Complex

By Mary Stavina

On Nov. 13, 2009, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New York District held a "Ground/Wall Breaking Ceremony" at the Fuze Engineering Complex in Picatinny Arsenal located in New Jersey. As part of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure recommendation this multi-building complex will establish a joint center for guns, weapons and ammunition research at Picatinny.

The Fuze Division, which is part of the Fuze and Precision Armament Technology Directorate, Munitions Engineering and Technology Center, focuses mainly on fuze science and technology effort and development. Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center, (ARDEC) Fuze Division is responsible for the entire life cycle of fuzes, safing and arming devices and setters for fuzes across a wide variety of munitions.

ARDEC plays a key part in Army Transformation with its involvement in the development of the Soldier and Future Combat Systems and

continued efforts in the development of advanced weapons that exploit technologies like high-power microwaves, high-energy lasers and



**Picatinny Arsenal and New York District Corps leadership take part in a wall breaking ceremony to expand the FUZE Engineering Complex at Picatinny Arsenal. Photo Credit: Dan Desmet, Public Affairs**

nano-technology.

The Fuze complex will be in various locations throughout Picatinny. Building six will be renovated to include administrative office space, an addition to the building will add significant fuze laboratory space co-located with the hands-on-fuze design engineering personnel. Other

developments within the complex include the construction of a Fuze Electromagnetic Research building; a Fuze Explosive Research building, renovation of the Anechoic Chamber (a room with special walls that absorb as much sound as possible so electronic testing can be done), and the construction of two ammunition storage bunkers to support the increased fuze mission.

The contractor for the project is Benard Associates "The Corps of Engineers/ Picatinny is looking forward to working with the contractor to complete this project" said Richard

Mandra, the Project Manager.

The Fuze project will cost \$15 Million and is scheduled for completion in 2011.



# Army Corps Helps Preserve Eroding Plum Beach



Members from the Army Corps' New York District joins Rep. Anthony Weiner and government officials and observe beach erosion along Plum Beach, Brooklyn, N.Y. Photo Credit: Vince Elias, Public Affairs

By Hector Mosley

One of New York's most well known shoreline rest stops, Plum Beach is ready for a much needed upgrade.

This southern shore in Brooklyn has suffered bad erosion damage due to the strong waves from the Atlantic caused by severe storms.

The dangerous waves are eroding the beach features by causing hundreds of cubic yards of sand to wash away and deteriorating its bike trail, which is only a few feet from the heavily congested Belt Parkway that's used by millions of commuters daily.

During the first week of December, Dan Falt, Stephen Couch, Lenny Houston, Randall Hintz, and Diane Rahoy of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New York District met with local and state agencies and Congressman Anthony Weiner to discuss options for addressing Plum's Beach erosion.

The group walked along the beach to get a closer look at its damages. "Delay is our enemy," said Weiner acknowledging the effects of high tides flooding the Belt Parkway. Weiner added that if something isn't done about the eroding beach, the effects could be detrimental to the security of local residents.

The USACE New York District's regulatory department has issued permits for sandbag placement to protect the beaches bike trail and potential flooding on the Belt Parkway.

"The sandbags are not permanent, they just buy us enough time to consolidate with our partners, and insinuate a natural solution for this future project," said Randall Hintz, of the USACE New York District Operations Division.

Bidding for the sandbag contract began that same week, and work started immediately to protect the Belt Parkway and the beach from further damages.

# Lockmaster's House Demolition One of Many Albany Field Office Stimulus Projects

*The demolition of the nearly one-century-old building is just one of the more visible projects of several stimulus-funded projects being managed out of the Albany Field Office*

by Chris Gardner

People passing through Troy Lock next navigation season might notice something missing from the area as they lock through.

Thanks to about \$168,000 from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), commonly referred to as the stimulus package, the crumbling lockmaster's house building that originally opened in 1916 was demolished, removing both an eyesore and a safety hazard from the area. The contract was combined with overall asbestos abatement work at both the lockmaster's house (required prior to demolition) as well as at other parts of the Albany Field Office facility, which creates another layer of safety benefits from the contract.

The job was completed by Tribal Construction, a nearby small business based out of northern

New Jersey.

The lockmaster's house, which opened in 1916 with the Troy Lock and Dam, used to be occupied by the lock's actual lockmaster up until the 1970's, when the head of the facility was no longer required to live there.

Since then, the house has served as extra office space for various upstate District functions, ranging from regulatory to construction. As time marched on, the house fell into disrepair and was no longer suitable or safe enough to be occupied as office space and once stimulus funds became available earlier this year to remove the building, it was only a matter of time before it was ultimately torn down in October.

The demolition of the lockmaster house was just one of many stimulus projects being carried out by the District's Albany Field Office, which is co-located at

the Troy Lock and Dam, about 150 miles up the Hudson River from New York City.

In fact, the Albany Field Office has received approximately \$1.4 million to manage various repairs and improvements at the nearly one century old facility and approximately \$2.5 million to manage other projects elsewhere in upstate New York.

"The ARRA funding provided an opportunity to fund contract work that will lead to improved safety for our waterway users and our employees," said Bill Petronis, chief of the Albany Field Office. "Equipment upgrades will improve the efficiency and productivity of our workforce while reducing our energy consumption. Operation Division and the Albany Field Office were pleased we were able to quickly identify and award projects that not only helped to create jobs, but also promoted



The old lockmaster's house at the Troy Lock and Dam was torn down this past fall using approximately \$168,000 stimulus funding. The house was originally opened in 1916, but lockmasters haven't lived there since the 1970's and it had since fallen into disrepair. The demolition was one of many stimulus-funded projects at the facility, which received a total of \$1.4 million dollars for repairs, improvements and equipment that will, among other things, help the facility be safer and more energy efficient. The Albany Field Office also managed another \$2.5 million in stimulus-funded projects elsewhere in Upstate New York. Photo Credit: Bob Berrian, civil engineering tech, Albany Field Office.



safety, energy conservation and supported small businesses.”

Approximately \$1 million went toward replacing a 40-ton hydraulic crane and a sectional barge system at the Lock.

“Replacing the crane and sectional barge system will increase public safety and the productivity and efficiency of our hired labor workforce performing various activities including removing debris and hazards to navigation from the lock entrances, performing channel maintenance activities, and performing maintenance and repair to the Troy Lock,” Petronis said.

Additionally, the lighting at the lock and dam is undergoing a \$232,000 improvement in order to both increase safety and security for vessels using the facility while at the same time decreasing energy consumption there.

Even further up the Hudson River, by Lake Champlain and the Canadian border, the Albany Field Office is also managing the \$1.9 million dollar project for breakwater repairs at the Plattsburgh Harbor. The work will increase the safety of the harbor by

repairing deteriorated and subsided portions of the breakwater to return the structure to its original design elevation and help protect the harbor from wind-driven waves

The field office is also using stimulus money to increase the capacity of an upland placement site for dredged material from the Hudson River, a \$575,000 project. This work will not only directly create jobs, but is crucial to maintaining the navigability of the Hudson River between New York City and Albany, Petronis said.

All of the ARRA projects being managed out the Albany field office are 100 percent set aside for small businesses, which in turn generally leads to more local contractors creating more local jobs.

While exact employment figures are not yet available, the nature of the work at Troy Lock as well as the work being managed by the Albany Field Office elsewhere upstate, requires employing many people from several backgrounds including construction, manufacturing, engineering and environmental science to name a few.



## DID YOU KNOW? FACTS ABOUT TROY LOCK AND DAM

The Troy Lock serves government, commercial and recreational watercraft. During the 2009 navigation season, which ran from the beginning of May through the end of November, there were a total of 4,156 vessels, 2,777 lockages and 1,368 tons of commerce.

# Equal Employment Opportunities SPECIAL PROGRAMS 2010

It was a wonderful year in 2009 for our Equal Employment Opportunities special programs! We would like the EEO programs in 2010 to be even better. The EEO Special Emphasis Committee has lined up some great events for African American History Month.

The following films will be showing:

**Atwaine Fisher**  
Feb. 9- 11:30 A.M., Rm 3032

**Remember the Titans**  
Feb 17- 11:30 A.M., Rm 3006

**Pursuit of Happiness**  
Feb. 24 11:30 A.M., Rm 3006

We have also invited Mona Santos from First Command Finance to the District to increase our knowledge of our benefits and finances!

The following seminars will be presented:

**Tax Strategies**  
Feb 10 A.M.- noon, Rm. 3032

**7 Common Mistakes Made by Federal Employees**  
March 10 A.M.- noon, Rm. 1802

**Civil Service Retire Systems (CSRS, FERS, Offset)**  
April 13- 12-1 P.M., Rm. 1802

**Understanding Fed Emp Benefits**

May 18- 12-1 P.M., Rm. TBD

**Long Term Care Benefits**

Jun 8- 12-1 P.M., Rm. TBD

Please come out and show support for your EEO programs!

## New York District Receives Award

By Jean Lau, EEO

USACE, New York District was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation by the New York State Regional Employment Alliance in fall 2009. This certificate recognized the commitment the District made to promote employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Maj. Michael Clancy, deputy commander, New York District accepted the award on behalf of the USACE managers and the Equal Employment Opportunity staff.

Since 2008, the EEO office has worked with various managers and human resources and has hired a total of 13 employees under the Schedule A hiring authority. The Schedule A Hiring Authority is a non-competitive government hir-

ing process, which allows Federal employers to hire qualified people with disabilities to fill vacant civil-



**Maj. Michael Clancy, deputy commander, New York District accepts a certificate of appreciation from the New York State Regional Employment Alliance. Photo Credit: Mary Stavina, Public Affairs**

ian positions.

Estelle Capowski, chief of EEO, serves as an active member on the Business Advisory Council at Abilities Inc. an organization that helps

people with disabilities achieve their potential through training, evaluations and placement.

At Abilities Estelle conducts mock interviews and later provides assessments for disabled interviewees. Her efforts, combined with managerial commitments, have resulted in establishing realistic training and evaluative criteria that help enhance disabled members of the community in achieving employment.

Currently over seven percent of the total federal civilian workforce consists of people with disabilities in various levels of government and a variety of occupations.