



# Afghanistan mission continues to grow and reach new milestones

By Chris Gardner, Public Affairs

With Washington's renewed focus on operations in Afghanistan and armed forces "surging," the Corps of Engineers is also part of the ramp up with two entire Districts now completing important projects within the fragile nation.

The Corps is primarily focused on capacity building in Afghanistan and ensuring the government has the infrastructure it needs to sustain itself. This includes a great deal of support for the Afghan National Security Forces (Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police) that are responsible for keeping order in the region. The Corps is also working on basic infrastructure projects like roads and water treatment that people may take for granted here stateside.

"Projects that are part of rebuilding the nation – making sure their sewage treatment plants are up to snuff, improving their infrastructure, whether it be irrigation for farmers that are there, water treatment for the cities, improving the electrical grids," said Maj. Justin Pabis, deployment and family support coordinator, New York District. "We have a pretty large part in just about everything."

To date, the Corps has completed nearly \$1 billion worth of projects in the region and has more than 400 projects under construction worth a total \$1.9 billion. With the re-energized focus on Afghanistan, the Corps plans to award \$2.1 billion worth of contracts in the 2010 fiscal year.

The Corps' mission used to be handled primarily by one District, the Afghanistan Engineer District, but with that kind of boost in workload

Corps leadership recently stood up an entire second District within the country, meaning there are now Afghanistan Engineer Districts in the northern (Kabul) and southern (Kandahar) portions of the country. With two entire Districts carrying out billions of dollars worth of projects, there is an even greater need for Corps of Engineers civilians to keep the Afghanistan Districts' operations running smoothly.

"Professional development opportunities like this come by only once in a lifetime," said Jerry Byrne, chief, construction division, New York District. "An Afghanistan deployment will definitely challenge volunteers professionally, while testing their resolve, commitment, resourcefulness, and ingenuity. Couple all this with the financial incentives and you have an unbeatable opportunity for career and personal growth."

The positions can range from very technical to things people might not associate with overseas deployments at first.

"The main jobs we're looking for are engineers, construction representatives, project managers and there's a long detailed list of other jobs," Pabis said, noting that positions people might not consider as deployable positions are needed too, like lawyers, accountants and administrative assistants. "If we do it here in the District, they're doing it over there in Afghanistan."

Some Corps of Engineers accomplishments in Afghanistan so far include hundreds of miles of roads, schools serving thousands of children and hundreds of border posts, barracks, police stations, courthouses and fire stations.

Also, in the same way Afghanistan's troops are being trained and built up so they have the capacity

(continued page 6)

# In This Month's Issue

New York District Times  
Newsletter of the  
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U.S. Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
New York District

## North Atlantic Division Commander visits New York District

On April 30, Col. (P) Peter 'Duke' DeLuca (right) conducted a town-hall meeting at New York District. He talked about his command philosophy and emphasized the good work being done by district employees both here and abroad. He also discussed the way ahead for North Atlantic Division and received a district coin of appreciation from New York District Commander, Col. John Boulé. Col. DeLuca is scheduled to be promoted to Brigadier General on 11 May 2010.



Page 3

Colonel's Corner

Page 4

Army Corps takes green to new heights

Page 5

Jamaica Bay

Page 6

Fort Drum dedicates new dental clinic

Page 7

FENIB

Page 8

Employee Spotlight

Page 9

New Employees

Page 10

West Point middle school donates supplies

Page 11

New York District Deputy Commander promoted to Lt. Colonel

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# Colonel's Corner

## Collaborate for Success

In grade school, the rules are simple: be kind, share with others and work together as a team. As we get older, we may lose sight of these fundamental principles and want to do things on our own. Let's refocus on the basics because working together is essential to mission success.

Goal Two of the USACE Campaign Plan says that "the Corps will collaborate with partners and stakeholders to find holistic and sustainable solutions." The quality of the relationships that we build with our customers, shareholders and partners will influence our ability to achieve effective water resource and military construction solutions, bringing us closer to achieving this goal. The only way to build good relationships is to listen to the needs of our project team members and work closely together to reach a solution that is beneficial for all parties involved.

The Project Partnership Agreements that we forge with local, city and state officials exemplify how building healthy relationships can payoff for everyone. Our district carried out this campaign goal beautifully just recently with the signing of Project Partnership and Design Agreements to study the problematic Forge River and Mamaroneck & Sheldrake Rivers, respectively. These studies are being carried out due to the collaboration of local citizens, town and state governments, our district team members and federal officials determined to create solutions to environmental and flood risk problems that towns in Long Island and Westchester County have experienced for years.

Our District must excel at building good relationships with our stakeholders. Whether it's collaborating with the Department of Environmental Protection for a restoration project, working with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey on a dredging project or partnering with senior military officials to advance important facilities; the relationships that we build today will make current and future work easier and more effective. Working as a team means more than building a good relationship, it's about nurturing and maintaining those relationships even after the project is done.

Upon entering office, the President called for an open, transparent and collaborative government. I recently went to Washington, D.C. to brief our congressional leaders on the proposed FY 11 budget. By creating an open dialogue and building strong relationships with our congressional members, their staffs and leaders at headquarters and the ASA (CW), we are able to convey our region's civil works and military needs and discuss the funding resources needed to move our projects forward.

Being open and collaborative isn't just about building good relationships with our external partners; it starts internally with the people that we work with everyday here in our District Headquarters and field offices. Listening to one another, working together as a team towards a common purpose and building positive professional relationships is how we foster trust and mutual respect. Our District is comprised of some of the brightest, smartest and innovative folks in the Corps. Let's work together to create a healthy, productive organizational climate, eliminate the stovepipes and create a lateral exchange of information that benefits all of us.

The old saying is there's no *I in Teamwork*. Well, there is no *I in Corps* either. Relationship building, collaboration and teamwork, that's what **Building Strong** is all about. I couldn't be prouder to be a part of the New York District Corps of Engineers' team whose members demonstrate these traits regularly. Let's recommit ourselves to continuing to do so and become the partnership role models in USACE.



Col. John R. Boulé II  
Commander

## Essayons!



# Army Corps takes going green to new heights!

By JoAnne Castagna, Ed.D.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, is breaking new ground in Alexandria, Va. When complete, the Washington Headquarters Services complex will be the tallest structure in the region and tallest project ever erected by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

What isn't as obvious is something that may be more impressive. This is the Army Corps's first project of this size working for Leadership in Energy and Environmental

Design (LEED) Gold Building certification and the only one in the region that will only use 30 percent of the energy of a traditional complex and save taxpayers millions.

LEED is an internationally recognized green building certification system that was developed by the U.S. Green Building Council. The system provides third-party verification, that a building or community was designed and built using strategies aimed at improving performance

in the areas of energy savings, water efficiency, CO2 emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and steward-

certified LEED Gold, so we are shooting for LEED Gold for the whole complex," said Joanne Hensley, chief, project develop-

ment, BRAC 133 Project, New York District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Sean Wachutka, program manager, BRAC 133 Project, New York District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said this project is the most incredible mission he has ever worked on. "Green building standards are slowly being worked out.

They are going to get better as we go along and the Army Corps is helping to lead the way in moving them forward."

The Washington Headquarters Services Complex is scheduled for completion in September 2011. The contractor is Duke Realty, working with Clark Construction.



**Precast exterior wall panels are quickly rising to the top of 17-story and 15-story office towers as construction continues on the \$1.8 billion Department of Defense Office Complex (BRAC 133) at Mark Center in Alexandria, Va. The Corps' New York District is managing design and construction of the project, which will relocate around 6,400 Defense Department employees from leased office space in the region to a single campus in Alexandria. Photo Credit: Marc Barnes, Belvoir Integration Office Public Affairs.**

ship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts.

The City of Alexandria and other team members also stressed the importance of making this complex certified LEED Gold and the Army Corps made this their mission.

"Originally our goal was to make part of the complex certified LEED Silver and another part certified LEED Gold. We reviewed our original design plans and realized we were only shy one point from having the entire complex be





# Corps, partners look at ecosystem restoration progress in Jamaica Bay

By Christopher Gardner, Public Affairs

Representatives from the Corps of Engineers, along with partner agencies and stakeholders, were in Jamaica Bay April to discuss ecosystem restoration efforts there and see firsthand the results of

ecosystem restoration work at marsh islands in the bay.

The group included representatives from local, state and federal partners; including the National Park Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service, New York

City Department of Environmental Protection, Port Authority of New York & New Jersey, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, that work in concert with the Corps on efforts to protect and restore the New York and New Jersey Harbor and specifically in this case Jamaica Bay.

The trip to Jamaica Bay included informational presentations regarding the importance of continuing to work together on ecosystem restoration efforts, the history of Jamaica Bay and plans for the future, including the Comprehensive Restoration Plan for the Hudson-Raritan Estuary.

Representatives from the various partner agencies also toured the marsh island of Elders Point East in Jamaica Bay, where the Corps managed extensive ecosystem restoration work in 2006-2007

and has been monitoring since. More than 40 acres of wetlands have been restored on Elders Point East and a variety of plants and animals now call the island home at various points throughout the year.

Restoration work is ongoing at the nearby marsh island

of Elders West, where more than 30 acres of wetlands are expected to be restored.

For projects like this, sand is pumped onto the island, specially contoured and shaped, and then native species are planted. The sand is beneficially reused from dredging projects the New York and New Jersey Harbor.



**Melissa Alvarez, senior project biologist with New York District, shows community stakeholders and representatives of the Corps' local, state and federal partners on the project the different varieties of plant life that are now found throughout the restored marsh island of Elders Point East in Jamaica Bay. (photo by Chris Gardner, New York District public affairs)**



# Fort Drum dedicates new dental center

By Frederick P. Pike, P.E., Project Engineer, Fort Drum Resident Engineer Office



In February 2010, Ft. Drum held an official ribbon cutting ceremony for the new \$9M Stone Dental Clinic. The event was attended by several soldiers, family members, civilians and dignitaries from the Installation and Dental Command communities. The freestanding clinic incorporates steel, reinforced concrete and brick construction with large anodized aluminum window systems and terrazzo floors in accordance with installation compatibility standards for architectural features. The 18,300 square foot state-of-the-art 24-chair facility has classroom and conference room facilities, and serves as the Fort Drum Dental Command headquarter offices. The clinic was named after COL Frank Powell Stone who served as one of the original thirty 1901 U.S. Army Dental Corps dental surgeons moving on to become the Chief of the Dental Corps in 1934.

**(continued from cover)**

to operate in the future, the Corps is also working on training Afghanis on how to operate, maintain and repair the facilities being built there, creating long-term jobs. In fact, the Corps directly employs more than 400 contractors and at any given time has around 40,000 Afghanis working on Corps projects throughout the country.

Even with those numbers though, the Corps' multi-District, multi-billion dollar efforts in Afghanistan still need the support and expertise of civilian volunteers from throughout the Corps. Any employees interested in learning more about deployment opportunities should contact Maj. Justin Pabis, deployment and family support coordinator, New York District at 917-790-8331 or at [Justin.Pabis@usace.army.mil](mailto:Justin.Pabis@usace.army.mil).



With more than 400 projects under construction worth a total \$1.9 billion, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is working relentlessly to help the citizens of Afghanistan improve their country.





# *Federal Employee News in Brief*

**Electronic Benefits:** Federal benefits payments will go exclusively electronic by 2013, the Treasury Department recently announced. This decision applies to all recipients of Social Security Supplemental Security Income, Veterans Affairs, Railroad Retirement and Office of Personnel Management benefits. Enrollees will be able to choose between direct deposits and balances added to Treasury debit cards. All new program enrollees will receive their benefits electronically starting on March 1, 2011, and current recipients will make the transition by March 1, 2013. This will save the Treasury an estimated \$300 million over five years.

**Social Media:** If you are sitting at your desk working on a non-classified government computer network, the Pentagon recently released an official social media use policy that allows open access to Internet-based applications such as Facebook, Twitter, Instant Messaging and blogs. This new directive means that YouTube, MySpace and more than a dozen sites previously blocked will be unblocked. The Defense Department acknowledged that the Internet is proving a powerful tool for many tasks including recruiting, public relations and communications between troops and their families. To guard security, it allows commanders to cut off access on a temporary basis only- if it is required to safeguard a mission or reserve bandwidth for official use.

**KSA's On the Way Out:** The knowledge, skills and abilities part of federal job applications could be eliminated by April, according to the Office of Personnel Management Director John Berry. This is only one of the many reforms he is advocating. Aiming to get the federal hiring system to be in line with the corporate world, he outlined several hiring and performance management ideas which included employee performance evaluation, and legislation to eliminate the rule of three (three candidates are interviewed for the job). Berry said he expects to send a plan outlining immediate hiring reforms to President Obama for signature. If signed the changes could take effect as early as April.

**Revamped TSP Website:** The Thrift Savings Plan board said the launch of its new website may be delayed by a few weeks and the multimedia features could come later. In January the Board anticipated a redesigned website by spring. Although the site will not be ready, perhaps in June, it will incorporate elements such as video, RSS feeds and a ticker-tape feature. Officials suggested that the tools eventually could replace printed information or the DVD supplements sent out to encourage workers to set aside parts of their paychecks for retirement. The site currently receives tens of thousands of hits a day, and more than a million page views per month.

**Health Care for Young Adults Available:** Three major health insurers have agreed to let young adults stay on their parents' plans after they would normally lose their eligibility, according to the Department of Health and Human Services. Blue Cross Blue Shield plans, Kaiser Permanente and Humana have adopted the new health care law's higher age limit before they're required to at the end of September. In the past carriers have allowed young adults to stay on their parents' plans only until they graduate college. "This will give greater health security to millions of American families" said Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of Health and Human Services.



# Employee Spotlight

## 1. Where do you work in the District?

I work in the New York District's Equal Employment Opportunity Office with two of the most hard working, dedicated and optimistic people in the District -Estelle Capowski, Chief EEO and Victoria Springs, EEO Specialist.

## 2. How long have you worked for the Corps?

It is true when people say "time flies!" I just received a 5 Years of Service award, but I joined the Corps of Engineers in 2001 as a student summer hire.

## 3. In your own words, what is your job? What do you do?

I am an EEO complaints counselor and inform aggrieved employees about the EEO complaint process and their rights and responsibilities according to Army Regulations. I assist the parties involved in amicably resolving complicated and sometimes emotional issues at the lowest level possible.

## 4. What do you love about your job?

Working in the EEO career field is difficult and quite frankly not for everyone, but there are little moments of magic that make it more than your average J.O.B. These come from helping resolve complicated issues, seeing new hires recruited from local colleges, as well as helping vocational agencies and veterans in-process for their first day at work.



**Jean Lau**  
Equal Employment  
Opportunity Office

## 5. How do you see your job making a difference and contributing to the Corps success?

I love working in a place that safeguards the Army's commitment to maintain a positive workplace environment of mutual respect, trust, dignity, fair treatment and everyday we're working to help maintain a diverse workforce that reflects the great citizens of America. A diverse workforce strengthens the Corps success by providing different perspectives and solutions to work related challenges. Having diversity greatly strengthens our connection to communities, both the local and abroad.

## 6. Any special moments/memories about your job you'd like to share?

My career here is relatively short but a particularly special moment was when everyone came together to witness the inauguration of president Obama on the big screen. Being able to put my first language (Cantonese)-to use during the District's harbor inspection for the China Ministry of Water Resources was also a special moment. Recently, being named Hero of the week was particularly awesome. But, every now and then when stress finds its way through the door, I invoke the memory of my first supervisor-Kathleen Hirschy singing along to the Eagles' Take it easy... and I'm able to ground myself. Hopefully next time I will have more to share.





# “Say Hi,” to New York District’s Newest Employees





# *West Point middle school donates supplies*

Students at West Point Middle School made more than an academic connection with students at the Basbulaq Elementary School in Iraq with a little help from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region District (GRD). The fifth through eighth grade students at the Department of Defense school in West Point, N.Y., collected much needed school supplies recently to share with elementary students in Iraq. The project was organized by the National Junior Honor Society at West Point. Engineers from the GRD Kirkuk Resident Office arranged the logistics with the Iraqi school to distribute the supplies.





## *MAJ. Clancy Promoted to Lieutenant Colonel*

Maj. Michael N. Clancy was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel at a ceremony held on March 5, 2010. He joined the District in July 2009 and serves as the deputy district commander. Prior to his joining the New York District Lt. Col. Clancy served in a variety of units throughout the United States. His prior assignments have included three assignments in Iraq, one as a combat engineer with the 1st Armored Division, one constructing support facilities as the 3rd Corps Support Command Engineer, and one serving as the resident engineer for South Baghdad with the Gulf Region Central District, which is part of the Corps' massive reconstruction effort.



**Lt. Col. Michael N. Clancy**  
**Deputy Commander**

## **Comprehensive Soldier (and Civilian) Fitness**



The Army established Comprehensive Soldier Fitness to increase the fitness, health, and resilience of soldiers, their families, and Army Civilians. Resilience is the ability to grow and thrive in the face of challenges and bounce back from adversity. CSF helps increase fitness, health, and resilience in individuals by assessing their strengths and weaknesses, then by providing training in the form of self-development modules and resilience building techniques that teach specific mental and physical skills. These techniques are designed to increase fitness and health in the physical, emotional, social, family, and spiritual dimensions of resilience.

The training begins with taking the Global Assessment Tool (GAT). The GAT was developed by both military and academic experts to assess an individual's fitness and health in the dimensions of resilience. The results of the GAT direct the individual to self-development training known as Comprehensive Resilience Modules (CRM). You then take the CRM modules at your own pace to help improve your resilience.

This training is entirely free and also entirely voluntary for the civilian force. The training, and more details, can be found at: <http://www.army.mil/CSF/>

