



U.S. Army Aviation and Missile

Research, Development and Engineering Center
Army Educational Outreach Programs

CAPSULES



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Blanding Heads RDECOM Outreach Program

On October 14, 2007, Dr. Blanding left her Program Management position at NASA Headquarters for an appointment as the Director of the Educational Outreach Program (EOP) at the U. S. Army Research, Development, and Engineering Command (RDECOM). Her responsibilities include developing a vision for RDECOM's educational outreach program, and aligning performance expectations with organizational goals. Currently, she is developing the Strategic Plan and Implementation Procedures for the EOP; integrating the educational activities at RDECOM's ten (10) Research, Development, and Engineering Centers; and developing a recruitment strategy to bring scientists and engineers into RDECOM's workforce. In a staff capacity with responsibilities that have a di-

rect and substantial effect on RDECOM, DA and DOD, Blanding provides direction, control, studies, analyses and assessments of scientific and engineering recruitment programs. In this role, she ensures that program participation is diverse and includes under-represented groups and disadvantaged individuals.

Dr. Blanding began her federal career in 1985 as the Director of the AMCOM Office of Academic Affairs (Redstone Arsenal, Alabama). Over the years, she has held several assignments within the Department of Defense and, most recently, with NASA. Her career includes a wide range of experiences and skills developing and leading formal and informal education programs and projects in the federal government and universities to enhance science, technology, engineering, and math-

ematics (STEM) academic programs, careers, professional development, and literacy for a wide and diverse public.

Blanding has a highly successful record of establishing external partnerships with education programs, groups and organizations to inspire, engage, educate, and employ U. S. and international students and researchers in the STEM workforce. Her previous record of achievement with the U. S. Army, Office of Naval Research (ONR), and NASA includes providing unique research opportunities for national and international post-doctoral associates. Additional experiences include integrating and managing program outcomes, accountability, evaluation, and practices that resulted in cost-efficient solutions to outreach problems.

Outreach Training Offered

On February 11, 2008, from 2-4 p.m., an informal outreach training session will be offered in SELA, according to Ms. Nancy Salmon, Management and Program Analyst. Persons experienced in attending RDECOM diversity recruiting events will share

their knowledge and experience with each other and with younger AMRDEC representatives.

Ms. Gayla McMichael, Electronics Engineer – Weapons Sciences Directorate, will lead the discussion, sharing her experiences of representing AMRDEC over the past several years.

Please encourage everyone who will be good candidates to represent AMRDEC in the future to attend. According to Salmon, this effort is part of a larger effort to form a recruitment team for AMRDEC.

Voluntary Emeritus Program and SEAP Testimony

As one of the participants in AMRDEC's Voluntary Emeritus Program, Mr. William Pittman has graciously volunteered to be a SEAP mentor. Mr. Pittman provided the following testimony to Ms. Lana Hargrove recently: "My SEAP student, Kevin Chou, asked me to provide him with material before he came on board, and I gave him a copy of the DOD UAV Roadmap. He read the entire volume before he arrived here. He was a mathematical whiz who would have loved to have had more mathematical "case study" problems; but he did win a prize for his project, and learned how to make use of the U.S. Patent Office database in his project. Chou was a junior at Grissom High School as a SEAP, and I received a Christmas card from him last month (December 2007). He is currently an electrical engineering student at Princeton University. It was easy to see from his high school record he was going to the top!"

Buckhorn High School Students *into* Robotics

According to a January 31, 2008, article in *The Huntsville Times*, Mr. Chris Hancock's class at Buckhorn High School is "using engineering principles to build and operate small robotic vehicles." Buckhorn High School is located in New Market, Ala., and is one of Madison County's largest high schools. Mr. Hancock teaches the Digital Electronics and Robotics class to mostly freshmen. The class includes concepts in math, science, and engineering. This is a new class, offered this semester, via Buckhorn's Engineering Academy. According to the article, Hancock hopes students will develop "an interest in engineering." Additional advanced engineering classes are being considered.