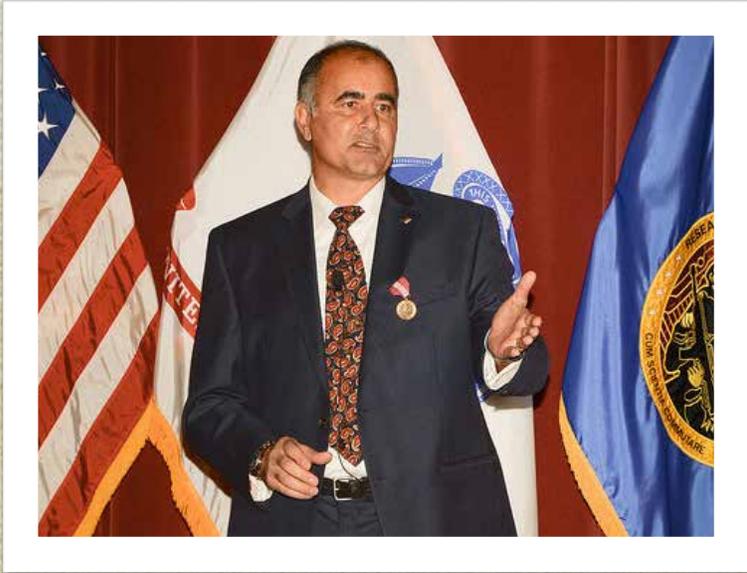


THE ENGINEERING EDGE

EDGEWOOD CHEMICAL BIOLOGICAL CENTER

Volume 7, Issue 3

March 2015



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To access the electronic version of this newsletter, visit:
<http://www.ecbc.army.mil/news/ENG/>



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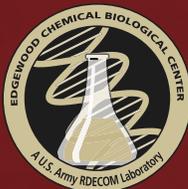
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This newsletter was published through the **Balanced Scorecard**.

For article suggestions, questions or comments please contact **Ed Bowen** at edward.c.bowen8.civ@mail.mil.



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Worker's Compensation: How it Works for You

You are heading into work for the day. It's winter, and the ground is covered with a light dusting of snow. You take the steps up to your building and—WHOOSH! Your foot hits a slippery spot and you're going down. You grab for the railing to steady yourself, but it's too late—You're on the ground and you immediately feel a piercing pain in your back.



People slip and trip; people bump their heads and cut their hands. All of these accidents can occur in the workplace. It is important to understand that all work-related injuries are subject to a worker's compensation claim.

There is a specific process that must be followed when a workplace injury occurs. Every job-related injury or illness should be reported to supervisors as soon as possible. Once an incident occurs, call 911 immediately if the injury warrants emergency attention. All injuries should be assessed by a medical professional, even if you feel the injury is minor.

If a medical professional determines you cannot return to work, ensure that he or she provides you with a medical duty slip and any supporting documentation to explain this decision. A form CA-16 must be completed within two days of the incident. Also complete a Report of Incident (ROI) with your supervisor so that there is an official office record. Then compile a Short Notice Accident Prevention (SNAP) report regarding the details of the incident, and notify your organizational safety office. You will also need to contact the Injury Compensation Program Administrator (ICPA) in order to file the official claim which will be submitted to the Department of Labor. All of this notification must occur within 10 days of the incident.

Remember, these things happen, but you do have the right and the responsibility to inform your leadership and the proper organizations. The end goal for everyone involved is for the employee to return to work in a safe environment with a clean bill of health.

For more details and contact information regarding ECBC's worker's compensation process, go to <https://cbconnect.apgea.army.mil/DPI/cb/risk/sho/Injury%20Reporting/Home.aspx>. 

Ask a Tech Tip: Antiseptic Soaps – Are They Safe?

Mike Kauzlarich, of the *Pyrotechnics and Explosives Branch*, reveals how the techniques and lessons learned in labs can help you solve your household problems. Submit a question to him at usarmy.APG.ecbc.mbx.engineering-directorate@mail.mil.

A question was asked about the recent hubbub on the use of triclosan in hand soaps labeled as "antiseptic," and the link to triclosan-resistant bacteria. Triclosan has been used since the 1960s. We won't discuss the bacteria in this column, or whether triclosan should or should not be used in everyday soaps—but we can explain the chemistry. Triclosan is fat-soluble and poisons an enzyme found in many fungi and bacteria. Since the enzyme is not found in humans, it is harmless to us. This enzyme, called enoyl-acyl carrier-protein reductase, is permanently blocked by one molecule of triclosan, which is why it is so prevalent as an antiseptic/antibacterial.



Recent studies are leading researchers to believe that the widespread use of triclosan leads to mutations in the bacteria gene, which may produce triclosan-resistant bacteria. If you are concerned about exposure to triclosan, our advice is to discuss the use of these soaps with your family doctor. 

ECBC Mentoring Program Benefits Mentees and Senior Leaders Alike



Engineering Director Mike Abaie shares his mentoring experiences during the ECBC Mentoring Program session held on Mar. 11. Credit: ECBC Public Affairs

When you ask senior leaders about their professional journey, most will tell you they wouldn't have achieved their goals without advice from a mentor—a teacher, favorite boss or role model. And those leaders are eager to pass along their advice and lessons learned to someone else who is charting their career path.

In this spirit, the ECBC Mentoring Program was established in 2005 by the Engineering Directorate's Pam Barrett and Bill Klein to pair experienced leaders and managers with mentees as they develop a career at ECBC and in government service. The program also endeavors to provide insight into the mission, functions, policies and people of ECBC, and foster collaboration and teamwork through networking opportunities among mentors and mentees.

Klein, Deputy Director of Engineering, is one of the program's biggest advocates. "This program is specifically designed for the ECBC workforce, and has evolved over the years to give participants the chance to really get to know each other, as well as the Center," said Klein. "It is especially valuable for employees who are focused primarily

on their lab work and customer projects because it broadens their perspective of ECBC and its capabilities."

That is precisely why Joani Eng signed up for the program as a mentee. "As a chemist in the Protective Equipment Test Branch, I spend much of my time in the lab, running long tests," she said. "I saw this as an opportunity to get out of the lab, meet new people from around ECBC, and develop my professional networks and communication skills."

This year's program is now in progress, with 16 mentors and 16 mentees from across the Center. Mentees are purposely paired with mentors from another Directorate to expand networks and knowledge of the Center. The program consists of an orientation plus five sessions on specific topics, such as self-awareness, leadership potential, generational differences and entrepreneurship. Formal sessions meet monthly for six months, and mentors and mentees are encouraged to meet regularly between sessions to discuss the program and grow their relationship.

Eng's mentor is Mary Martinez from the Directorate of Program Integration. "Mary's wealth of experience in human resources gives me a window into the inner-workings of the Center, and I am excited to learn how workforce policies and programs are

planned, implemented and managed from Mary's perspective."

Mentees aren't the only ones who benefit from the program—mentors also have something to gain from participating. "My mentee is younger than me, and I expect our interaction will give me a better understanding of their generation's point of view. I can use that knowledge to bridge generational differences with others," said Jim Duhala, Chief of Engineering's Strategic Planning and Business Management Division. "In turn, I hope to provide unbiased career advice that helps my mentee adapt to challenges and navigate some of the potential organizational hurdles they may encounter."

Beyond leadership advice, mentors also offer perspective on how mentees can increase their technical expertise, and the impact that can have on their careers. "I have received coaching and mentoring throughout my career at ECBC that helped me improve as an engineer," said Protection Engineering Division Chief Jorge Christian. "Through this program, mentees will gain confidence in their technical skills and their ability to make decisions and solve challenges. That confidence will benefit your career, the organization and the Warfighter." 

Best Wishes to Nan Ramsey, Engineering Associate Director, Upon



Nan Ramsey (far right) serves as a panelist at an ECBC Women in Science and Engineering event. *Credit: ECBC Public Affairs*

The Engineering Directorate bids a fond farewell and best wishes to Nan Ramsey, Associate Director of Engineering and ECBC-Rock Island Site Manager, as she retires after 30 years of government service. She reflects on her career and gives some final advice to the workforce.

What inspired your career in engineering?

Economics was actually my first love. I double-majored in economics and business because it was practical. After graduation, the job prospects at the time convinced me that an engineering degree would be valuable. My dad was an engineer, so I think that influenced me as well.

You worked in industry prior to the government. What were your jobs in industry, and how did you end up working for the government?

First, I worked as a management trainee for Caterpillar Tractor Company, but the plant was moved to France and eventually closed down. Then I went to work as an engineer at J. I. Case, but there was discussion of closing the Rock Island plant where I worked. It was by coincidence that a

supervisor at Rock Island Arsenal Industrial Engineering Activity called me and asked me to apply for a job there. Since the J. I. Case job looked tenuous, I applied with the government and got the job.

What are some of your favorite memories from your early government career?

My best memories are of friends and co-workers who helped make our various projects go smoothly and made me feel like part of a wonderful team. There is great satisfaction from working with great people and getting the job done right. I had the privilege of working with all the Research, Development and Engineering Centers on various issues with the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) and we had a tremendously proactive, helpful team. The Army Materiel Command (AMC) G6 group worked very

closely with us and we made great strides together. That was a very rewarding time.

Early in my career, I had the honor of briefing the Army Chief of Staff on an industrial base study. I got to ride over to the Pentagon in a staff car with the Deputy Commander of the AMC at one point. It was very exciting for me. I wouldn't have had the privilege if not for all the hard work of the industrial base team back then.

What made you decide to take a position with ECBC?

I was looking forward to working for Larry Light, the site manager at ECBC-Rock Island—he had a great reputation. I was barely here a few months when Larry decided to retire. When AJay Thornton became the Director of Engineering, he

Her Retirement



Ramsey receives the Commander's Award for Civilian Service from former ECBC Director Joseph Wienand.
Photo courtesy of ECBC-Rock Island



Ramsey (center) and the 2007 CFC Kick-Off Workplace Olympics Team.
Photo courtesy of ECBC-Rock Island



Kevin Lee presents Ramsey with the Federal Executive Association Quad City Chapter Certificate of Outstanding Performance-Coach/Manager Executive Category.
Photo courtesy of ECBC-Rock Island

asked me to move into the Associate Director position. Moving up the ladder was never an objective of mine—I was always focused on projects. I really enjoyed working with the entire management team at ECBC. It was very much like a family and everyone was very easy to work with. I wanted to do the most I could do for ECBC and the Army.

What were your first goals as Associate Director/ECBC-RI Site Manager? What were the immediate challenges?

Under the direction of Rick Decker, one of my first goals was to resolve any issues we were having with support to DLA. From a strategic perspective, I knew this was important to a successful future, so I spent a great deal of time working the issues. This work with DLA kept me very busy and away from the office, and I did not get much chance to know all the folks in the workforce. When I look back, I wish I had made it more of a priority to connect with the RI workforce.

Also, since we were ISO 9000 certified, all our processes were documented, and we surveyed our customers for feedback and wrote corrective action reports when we deviated from our goals. One of my challenges was to show the management team and workforce that the ISO 9000 system could work for us, and that we would reap great benefits from it. I felt in

some cases, the actions were performed without real buy-in. I think over time, most everyone has come to see that the effort has real payback, and we understand our customers better and can react to their needs more effectively.

As a leader, what has been your biggest “change of mind”?

I used to take on every single issue, large and small, and try to ‘fix’ it. It took a while, but I figured out I needed to spend more of my time leading and thinking strategically. Also, I always believed that if I put my mind to something and did absolutely everything I could, I could make positive change happen. In this role, I learned that sometimes there are things outside our control, and I would be better off accepting them and moving forward.

This month is Women’s History Month. What are your thoughts on bridging the gender gap in the science and engineering fields?

I think we’re doing better than when I first started in the field, but we need to keep working at it. We need to promote STEM outreach to schools at the youngest ages. Parents need to do what they can to encourage young girls, as well.

What is your advice for those who are interested in advancing their careers at ECBC?

When you say you’re going to do something, do it. This develops trust with your colleagues and management. Volunteer for challenging assignments, and don’t turn down any opportunities management might present. This helps to increase your own skill set and network; it can also help you better understand the bigger picture. Always remember that this is about serving the Army and our customers.

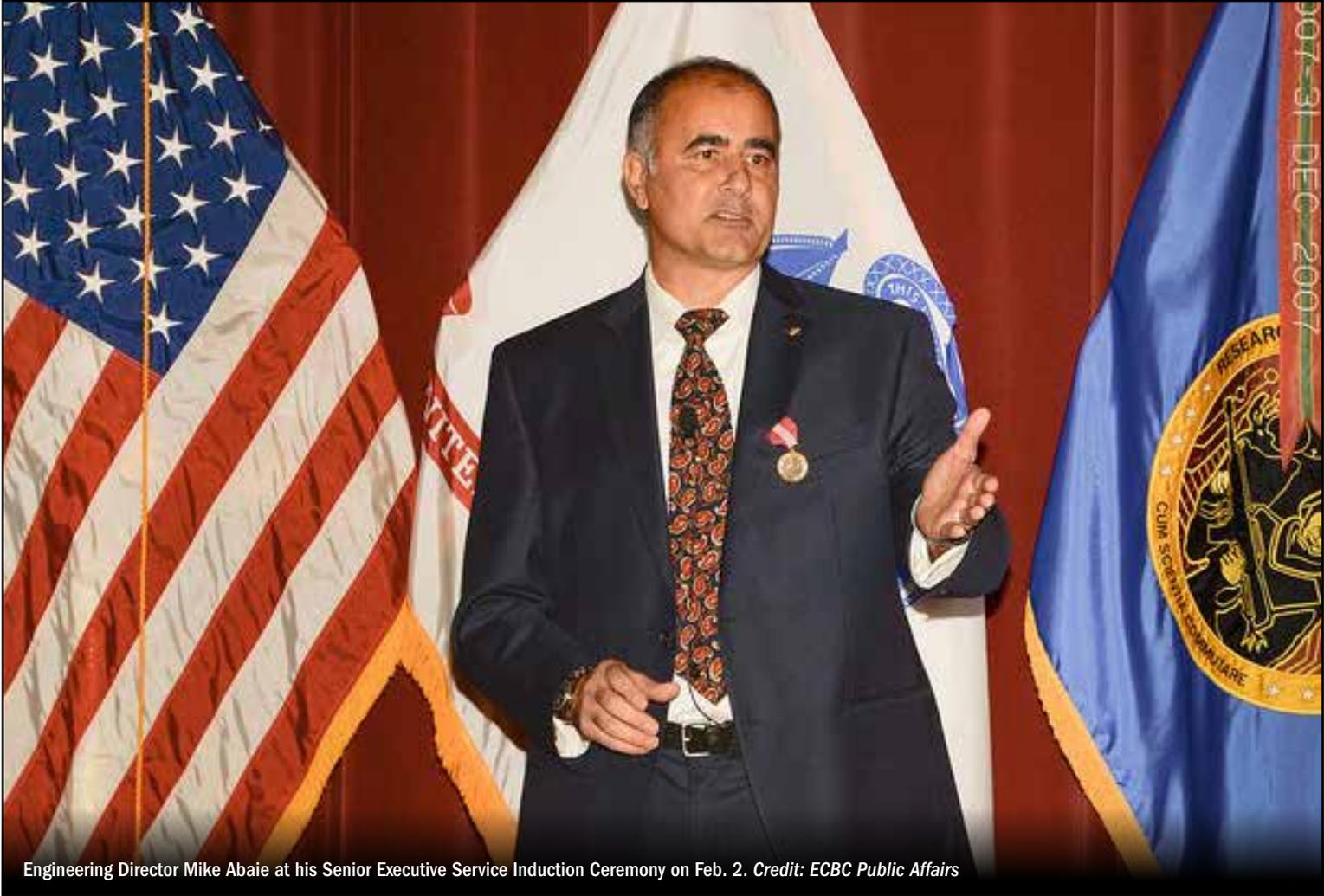
What are your plans for retirement?

I plan to spend more time with my 88-year-old mother, and spend more time keeping fit. I am going to try stand-up paddle boarding, and do more kayaking and running.

What will you miss the most about working at ECBC?

Isn’t it always the people? The people are ECBC. ⚙️

Getting to Know New Engineering Director Mike Abaie



Engineering Director Mike Abaie at his Senior Executive Service Induction Ceremony on Feb. 2. Credit: ECBC Public Affairs

The *Engineering Edge* sat down with Mike Abaie to find out how he is settling into his new role as Director of Engineering. How is he adjusting? What are the immediate challenges? What are his leadership and communication styles like? If you missed the Engineering Town Hall in January, here is another opportunity to learn more about the new Director.

Tell us more about your career leading up to this new role.

My father wanted me to become a doctor—but I was always interested in how things worked and were built. It was a toss-up between civil engineering and mechanical engineering, but I chose mechanical

engineering because I knew it would allow me to be hands-on in the field and shop, as well as in the office. My first government job was as a design engineer at the Naval Air Engineering Center working on aircraft carriers, and then I left the government to work in industry for several years. I found the emphasis in industry on the bottom dollar both motivating from an organizational standpoint, and demotivating from a personal standpoint, as almost all decisions were based on the effects on the bottom line. I returned to government work because I wanted to do something more meaningful, where there is a commitment to a cause.

What was your first experience in the chem-bio defense?

My first experience with the chem-bio defense program was in 1998, when I worked in advanced technology demonstration for early warning. Since then, I have had many diverse roles in

chem-bio. My work with the Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical and Biological Defense (JPEO-CBD) allowed me to touch many aspects of the chem-bio defense program—chemical and biological detection, filtration/collective protection, medical areas and sustainment for all chem-bio defense program equipment.

Can you tell us about some of the pivotal, defining moments of your career?

I remember my first PM job in the chem-bio program. Although I had PM experience in industry, I was green with regard to how the DoD manages programs. I was fortunate to have the senior PM, Stan Enatsky, take me under his wing to teach me the mechanics and dynamics of the position. Our relationship just clicked, and grew stronger over time. I realized the importance of that mentor-mentee relationship. Another defining moment for me was when I was the JPM for Collective Protection, and I was

ANNOUNCEMENT

CBRN-IRC's New Email Address: Update Your Contact Lists!

On Mar. 31, Program Executive Office Enterprise Information Systems (PEO EIS) will be shutting down all non-tactical legacy email systems.

The IRC email addresses that will no longer work are:

- cbrn.irc@us.army.mil
- cbrn.irc@us.army.smil.mil

The new email addresses are:

NIPRnet: cbrn.irc@mail.mil for unclassified communication

SIPRnet: usarmy.cbrn.irc@mail.smil.mil for classified communications

Please update your contact lists!

Contact the IRC 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at:

<https://jacks.jpeocbd.army.mil/>

Toll free: 1-800-831-4408

DSN: 793-7349

Commercial: 309-782-7349 

HUMAN CAPITAL INITIATIVE

Take the Engineering Employee Retention Survey!

ECBC Engineering is committed to investing in its personnel and aligning the Directorate's human resources to strategic needs. The Human Capital Initiative is releasing an Employee Retention Survey on Mar. 30. The survey will be administered by Booz Allen Hamilton and responses will be completely anonymous. Results will be released to the workforce with recommendations. This is your chance to provide feedback and encourage positive change in the organization! We thank you in advance for participating. 

asked to become the JPM for a medical program, which was out of my comfort zone. But I took a chance, saw it as a career opportunity, and I was willing to work hard, develop strategies, and pull together the right team. Even in government jobs, it is important to have that entrepreneurial spirit—the drive to find opportunities and take risks when needed to move your organization forward.

What interested you in the Engineering Director position?

My work with the JPEO was very challenging, but I was ready for the next step in my career, which was a leadership role in the chem-bio defense community. This job was the right fit—it combined both my engineering and chem-bio defense backgrounds.

How are you adjusting to the role? What has been your biggest challenge so far?

I think I am adjusting well. I have been focusing my time on listening, learning and thinking. Certainly the biggest challenge has been learning everything about the Directorate's—and ECBC's—capabilities, as well as meeting as many of the workforce as possible. When I worked at Naval Surface Warfare Center, where I started my chem-bio career, there were 50 employees in chem-bio—ECBC has many more. I am excited to learn and understand the depth of capabilities of the Directorate and ECBC, and the expertise of the workforce. The more I learn, the better I can help communicate our strengths and values to our existing and potential customers and help us address their needs.

How do you begin your typical day? How does it end?

My typical day begins and ends with responding to emails. I look at every email during the day, but don't necessarily respond right away. Of course, I do respond quickly to urgent needs, but I like to give other responses more thought.

What are the most critical issues or challenges you are tackling?

I believe I mentioned at the Town Hall that I want to take my first 60-to-90 days to absorb as much as I can; then think

strategically about where the organization is going. There have been many leadership changes at ECBC recently. The retirements of Randy Laye and Nan Ramsey are two near-term points that I need to address. How will the Directorate collaborate with Dr. Joe Corriveau in his new role. Suzanne Milchling's new temporary assignment will also have an impact. I want to step up and help as much as I can during this time of transition.

How will you communicate with the workforce to keep them informed of issues and activities? How should the workforce communicate with you?

I believe in transparency. You may have noticed that the Engineering Front Office has a new glass door—that is a great representation of my communication style. I want to meet individually with all of the Branches; then meet with our primary customers; then strategize about how our support can best align with our customers' needs. I have no issues with reaching directly to subject-matter experts and teams on projects. And, I want the workforce to feel like they can come to me to discuss an idea or problem with a project, or any issue. When my schedule settles down, I plan to set up office hours and encourage the workforce to stop by and meet with me.

You said at the Town Hall that teaming and collaboration are very important to you, and that you wanted to facilitate more interaction and collaboration among the workforce. How do you plan to do that?

I'm always looking for a win-win solution, and collaboration is the mechanism for getting to that state. Our customers should see us as team members; so should our sister laboratories and academic partners. How do we collaborate with each other to be more nimble and flexible for our customers? How do we team with the other Directorates? ECBC gives support from cradle-to-grave—sometimes our customers don't realize that. We need to educate them that together, across the Center, we can fulfill all of their requirements. 

Mary McNally

This month's Employee Spotlight is on Mary McNally from the Joint Service Ground Mask team.



Mary McNally (left) with teammates Bill Fritch and Akanksha Raja. Credit: ECBC Public Affairs

What is your background with ECBC?

I joined ECBC as a chemist in 1988 assigned to work in a quality assurance laboratory doing testing on protective products. After working several years in the lab, I transitioned to a team that was responsible for conducting quality audits of the environmental monitoring laboratories at chemical depots with igloos containing chemical warfare agents. Then I moved on to act as the quality manager for a forensic laboratory within the ECBC Research and Technology Directorate. After several years, I returned to my chemistry roots as Branch Chief of the Protective Equipment Test Branch, and now I am working on the Joint Service Ground Mask team as a test engineer.

What was the transition from chemist to test engineer like?

I had to relearn some things, and dust off my knowledge in systems engineering. Learning about the big picture of a product's acquisition lifecycle has been an eye-opener. This is an awesome experience for the career stage I'm in now.

Tell us about your current project.

Our team's main focus is to ensure the acquisition life cycle of the M50/M51 and M53 masks. Another priority is to be in sync with the Joint Services; Branch Chief Bill Fritch and the entire team have been keenly aware of customer needs and have been very responsive in resolving any issues with the final product. Because of this, the team is currently working on

the voice amplifier operation support cost reduction (OSCR) effort. This is a redesign of the common voice amplifier kits for the M50 and M53. The purpose is to reduce overall item cost, allow for multiple mask system modularity, reduce the overall logistic footprint, and provide for an additional feature for better radio interface flexibility. We have been involved in the test plans and validation.

March is Women's History Month, and a good time to ask about women in science and engineering. Who inspired you to have a career in science and engineering?

I have five brothers and a sister. We were all raised the same, with no traditional gender-based roles. The person who inspired me most was a female chemistry teacher in high school—She made it fun and truly loved her job! Seeing chemical reactions and balancing chemical equations became really exciting for me because of her enthusiasm.

What do you think are some unique perspectives women offer in this field?

Women bring emotion to the job—passion, devotion, compassion and energy. The Center has a lot of female role models—Suzanne Milchling, Nancy Kammerer and Suzanne Procell, just to name a few. I think Engineering is ahead of the game in empowering women in the science and engineering fields.

Have you noticed any trends developing with women in this field?

The Engineering Directorate supports the "pay it forward" philosophy by participating in local STEM education. So many of us are involved in encouraging young students, both girls and boys. More and more girls say they want to be engineers at the end of these STEM events. It is great to see more girls and women finding this work exciting and rewarding! It's so important to have a mentor, or several mentors. When I first started in my career, I became a jack of all trades, asked questions, relied on mentors and soaked up their knowledge like a sponge. At this stage in my career, I'm looking for my own "sponge" to mentor—someone to transfer my knowledge to, and pass on my lessons learned. ⚙️

ECBC Employees Earn Visionary Awards for Innovation and Technological Advancement



NMTC Board Chairman Michael Parker (left) with Hitch, Ruprecht and Moore. Credit: RDECOM Public Affairs



Parker (left) with Domanico. Credit: RDECOM Public Affairs

Joseph Domanico, Lester Hitch, Rick Moore and Brad Ruprecht of the ECBC Engineering Directorate were honored at the Northeastern Maryland Technology Council 2015 Visionary Awards, held on Feb. 26 in Edgewood, Md. More than 220 leaders from government, industry and academia gathered at this year's Visionary Awards ceremony to celebrate the awardees' accomplishments.

Domanico received the 2015 Innovator Award for his exceptional personal effort in the development and implementation of innovative programs that have benefited STEM education and made a positive impact on the community.

Hitch, Moore and Ruprecht were honored with the 2015 Technology Advancement Award for their role in evolving ECBC's Prototype Integration Facility into one of the most unique and comprehensive facilities of its kind within the Department of Defense, with a \$4 million inventory of state-of-the-art equipment used for rapid product development for the U.S. Army and other customers.

For the full article, go to www.ecbc.army.mil/news. ⚙️