



News Release

News Release No.

5 December 2008

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Thornton Promoted to Senior Executive Service

ECBC's new Director of Engineering receives SES pin, flag during ceremony

Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. — Alvin D. "AJay" Thornton, newly-appointed Director of Engineering for the Edgewood Chemical Biological Center (ECBC), was formally promoted to Senior Executive Service (SES) on Thursday, Dec. 4, during a ceremony held at the Center.

Members of the SES serve in key positions just below top Presidential appointees and are the major link between the appointees and the federal work force. SES members within the Department of Defense are considered the equivalent of general officers.

"I don't take the responsibility lightly and I didn't do it alone," Thornton said. "This is not only about me, this is about [U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command (RDECOM)], ECBC and the warfighter."

Thornton, who began his 26-year career at ECBC as a GS-5 physical scientist, received his SES pin from outgoing RDECOM Commander Maj. Gen. Fred D. Robinson Jr.

"Tomorrow is the last day of my active duty and I take a great deal of personal honor in presenting AJay with the Senior Executive Service insignia," Robinson said. "In the face of great threats ... I feel comforted with the leadership of AJay Thornton. He is a great hero, a great American and a superb role model."

As director of engineering, Thornton serves as client manager to key military and civilian agencies, to include multiple joint project managers of the Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical Biological Defense. His responsibilities include policy development, management and overall direction of engineering development and technical support for CBD systems program lifecycles.

Prior to this appointment, Thornton served for nearly nine months as the acting director of Engineering. Before that, he served as Engineering's associate director – a senior manager and business unit leader for all Directorate efforts related to individual and collective protection, contamination avoidance and decontamination. In this capacity, he was credited with pioneering the ECBC mentoring program for young journeyman-level scientists and engineers.

As team leader for Biological Detection Manufacturing, Office of the Project Manager for Nuclear Biological Chemical Contamination Avoidance, Thornton, notably planned and managed the execution of the complex building efforts for the M31A1 and M31E2/A2 Biological Integrated Detection Systems.

He is a member of the Army Acquisition Corps maintaining level three certifications in Program Management, Test and Evaluation Engineering and Systems Planning Research Development and Engineering. Thornton, who lives in Baltimore, Md., holds a bachelor's degree in geography from Morgan State University.

ECBC is the Army's principal research and development center for chemical and biological defense technology, engineering and field operations. ECBC has achieved major technological advances for the warfighter and for our national defense, with a long and distinguished history of providing the Armed Forces with quality systems and outstanding customer service. ECBC is a US Army Research, Development and Engineering Command laboratory located at the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. For more information about the Edgewood Chemical Biological Center, please visit our Web site at <http://www.ecbc.army.mil> or call (410) 436-7118.

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