

TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

May 7, 2021
Las Vegas, NV

THANK YOU

Dear GCE Leadership Team,

It has been an honor, and I thoroughly appreciate being part of the GCE Team. I wore that honor proudly while carrying out my duties at Michael O'Callaghan Military Medical Center. As a proud disabled veteran, GCE reminded me my disabilities did not limit me. It revealed to me I could continue servicing this great nation. In actuality, it expanded my determination and my desires to enhance my skillsets to better serve this country.

GCE provided me with the tools and resources to professionally perform my duties as an EHR, Training Specialist. I will forever be indebted to this great organization. Thank you for making me feel whole again and believing in the disabled veteran.

Respectfully,

Alfred M. Butts

Alfred M. Butts
United States Air Force



Al noted EHR in his message which stands for electronic health records, a contract with the Defense Health Agency. A veteran of the U.S. Air Force, a kind and compassionate man, full of hope and equally full of skills and not defined by his disability at GCE. Al's message resonates with so many of our GCE team members, both veterans and non-veterans, of the importance of meaningful work and to be given a chance to showcase skills and abilities.

A NOTE FROM XAN

In January 2021 President-elect Biden took office. The Biden-Harris administration have stated their commitment to ensuring "equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for people with disabilities."

What gives me hope, is that people who have a significant disability will have a "seat at the table," which includes veterans. Policy development and implementation across the government ensures that the concerns of the disability community are elevated to the highest levels of government. We need to be heard by the ultimate decision makers of the executive branch of our government, which includes the appointment of people to positions concerning people with disabilities.



Xan Smith, GCE President

Unless a person is on the same journey of seeking meaningful work, no one can truly understand what people with significant disabilities go through on their journeys to reach their goals in life, such as employment. The world of work continues to change as we enter what we hope is the "other side" of the COVID-19 pandemic. People with disabilities want to know what true inclusion will look like. At GCE, we are hoping for more equitable access to federal job opportunities to include working with others in the for-profit world on military contracts at sites across the country.

Sometimes people are quick to pass judgement or have pre-conceived notions of what a person with a disability can or cannot do in terms of work. Education and awareness is part of our Mission. Together with our peer organizations and partners, we can help employers truly understand, appreciate, and respect the strengths of people with disabilities. A disability is not a deficit, it is merely a difference seeking to be understood.

GCE will continue to fight for jobs for people with disabilities to include those who have served our country in the military now and in the years to come.

OPERATIONS SPOTLIGHT

At GCE, the business development team (BD) focuses on the growth and expansion of our organization. We strive to explore the boundaries of what can be achieved, with the ever-pressing goal of creating jobs and enriching the lives of people with disabilities and service-disabled veterans.

Although our team is small, we are mighty! The team is led by Mark Kessler, vice president of innovation/business development, and includes Stephen Carter, veteran program employment manager; Chris Seventko, director of contact centers; and Dawn Smith, business development and marketing specialist. We continuously look at opportunities through different lenses to explore all potential prospects. We know there is a perfect job out there just waiting for an ideal candidate we have yet to meet.

The BD team identifies leads and opportunities through various online resources including GovWin, My FL, and beta.sam. Where there is potential, we dive in and pursue that chance to grow. Branching away from AbilityOne® sources reflects a new and innovative approach to growth, and we're looking beyond traditional lines of business. Each member of the business development team sifts through dozens of websites and opportunities each week for potential contacts, networking, and contracts to present to the team for review and discussion. If an opportunity meets a feasibility test, we provide it to the GCE senior leadership team for a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis and then hold further discussion. GCE senior operations executives and teams, organizational management team members, and others all play a valuable role in a successful proposal process.

Business development is not just about our team – it's every member of the GCE Family! Every team member can contribute to our growth and expansion. We all play a part in the overall success of our organization. We invite you to bring your ideas, friends and networking opportunities to GCE leadership or to the business development team directly. You never know what door you will open!



GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

What is disability advocacy? It is acting, speaking or writing to promote, protect and defend the human rights of people with disabilities. You, all of our GCE team members, are advocates both self-advocates and group advocates in the communities where you live and work. Only you can speak up for yourself and say what matters to you. Your team at GCE can advocate as a group, with a common message, and advocate to raise awareness of issues and seek solutions.

Everyone can advocate and reach out to members of Congress in both the House and the Senate in Washington, D.C. You can also reach out to your state representative. Your representatives want to hear from you, and it is very easy to do. Each representative has a website where you can fill out a form to email them and provide your contact information. There is also information on how to call their office directly on their website. If you want to learn more and need help, please contact Lori Kain, director of government and community relations at lori.kain@gce.org.

Your Voice Matters. Jobs for people with significant disabilities, to include military veterans, cannot be ignored or pushed aside. You can make change happen.



Community Relations Are you back out in your community and volunteering to help others? Many of us have received our COVID-19 vaccinations and we are seeing opportunities to help others as organizations where we live as they open back up. If you have been volunteering to help others, share a picture with us and tell us what you did. Be sure to tell us what local organization you chose to assist. Send your photo and information to: Lori.Kain@gce.org. Please make sure the picture is clear, not blurry, of you out in front of the facility. If you have others in the picture with you from that organization, we need to get their permission to use the photo.

UPCOMING EVENTS / WHO KNEW?



GCE added a Community Partner Work Incentives Coordinator (CPWIC) to our team. The CPWIC will be providing vocational rehabilitation (VR) benefits counseling services for Social Security beneficiaries.

Welcome to the GCE family **Talethia Shakes!** Talethia recently joined Katrina Simpkins (Employment and Support Services) team.

QUALITY WITH STEPHANIE COOPER

GCE recertified for CIMS-GB with Honors

The Cleaning Industry Management Standard (CIMS) is a third party accreditation governed by the ISSA - the Worldwide Cleaning Industry Association. CIMS and CIMS-GB certifications demonstrate an organization is prepared to deliver quality, customer-focused services and ensures an organization is capable of delivering a comprehensive green cleaning program based on LEED: EB O&M green-cleaning criteria (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Existing Buildings)

During the week of April 12, GCE's Quality & Training Specialist for the custodial line of business and six of our contract sites participated in a virtual audit with our CIMS assessor, Cliff Beiser. Cliff met with our management teams, team members, and customers to assess our operations, quality, training, safety, and customer relationships. GCE not only received a two-year recertification, Cliff was so impressed with our sites that he recommended us to ISSA for a case study on high quality cleaning.

A huge **Thank You** to Lori Webster, quality and training specialist; Mercy Miller and Pam Aman, operations executives; and their teams (see below) for all of their hard work in obtaining this certification!

AU 6460 MacDill AFB - Mercy Miller, Dana Jedrick and team
AU 6650 Hillsborough Health Department - Al Sheppard and team
AU 6680 - Federal Courthouse - Judy Brahier and team
AU 6700 Whiting Field - Yvonne Lockstead and team
AU 6860 VA New Port Richey - Mike Dwyer and team
AU 6780 NAS Custodial - Pam Aman and team



STEPHANIE COOPER



SAFETY WITH JONATHAN BROUSSARD

Hazard Communications

GCE team members use many types of chemicals while performing their jobs. GCE strives to utilize safe and green chemicals when possible. However, even when using safe and green chemicals, it is crucial to protect yourself at all times. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulates the protection of workers from chemicals under the hazardous communications standard, also known as HAZCOM.



JONATHAN BROUSSARD

Under HAZCOM, all team members are required to receive training on the chemicals in their work areas. Training must include information about the chemicals located at the site, hazards of the chemicals, methods for protection from the chemicals, location of Safety Data Sheets (SDS) and how to use them, among other things.

The following are a few tips we should all adhere to when dealing with chemicals in the workplace:

- Ensure all products are correctly labeled. As chemicals are mixed, the solution should be placed in an appropriate container and a label identifying the product placed on the container.
- Wear all protective equipment when handling chemicals, even those you believe to be safe. Repeated exposures from handling the chemicals can lead to an increased potential for developing sensitivities. Always wear gloves when handling chemicals and immediately wash off any chemicals that contact the skin.
- Know the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) location for your site and know how to use it. If you are unsure how to use one, immediately ask your supervisor or manager.
- Team members should receive training each time a chemical is added to the site. Training must – at a minimum – include the hazards of the chemical, methods of protection, and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements. Do not use a chemical until you have been provided the information to allow for safe use of the product.
- Always use the chemical precisely according to the manufacturer’s recommendations. Never mix two chemicals unless required by the manufacturer. If you are ever unsure how to use a product, immediately speak with a supervisor or manager.
- Wear all protective equipment as required on the SDS for the product you are using. Taking shortcuts and not wearing the proper PPE can lead to serious injury.

By working together and following proper procedures, GCE team members can safely use chemicals to perform their assigned tasks. If there are any questions about HAZCOM or use of chemicals, contact Jonathan Broussard, safety professional.

SECURITY WITH JOHNNIE ZIMMERMAN

Summer vacation season means more individuals and families setting out on road trips of all kinds. Statistics indicate that distracted driving from phone use occurs most frequently during the summer. Nearly 10 % more often than any other time of year. This summer, take care to avoid distraction and stay focused on the road. Please consider the following:



JOHNNIE ZIMMERMAN

- Stow your phone. Turn off the phone or put it in “do not disturb” mode to help remove the temptation to use it.
- Know your route. Have a passenger program your navigation system or enter your destination before you start driving.
- Create zones for kids and pets. Secure pets and children safely in the back seat.
- On average, drivers are distracted for almost 15 minutes of every hour of road time during the summer. To assist in eliminating distractions for all drivers, consider the following:

- Don't be a source of distraction. Avoid calling or texting family and friends when you know they are driving.
- Set a good example. Parents can model good behavior for their children by demonstrating attentive driving.
- Vow not to multitask. Avoid eating, grooming or calling someone while behind the wheel. Never text and drive.

With the loosening of social distancing and face mask requirements, and businesses trying to return to a “new normal,” it is expected that more families will be out and about during the warm summer months. Limiting driver distraction can be the first step to having a fun and safe experience as we get back to creating great summertime memories!

Have a great summer, and be safe.

WE SALUTE YOU

Wanda Tye and Grassroots Conference

Every year GCE participates in SourceAmerica’s grassroots conference which typically takes place in-person in Washington, D.C. This year, due to COVID-19, it was held virtually, and GCE’s team member of the year 2020, Wanda Tye, mail clerk at Fort Rucker Army base, joined Lori Kain, GCE director of governmental and community relations to represent our organization. For two of the three days, meetings with congressional leaders and/or their staff members, took place so that people with disabilities could tell their stories of how they found work through AbilityOne contracts and how important jobs are for people with significant disabilities. Who better to advocate for better employment opportunities than Wanda Tye and the impact work has had on her life. The same goes for others who were in meetings with us, but from other non-profit organizations just like GCE. The first day of the conference provided key training tips for first-time attendees to the conference, such as Wanda, so they were prepared and ready for their “virtual” trip to Capitol Hill!



Wanda was a rock star and could not have done a better job of representing GCE, her team members at Fort Rucker, and people with significant disabilities across our great country! Thank you Wanda.

Jeremy Schell and the SourceAmerica National Conference

During the virtual SourceAmerica national conference held in late May, our wonderful EITS team member Jeremy Schell from our Lorton, Virginia office, announced the recipient of the 2021 William M. Usdane National Award. Jeremy, who is a team member with a disability, won this award in 2020. Who better than Jeremy to be asked to announce the winner for 2021 who was selected from a pool of nominees from locations across the country in the AbilityOne program.

Jeremy noted, “It is such an honor to present this award to a person who also represents another organization, like GCE, and SourceAmerica. What an amazing story, outstanding achievement, and exceptional character. I love seeing stories like this. It makes me proud to see others push themselves to be someone because WE ARE SOMEONE!”

Jeremy in order to convey the announcement, used American Sign Language (ASL) throughout his video.



LIVING OUR VALUES (value coin recognition)

Ownership: accountable, engaged, stewardship, responsive, committed

Integrity: honest, principled, trustworthy, transparent

Compassion: empathetic, merciful, sensitive, kind, giving, forgiving, hopeful

Excellence: safety, quality, distinguished, learning, improving

Service: welcoming, attentive, humble, respectful, exceeds expectations, collaborative



GCE Value coins are given out by managers and supervisors to recognize team members for consistently living one of our Values every day. When a team member earns all five Value coins he or she will receive a Value pin, coin holder and plaque with certificate.

Five Coin Recipient Value Plaques (March - May 2021)

Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Tacoma, WA – Food Services: Rafietou Agora, Robert Johnston, Elizabeth Webster, Madison Taylor, Yong Sim, Kathryn Savage, Linda Robinson, Brendan McGinty, Jonna Guist, Kamille Burnett, Kevin Bebeau

Lakeview Center, Pensacola, FL – Food Services: Deborah Wade, Lenetha House, Mark Tilley

Eglin Air Force Base, Fort Walton Beach, FL – Custodial Services: Allyn Carter, Kayla Fletchers, Robert Hammen, Carletta Smith, Serless Stokes, Benedicta Waldorf, Emma West

U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater, Clearwater, FL – Custodial Services: Steve Hysell

Armed Forces Retirement Home, Washington, D.C. – Custodial Services: Teo Wright, Thurnell Outlaw, Mark Campbell, Doanard Witherspoon

Value coin recipients (March - May 2021)

U.S. Army 7th Special Forces Group, Eglin Air Force Base, Fort Walton Beach, FL – Food Services:

Justin Kelley, Tyshawn Walker, James Woods

Eglin Air Force Base, Fort Walton Beach, FL – Custodial Services:

Christopher Blythe, Patricia Boggan, Michael Bowling, Chris Coltman, Eric Draper, Chance Eudy, Virginia Fuller, Brenda Griffith, Katie Leifermann, Kevin Letourneau, Kevin Letourneau, Pablo Lopez, Barbara Lovejoy, Elvira McMillian, Jayson Moore, Wanda Muse, Joseph Ponce, Mariana Provenzano, Lloyd Sanders, Randall Schreiner, Jorge Sira, Becky Smith, Joshua Tolle, Brandon Trainor, Cynthia Trainor, Yvon Yardley

Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Tacoma, WA – Food Services:

Matthew Amendt, Megan Becker, Cecilia Boatner, Nicole Boatner, Amy Buckler, Nigel Coppin, Moses Cross, Kenrick Davis, Roy Jacob, Charlie Johnson, Robert Johnston, In Sook Kwon, Kace Larson, Alex Mathis, Brendan McGinty, William Mba, No Pak, Michael Pruette, Gabriel Rivera, Kyung Ja Shin, Madison Taylor

Fort Polk, Vernon Parish, LA – Food Services:

Shirley Monk, Emily Seagrave, Carl Clark

Naval Air Station Whiting Field, Milton, FL - Custodial Services:

Angila Bowers, Fred Frome, David Hewes, Richard Knox, Samantha Polk, Michael Worthy, Kyle McCabe, Taj Wilson, Debra Buchanan, Christopher Mathews, Rebecca Barrineau, Schara Ptomy, Cortavis Watts

Naval Air Station Pensacola, Pensacola, FL – Custodial Services:

John Steadman III, Helen Stewart, Kameron Jones, Lil Bobby Jones, Malyk Evans, Aaron Tappin, Roger Avery

Gulf Breeze Hospital, Gulf Breeze FL, - Custodial Services:

Margaret Gaston, Mario Hollingsworth, Wylie Norman, Katal Watts, Ashely Alverson

Naval Air Station Pensacola, Pensacola, FL – Food Services:

Christina Spencer, Chris Wermers, Terry Walker, Daniel Marlow, Maria Grubbs, Sydney Riley, Rachel Johnson, Medita Bascos, Nancy Pressley, Maria Grubbs, Hibbert Salter, Tom Windorfer

Lakeview Center, Pensacola, FL – Food Services:

Felicia Bryant, Brandon Lucas, Willie Mims, Cleotis Watson