

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Matthew “Matt” Amendt was selected as the **GCE 2018 Employee of the Year** from among the entries submitted by Project Managers from various GCE sites.

Don Chandler, Joint Base Lewis-McChord Project Manager noted: “Matthew truly embodies the company’s values of Compassion, Ownership, Integrity, Excellence, and Service. Since he began working for GCE, Matthew has never shied away from working in different areas. Matthew’s confidence level has continued to grow since he began working for GCE. I have seen first-hand the dedication that Matthew has for his job and our team. Other employees, military personnel and commercial vendors we conduct business with always comment on his work ethic.” Congratulations Matt from your GCE family! ●



Matt Amendt 2018 Employee of the Year

To Read Matt’s full story go to GCE.org/successes

OPERATIONS SPOTLIGHT

Employment and Support Services

The Targeted Employment Services team at Global Connections to Employment (GCE), help people with disabilities prepare for competitive work. Lisa Bloodworth is the director of specific areas under Employment and Support Services one of which is **Targeted Employment Navigation Services (TENS)**. The TENS can assist with the question:

When should I schedule a sign language interpreter?

The TENS are available to help you identify and research resources for workplace accommodations for our team members. A common example of a workplace accommodation is the use of a sign language interpreter. Sign language interpreters are usually considered when there is an

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A NOTE FROM RICH

On January 17 **Ms. Allison Flanagan**, State Director of the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, visited GCE. In particular, Ms. Flanagan visited our Project Search program at Baptist Hospital and then toured our galley (food service) operations at Naval Air Station Pensacola. These initiatives are two great examples of the opportunities being created by GCE for people with disabilities.



Rich Gilmartin, GCE President

During the January meeting of the GCE Board of Directors, staff demonstrated some of the technologies and tools that GCE now utilizes as accommodations for people with various kinds of disabilities. Board members were fascinated with the tools that GCE is using to help our employees overcome obstacles they face in performing their jobs.

GCE was one of the first organizations in the AbilityOne® Program to embrace the Quality Work Environment initiative spawned by the AbilityOne Commission years ago. We continue that journey today and are focused on creating career paths for people, conducting self-advocacy training to help people share the power of their own stories, and incorporating advanced technologies into the workplace to achieve greater efficiencies and effectiveness across our operations.

At the time of this writing, we have already endured one partial government shutdown and are now facing the potential for a second one. Beyond the politics involved with these events, shutdowns create hardships for people attached to work that might be impacted. During the January board meeting, we recognized **Bill Dietz and Mercy Miller** for their efforts to ensure that GCE employees experiencing a disruption in their work for the U.S. Coast Guard had a chance to work at another GCE contract site. GCE was fortunate not to be faced with a more widespread impact, but other companies were not so lucky; more than 2,000 people with disabilities employed on government contracts had their jobs disrupted by the shutdown. ●

important event such as a job interview, performance reviews or company meetings. However, you also should consider calling in an interpreter (in the absence of undue hardship) for other GCE events such as trainings, luncheons, and other GCE-sponsored events to ensure that employees who are deaf have equal access to information. Keep in mind that many individuals, such as co-workers, may be knowledgeable or fluent in sign language, but that does not mean that they are qualified to interpret for an individual. Sign language interpreters are specially trained individuals who usually hold a specialized degree and may also be certified. Scheduling a qualified interpreter will ensure that all information is effectively and accurately communicated. Please feel free to reach out to the TENS team members assigned to your area for assistance.

Government and Community Relations



Pictured (left to right): Rich Gilmartin (presenting) and House Representative Jimmy Panetta.

During the month of February we were pleased to have Senator Mark Warner from Virginia and House Representative Jimmy Panetta from California join us on two separate occasions. Senator Warner made a stop at our Lorton, Virginia IT site on February 1. During his visit we engaged in a town hall gathering so that GCE team members could ask questions and the senator could learn more about issues that affect workers with disabilities and their families. The congressman also learned about our organization and the importance of training and work opportunities for all individuals with disabilities.

On February 6, in Washington, DC, Rich Gilmartin, GCE President/CEO, presented the AbilityOne Champion plaque to Congressman Panetta. The award recognizes an elected federal policymaker who has demonstrated support for the AbilityOne Program and for related community-based nonprofit agencies in his or her district or state. Through congressional actions honorees have demonstrated support for the overall enhancement of opportunities for economic and personal independence of persons with significant disabilities.●



Senator Warner of Virginia at Lorton IT site

UPCOMING EVENTS / WHO KNEW?

Welcome - GCE's new Contracting and Compliance Manager

Holly Weaver oversees the daily management of GCE's contract administration processes. She is responsible for cradle-to-grave contracting and related activities, such as subcontractor procurement oversight, risk assessment, subcontract terms and conditions evaluation and negotiation, subcontractor compliance, and contract document management. She communicates regularly with external customers and subcontractors, and provides information to senior leadership as it relates to contractual issues. Holly also serves as liaison for any contract-related audits in which GCE is involved.

In an IT Minute

On January 4, Felix Alfonso from our Lorton, Virginia IT Services site, spoke at a local high school to present information about the Pre-Employment Transition Services Program (Pre-ETS). During the session he specifically focused on STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) careers. Felix spoke with a group of students for about 45 minutes and talked about his path from phlebotomist to IT program manager and everything in between. He spoke about the educational requirements for different fields in STEM. He noted how even though phlebotomy and his current

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role as a GCE program manager of software engineering projects may seem very different, the main characteristics someone must possess to perform both jobs is very similar. He also spoke about GCE's Mission, Vision, and Values and how we do business as an AbilityOne provider. The presentation went so well that we were invited to present throughout the coming year.

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) is a program offered, in partnership with ServiceSource and the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), at select schools across Northern Virginia. The Pre-ETS program allows high school students with disabilities to explore post-secondary career and education options, as well as to develop workplace readiness and self-advocacy skills.●



Felix Alfonso from our Lorton, Virginia IT Services site, spoke at a local high school to present information about the Pre-Employment Transition Services Program (Pre-ETS)

SAFETY, QUALITY AND FSO SECURITY

Safety with Jonathan Broussard:

Proper Trash Handling

Handling trash continues to be a major source of injury at GCE. It is a task we perform many times a day across almost all of our business lines. Injuries related to handling trash include:

- Back injuries from lifting.
- Extremity strains from lifting, such as shoulder, arm, elbow, etc.
- Lacerations from improperly handling trash, such as carrying the trash over the shoulder, against the body, or pushing down on trash with hands.

To prevent injury, remember to always follow the basic rules for handling trash:

- Test the load before attempting to lift. If it is too heavy, ask a co-worker to help you.
- Practice the proper lifting technique. Even when the item is not heavy, always lift with the legs and never bend at waist to lift.
- Avoid overextending yourself when handling the trash. This may require leaning a trash can sideways to remove the bag instead of lifting it high into the air to clear the can.
- Avoid throwing trash into dumpsters alone. Have a co-worker assist you in getting the trash over the edge of the dumpster.
- Never push down on trash with your hands. Trash bags may contain hidden objects that can cause lacerations or punctures

Never carry trash over your shoulder or bounce it against your body. Items in the bag can puncture or tear through and cause injuries such as lacerations and punctures.●

QUALITY WITH STEPHANIE COOPER

IT Line of Business ISO 9001:2015 Surveillance Audit

GCE's IT line of business will have its first year surveillance audit for ISO 9001:2015 on Monday, April 1 and Tuesday, April 2. The audit will take place at our IT Services location in Lorton, VA. During this audit our registrar, Dekra, will evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of our quality management system and determine whether or not we are in compliance with the ISO 9001:2015 standard.

How can you help?

- Know and locate company policies and procedures.
- Maintain customer focus and report customer feedback to your senior leadership.
- Understand the organization's procedures.●

SECURITY WITH JOHNNIE ZIMMERMAN

Security and Your Car

Spring is right around the corner and as the days get longer and warmer, we will be out and about more often – and more often in our cars. As you sit in traffic waiting for the light to change, take notice of the different decals on other cars. Stick figures showing a family's size and how many children they have, or if they have a "baby onboard." Perhaps they have a student in high school on the honor roll or in sports as they proudly display the school's mascot or sports decal.

The other day I noticed a vehicle with "I love my dachshund" stickers all over the back. Those wiener dogs are so cute and so expensive. Have you priced them lately? From a good breeder they can cost several thousands of dollars. So now that the driver has announced to everyone that they have not one, but three, surely they won't miss it if someone were to follow them home and "borrow" one. Yes, sadly, people do steal family pets, and a thief will probably assume the owner can afford to buy a replacement.

What stickers do you have on your vehicles? What are you telling the world? Better yet, as you sit in traffic look around and learn about the other drivers who share the road with you. You will be amazed at what information people don't realize they are announcing to the world! Be SAFE! ●

WE SALUTE YOU

Every February GCE invites project managers to visit Pensacola for a three-day conference where our senior level team members receive training. The focus during this year's conference was our core competencies: communication, decision making, change management, operational excellence, and team member development. The goal of the event is for our leaders to apply what they've learned at their work sites in their everyday operations. We ended the conference, on Thursday evening, with an awards banquet where we announced honorees of our key recognition programs: Employee of the Year, Spencer B. Jones, Project Manager Support and GCE Living the Mission award. Each winner is highlighted in this newsletter along with a photo.

Below are a few senior leadership team member moments taken during the conference.





The 2018 Living the Mission Award

This award is given to an individual who personifies the GCE Mission without fanfare or expecting recognition, but just because of who he or she is. Jeremy Schell was selected this year, and the announcement was shared at the GCE Awards Banquet during the annual leadership conference. Jeremy is a business analyst at our IT site in Lorton, Virginia. He is a mentor, an advocate, and a leader for those he works with who are deaf or hard of hearing. His compassion and collaborative nature continues to help others realize what they can do to be successful. To learn more about Jeremy go to gce.org/videos and click on the “videos” link upper right corner to watch a recent video of his journey to employment with GCE and his current role.



Jeremy Schell – Living the Mission Award winner

Spencer B. Jones Outstanding Achievement award presented for 2018

This award was presented to Pamela Cox, custodial project manager from the Armed Forces Retirement Homes in Washington, D.C. Each year, the Spencer B. Jones Outstanding Achievement Award is presented to a project manager who has demonstrated performance excellence and achievement at the highest level, all while advancing the Mission of Global Connections to Employment by “Helping People Throughout Life’s Journey.”



Pamela Cox – Spencer B. Jones Award winner

Project Manager Support Award

This Award recognizes one individual who provides critical services directly to project managers (PM) throughout the year. The services of this person help PMs perform administrative duties such as hiring, contracting, invoicing, payroll, employee relations, customer relations, safety and training and other tasks. Thirty nominations were received and from those PMs selected the one and only Shirley Carey. Bill Dietz, project manager Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater Florida, presented the award.



Shirley Carey – Project Manager Support Award winner

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 RECIPIENTS (November - January 2019)

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

James Johnson, Amber Limes

Armed Forces Retirement Home, Washington, DC – Custodial:

Sonia Ramos, Christina Everett, Tynise Rich

Value coin recipients November- January 2019

Naval Station Newport, Newport, RI – Food Service:

Shannon Carter, Frank Seaman, Madeleine Fitzsimmons, Lisa Toppins, Antanika Cole, Treasray Carter, Ian Kelly, Jim Perry, Daniel Kates, Joseph Hoffnagle, Josie Decotis

Armed Forces Retirement Home, Washington, DC – Custodial:

Mathew McKinley, Harry Rowe, Tonya Richardson

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

Greg Weeks, Nelly Reed, Arle Ferguson, Michael Bowolling

Naval Air Station Whiting Field, Milton, FL – Custodial:

Brian Hicks, Angila Bowers, Erin Henderson, David Hewes, Alex Carroll, Walker Rich, Domick Ellis, Scott Gordon, Celeste Parise, Fred Frome, Ashley Gordon, Stephen Leggett, Robert Parham, Christopher Matthews, Emily Chever, David Norwood, Yvonne Lockstead, Devon Freeman, James Paulo

Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Tacoma, WA - Food Service:

Brian Coleman, Tal Hockenbrock, Michael Shaffer, Jeff Ketola, No Kyong Pak, Carri-Anne Chambers, Hans Gregory, Roy Jacob, Kevin Karalus, Young Lafrancoeur, Kathleen Thompson, Jason Woods

Fort Campbell, Clarksville, TN – Custodial:

Michael Hammonds, Robert Brooks, Cody Whitfield, Aaron Cooper, Emmanuel "Manny" Roman, Paula Martin, Jonathan Quam, Stacey Bowen, Cathy Fentress

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

Chevelle Robinson, Lakerria Wright, Lakeshia Dawson, Freda Hale, Latrice Rembert, Dawn Rupert, Janas Marlow, Deniece Costa, Decarlos Williams, Phan Nguyen, Anita Seekford, Jody Fejeran, Robert Fort, Eddie Jones, Monica Galloway, Fred Spencer, Maggie Johnson

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

Kesha McTear

GCE Administration and Building T team:

Rich Gilmartin, Jeff Read, Carol Duke, Jessica Martin, Charlene Ferguson (Lakeview Center) ●

SOME MEMORABLE MOMENTS FROM THE 2019 GCE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Wednesday morning we held self-advocacy training with front line team members coming from Naval Air Station Pensacola, Eglin Air Force Base, Naval Air Station Whiting Field, Baptist Hospital Towers, Gulf Breeze Hospital, and Lakeview Center. We were joined by SourceAmerica's senior manager of state relations, Debbie Ignatz, who helps provide the training along with Lori Kain, GCE Director of Governmental and Community Relations. Why is self-advocacy so important? It provides the knowledge needed to succeed, and individuals are given an opportunity to participate in decisions that are being made about their lives. There are two sayings in the disability world: "Nothing about me Without me" and "I am somebody!" As our world quickly changes around us, so do government policies which bring on changes that affect individuals with disabilities. Every voice is important. Understanding how to be heard in the community is vital.





WHAT IS TARGETED EMPLOYMENT NAVIGATION SERVICES?

Targeted Employment Navigation Services (TENS) is a program aligned under the Employment and Support Services line of business. Services are available to help GCE applicants and GCE team members with significant disabilities (TMSD) navigate our employment process. The TENS team was officially realigned under GCE's area of responsibility in September 2016 when team members were selected and located at GCE contract sites throughout the country. The TENS team is responsible for the following essential functions:

- Targeted outreach and recruitment of people with disabilities who are interested in working in an AbilityOne(AB1) GCE position
- Management of the AB1 qualifying process which includes efforts to secure and approve disability documentation, completion/review and approval of the initial and annual Individual Eligibility Evaluation (IEE), and for documentation of actions/updates in BalanceTrak throughout this process
- Job retention services that are solution-oriented and intended to promote job retention for GCE TMSD accomplished by collaborating with GCE hiring managers where workplace accommodations, supports, and internal/external resources are identified, recommended, and implemented
- Outplacement services are provided for GCE TMSD who are no longer eligible under the AB1 qualifying process or have requested assistance in finding employment outside of GCE.



Pictured: Back Row (left to right): Lynette Meadows, D.C. AFRH; Domonique Woodard, McDill AFB; Chad Cheek, Ft. Kno; Jo'el Roth, JBLM

Front Row (left to right): Zach Tamer, Lorton, VA; Lisa Bloodworth, GCE Corporate Office; Jessica Wells, Gulf Breeze/Shalimar; Sandra Plocharczyk, GCE Corporate Office; Robin Bivins, GCE Corporate Office; Adrian Wyer, GCE Corporate Office.

Please reach out to the TENS team member assigned to your area of responsibility for support and assistance when needed. They are an excellent resource and offer a wide range of services to support you and your employees. ●