

**UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

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**BRIEFING ON EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY, AFFIRMATIVE
EMPLOYMENT, AND SMALL BUSINESS**

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TUESDAY,

DECEMBER 17, 2019

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ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

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The Commission met in the Commissioners' Hearing Room at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, at 10:00 a.m., Kristine L. Svinicki, Chairman, presiding.

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

KRISTINE L. SVINICKI, Chairman

JEFF BARAN, Commissioner

ANNIE CAPUTO, Commissioner

DAVID A. WRIGHT, Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT:

ANNETTE VIETTI-COOK, Secretary of the Commission

MARIAN ZOBLER, General Counsel

SERITA SANDERS, Executive Vice President, National Treasury Employees'
Union, Chapter 208

NRC STAFF:

MARGARET DOANE, Executive Director for Operations

VONNA ORDAZ, Director, Office of Small Business
and Civil Rights

MARY C. MUESSLE, Director, Office of Administration

MARK SHAFFER, Deputy Regional Administrator,
Region IV

HECTOR RODRIGUEZ-LUCCIONI, Chair, Advisory Committee
for Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual, and Transgender
Employees

1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 10:03 a.m.

3 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Well, good morning everyone.

4 And it's a nice full room, which is always such a pleasure to see.

5 I call the Commission's meeting to order. And the purpose
6 of today's meeting is to hear an update on progress and opportunities related
7 to equal employment opportunity, diversity and inclusion and small business.

8 And we conduct meetings on this topic twice a year. And
9 given the frequency we've settled into and the time of year, this tends to be
10 either, often it's the last meeting we have of the calendar year, or it's close to
11 that.

12 Most years I think it's always a good opportunity for us to
13 look a little bit inwardly at our own organization. And again, our important
14 work in advancing diversity and inclusion and kind of thinking about our own
15 culture and how we interact and engage with each other, so I always welcome
16 this meeting.

17 And in preparation for today's meeting I was reminded of
18 how much our diversity, our affinity groups, help advance not only our diversity
19 and inclusion goals, but they are a bit of a force to be reckoned with in terms
20 of other things we have going on at the agency. In particular, just on a
21 personal note, I think it was Charles Dickens who described this time of year
22 as a time when want is keenly felt and abundance rejoices.

23 So I was reminded that many of our affinity groups, I think

1 almost all of them, have engaged somehow in opportunities for the Agency as
2 a whole to participate in addressing needs in the community or across the
3 country or around the world. You know, things like collecting warm clothing
4 for the needy, the food drive.

5 Our veteran's employee's affinity group works on the, I think
6 Toys for Tots and toys collections. So, I just, it's really kind of an ancillary or
7 a corollary to why they exist and what they help us do in a more official
8 capacity.

9 But I just personally want to recognize that that is something
10 that they take on. I am grateful. It makes it very, very facilitated and easy
11 for me to then participate with so many other NRC employees in being a part
12 of those very worthy collections and causes, so thank you for that.

13 And with that, I offer, if my colleagues wish to make any
14 opening remarks? Hearing none, then we will hear from one panel of
15 presenters of the NRC staff. And I will turn it over to our Executive Director
16 for Operations, Margie Doane, to lead us off. Thank you.

17 MS. DOANE: Good morning, Chairman Svinicki and
18 Commissioners. The purpose of the briefing today is a status and highlight
19 of the accomplishments of the Agency through the Office of Small Business
20 and Civil Rights, as well as the diversity and inclusion, small business and
21 cultural transformation efforts of the Office of Administration and Region IV.

22 SBCR programs provide leadership for the Agency's efforts
23 to carry out the obligations under various civil rights and small business

1 statutes. They have done a wonderful job of meeting these requirements as
2 well as developing and sharing opportunities to recruit, develop and retain a
3 diverse workforce.

4 This year, SBCR has chosen a theme, Diversity & Inclusion:
5 A Forethought, Not an Afterthought. The NRC is currently facing an
6 environment of unprecedented change.

7 In order to adapt our environment we must follow the theme
8 and work strategically to build an inclusive culture at the Agency. One where
9 our skilled and agile workforce is prepared to transform. Or change or evolve.
10 We're using lots of different words.

11 As we make diversity inclusion a forethought, we encourage
12 employees to bring their entire selves to work so that their creativity, new ideas
13 and different perspectives spawn the innovation we seek as our world
14 changes around us.

15 I am extremely proud of the accomplishments and
16 dedication of our NRC staff. Today you will hear about the employees
17 exemplifying the characteristics of the leadership model built on a foundation
18 of values where discrimination and micro-inequities are not tolerated and
19 employee efforts contribute directly to accomplishing the Agency's mission
20 and improving the organization's culture.

21 I now turn the presentation over to Vonna Ordaz, the
22 Director of the Office of Small Business and Civil Rights, who will introduce
23 the program participants and begin the rest of our briefing.

1 MS. ORDAZ: Great, thank you, Margie. Good morning,
2 Chairman Svinicki and Commissioners Baran, Caputo and Wright, and the
3 NRC staff.

4 I'm honored to brief you this morning on the status, the
5 progress and challenges of the Agency's equal employment opportunity,
6 affirmative employment and small business efforts as administered by the
7 Office of the Small Business and Civil Rights and its Agency's partners.

8 Next slide. We're happy to have some of our partners with
9 us here at the table today. They are Mary Muessle, the Director of the Office
10 of Administration, in one of her final duties here in Headquarters.

11 Mark Shaffer, the Deputy Regional Administrator from
12 Region IV and Hector Rodriguez-Luccioni, the Chair of the Advisory
13 Committee for Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Transgender Employees.

14 Our theme for this year is Diversity & Inclusion: A
15 Forethought, Not an Afterthought. It was chosen by SBCR staff in
16 preparation for our biannual counselor committee and ambassador
17 conference.

18 Speaking of which, I'd like to take this opportunity to ask the
19 following individuals to stand, if you can, and stay standing to be recognized.
20 If you're unable to stand, then please raise your hand.

21 Collateral duty counselors. We might have some in the
22 room. Many are on the line too.

23 EEO advisory committee members. Our dialogue

1 ambassadors. Our executive sponsors. And SBCR staff.

2 In addition to those folks standing, we have hundreds of
3 volunteers in the Agency, both here at Headquarters and the Regional offices.
4 We thank each and every one of these folks for their extraordinary efforts, their
5 tremendous time and dedication toward the SBCR mission and our
6 unwavering support to diversity and inclusion, which supports the Agency as
7 a whole. Please give these folks a round of applause.

8 (Applause.)

9 MS. ORDAZ: You may be seated. I'd also like to
10 recognize our OGC colleagues. And particular, two folks that have spent
11 decades in this area of civil rights. They are our partners Sara McAndrew
12 and Mark Maxin. I'd ask them to stand please to be recognized. They are
13 going to be leaving us.

14 (Applause.)

15 MS. ORDAZ: I don't know how we're going to go without
16 them, but they have just been remarkable, as many of you know around the
17 table for many, many years here at the NRC. So good luck to you in your
18 retirement. Thank you.

19 Okay, next slide please. As you can see, SBCR is
20 passionate about leading these efforts included in our mission statement.
21 Which is illustrated in the next few slides.

22 Our office touches so many areas of daily life here at the
23 NRC. When inclusion is a forethought, we can leverage the needs and

1 talents of diversity of backgrounds, cultures, perspectives and thoughts into
2 NRC operations.

3 Next slide please. Here you see at a glance, some of what
4 the Small Business Program does in collaboration with the Agency. You'll
5 hear more about our work with acquisitions management, HUBZones and
6 outreach a bit later in the presentation. As well as in Mary and Mark's
7 presentations.

8 Next slide. This slide reflects the various facets of our civil
9 rights program. Our proactive prevention in conflict resolution referred to our
10 commitment to the alternate dispute resolution, both for the cultural health of
11 the Agency and as mandated by the Equal Employment Opportunity
12 Commission.

13 Next slide please. And this slide shows a snapshot of
14 what's involved in our affirmative employment and diversity and inclusion
15 programs. Here I'd like to highlight dialogue, which is an important ongoing
16 initiative in addressing unconscious bias and difficult conversations.

17 In this area we also partner with OCHCO on efforts such as
18 FEVS analysis, FEVS action plans and recruitment.

19 Next slide. The Small Business Program continues
20 innovation and acquisition through Agency-wide collaboration. This is driven
21 through the acquisition planning and market research activities performed by
22 the program.

23 We were inspired by the Agency's message of striving

1 towards innovation in how we do business. As such, we partner with the
2 Office of Administration on items that will save the Agency money and reduce
3 our footprint.

4 A few examples include, one, we were integral in, we were
5 an integral part of the process to restructure how the NRC purchased its
6 assistance furniture. The result of the improved process is that the NRC
7 continues to procure furniture through a small business. Yet by using a more
8 streamlined approach, NRC expects to save between \$1 to \$1.5 million over
9 the next five years.

10 Two, we partnered with OCIO to research the industry's best
11 practices regarding the innovation, adoption and training approach that
12 accelerates an employee's understanding of new technologies in Microsoft
13 365, by explaining how they can benefit from using the new technology or
14 functionality, in performing their work before they receive the training.

15 And three, the business program works with our partners in
16 ADM and OCIO to strategically explore the HUBZone marketplace for a
17 modernized storage service refresh that resulted in not only expediting the
18 award under a tight time schedule to prevent possible and end of cycle life
19 cycle costly repairs and maintenance, but it was also the second largest
20 HUBZone set-aside in the Agency's history.

21 In addition, the Small Business Program collaborated with
22 Region II this summer. This was to continue its outreach efforts to NRC
23 Regional offices, to raise awareness of Agency buying needs and the

1 HUBZone certification process to improve our participation in HUBZone,
2 HUBZones, and NRC procurements.

3 We expanded outreach to the Regions, because while
4 locations have decreased locally through economic revitalization from federal
5 contracting, Regional locations have increased or maintained their HUBZone
6 status.

7 In 2018, we had our first collaboration with Region IV. And
8 we're planning a similar event with Region I in 2020.

9 Next slide please. All of our efforts have yielded great
10 results, including historical levels of achievement in FY19. We accomplished
11 record setting Small Business performance in the area of contract awards to
12 historically underutilized business zones and to service-disabled veteran
13 owned small businesses.

14 There is significant, this is significant because, even though
15 the Agency reported \$50 million less in FY19 contract dollars than '18, the
16 Agency awarded the largest amount, not only to small business, businesses,
17 but to HUBZone and service-disabled veteran owned small businesses. Two
18 of the most difficult goals to achieve in the federal government.

19 Next slide please. We also accomplished five of five small
20 businesses goals in FY19. In fact, we surpassed our goal of 38 percent by
21 awarding more than 56 percent of contract awards to small businesses.

22 The collaboration from the Office of Administration and
23 Program Offices was critical to reaching such historical goals. And we cannot

1 thank our Agency partners enough for their support.

2 Our FY19 scorecard grade has not arrived yet from the
3 Small Business Administration. However, we did achieve an SBA scorecard
4 grade of A in FY18 performance. Which is a great achievement.

5 Slide 12. Moving into the area of equal employment
6 opportunity. Over the last several years, complaint activity has been fairly
7 steady.

8 However, during FY19 there was an increase. We may be
9 seeing the effects of some of the changes that the Agency has endured.
10 Uncertainty often leads to misunderstandings that can field perceptions of
11 disparate treatment.

12 This chart shows that EEO complaint activity is trending
13 upward, even as our Agency staffing levels decline. I would note that despite
14 the increase, NRC's EEO complaint activity remains relatively low in
15 comparison to other federal agencies of our size.

16 Next slide please. Looking at the basis for formal
17 complaints, reprisal, age and gender have been most frequently cited
18 contributing to approximately 60 percent of formal cases.

19 While reprisal is our most asserted basis, it should be noted
20 that a reprisal is also the basis most raised throughout the federal government.

21 Additionally, we continue to see a trend that began in FY17,
22 in that age, as a basis, has continued to trend upward. This is not surprising
23 given the composition of our workforce, where the average age of employees

1 exceeds 40 years. Which is the threshold to be considered in this protected
2 class.

3 This chart reflects all bases cited in a formal complaint,
4 which may include multiple bases. Hence why the number here is greater
5 than the actual number of formal complaints in the previous chart.

6 Next slide please. Harassment continues to be one of the
7 top three issues raised. Often, harassment accompanies other issues and is
8 a frequently raised issue throughout the federal government. We continue to
9 work with our partners in OCHCO and OGC to provide anti-harassment
10 training, as well as support for OCHCO's anti-harassment policy.

11 Next slide please. This chart reflects all methods of
12 complaint closures over the past several years. The SBCR is continuing to
13 follow the agencies established internal procedures and ensure quality review
14 and adherence to regulatory time frames, by leveraging the efficiency and
15 effectiveness of its civil rights program.

16 And that's with a focus of a, on transformation as we
17 undertake some of the enhancements to our practices and our processes.

18 As the chart indicates, there has been a drop in the number
19 of complaints settled. That is, at least in part, due to new executive orders
20 issues by this administration that limits some of the settlement options
21 previously used.

22 Next slide please. One of the methods we use to take the
23 temperature of the Agency is the FEVS. The FEVS data can be broken into

1 several indices. That is, what story do the related questions tell.

2 The FOCSE index, F-O-C-S-E, measures employee
3 opinions on inclusion. Whether the environment is fair, open, cooperative,
4 supportive and empowering.

5 Over the last year, our office has focused on the relationship
6 between FOCSE and our guiding principles of diversity and inclusion. Under
7 our analysis, when people feel that the work environment is receptive to their
8 ideas, they feel included, they are engaged. And when they are engaged,
9 they are invested, productive and enjoy more work satisfaction.

10 We must be purposely inclusive with leadership at all levels.
11 Transformation cannot occur with only a portion of staff engaged.

12 The chart shows that the Agency went down some, while
13 the federal government, as a whole, went up. What this tells me is that we
14 can't take our eyes off the ball. We want to continue to do the proactive front
15 end work.

16 Next slide please. And speaking of being proactive, the
17 NRC inclusive diversity strategic plan focuses on fostering the diversity
18 starting with a potential applicant pool and moving through all phases of NRC
19 employment, raising awareness of the potential impact and cognitive and
20 biases it may have on each base.

21 There are three goals in this plan. One is to diversify the
22 federal workforce through active engagement of leadership, two, include and
23 engage everyone in the workplace, three, optimize inclusive diversity efforts

1 using data driven approaches.

2 The increased Agency focus on innovation and
3 transformation may present challenges, as change always does. However,
4 we can meet these challenges with an inclusive and diverse workforce.

5 SBCR's review of the FY19, comprehensive diversity and
6 management plan reports reflect that managers and supervisors actively
7 promoted the agency's Speed of Trust principles, executed trust huddles and
8 staff participated in other EEO and diversity and inclusion training activities.

9 OCHCO conducted 85 workshops for supervisors and staff
10 resulting in almost 60 percent of the workforce receiving this training.

11 The Agency's EEO advisory committees, employee
12 research groups and affinity groups hosted lunch and learns about NRC's
13 leadership model, which focuses on leadership characteristics that are
14 expected from individuals, managers, and organizations, to promoted
15 leadership at all levels and sponsored cultural events, seminars and
16 discussions on EEO and DNI topics.

17 SBCR revised the managers and supervisors training to
18 focus more on proactive measures in order to help them understand
19 implementation and execution of EEO and DNI programs, the use of ADR,
20 operational best practices, and also using data to influence or drive agency-
21 wide decision making in these areas.

22 During the summer, SBCR held the Biannual Counselor
23 Committee and Ambassador Conference. Training was provided for all three

1 groups on everything from EEO counseling, to bystander intervention and
2 data analytics.

3 NRC also continued the DIALOGUE project to help develop
4 a greater appreciation for the value and impacts, positive impacts, made by
5 diverse groups in meeting the NRC's mission. NRC completed three cohorts
6 in FY19, making a total of 12 cohorts since its inception of DIALOGUE.

7 In consider outreach to external venues, the SBCR Minority
8 Serving Institutions Program continues to act as a catalyst to develop
9 partnerships by leveraging existing networks and facilitating engagement in
10 educational efforts.

11 NRC cosponsored the 2019 White House conference for
12 Historically Black Colleges and Universities and continues close coordination
13 with OCHCO on the pipeline through the Nuclear Regulator Apprenticeship
14 Network, known as NRAN.

15 With all of these proactive measured and programs shared
16 here today, we will continue championing the Agency's effort to make diversity
17 inclusion a forethought, not an afterthought. Thank you. And now I'll turn it
18 over to Mary Muessle.

19 MS. MUESSLE: Thank you, Vonna. Chairman Svinicki,
20 Commissioners Baran, Caputo and Wright, I am honored to speak today about
21 equal employment opportunity related in Small Business activities in the Office
22 of Administration.

23 Next slide please. ADM is comprised of 117 permanent

1 staff who are likely among the most diverse in the Agency. Staff experiences
2 range 90 days to 40 years with a broad range of backgrounds, including
3 engineering, law enforcement, business, technology, media and art.

4 Some of our very characteristics are noted on this slide.

5 Next slide please. It is difficult to think of anything that NRC
6 does that ADM is not involved in. This slide shows some of the many support
7 functions that we provide.

8 Next slide please. ADM continues to be key to the
9 Agency's Small Business Program. The acquisition staff work hand in glove
10 with SBCR in reviewing all Agency's small business opportunities.

11 Additionally, in the administrative service area, we look at
12 each service contract for a small business fit. We have found that using small
13 businesses is advantageous in providing business essential functions, such
14 as building and grounds management and other support services.

15 These critical relationships are integral in keeping the NRC
16 operating day and night.

17 Next slide please. In telling the story of ADM, it is important
18 to go back in time to what I call the Storm of 2017.

19 In 2017, NRC planned significant corporate staff reductions
20 in line with the smaller NRC imagined in Project Aim. These cuts could not
21 be addressed with natural attrition, so NRC began a reduction in force
22 impacting the large corporate offices.

23 ADM had the largest number if planned reductions and staff

1 faced significant stress and tension. While in the end, no staff were
2 involuntarily separated, several staff were moved to lower graded positions
3 and/or positions outside of their expertise.

4 Additionally, other staff left for opportunities outside the
5 Agency prior to, and just after the RIF occurred. Morale was low, workload
6 was high and many people with important knowledge had departed the
7 Agency.

8 Additionally, the Office was highly fragmented and people
9 were seated on six different floors of two buildings and in a warehouse facility.
10 Connection and trust were low to say the least.

11 Next slide please. Facing this environment, we embarked
12 on a path of what I call intentional inclusion to meet work demands. Intention
13 inclusion means staff having the knowledge and skills to do their work and
14 having equal access to equal opportunities.

15 Intentional inclusion includes hiring through diverse panels,
16 recruiting from a variety of sources, soliciting interests for rotations and special
17 assignments, embracing the leadership model and empowering staff to make
18 decisions at the lowest level.

19 It means staff recognizing their peers every month when we
20 come together at our Kudos Cafes to reflect on accomplishments and honor
21 a staff member with a small gift. Intentional inclusion works to level the
22 playing field by taking time to provide context and background for
23 assignments, intentional inclusions and mindfully seeks input from a variety of

1 people as we make decisions.

2 This year, faced with the reality of significant budget
3 reductions, ADM had brainstorming sessions to identify ideas for doing our
4 work better and more cost effectively. This effort led to 250 ideas to reduce
5 cost and burdens while still providing important support to the mission.

6 Next slide please. It is important to come together to
7 recognize and celebrate. Management begins weekly staff meetings with an
8 accomplishment they want to share.

9 The super leader award is another peer recognition award
10 for people who have exhibited attributes of the NRC leadership model. Lucky
11 Duck here travels to a new super leader each quarter.

12 ADM also comes together for fun events, as well as to
13 support children at a local elementary school through the Smart Snacks
14 Program.

15 Next slide please. So, how is the weather now? In 2018
16 we doubled our FEVS participation rate. And since the storm, ADM FEVS'
17 results have grown significantly in almost every category.

18 This trend is even more striking as NRC scores declined
19 overall in 2019. This slide shows the metrics related to employee
20 engagement and inclusion.

21 As you can see, intentional inclusion makes the difference.
22 Moving forward we will share, continue to share our successes and lessons
23 learned with other offices and continue focusing on areas where we can grow.

1 Next slide please. The future will have more storms and
2 we need to continue to focus on developing our new and existing staff as work
3 changes and corporate support dollar caps dictate the need for more
4 innovation.

5 I am confident that with diversity as a forethought and a
6 continued commitment to intentional inclusion, we will weather whatever
7 comes. Thank you for the opportunity to present today. And I invite you to
8 learn more from the people in ADM in this short video.

9 (Video played.)

10 MS. MUESSLE: Thank you. I now turn the presentation
11 over to Mark Shaffer from Region IV.

12 (Applause.)

13 MR. SHAFFER: That's tough to follow.

14 (Laughter.)

15 MR. SHAFFER: So, good morning, Chairman and
16 Commissioners. It's a pleasure to be here this morning to talk to you about
17 some of the things we're doing out in the Regions to enhance our diversity in
18 the workforce.

19 Next slide please. So, diversity at all levels in the Region
20 is achieved through our recruiting and our hiring initiatives. In Region IV we
21 continuously strive to achieve diversity in our workforce.

22 This includes diversity in culture, educational and social
23 backgrounds, personal experiences, as well as professional experiences. All

1 these activities help us to become diverse in our thought.

2 The bullets on this slide show some of the recruiting efforts,
3 including areas such as veteran's hiring initiatives. Region IV is currently at
4 40 percent veterans.

5 Leveraging college recruiting fairs, and then specifically
6 seeking out a diverse set of educational backgrounds.

7 Through diversity we create a more interesting and vibrant
8 workforce. We're more innovative, more productive and we make better
9 decisions. We value diversity as a source of enrichment and opportunity.

10 Next slide please. In April of this year Region IV hosted the
11 Dallas-Fort Worth Federal Agency Small Business Advocacy Council's
12 Leadership Forum. This event was hosted in conjunction with NRC's Office
13 of Small Business and Civil Rights and the Office of Administration. As well
14 as with the Director for the Area Small Business Administration in Fort Worth,
15 Texas.

16 The event included participation by senior leaders and staff
17 from other federal agencies in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, as well as
18 headquarters staff and regional procurement staff, to support our continued
19 focus on small businesses.

20 Region IV staff and management also supported and
21 participated with SBCR in the first Regional small business exchange and
22 matchmaking event. The event was a major success having over 250
23 participants, which included other federal agencies and a Small Business

1 Administration.

2 Region II also hosted a matchmaking event earlier this year.

3 Region IV will continue to participate in and host the monthly
4 business advocacy council meetings, as this is an important part of our
5 continued focus on the small business environment.

6 Next slide please. As is the case in all four Regions,
7 Region IV has a very active diversity management advisory committee, or
8 DMAC, with multiple subcommittees representing our diverse and inclusive
9 workforce. We champion diversity in Region IV not only at our annual
10 diversity day, but every day.

11 To borrow a phrase I recently heard, we don't have to, we
12 get to. In other words, we see this as a privilege and an opportunity to bring
13 people together and to support our community.

14 As an example, the Region IV DMAC sponsored a backpack
15 drive earlier this year that was able to donate over 60 backpacks to our local
16 shelters in Arlington. We've also been fortunate enough to have some very
17 inspirational keynote speakers at our diversity day celebrations.

18 Just last week our special guest speaker spoke about the
19 power of togetherness. These celebrations are an effective means to
20 educate each other on our different cultures and capabilities and increase our
21 awareness of the value of a diverse organization to accomplish our mission.

22 They're also a great opportunity to enhance our safety
23 culture through training and workshops.

1 Next slide please. As I noted in the previous slide, the
2 DMAC sponsored backpack drive was a big success. You can see some of
3 the donated supplies included paper, pencils, calculators and notebooks.

4 On this slide you can see loading of the backpacks and
5 delivery of the supplies to one of the local area shelters.

6 Also shown here are the dedicated folks that put this project
7 together and worked really hard to make sure it was successful and a needed
8 donation drive.

9 I'm so proud and humbled to work alongside these folks
10 every day in Region IV. These individuals truly demonstrate leadership at all
11 levels and they're unwavering commitment to public service.

12 Next slide please. Region IV kicked off our diversity day
13 celebration last Wednesday, December 11th.

14 This slide shows a few pictures from that event, including
15 food, of course, from multiple cultures, some fun activities and an inspiration
16 workshop presented by Ms. Karren Alexander. Her informative and energetic
17 workshop focused on how our beliefs and values inform interactions with
18 others, and the value of respect.

19 On a personal note, I've mentioned that I met Ms. Alexander
20 back in 2003 when I attended the Federal Executive Institute and she was one
21 of my classmates. Karren worked for the Department of Agriculture at the
22 time and she had aspirations of becoming a motivational speaker. And as
23 you can see, she is now a best-selling author and a well sought after speaker.

1 Next slide. In addition to the outstanding support from
2 Region IV staff and management, we also want to thank Commissioner Wright
3 for joining us in Arlington last week for the special event. Thank you, sir.

4 Next slide. In our forethought for diversity awareness,
5 Region IV staff and management participated in a privilege walk with SBCR.

6 SBCR led the exercise to help us understand how some of
7 us, without even knowing it, come from a privilege, or not privilege
8 background, with respect to education, culture, race, gender and even just
9 opportunities in life.

10 I believe this exercise was an eye opener for staff and
11 management to think about the bias thoughts that we have towards each
12 other, without really knowing an individual's background.

13 In the Regions we continue to support the Agency with our
14 EEO counselors, by enhancing their training and diversity and inclusion,
15 through many of the Agency's workshops and training sessions.

16 Also, our labor management partnership committee needs
17 to help promote our strong focus on workforce fairness and diversity in the
18 Region.

19 Our topics discuss, range from staffing to office space,
20 award and multiple other issues that are important to the staff.

21 Next slide. As leaders from all levels within the NRC, we
22 need to continuously ensure that we have a diverse organization to enhance
23 our creativity, our problem solving, our strategic thinking and our decision

1 making. We strive for a diverse organization, not because we have to, but
2 because it makes us a stronger and more effective organization.

3 Toward that end, Region IV developed a vision statement
4 that summarizes our aspirational goal. Our vision is, together we work to
5 foster a culture of high trust that maximizes professional growth and inspires
6 leadership at all levels.

7 Thank you for the opportunity to be here this morning to
8 highlight some of the activities we're doing out in the region. And I'll now turn
9 it over the Hector.

10 MR. RODRIGUEZ-LUCCIONI: Thank you, Mark. Good
11 morning, Chairman and Commissioners. I would like to recognize and thank
12 you for your continued participation and support in the bias, diversity and
13 inclusion effort throughout the Agency.

14 It's my honor to speak to you today on the behalf of the
15 Diversity Management Advisory Committee, DMAC. Which represents the
16 collective voice of the NRC's Volunteer Advisory Committees, Including the
17 Advisory Committee for African-Americans, Advisory Committee for
18 Employees with Disabilities, Advisory Committee for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual
19 and Transgender Employees, Asian Pacific American Advisory Committee,
20 Diversity Advisory Committee on Ageism, Federal Women's Program
21 Advisory Committee, Hispanic Employment Program Advisory Committee,
22 Native American Advisory Committee, and finally, Veterans Employee
23 Resource Group.

1 The DMAC works with SBCR to support recruitment,
2 professional development, retention, diversity, as stated in the Agency
3 comprehensive diversity management plan and the inclusive diversity
4 strategic plan. This statement communicates the joint perspective of the
5 DMAC members on three matters of great interest to our constituencies and
6 the NRC staff at-large, workforce of the future, career development and hiring
7 and workplace behavior and culture.

8 Next slide please. As we have discussed today, in many
9 ways, the past several years have brought tremendous and constant change
10 to the Agency as it has undertaken several initiatives, including Project Aim,
11 transformation, and most recently, the future's assessment.

12 The need for changed has motivated the advisory
13 committees and resource groups to help SBCR and OCHCO promote
14 transformation in diversity and inclusion by providing inclusion related
15 speakers, workshops and other programs.

16 A couple of highlights over the past year include a
17 memorandum to SBCR recommending the development of policy and
18 guidance for transgender and gender nonconforming employees.

19 A memorandum to OCHCO with recommendations for
20 establishing an employee concerns program. Working with SBCR to finalize
21 a performance appraisal job aid that was submitted to OCHCO and shared
22 with supervisors Agency-wide. And engaging with summer students over
23 pizza and ice cream.

1 The advisory committees and resource groups bring, unique
2 perspectives, to all of the changes and transformation initiatives going on
3 throughout the Agency. And we look forward to continuing engaging,
4 continuing engagement with leadership to ensure that principles of diversity
5 and inclusion remained ingrained in our culture.

6 Next slide please. The advisory committee and resources
7 groups are aware of the factors presently limiting promotions and accelerating
8 hiring at the NRC.

9 In this environment, we remain focused on contributing to
10 the Agency's broader efforts to promote relevant training and skills
11 development to ensure that we remain an effective and agile organization.

12 A highlight from this past year is an advisory committee and
13 resource groups collaborated to plan a series of lunch and learn sessions that
14 taught NRC staff how the illusion model enhances our organizational culture.
15 Each lunch and learn session discuss one of the predict letters that represent
16 the six fundamental cursory sticks of a leader.

17 This effort also represented a concerted effort by the
18 advisory committees and resource groups to expand their activities beyond a
19 straight focus on diversity and inclusion. To an integrated approach with
20 more activities tied directly to the NRC's mission innovation.

21 We stick to ensure women, veterans, persons with
22 disabilities, people of color, and all individuals, regardless of their sexual or
23 gender identity, are receiving the development opportunities to become future

1 leaders of the Agency.

2 Finally, we encourage NRC management to promote staff
3 attendance at external training and conferences that promote diversity and
4 inclusion and bring transformation and innovative ideas to the NRC. In
5 addition, this build diversity focus external relationship with institutions for
6 future recurring efforts.

7 Next slide please. The advisory committees and resource
8 groups remained focused on our workplace behavior and culture.

9 The committees are making efforts to foster this cushion on
10 bullying, racism, harassment and other social related issues to promote a safe
11 and respectful work environment. Raising awareness of insensitivities and
12 disrespectful behavior is a first step in fostering a positive dialogue.

13 Issues of harassment and bullying are not new, and we
14 need to continue to work towards ways to resolve these behaviors.

15 Next slide please. Over the past year, the advisory
16 committees and resource groups offer events that provided opportunities for
17 discussion, such as safe space workshop. Being a lesbian, gay, bisexual,
18 transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual ally.

19 Screened Dawnland, a Native American documentary with
20 filmmaker Mishy Lesser. And a couple of community service events, such as
21 volunteering at Food n' Friends and Miriam's Kitchen. Dressed for Success
22 Business Clothing Initiative for young people working for the rich concepts'
23 organizations in the D.C. area.

1 In addition, all EEO members attended the EEO joint
2 conference. Which theme was, Diversity & Inclusion: A Forethought, Not an
3 Afterthought, for additional training.

4 Next slide please. This collage represents the staff who
5 volunteer to continue strengthening diversity and inclusion in the workplace.
6 We look forward to continue to support change efforts, maintaining a diverse
7 and inclusive workforce and providing a forum for a continued dialogue on
8 issues that are important to the principles of diversity and inclusion.

9 Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about
10 how resourceful the advisory committees and resource groups are to the NRC.
11 Now I will turn it over to Margie for closing remarks.

12 MS. DOANE: Thank you, Hector. It's been our pleasure
13 to share this information with you this morning.

14 My thanks to the Committee members, collateral duty
15 counselors, dialogue ambassadors, executive sponsors, SBCR staff,
16 including Larniece McKoy Moore, who did a tremendous job developing these
17 presentations, and also prepping us all today, and all of the many volunteers
18 who lead the NRC in these important cultural endeavors.

19 Although there continues to be evolution and change, we
20 continue to strategize and adapt. We continue to strive for the type of
21 intentional inclusion where it's safe for each of us to be who we are and
22 express our opinions without fear, where diversity and inclusion is a
23 forethought, not an afterthought.

1 I appreciate the Commission's ongoing support of these
2 many activities and the kind remarks that the Chairman said when she
3 recognized all of the affinity groups and our other committees this morning.
4 Because as you can see, they do a tremendous amount of work and not just
5 in areas that are particular to their area of focus, but they concentrate on
6 Agency activities.

7 And this year they concentrated on issues that were
8 important to our transformation efforts. Including the leadership model.
9 Which is the behaviors that will help us embrace change and to keep an open
10 mind.

11 And to ensure that individuals that are in communities within
12 the Agency that might feel like they were otherwise left out of the conversation,
13 that we make a particular effort to include them into the conversation.

14 And this is something that our outgoing director of SBCR,
15 Pam Baker, was always making a very strong point about, and that Vonna is
16 carrying on, to make sure that we understand that individuals who already may
17 feel excluded can feel even more excluded in an environment of change.

18 And so, we are using our affinity groups and all of the efforts
19 of SBCR to ensure that our change is done with a particular and intentional
20 focus on capturing everybody's views. And we talk about all the time how
21 you never know where the next really good idea is going to come from.

22 So, this will pay off for the Agency in the long run and make
23 it a better place for us to work. So, I appreciate the Commission's support,

1 as I said, and all of the work of the individuals that you see here today and the
2 many people that are in the audience that work on this program as well.

3 And with that, that concludes our formal presentation and
4 we look forward to your questions.

5 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Well, thank you, Margie, and to
6 each of the presenters. And again, recognizing all of those who helped you
7 to prepare to present and for, I'm sure, the really interesting questions that
8 you're going to be asked.

9 And speaking of that, we begin with Commissioner Wright.

10 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Thank you. Good morning.
11 And thank all of you for your presentations. And for being here too. Even
12 you, Lucky Duck.

13 (Laughter.)

14 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: I kind of wanted to hear him
15 say Aflac or something.

16 (Laughter.)

17 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: And to all the counselors out
18 there and the Committee members, DIALOGUE ambassadors, executive
19 sponsors and the SBCR staff members, thank you for all you do to make sure
20 that diversity and inclusion is a priority here at the NRC.

21 Margie, thank you for your comments and your introduction.
22 I do agree with you that the Agency is going to succeed in transformation and
23 our innovation efforts.

1 And a key part of that is going to be through encouraging
2 each of the employees to bring his or her unique and diverse perspectives to
3 our workplace. So thank you for your comments.

4 I'm going to start with you, Vonna. Good morning to you.
5 And again, congratulations on the A rating again this year.

6 MS. ORDAZ: Yes. Thank you.

7 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: You all seem to be on a hot
8 streak, and we like that. It's very good, congratulations.

9 So I was very interested in hearing about the SBCR's
10 actions to promote innovations and acquisitions. In particular, your approach
11 to collaborating with the Chief Information Officer, the Office of Administration,
12 the Regional offices and other government partners.

13 And trying to reach all the goals. Two of which were kind
14 of difficult. That were the HUBZone and the disabled veterans and small
15 business.

16 What plans do you have to leverage this experience and its
17 outcomes to make further gains in the small business program? Can you
18 share with me a little bit?

19 MS. ORDAZ: Sure. We're just going to continue doing a
20 lot of what we have already done, becoming an inclusive, you know, we have
21 a really great partnership with ADM. It's an integrated team.

22 Many of the requests for contract dollars come through
23 small business as a first step. And as it's coordinated with ADM.

1 So, I think what, we're going to keep pulsing the
2 environment, keep doing some outreach. We work closely with the Chamber
3 of Commerce, we have other events coming up that will help foster those
4 areas to stay focused on HUBZone and service-disabled veterans and women
5 owned small businesses.

6 We also, there is, from the transformation standpoint there
7 is some other things being done. We've done a lot of the matchmaking
8 events you've heard of here in the Agency where you match Agency's
9 capabilities or business capabilities with the Agency needs.

10 And some of that is done through, electronically online, as
11 opposed to having to uproot small businesses to come into the Agency. So
12 I know our small business team has done some of that work and has been
13 engaged in those. And that helps draw a better awareness to what we have
14 and to match it with the needs of the Agency, plus the small businesses out
15 there.

16 So, leveraging the technology is a huge part and we're
17 working closely with OCIO on that. And we'll continue to do so to help even
18 make a stronger A. I know there is an A+. Some of that involves structure
19 that's outside of my control.

20 But that's what I'd like to share. Tony Briggs is our Small
21 Business Program Manager. He is sitting here behind me and he is welcome
22 to share a couple of insights briefly.

23 MR. BRIGGS: Good morning, Chairman and good

1 morning, Commissioners. And thank you for that question, we do appreciate
2 it.

3 So, our approach, essentially, is a constant and fluid
4 approach as to a one-time static assessment. So what we do each year is
5 we take a look at what internal and external challenges we may face in the
6 future.

7 So, with respect to internal challenges it could be spending
8 restrictions, it could be dealing with changing contracting requirements based
9 upon our move towards innovation. And with respect to external challenges,
10 it could be new federal mandates and initiatives that focus on economic and
11 business development.

12 In addition to that, the small business program meets with
13 our federal counterparts and other small businesses, offices across the federal
14 government on a monthly basis. And that is to discuss best practices.
15 What's working for their Agency, what's working for ours. And then we try to
16 incorporate those best practices into how we do business.

17 So, in the end it's a constant, ever-changing approach, not
18 a static one-time assessment. Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Thank you.

20 MS. ORDAZ: Yes.

21 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: I want to ask you one other
22 question too. About your inclusive diversity strategic plan.

23 Do you have any specific plans for fostering diversity and

1 potential applicant pools?

2 For example, are you working with OCHCO to recommend
3 different recruitment efforts that may increase the diversity of applicant pools?

4 And I guess just to follow-up with that, the page, the other
5 question I had here was a second. Oh, should we consider how we write our
6 vacancies to increase the pool of qualified applicants?

7 MS. ORDAZ: Great question. And yes, we have been
8 doing that. We've been engaged closely with OCHCO.

9 As a matter of fact, Susan Salter is here from OCHCO. I'd
10 like her to speak as opposed to me speaking for her in this regard. And she'll
11 tell you some of the great things that we're doing.

12 MS. SALTER: Good morning, Chairman and
13 Commissioners. Thank you for that question.

14 So, our campus, our fall campus recruitment activities, let
15 me talk a little bit about that. We had a very robust recruitment activity this
16 fall.

17 We visited, physically, 20 campuses. But not only just to
18 go and participate in a career fair, but we did a lot of outreach prior to the event
19 to student groups, such as the National Society of Black Engineers, Society
20 of Women Engineers, to encourage them to let their constituents come visit
21 our booth, learn more about the NRC. We did a lot of student information
22 sessions.

23 So, we felt like we had a really good campus game. We

1 sent diverse groups of recruiters out to the schools.

2 In addition for the schools that we weren't able to physically
3 visit, we did a lot of outreach. Particularly to grant students who received
4 scholarships and fellowships to the NRC grants, but also by posting our
5 summer internship opportunities on a variety of campuses through programs
6 like Handshake and Simplicity where you send it and they kind of blast it out
7 to a variety of schools.

8 Those schools included minority serving institutions. And
9 so, we feel like we had a good game this year. We are encouraged by the
10 results that we're seeing.

11 We have 21 acceptances for the NRAN program. Some
12 more pending. We also are in the process of finishing up 96 offers to summer
13 students for internships this summer.

14 We're encouraged by what we see. It is still a work in
15 progress. We don't have final numbers. But we're also keeping an eye on
16 areas that may be of concern.

17 For example, individuals with disabilities, the workforce
18 recruitment program, which is managed by Department of Labor and
19 Department of Defense is releasing this week their database of students that
20 they recruit. So we're going to be looking at that and trying to add to the
21 numbers that we have.

22 As far as rating the vacancies, I think we always are looking
23 at ways to better promote the vacancies and make sure that people see

1 themselves in it. So I think there is work that we can do in that, but that's
2 always on our mind when we're creating a vacancy.

3 The other thing I would like to say is just to thank all the
4 advisory committees and the NextGen workgroup. They have been helping
5 us, not only to identify and support recruitment activities that would increase
6 diversity, but also with that, most important job of on boarding because once
7 we bring these folks onboard we want to make sure that they feel welcome,
8 that they feel included, that they're not left hanging about, how do I find
9 housing. And particularly for new graduates and things like that.

10 So, they are also helping us with that important activity.

11 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Thank you.

12 MS. SALTER: Does that help?

13 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Thank you so much. Mary, I
14 got a couple of minutes left --

15 MS. MUESSLE: Okay.

16 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: -- a little less than that now.
17 So for -- and Lucky Ducky.

18 (Laughter.)

19 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: So, thank you for your hard
20 work here at the Agency over the years. And I know you're getting ready to
21 move out to Mark's area. They're very excited to have you coming out there.

22 MR. SHAFFER: She's bringing the duck.

23 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: And she's bringing the duck.

1 All right.

2 MS. MUESSLE: Yes. There's a new duck in ADM.

3 (Laughter.)

4 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: So, I really appreciated
5 hearing about your approach to handling the cuts and the corporate side of
6 the Agency. And I was also, I really appreciated hearing about the
7 brainstorming sessions and the ways you identify things. And how to work
8 more efficiently.

9 Do you know whether any of the ideas you've identified can
10 be exported to other Agency offices? You know?

11 MS. MUESSLE: Yes. So, and they were brainstorming
12 ideas. So they kind of planted seeds that took, grew into different things.
13 And it could be before the Jam.

14 So, I think that we're seeing a lot of the same things in this
15 exercise as we saw in the Jam things. Like the top two.

16 And we did some crowd sourcing around the, our ideas,
17 when we brainstormed we brought them together. We put them out to what's
18 important to people, what's realistic.

19 And so, things like concurrence process, empowering
20 people to the lowest level, the electronic signature, giving people time in
21 between meetings. You know, 50 minutes rather than an hour to get
22 someplace, make a phone call, to communicate.

23 There is a number of things. Use of technology, right, that

1 one in particular. Use, effective use of overtime.

2 So those are things that aren't this specific where we might
3 have found cost savings in the budget for an ADM activity that I do think could
4 be transported to other offices.

5 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Thank you so much. And
6 very quickly, Chairman. Mark, thank you for your assistance last week, I had
7 a great trip. And please tell everybody hello and that I have my pictures still
8 from the photo booth --

9 (Laughter.)

10 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: -- that they had set up.

11 And for those of you who have not heard, Karren Alexander,
12 Karren with two Rs is you want to Google her, is worth it. And if you ever
13 have the opportunity to listen to her, you should do so. Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Well, thank you all again for your
15 presentations. And I think for a theme that I heard from each of you today is
16 thought, as we move forward, not just for transformation, but generally with
17 our culture that every voice has a contribution to make, everyone's ideas and
18 perspectives, I think, are going to contribute to the strength of who we are and
19 getting where we're trying to go.

20 So I felt in one form or another each of you kind of touched
21 on that same point. I'm in the strong, strong agreement with that, as I know
22 the Commission as a whole, feels that way as well.

23 But let me just touch on a few areas. It is, we do get

1 background information for the meeting, so I was going through some of our
2 diversity percentages. And in an environment where we're seeing
3 organizations like Los Alamos National Laboratory and other organizations
4 make commitments to move towards greater gender parity and to do so faster.

5 I don't have any illusions about the challenges of moving the
6 needle on that in technical fields. I know that that can be difficult to do.

7 However, in kind of looking at some of our five years stats,
8 and with and awareness that I think more women are going into STEM fields,
9 it just doesn't seem like it's showing up. Maybe it's too far at the front-end of
10 the pipeline with women who are looking more seriously at STEM, but, Vonna,
11 do you want to talk a little bit about that?

12 MS. ORDAZ: Sure. I think there is always a need for
13 continuing efforts to promote STEM. I'm trying to do it in my household and
14 I've been unsuccessful with two ladies and a gentleman. But, anyway, so in
15 many cases it's one of those things you just have to keep the pulse on it.

16 You know, we've gone down as an agency from a staffing
17 perspective. But we have all these efforts, the volunteers here in the room,
18 the ones in the Regions that are out there to recruitment events. We just
19 have to keep the pulse on it.

20 And as a, I remember when I was in this role several years
21 ago, starting at the elementary level and up, that's really where you have to,
22 you have to go. You know, getting out not just to the high schools because
23 some of them have already made up their mind and they don't want to listen.

1 You know, you have to get down that younger, younger group to show them
2 all the opportunities that exist in STEM for women, minorities, and the like.

3 So, it is a continuing need to do that.

4 We have a Diversity Management Inclusion Council. I
5 haven't mentioned that here today yet, but that is, I think in the past several
6 years it hasn't had a strong focus as it originally had, and that's through an
7 executive order. So, we are coming back to bring that back to life, if you will,
8 in January. That's going to be a great opportunity. We've got a lot of change
9 in the agency. We have different folks in SBCR and OCHCO, and some
10 renewed energy there. So, I think we will use that as a forum to help focus in
11 this area together with OCHCO.

12 The SWP also has opportunities in this area where they get
13 together and engage on some of these activities, as well as the Human Capital
14 Council.

15 So, the focus on diversity and management inclusion, I think
16 that will be the right venue to take it to the next level in the coming year.

17 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Well, thank you for that. And
18 maybe to build on that response, Hector, thank you for your presentation today
19 on behalf of all the advisory committees. But in particular, I think you are the
20 current chair of the Advisory Committee on LGBTQ+ issues here at the
21 agency.

22 And I was acquainting myself a little bit with kind of the 2020
23 priorities of some of the advisory groups, and I noted particularly for your

1 advisory committee you are looking closely at transgender equality issues,
2 and also gender non-conforming awareness and inclusion.

3 And I thought what was really interesting was with the
4 Agency's focus on renewing a commitment to entry level hiring. And when
5 you look at survey results and research among Generation Z, there is, you
6 know, just a kind of I think a different cultural expansiveness maybe towards
7 issues. You had referenced some research that over a third of Generation Z
8 would identify themselves as knowing someone who is gender non-
9 conforming and things like that.

10 And so, as we go out and try to have university champions
11 and go out and look at our recruitment, I thought it was a really valid point how,
12 you know, if that generation of rising professionals thinks that this isn't going
13 to be an environment, it's kind of old school and, you know, has -- it's not
14 inclusive in the ways that they would be more comfortable with, then they are
15 not going to be as eager to explore opportunities maybe with the Federal
16 Government as a whole or with an agency like NRC.

17 So, I appreciate that that's kind of a challenge area that you
18 all are looking at.

19 Also, the Native American Advisory Committee felt that, you
20 know, we needed as an agency maybe to have better outreach to Tribal
21 colleges. And I know we're working a lot with minority-serving institutions.
22 But I think that NAAC was looking in particular at how we could improve on
23 getting Native American and Alaska-Native, you know, employees here at

1 NRC.

2 I wondered, Hector, if you'd just like to talk a little bit
3 generally about that challenge of bringing in kind of the rising generation of
4 professionals and trying to get a face of NRC that would be really highlighting
5 our inclusion and our culture here?

6 MR. RODRIGUEZ-LUCCIONI: Yeah. Thank you very
7 much for that question and for bringing the topic up. I think it's really
8 important that the NRC move to what's going on out there and how inclusive
9 it's getting basically, you know, the society.

10 I think it's very important that we show to either when we go
11 to recruit or universities how diverse the agency is and where we're moving
12 and where are our challenges, but also how are we actually addressing those
13 challenges. Because we all know that it's not, it's not something that is really
14 easy to be done right. Especially if you don't have the experience, like, if it's
15 something new.

16 Like, so the important thing is that people know that we're
17 looking to get better, to get there. What are we doing to make the changes
18 to make everybody feel like they're safe in their workspace here at the NRC?

19 Not only when we go to recruit but I think it's really important
20 that we engage in outside events. Go, like, community services, or we go to
21 other conferences that external training, that people see who's the NRC, what
22 we do. And I think that will encompass altogether what you mentioned in
23 trying to bring more STEM women, but not only that but also, like, other people

1 know, like, the NRC's out there, they're very inclusive, they try to get every
2 background, right, every community into it.

3 I had the experience, like, for the first time to ever
4 appreciate, I went to Out and Equal Summit this past October. And it gave
5 me an opportunity to engage with other private industry and organizations and
6 agencies, and other federal agencies, to see what they are doing with respect
7 to transgender and gender non-conforming employees.

8 And I've got so many good ideas I would like to bring to the
9 NRC. And that's what we are fighting for.

10 So that situation, a partnership with other agencies and
11 industries to see what they are doing to the best practices, what to bring here
12 is what people from the outside see that we're trying to do.

13 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: That's great. And I think rather
14 than have you address the Native American Advisory Committee issue and
15 the tribal colleges, you've got, you've got phone-a-friend here. Thank you so
16 much.

17 MS. SPORE: Well, I didn't know you were going to ask.

18 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: And if you would give your name
19 for the transcript and the web.

20 MS. SPORE: My name is Candace Spore. I am the Chair
21 of the Native American Advisory Committee.

22 And the one thing I wanted to bring up to kind of address
23 what you've asked, and also address what Commissioner Wright brought up,

1 is that one of things as NAAC that we want to do is to try and value the people
2 that are going to their home universities.

3 So, for instance, I travel to the University of Mexico, because
4 my family lives there, a couple times a year. So why not give those, in
5 addition to the community champion -- college champions there the ability that
6 they can go to the university and maybe take a day and get some credit hours,
7 and go and talk to the American Indians Advisory Committee there at those
8 universities.

9 So, it's a way that we all know we're downsizing, we all
10 heard that story, but now we don't have to have something even larger -- it's
11 just a few hours or credit hours -- but we can give them the skills to talk to
12 about what we're doing for native people, what we, how we want them to come
13 to the agency, and what was would be able to do even as interns. Because
14 it's a group that often needs a little bit more than just here's where you get to
15 the Metro. It might need I'm going to take you to the Metro.

16 So, there's a lot more engagement that has to be done.
17 And Twanna has really helped me in that area, and all of NAAC. So, that's
18 one of the things that we're going to be working on for the new year.

19 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Well, and, Candace, if I may that in
20 the tribal college outreach, too, there was an emphasis on building
21 relationships. And I think it takes some time after you begin investing in
22 building those before things come to fruition.

23 So, I appreciate that recognition that maybe NRC needs to

1 establish and then consistently support those relationships. But thank you
2 for the work that NAAC's doing.

3 MS. SPORE: Thanks.

4 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Thank you.

5 And, Margie, I wanted to refer back to something you said,
6 which was that getting all parts of NRC to realize that their ideas and
7 perspectives are welcomed. I wanted to advocate briefly for skeptics, you
8 know, we've got. It's important for skeptics to speak up as well because I
9 think it makes us sharpen the saw and really think about what we're setting
10 out to do, and make sure that we're looking at it from all different dimensions.

11 On that point, I want to mention that I know in general, both
12 in formal and informal EEO complaints are relatively low for NRC. So I don't
13 want to, you know, indicate that I think that in the span of federal agencies we
14 have equivalent challenges to some others. But that links that, of course,
15 where we look at those statistics. And , Vonna, you talked about that today.

16 And, you know, age, alleged age-related discrimination
17 continues to be something that makes up a substantial portion of the bases
18 for complaints that are issued here. And as we work to revitalize entry-level
19 hiring, it's very important to me, I know it's important to you all, it's important
20 to the Commission and the Agency, that that not be viewed as something that
21 it is an over-emphasis on entry-level hiring and not a valuing of all of the
22 tremendous wealth of experience that we have here.

23 Vonna or Margie, do you want to talk a little bit? It's difficult

1 to communicate even though the feeling is very sincere, it's a difficult thing as
2 we focus on our age demographics and reopening the spigot for entry-level
3 hiring, that people not feel that it's neglectful of their contributions. But how
4 are you tackling that?

5 MS. DOANE: Yes. So, I've made a concerted effort in my
6 meetings with regional staff at program offices. We had a great conversation
7 in Region IV because I was down there in December talking about how
8 employees that have a great amount of experience at the NRC are really very
9 important to our evolution of the Agency, our evolving culture, because they
10 often have the basis for why we are doing something.

11 They, when we are talking about becoming or looking how
12 we are risk-informed, making sure that we are focused on the most safety-
13 significant issues, there's so much expertise in the Agency. They have been
14 doing this for many years and they bring a tremendous amount of experience.

15 And so there really is a role for everyone at the Agency, but
16 especially our more experienced employees who are going to help us with the
17 change because they are going to help us understand where we were, why
18 we might want to do something differently, what the changes were, and then
19 how to communicate it.

20 And often, every time we are thinking about a change when
21 we're going through this evolution we have people standing up saying, you
22 know, we tried that before and this is what happened. And I don't know what
23 we would do without those individuals.

1 So, there is a role for everyone.

2 We also are going to have -- you know, I know you're familiar
3 with Nucleapedia, which is going to be an online source of information. And
4 we're encouraging all of our staff that have experience from all, you know, all
5 areas of the agency and all experience levels, to add to this database. And
6 so you can imagine that those employees, and especially employees who are
7 thinking that perhaps they're going to be retiring within 5 to 7 years, to really
8 think about how they are able to transfer that knowledge.

9 I really emphasize how important it is for them to engage.
10 And we are really looking forward to them being a part of this, part of our
11 changed environment.

12 So that's just general. I think, Chairman, if there's more
13 time.

14 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Thank you very much for that.
15 And I went a little over. I apologize.

16 Commissioner Baran.

17 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Thanks. Thank you all for
18 your presentations, and really more importantly for your many efforts to
19 promote diversity inclusion at the agency.

20 We've had I think a good conversation so far about -- that's
21 touched on external hiring and recruitment. I thought maybe, Margie, it would
22 make sense to just kind of take a step back for a second and give, you know,
23 a general update on external hiring.

1 What's the current pace for external hiring?

2 How are recruitment and hiring efforts being informed by
3 strategic workforce planning?

4 Are we seeing any internal procedural obstacles like the
5 SWP or other things to increase the pace of external hiring?

6 You could take all that anywhere you want or just kind of
7 general invitation to talk to us about external hiring.

8 MS. DOANE: Okay. External hiring.

9 So, you know, we have been very focused -- and I know I
10 appreciate the Commission's support as well -- on external hiring.

11 There's been a lot of confusion because we were, you know,
12 as Mary's talked about, we had Project Aim, and we were looking at reductions
13 in force. And now we're hiring. And so it's created a lot of confusion.

14 And so, to clear up some of that confusion we had
15 anticipated a 4 percent attrition rate. We are at 7.1. So, our attrition rate is
16 greater and climbing. And that has to do with an aging workforce, partly, and
17 then partly it is other, people leaving for other opportunities.

18 So, we are very focused on this issue. We need to hire.
19 Even though the agency is becoming smaller we still, as you know, we need
20 to hire just to keep the levels that we are predicting that we need. So, even
21 that smaller level because of the attrition rate we have to continue hiring.

22 So, we have 125 external hires for fiscal year 2020. And
23 we're actively working on about 100 of those right now. So, but we had to get

1 this machine working again.

2 And some of the things that we talked about, some of our
3 internal groups that look at external hiring, we really are careful in how we hire
4 because we are continuing to bring the agency, albeit it, you know, at a much
5 smaller case we are bringing the agency down as we right-size it for the
6 amount of work that we have.

7 Say, for example, plant closings and things like that. But
8 we are doing it all through transformational learning and taking staff from areas
9 where there isn't work and moving them to areas where there are. And there
10 are a number of different issues, novel issues that are coming up every day
11 that the Agency hadn't anticipated that we are continuing to work on.

12 So, so my message is that we are continuing to work on it.
13 We are looking at our internal groups to ensure that there aren't these catches.
14 We have more work to do there, because as we make sure that we don't go
15 too far, we also sometimes can hold up the very good efforts of expediting
16 these new hires to get them on.

17 We use Strategic Workforce Planning, as you referenced,
18 we use Strategic Workforce Planning to identify gaps. And those gaps are
19 current gaps that we already have and then future gaps. And so we are
20 putting a particular emphasis on those areas.

21 But we have more work to do, because like I said, this is a
22 machine that we have to get moving again.

23 So, that's kind of a broad view.

1 COMMISSIONER BARAN: We've had a few years where
2 there's been very, very little external hiring. We are ramping up a little bit
3 now. How much of the -- you know, if we're talking about, like, 125, how much
4 of that is related to internships and co-ops? How much of it is more kind of
5 just traditional --

6 MS. DOANE: Yeah.

7 COMMISSIONER BARAN: -- hiring, new hiring?

8 MS. DOANE: Yeah. So, would it be okay if I --

9 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Sure, yeah.

10 MS. DOANE: -- call a friend?

11 (Laughter.)

12 MS. DOANE: I believe we'll have more polish here.

13 MS. SALTER: So, about, we're estimating about 50 of
14 those would be at the entry level. The cohort for NRAM's about 25 to 30, but
15 that is not the only way that we bring entry level in. And so, we have a large
16 number of individuals who are being hired at the entry level outside of NRAM
17 for positions because NRAM is really designed for the future for positions that
18 we think are coming but we're not exactly sure where.

19 So, does that?

20 COMMISSIONER BARAN: That's helpful.

21 And while you're up there let me ask. You know, there was
22 a great discussion earlier I really appreciated about the efforts we're making,
23 and it sounds like we're making a lot of efforts to make sure that we have,

1 we're getting a diverse pool of applications for, you know, these new positions
2 that we have.

3 And Hector mentioned something which is, you know, he
4 was at a conference where there were folks from other agencies, and he had
5 ideas, but he heard from that. Maybe the both of you or others can chime in
6 a little bit, do we have a sense of, you know, it sounds like we're doing a lot.
7 How does it compare to what other agencies are doing out there?

8 What has been successful in terms of building the most
9 diverse applicant pool we can for these various hiring levels we're going to be
10 doing?

11 MS. SALTER: Sure. So, we do in OCHCO attend a
12 variety of meetings with other federal agencies, as well as the private sector
13 as well. And so we're always getting new and different ideas. I think for the
14 most part there's a lot of similarities. It's where you go, it's sending diverse
15 teams out, it's making sure that your interview teams are diverse.

16 So, there's not, there's not kind of, like, this new, you know,
17 thing out there. It really is the basics of where you go, how you present
18 yourself, how do you design your programs. Are they inadvertently excluding
19 candidates because of the way they're designed? Are your vacancy
20 announcements, you know, written in a way that people understand, oh, I'm
21 eligible for this, they're looking for me?

22 So, so we keep our, you know, we keep track of what's going
23 on out there and we share best practices.

1 I would like to say, too, that I think as we finish this first
2 quarter of fiscal year 2020, we really are seeing a pretty dramatic shift in hiring.
3 We have implemented a number of things to streamline the hiring process.
4 That includes opportunities for direct hire, the Tiger Team approach that we
5 used for the former hires in NRAMs, which is allowing us to get our offers out
6 in November and December versus, you know, April, February, and March.

7 So that's, those are big changes for us. And those are
8 things that we haven't done in the past.

9 And also I think the Strategic Workforce Planning results are
10 really helping us to push decisions on hiring to the Offices and Regions. You
11 can decide where you need to fill vacancies. And those are the tools that
12 require that.

13 So, SWP doesn't approve vacancies anymore. OCHCO
14 works to make sure that we have sufficient applicant pools. And I think we're
15 seeing much fewer solicitation of interests that laterally move people up the
16 same grade. And we're seeing a lot more merit promotion opportunities for
17 staff.

18 So, I just want to point that out. And those are both in the
19 technical areas and non-technical areas as well as the supervisory areas
20 where for a long time we've just been taking 15's and moving them into 15
21 positions, and taking 14's and as we tried to right-size and address some
22 surpluses.

23 But we are at the point now where we're going to see much

1 more merit promotion opportunities for staff. So that's exciting, too, I think.

2 COMMISSIONER BARAN: That's very helpful. Thanks
3 so much.

4 And, you know, I'll just close by saying I think, you know, I
5 think we recognize increased external hiring is really a necessity for the
6 Agency. And it's really good to hear that we are taking the critical steps we
7 need to take to make sure that, you know, as we do additional external hiring
8 it's something that's going to boost our diversity at the agency, which I think
9 would be really a positive thing. So, thank you all for your efforts on that.

10 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Thank you, Commissioner Baran.
11 Commissioner Caputo.

12 COMMISSIONER CAPUTO: Good morning. So, thank
13 you all for all of your efforts to prepare for the meeting today.

14 I want to add my thanks and appreciation for all these
15 activities that the staff supports throughout the year. I always enjoy the
16 cultural events whenever I can make it. And I find them to be very insightful
17 and thought-provoking. The Native American event recently was no
18 exception; it was absolutely delightful.

19 I think it's a great way that we showcase the talent, initiative,
20 and creativity of our staff. So, thank you for those.

21 I also want to add my appreciation to the Chairman's in
22 terms of the philanthropic events. I was lucky enough to get invited to join in
23 and volunteer some friends. I brought my son. It was just a wonderful

1 opportunity to share and support a very worthy cause.

2 So, those are activities that go on throughout the year, and
3 it really is, I think, special to be a part of that. So, thank you for that
4 opportunity.

5 I want to congratulate the staff for achieving the five goals
6 of excellence in small business acquisitions and receiving the A, that you are
7 going to make a stronger A. Well done, Vonna, you and your staff. But well
8 done. Well done.

9 Shifting gears a little bit, I think in looking at some of our
10 attrition rates, one that I think stands out a little bit is in the last five years we've
11 lost 5 percent of our 39-and-under employees. So, obviously we're not losing
12 these people to retirement, we're losing these people to other opportunities.

13 And I think when I look at that and I look at the FEVS, in
14 particular Question 67, "How satisfied are you with your opportunity to get a
15 better job in your organizations?" and it's one of our lowest scores at 37
16 percent positive, and 37 percent negative. So, this is clearly a challenge area
17 for us in needing to do better at retaining our staff and including opportunities
18 for career growth, especially as we see increasing retirements.

19 So, can you discuss what we're doing for our existing staff
20 to promote pathways for future promotions, both technical and administrative,
21 beyond just making training available?

22 And how does efforts in particular enhance diversity?

23 MS. ORDAZ: So, thank you for the question. I think it's a

1 great question.

2 There is individuals at all levels, whether it's the entry level,
3 mid-career, or those closer -- I'm getting into that other category -- towards the
4 end of their career.

5 COMMISSIONER CAPUTO: Not there yet.

6 MS. ORDAZ: Well, thank you.

7 So, I'm just saying, anyway, I think it's really important to
8 focus on the culture. I had the pleasure -- I don't know if Rita's here from
9 OCHCO -- but I had the pleasure to be on this Agency Desired Culture Team,
10 it's part of the initiatives that Margie was chatting about in terms of the
11 leadership model and transformation work.

12 And there's some things coming up. I won't spill all the
13 beans yet, but in January that we're doing, it's in the form of a slate survey, I
14 know, but it's to really look at the core of the culture. And so more things are
15 coming I'll just tell you.

16 So that will be helpful to understand because I think as
17 we've transformed in the agency or we are transforming, and innovating, I
18 think there has to be a better inclusion and understanding of what all that
19 entails. And some of the behaviors that may have existed in the past or even
20 the present, that will help us. Some of the things that we're going to do as a
21 result of the results from that survey, and that we're doing in this Agency
22 culture group will kind of help in that regard.

23 In terms of positions, I think a lot of the, I know the advisory

1 committees do a heck of a lot of work trying to promote various folks, not just
2 entry level but mid-career and those later in career, to help with resumes, to
3 help with packages, to help with how to apply for positions.

4 You know, we're all different here. We have introverts,
5 we've got extroverts, we've got, you know, double-E in some cases for extra-
6 extrovert. You know, we have all different types and styles. And it's really
7 important to help all of the different types improve their packages, improve
8 their interview skills, improve their how to answer questions. How -- you
9 know, I could use some of that today. But how to improve themselves as a
10 whole package to be able to better themselves for these positions.

11 Sometimes it's getting up out of your chair and not waiting
12 for the opportunity to come to you, you have to go get it. And trying to get
13 folks to be assertive in doing that, and helping themselves, and not assuming
14 that they're not going to get the job because they can't answer the questions.
15 Try. There's always ways that you can say I have comparable experience, et
16 cetera.

17 So, so I would say for those out there listening, you know,
18 take those opportunities, continue to take those opportunities. Come see me.
19 Many around the table, around the room here do a lot of mentoring, and we
20 want to make sure people take those opportunities and try to strive to get those
21 positions.

22 COMMISSIONER CAPUTO: Okay. Thank you for that.

23 On Slide 17 you mentioned the Inclusive Diversity Strategic

1 Plan, and the Comprehensive Diversity Management Plan. You know, it's no
2 secret, I'm kind of results-oriented, so what are we doing with these plans to
3 sort of step beyond having a plan and actually achieving the outcomes that
4 we're looking for?

5 MS. ORDAZ: That's a great question also.

6 And I would offer I've been back for three months here, and
7 one of the things that I wanted to bring back, as I mentioned earlier, was this
8 Diversity Management Inclusion Council. Susan's on it with me, and some
9 others, leaders across the Agency. And one of the focuses we're going to
10 have is there three goals that are in the Inclusive Diversity Strategic Plan.

11 So, some might say, what is this plan? In the past we've
12 always referred to CDMP, and that was the origin, and that has the pictures of
13 all the Commissioner from the past on there. So, in 2016, after I left this
14 office, there was a new plan that came out. And that's what this is.

15 So, the new component to this is essentially the data-driven
16 approaches. So, I'm with all the colleagues in SBCR and others that support
17 this area going to be focusing in that council to see what can we do to help
18 focus on the data-driven approaches that we can have. I think we can do
19 more in that area for sure.

20 And I hope you ask me that question next year if I'm still --
21 yeah, I'll be around.

22 (Laughter.)

23 MS. ORDAZ: But ask me that question next year. Give

1 me a little time with this committee and we, we're going to really focus on those
2 efforts.

3 COMMISSIONER CAPUTO: I'll just note for the record the
4 look of panic on Margie's face.

5 (Laughter.)

6 COMMISSIONER CAPUTO: So, that sounds good. But I
7 also want to note the CDMP is dated 2010, not necessarily easy to find on our
8 website. Is there any effort in the works to sort of update that plan to reflect
9 what we've learned in the meantime? And maybe showcase that more.

10 If we are looking to draw in under-represented groups, it
11 seems like this ought to be something that, you know, we showcase a little bit
12 more for the public so that they see it and understand.

13 MS. ORDAZ: Yes. And what -- Yes, I agree completely.

14 And that has been overtaken a bit by this Inclusive Diversity
15 Strategic Plan. But CDMP is the meat of that essentially.

16 So, the answer is yes, we need to advertise more. We will
17 be doing that. And we are going to do that in various ways.

18 And, also, starting in the beginning of 2020 we're going to
19 do an outreach to all the Offices in the Region. So, they'll be seeing me and
20 some others come out to look to see how we can help take everything that we
21 do in this office to the next level, and also listen to see what the issues are.

22 COMMISSIONER CAPUTO: Okay.

23 MS. ORDAZ: Thank you.

1 COMMISSIONER CAPUTO: Wonderful. Thank you.

2 Mary, thank you very much for the work that you've done in
3 administration.

4 MS. MUESSLE: Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER CAPUTO: And I am, I'm also thrilled to
6 have you going out to Region IV. I hope that's a good opportunity for you and
7 I wish you the best.

8 But I also want to ask you a question.

9 MS. MUESSLE: Okay.

10 COMMISSIONER CAPUTO: Slide 23 you mentioned the
11 staff came up with 250 ideas for working better and more cost-effectively.

12 MS. MUESSLE: Uh-huh.

13 COMMISSIONER CAPUTO: So, how many of these ideas
14 have been implemented? And how much do you anticipate being in cost
15 savings?

16 MS. MUESSLE: Okay. So, I am real results-oriented, too,
17 you were saying that. I don't have a specific measurement on the 250 ideas,
18 I'll tell you why, but I promise you I can equate it into real dollars.

19 When we were brainstorming ideas the intention really was
20 to bring each branch into a room with a facilitator and with a member of our
21 innovation panel and get people to really bring out ideas.

22 And part of, you know, it was in the middle of budget season
23 so we were busy. We also had just the Nuclear Energy Innovation and

1 Modernization Act had been passed. The cops were scaring the people, not
2 everybody, but there was enough of a sense. We had the biggest budget.
3 We were the one with the discretionary activities. They're coming for us.
4 And our approach was there's a lot we can do. Let's sit down and get the
5 ideas out. Let's not do it in a locked room. Let's hear what people have to
6 say and bring a budget forward.

7 So, we just got a lot of ideas. And I was thrilled. I mean,
8 we had everyone participate to get those ideas.

9 At the same time, we were doing a lot of other efforts like
10 looking at historical actuals and what really it costs to do activities and then
11 looking at redundancies, and already putting in some other innovation. So,
12 the efforts came together. We got more people engaged.

13 We presented a proposed budget at over 10 percent
14 decrease, while accommodating increases for contracts and things, without
15 what we thought will impact the agency. We had to go in the end deeper.
16 But that was 9 FTE and over \$10 million just of looking at what we could do.
17 And I believe it's a direct result of the innovation sessions and getting those
18 people engaged. And now we're looking at those contracts. They were on
19 board more in figuring out what their real requirements were.

20 Some of the actions did have real money. Right, we had a
21 new way for cars to enter the garage that we expect to save \$150,000 a year.
22 We had, we have a warehouse effort that we're reducing space that'll be
23 \$600,000 a year.

1 It didn't come directly from the innovation sessions, but the
2 other, the previous proposal was smaller. And I believe, again, getting more
3 people involved and seeing other people look and talk about risk. Then when
4 they went back they said, you know what, we can, we can even move it back.
5 And then we've even said, in a year from now we can make it a little bit back.

6 So, I don't have -- I have a website, we can look at how the
7 ideas were binned. And when we asked staff to vote on what the best ideas
8 were and how and weighted that was costing, we have some statistics. But
9 we were really just trying to run and get people launched. And then continue
10 to use things like our Innovation Panel to go forward.

11 COMMISSIONER CAPUTO: Well, thank you. It sounds
12 like a very productive effort. And I'm glad to hear that your employees were
13 engaged and contributing because I think that's one of the best ways to come
14 up with ideas.

15 I particularly like the idea of calibrating to known actuals and
16 previous expenditures. So, I think that really, you know, helps us be more
17 accurate. So, thank you for that.

18 And I guess my last comment would just be that, you know,
19 a lot of people contributed a lot of thought to those, to those ideas. And,
20 hopefully, they are captured in some way so that your successor can carry
21 forth on that work.

22 MS. MUESSLE: And we absolutely had more sessions
23 closed. We not told people what we were doing, what we weren't doing.

1 And if they wanted to rebuttal what we weren't doing, they had the opportunity
2 to do that.

3 COMMISSIONER CAPUTO: Wonderful. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Does anyone have anything else?

5 (No response.)

6 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: No? Okay.

7 Well, with that, again, my thanks to everyone. And, Mary,
8 I didn't have any questions for you today. But I, you know, you are someone
9 I can always count on to wish me a happy Constitution Day. So, I hope from
10 afar you will still do that. Mary and I just kind of geeked up on the Constitution.
11 We make no apologies for that. But thank you. I don't have a reliable source
12 to wish me a happy Constitution Day.

13 But there's still email, so you can still reach out to me.

14 Again, I appreciate everyone's presentation and all of those
15 of you who attended today and giving your energy to these efforts. Thank
16 you so much.

17 And with that, we are adjourned.

18 Oh, I'm sorry. No, we are not. So, Serita, we're never
19 going to stop doing this to you. But I just get so excited sometimes.

20 But next we will hear from Serita Sanders, who is the
21 Executive Vice President of the National Treasury Employees' Union, Chapter
22 208. And she will give us some remarks on behalf of NTEU, please.

23 MS. SANDERS: Thank you so much.

1 Good morning, Chairman Svinicki, Commissioner Baran,
2 Caputo, and Wright. Good morning to EDO Doane and our leadership and
3 managers as well.

4 And from my perspective as the Executive Vice President of
5 NTEU, Chapter 208, our most important audience this morning, our bargaining
6 unit employees, NRC's greatest resources, good morning to you, too.

7 Before I start, since I have a few more extra minutes, I see
8 we're ahead of schedule, so I just want to make one point. Candace came
9 up and talked about going to her alma mater. And Vonna talked about having
10 to go back to schools, I think it was, and how the initiatives to advisory
11 committees to reach out to the staff and work with the staff on those
12 simplicities of how to apply for jobs, how to help strengthen those skills.

13 So, I am also a university champion, and I just wanted to
14 share that I go out. What happened is my pipeline dried up. The previous
15 champion before overturning to me those connections within the university,
16 they retired. So, I literally go on my time.

17 So, that's a great idea to get some credit hours, and knock
18 on doors trying to get there's money through grants. And I still know a couple
19 of professors and I tell them about our new modern day risk regulator and the
20 great opportunity to marry our risks with our nuclear. You don't have to -- I'm
21 so forward, thank you. I'm like don't -- just because our reactor's gone here -
22 - I'm from Howard University -- I said doesn't mean that you can't use the
23 technology. They still have a nuclear engineering class. Let's get with the

1 math department. Let's get to statistics and try to work with.

2 And Candace doesn't know I'm coming to her -- she's in risk

3 -- later when I get this off the ground. So that's one of the challenges.

4 And I have to meet with Susan because I think Howard

5 University wasn't on the line up.

6 MS. SALTER: Sold out.

7 MS. SANDERS: Sold out.

8 MS. SALTER: Sold out.

9 MS. SANDERS: Was that it?

10 Because we are not on the university campuses, how are
11 you going to get the students to know about what's going on at NRC.

12 So, another thing I did is I connected with the young people.
13 They showed me how to use my nice, new, fancy phone. And when they
14 come back from break I'm going to hold a seminar for them on the very things
15 Vonna was talking about, walk them through the web page, help them with the
16 interview skills, incorporate it in their senior projects, and buy them lunch. If
17 you buy them lunch -- well, for them now it's different when I was in school,
18 it's they told me, which is going to be a challenge, we don't want to meet before
19 6:00 o'clock p.m. So, they'll come at that time because classes are structured
20 differently.

21 So, addressing this issue is really important. It's really
22 good for your champions or advocates to get to the university and understand
23 their culture and get back on the list to be in the recruitment cycle.

1 Okay, so I'll go back to my script.

2 Also, I would like to start off with my favorite topics of change
3 and transformation, and then share a few issues that are challenging our
4 bargaining unit employees. My intention is to give you soundbites and not
5 whiplash, okay, on what we see that the employees experience.

6 Thus far the agency has made significant strides towards
7 change. We have seen lots of reform such as those big ticket items, as the
8 Modern Risk-Informed Regulator, Backfit, NRR, NRO, consolidation and so
9 on. By all appearances, NRC is slaying that big dragon.

10 Well, in the peripheral there is something so innocuous
11 which has a huge impact on transformation. What is that something, you
12 might ask? It is how NRC managers work in its existing culture.

13 What we have seen, been seeing regarding staff's work
14 habits for our more technical issues is that staff typically works -- you have to
15 excuse me, I wrote notes and I'm following this path -- has typically, they
16 typically work more independently to get their work done with optional group
17 meetings to introduce the topic and scope, and then occasional meetings to
18 take it to the home stretch of their hardline deliverable dates.

19 In reality, the subject matter expert staff typically leads and
20 manages the project instead of the project manager. Where is that constant
21 collaboration element with the entire group working to the project completion?

22 To complicate this situation, the Agency is exploring open
23 office space format options or styles. Yet, the current infrastructure of how

1 we work is so draconian, and it doesn't sufficiently facilitate 21st century
2 collaboration, which is the byproduct of full open space.

3 NRC's culture as it relates to how staff work doesn't
4 necessarily promote openness and collaboration. There is room for growth
5 and transformation. The "jam" showed us that the staff is fully engaged on
6 any subject matter presented and offer excellent perspectives on any topic.

7 Outside the NRC everyone that uses a computer, is sharing
8 opinions on Twitter, Instagram, blogs, surveys, you name it, and moving the
9 issue forward with collective views and opinions to the next level. This way
10 of communicating is shaping and has shaped our American culture. This is
11 how everyone communicates. You see it everywhere. Why isn't NRC
12 employees doing this as a part of their everyday business?

13 Those positive and unprecedented learning experience
14 from the "jam" is another opportunity for collaboration and open
15 communication. What NRC has witnessed with this "jam" is that the staff is
16 21st century savvy in its communication, yet its basic infrastructure hasn't
17 caught up.

18 NRC's transformation technology reliability has been a
19 challenge for the staff, like Bridge lines, Citrix, et cetera. Continuously telling
20 the staff to send a ticket isn't good enough.

21 Recently I pulsed NRC employees on one single question:
22 What do you see the biggest challenge for the NRC today?

23 Now, that was a completely random and open question. It

1 wasn't, you know, posed like in politics. The unanimous response was that
2 management is inconsistent in how it implements NRC policies and practices
3 when dealing with employees. They show favoritism. And many examples
4 were provided.

5 Conversely, an example of characteristics that a manager
6 should embody was shared with me by a high-performing bargaining unit
7 employee. This employee's current supervisor is so supportive while he/she
8 is managing a personal crisis and still coming to work. Whereas, this
9 employee's previous supervisor would have made it very difficult to
10 simultaneously manage their personal situation and workload.

11 In this employee's words, "My supervisor is great. He's
12 what every supervisor should be. He is so supportive and understanding
13 during this major crisis in my life, I'm still able to work and be productive during
14 this difficult time."

15 The union has also witnessed supervisors using the CBA to
16 punish employees, especially during times when employees are having
17 personal crises and still must come to work, rather than following the intent of
18 the guidance. Wouldn't it be nice if all supervisors were like this employee's
19 supervisor?

20 This is just one example. However, there are more
21 employees that share the same sentiment about management. One bad apple
22 really does spoil the bunch.

23 What do you think about the recent NRC 2019 FEVS

1 scores? 2,174 employees out of 2,864 employees, or 75 percent of the
2 Agency participated. It appears to us that some of these ratings further
3 underscore employees' declining views regarding the NRC work environment.
4 The union observed some managers or Office Directors when discussing the
5 results with their staff, excuses were given for the lower rating, rather than
6 acknowledging the staff views and saying, How can we fix or improve this?

7 Well, the union is here to tell you that managers' excuses of
8 employees not adjusting to a reorganization or staff having attitude has
9 nothing to do with it. It appears that management is in denial.

10 In keeping with the best work environment for the bargaining
11 unit employee and NRC as a competitor in the nuclear marketplace for talent,
12 there is an area that the agency must give serious attention to, and that's our
13 Resident Inspection Program. This comment resonates with Commissioner
14 Caputo's comment on the staff 39 and under.

15 I'm sure that you are aware of this, the Resident Inspection
16 Program, but please indulge me.

17 In a recent visit to Region I, the 2019 Resident Inspector
18 Counterpart meeting, while engaging in a discussion the subject of resident
19 retention came up. I'm sure that you all read that it's difficult for the Regions
20 to compete for that talent at 2 percent, and more experienced senior staff to
21 fill these positions.

22 The union offers a suggestion to create a robust Resident
23 Inspector Program. I'm aware of what exists, but this would be an enhanced

1 type. This program would make it lucrative for highly-desirable and qualified
2 individuals to enter this program and remain at the NRC.

3 NRC's future and credibility depends on this leg of the
4 pyramid working well. Let's reshape our paradigm.

5 In closing I would like to quote, in the words of Steve Jobs
6 regarding success: Let's go invent the future. Forget about yesterday.

7 Thank you.

8 (Applause.)

9 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Serita, thank you very much for
10 those remarks.

11 And with that, we are adjourned. Thank you.

12 (Whereupon, at 11:50 a.m., the above-entitled matter was
13 adjourned.)