

# USDA



# GIPSA NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE EMPLOYEES OF THE GRAIN  
INSPECTION, PACKERS AND STOCKYARDS ADMINISTRATION

JUNE 2012

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## FGIS Matters...!

Randall Jones, Washington, DC



This past week was somewhat historic in Toledo as we celebrated the careers of **Dave Mundwiler**, Field Office Manager, **Phil Tate**, Assistant Field Office Manager, and **Donna Hillard**, Certification Assistant. Together their service to FGIS totaled 111 years! For me it is difficult to grasp all of the contributions and accomplishments of this group and their dedication and commitment that they have shown to FGIS, GIPSA, USDA and U.S. agriculture. Their legacy of outstanding service will forever live (see article on page 3). **Lynn Thomas**, recently selected as the Assistant Field Office Manager, has a monumental challenge awaiting as he takes on the management reins of the office without the help or aid of the three cherished FGIS team members that depart with well more than 100 years of service and expertise. I want to wish them well as they take a well deserved break. We will certainly miss them.

In June, I had the good fortune to travel with our new Administrator, **Larry Mitchell**, to League City, Texas, where we held two listening sessions that were widely attended by the local staff. Many that are located outside of the immediate area participated via teleconference. The sessions were very interactive and informative as we discussed the intern program, apprentice program, registers for vacant positions, the reauthorization of the U.S. Grain Standards Act which sunsets in 2015, quality assurance program, hiring processes, performance appraisals, civil rights, succession planning, training for technicians, working conditions, Diversity Roadmap, employee moral issues, staffing export labs on weekends, safety concerns, specifications for labs, upward mobility, mentoring program, fall protection and training, and AgLearn. I look forward to working with managers, supervisors, and staff to address the issues raised in League City for the benefit of employees across FGIS.

After the listening sessions, the Administrator, **Bob Lijewski**, Director, Field Management Division, and I traveled to Beaumont and visited one of our export grain elevators as well as a rice plant. The rice plant is similar to many other plants around the country in that it was built many, many years ago and has not seen significant enhancements of the years. We noticed that our lab in the plant was small and cramped and lacked internet service and telecommunications. **Dave Grady**, League City Field Office Manager, will be working the rice mill to enlarge our lab space and ensure that we have the necessary telecommunications.

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*Continued, see FGIS Matters...! on page 2.*



### FGIS Matters...!, from page 1

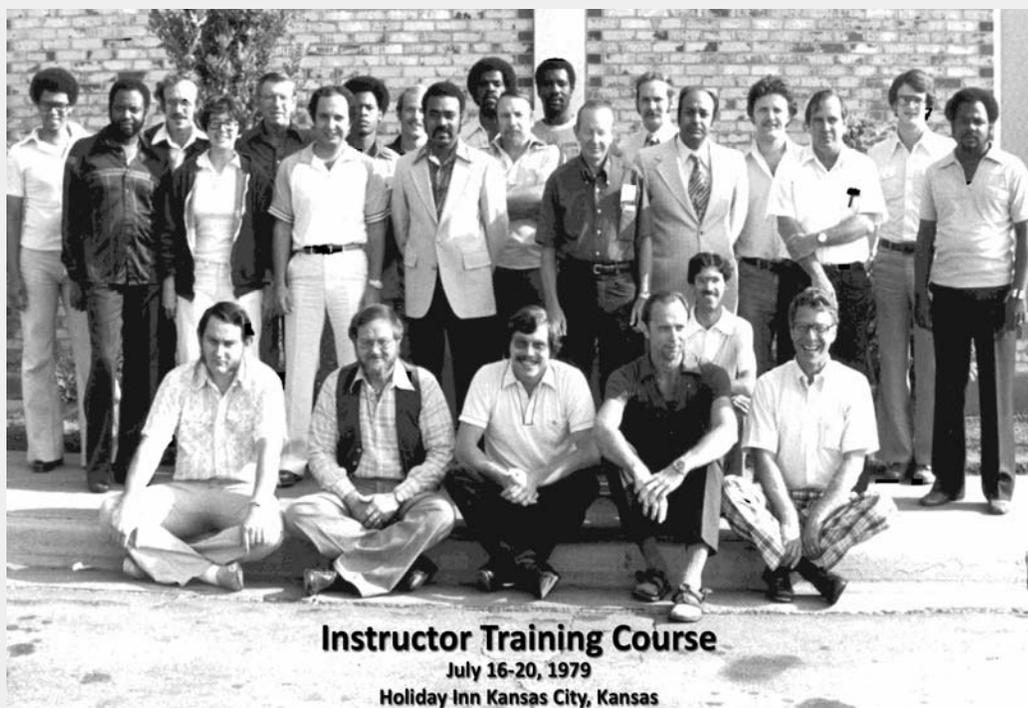
The National Grain and Feed Association and Grain Journal hosted a webinar exclusively dedicated to the implementation of the new moisture meters. The event drew nearly 200 participants from around the country representing all segments of the grain industry including producers, handlers, Official Agencies, exporters, and many more. **Dr. Dave Funk**, Chief Scientist, Technology and Science Division, played the lead role and was the primary presenter. As usual, **Dr. Funk** did a fantastic job explaining the rationale for moving to this new technology and the many advantages the new machines will offer.

In June, **Bob, Tom O'Connor**, Director, Quality Assurance and Compliance Division, and I met with Union officials at their Annual meeting. This is an annual strategic meeting for all involved as it provides an opportunity to discuss many issues that impact daily each and every FGIS Team Member. This year was no exception as we discussed the following topics: budget outlook, establishing design specifications and guidelines for labs, tours of duty, travel assignments, telework, industrial specialist positions, mixed tours, upward mobility, EEO complaints, protein coordinator positions, impact of increased attrition, incentive awards, WebTA, training of new employees, elevator safety, intermittent employees, ACT training for rice, journeyman and internship programs, intermittent and part time employees, elevator safety videos, elevator accidents, waivers for elevators that do not meet guidelines for location relating to tall structures, clothing program, safety concerns related to handling genetically modified grain, review of shiphold inspection process, and ACG performance. I want to thank the Union leadership for their commitment to working with us to enhance and improve the working conditions for all FGIS Team Members.

The volume of our exports continues to lag substantially behind the 2011 record and also well behind the five year average. With only a couple months left in fiscal year 2012, we are destined to see a historically low level of grain exports. It appears our exports will be smallest volume that we have experienced in the past 30 years. The Field Office Managers reported that our industry stakeholders indicate that exports should increase in late August with the corn and soybean harvest.

Until next time, keep up the good work and stay safe!

## Blast from the Past



Standing (left to right): James McLaurin (Mobile), Eugene Bass (Olive Branch), Dan Friendly (Beaumont), Nancy Bascom (Kansas City), Robert Spellmeier (Peoria), Martin Begley (Portland), Willie McLaurin (Destrehan), Phil Donehower (Compliance), Marvin Jones (Compliance), Jerry Wadley (Destrehan), Harry Booker (Houston), Willie Larry (Houston), Albert Tripp (Corpus Christi), John Blake (Beaumont), Assad L. Bastawrous (Chicago), Gregory Tomas (Baltimore), Bob Pope (Corpus Christi), John Pitchford (Portland), and Clinton Brinkley (New Orleans).  
Instructors—Seated (left to right): Jack Kramer, Paul (Hondo) Pendley, Tim Scullin, Donnell Keith, Carlos Moura (Inspector), and John Downs.



## Names in the News

### Personnel

**Lynn Thomas** has been selected as the Assistant Field Office Manager for the Toledo Field Office. Lynn began his career with FGIS as an Agricultural Commodity Technician in 1995. He has subsequently been promoted to Agricultural Commodity Grader and Quality Assurance Specialist. Lynn was also in the first (2007) graduating class of GIPSA's Leadership Development Program.

### Retirements

**John D. Barthel**, Regional Director, GIPSA, Western Regional Office will retire on July 28, 2012, with 33 years of federal service. John started his career as Agricultural Marketing Specialist with the former Packers & Stockyards Administration in 1979 serving in the Springfield, Illinois, regional office. In 1983, he transferred to Atlanta, Georgia, where he served 16 years as Supervisory Marketing Specialist. When GIPSA reorganized in 1999, John was selected as Trade Practices Supervisor for the Eastern Region in Atlanta, Georgia. In 2000, John became the Assistant Regional Director of the Eastern Regional Office.

John was selected as Regional Director of the Western Regional Office in Aurora, Colorado, in 2002. He plans to continue residing in Colorado during retirement.



*John D. Barthel*

## 111 Years of Service

### Sherri Murphy, Washington, DC

GIPSA's Field Management Division will see three valuable employees from the Toledo Field Office transition into retirement. On June 28, 2012, **David Mundwiler**, Field Office Manager, **Phil Tate**, Assistant Field Office Manager, and **Donna Hillard**, Certification Assistant, will retire from GIPSA with 111 years of collective Federal service.

**Dave Mundwiler** started his career in the Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) in 1976 in Chicago, Illinois, followed by promotions and assignments in Myrtle Grove, Louisiana, the Atlanta Regional Office, and Washington, D.C. In 1981, Dave was promoted to Field Office Manager of FGIS Field Office in Baltimore, Maryland. In 1992, Dave became the Field Office Manager in Toledo, Ohio, working there until his retirement, after 41 years of service. One of Dave's many contributions is an idea for an interpretive line card which has become the basis for the current Visual Reference Images (VRI) program. In his retirement, Dave plans on golfing, fishing, and other outdoor activities such as riding his motorcycle. Dave and his wife, Jen, also have plans for spoiling their two beautiful grandchildren.

**Phil Tate**, with almost 37 years of service, began his career with FGIS in 1976 in Beltsville, Maryland, then transferred to the Toledo Field Office as an Agricultural Commodity Aid. Phil spent several years with the Agricultural Marketing Service before returning to Toledo as an Agricultural Commodity Grader. He was later promoted to Quality Assurance Specialist, and then to Assistant Field Office Manager of the Toledo Field Office. Phil has always been active and full of energy and plans on spending time with his family and enjoying "The Great Outdoors".

**Donna Hillard** began her career with FGIS in 1979 as an Agricultural Commodity Aid. In 1981, Donna became an Agricultural Commodity Technician and a Program Clerk in 1993. Donna was promoted and joined the Toledo Field Office in 2007, as Certification Assistant. During retirement, Donna plans to travel with her husband Ray. She also plans on gardening and learning how to cook again. Donna retires with more than 33 years of service.

Dave, Phil, and Donna's contributions and dedication to GIPSA throughout the years are remarkable. They will be greatly missed. GIPSA is grateful to these retirees for their devoted service and wishes them the very best of luck in retirement.



*Left to right: Dave Mundwiler, Donna Hillard, and Phil Tate*



## Keeping an Eye on the Bottom Line

Kari McPherson, Pierre, SD, and Marilyn Gallagher, Longview, TX

Reoccurring themes of saving money and doing more with less have become all too familiar to everyone. The P&SP Change Control Working Group (CCWG) is also doing more with less. Previously, a letter was mailed to employees who submitted a Change Request (CR) thanking the submitter and letting them know the status of their CR. The CCWG decided an email would be more cost effective as there is no postage or envelopes required. Although it seems very minor in the grand scheme of things, every little bit does help!

A great example of a CR that will have an impact on saving money is CR #7106530 submitted by **Patti Tolle**. **Patti's** CR outlined a need to include Small Packers in the Account Management System (AMS) for Annual Report Mailings. Small Packers were not included in the query, but as more and more Small Packers were identified and added to AMS, it became necessary to send an Annual Report to determine if their volume has increased to a level that requires a bond. These reports had to be sent manually by the Central Reporting Unit (CRU) team. CRU then needed to manually follow up on these annual reports rather than it being automated through the Electronic Content Management System (ECM). **Patti's** CR allows all of this to now be done automatically saving a lot of personnel time. CR #7106530 was approved by CCWG and presented to the Packers and Stockyards Management Team (PMT) for consideration. PMT approved the CR and noted that the cost to implement the CR was justified as CRU was manually inputting the queries. **Patti's** CR will save CRU valuable time and resources.

If you have any ideas on how to improve efficiency and lower costs, the CCWG would like to hear your thoughts!

## 2012 Feds Feed Families

Janine Goodson, Kansas City, MO

The National Grain Center (NGC) is participating in the 2012 Feds Feed Families program donating food to the local food pantry Harvesters. Harvesters' food and fund drives typically decline by about 40 percent during the months of June, July and August, but they have nothing to worry about because the NGC has come to the rescue.

We started collecting food the week of June 11<sup>th</sup> and will continue until the end of August. The week of June 20<sup>th</sup> was our kick off – we had a bake sale and then a Sloppy Joe luncheon and boy did the NGC knock it out of the park. We raised \$200 and filled two barrels of food. We are already planning our next luncheon of red beans and rice, cornbread, and dessert ... yummy. Stay tune for more updates.

**Need to change something  
other than your socks?**



**Then fill out your change request form  
available at *inGIPSA* and email it to:**

**[FGIS-CCWG@usda.gov](mailto:FGIS-CCWG@usda.gov)**

## **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)**

**(800) 222-0364**

**(888) 262-7848 (TTY)**

**<http://www.FOH4You.com>**

**Confidential toll-free number 24 hours a day/7  
days a week**



## EEO Listening Sessions

Andrew Greenfield, Washington, DC

On June 19<sup>th</sup>, the GIPSA leadership team conducted multiple listening sessions for employees of the League City Field Office in response to a survey administered by GIPSA's EEO Advisory Committee (EEOAC) and Special Emphasis Program Managers (SEPM) to all employees in the League City Field Office circuit.

Administrator **Larry Mitchell**, FGIS Deputy Administrator, **Randall Jones**, FMD Director, **Bob Lijewski**, Civil Rights Director, **Kevin Smith**, League City Field Office Manager, **Dave Grady**, and Safety and Health Manager, **Mark Kemp**, gathered with employees to give them the opportunity to speak about issues and voice concerns relevant to them.

Multiple topics were discussed including: staffing, employee development, the HR hiring process, locality pay, workplace morale, dress code, the FGIS clothing program, performance appraisal samples, the USDA Diversity Roadmap, work/life balance, confidentiality, and safety and health concerns.

The EEOAC and Special Emphasis Program Managers would like to thank GIPSA leadership and all participants for their attendance and for sharing their thoughts on how we can best improve our agency. The EEOAC looks forward to hosting more listening sessions at other GIPSA offices in the future.

Special thanks to **Annie Trujillo**, EEOAC/Hispanic SEPM and **Adel Ibrahim** of the League City Field Office for helping coordinate this event.



*Left to Right: Kevin Smith, Dave Grady, Randall Jones, Larry Mitchell, Mark Kemp, and Bob Lijewski*

## GIPSA Idea Hotline

The GIPSA Idea Hotline is open for business. Please send your suggestions or ideas to [GIPSA-Ideas@usda.gov](mailto:GIPSA-Ideas@usda.gov); fax them to 202-690-2173; or telephone them to 1-800-455-3447 or 202-720-7045. It is best to send them via fax or email to reduce the possibility of transcription errors; however, ideas will be accepted regardless of the method of transmission.

## Issuance Report

Terri Henry, Washington, DC

- ◆ FGIS Directive 9180.35, Phytosanitary Inspection, dated June 11, 2012
- ◆ FGIS Program Notice 12-03, "Reveal Q+ for Aflatoxin test method" dated June 11, 2012
- ◆ FGIS Program Notice 12-05, "Charm Sciences ROSA® FAST5 DON Quantitative Test Method" dated June 25, 2012. This program notice replaces FGIS Program Notice 12-01 dated 3/18/12.



## A Tribute to JC Wooley

Lynn Cain, League City, TX

Louis Dreyfus Commodities honors one of FGIS' own by naming the grading laboratory after **JC Wooley**, FGIS Supervisor, who passed away February 27, 2008. JC spent many years working in the grain industry before joining FGIS on March 13, 1977. While working with the League City Field Office, much of his time was assigned to the FGIS laboratory at Louis Dreyfus Commodities in Galena Park, Texas. This thoughtful gesture speaks volumes as to the character of JC. He was a respected man, grain inspector, and friend to all.



*JC Wooley Building  
USDA- GIPSA Inspection Lab*



*JC Wooley*

## How Grain Trade Built U.S. Japan Ties

By Foreign Agricultural Service/Tokyo via John Pitchford, Washington, DC

The English translation of "Hog Lift and Corn from America – How grain trade built U.S.-Japan Ties" is available on the U.S. Grains Council Japan website. The book, which was published in December 2011, was written by Seiji Mitsuishi, Professor at the Miyagi University in Japan. He is a leading expert of grain trade and teaches the world food systems at the University. He wrote this book for ordinary readers who are interested in learning about foods they eat; how and where their foods come from. The readers will learn how the grain trade between the U.S. and Japan got started when an Iowan man wanted to help Japanese friends after a big typhoon hit Japan in 1959. Professor Mitsuishi's book also describes trade as an important part of food security. In the last chapter, he argues about the future of agriculture and food in Japan. For the recently translated version of the book go to <http://www.grainsjp.org/Hog%20Lift%20and%20Corn%20from%20America.pdf>.

Are EEO/CR issues or concerns affecting your  
employment with GIPSA?  
Do you have questions?  
Need help?  
Then let your voice be heard.  
Call the Civil Rights Staff at  
202-720-0216





## Collateral Duty Assignment in China

### Chuck Britton, Retiree

In September 2011, I completed an assignment for GIPSA's Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) Departmental Initiatives and International Affairs (DIIA) as a Collateral Duty Officer (CDO) in seven China Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine (CIQ) locations. The assignment was a collaborative effort of GIPSA, the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), and the Agricultural Trade Offices (ATO) in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou China. The objective of the meetings between CIQ and FGIS was for both organizations to gain a better understanding of each other's responsibilities for inspections to help facilitate grain shipments from the U.S. to China. I traveled with officials of ATO and FAS along with an interpreter.

FGIS has been building relationships with CIQ for many years with several different CDOs. This trip was my eighth visit to China since 2004. I was welcomed at each location with great hospitality and respect. FGIS plays an important role in facilitating cargoes of grain to China. Shipments of grain have increased at a steady pace for the past several years and should continue into the foreseeable future as China's demand for grain and feed products increases with consumer demands for higher protein diets related to increased meat products and food consumption. Soybeans lead the way for grain imports, but corn, wheat, and bi-products, such as soy meal, corn meal, and Distillers Dried Grain Solubles (DDGS) are also in demand.

I visited seven key CIQ offices where they import grain. They were Tianjin and Qingdao in northern China, Ningbo, Nantong, and Shanghai in central China and the Yangtze River, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen in southern China. During meetings and visits, I explained FGIS' role

and responsibilities, corn and wheat inspection and grading standards, and the importance of obtaining a representative sample.



Nantong China CIQ  
w/ Keith Schneller,  
ATO Director Shanghai

CIQ Entry- Exit offices have responsibility for all imported and exported products at the port locations in China; focusing on food safety, quality, pests, disease, viruses, etc. The organization employs thousands of very highly educated and well trained professionals. During my conversations, I explained our partnerships with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) for reporting infestation found during loading, and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for ensuring food safety requirements.

The visits and tours through the different laboratories show-cased incredible and impressive state of the art instruments for determining pest identification, weed seeds, food safety, and end-use. All offices have electron microscopes, heavy metal and pesticide residue testing equipment, and biotech labs, with a focus on food safety.

The system used by CIQ for obtaining samples and grading grain is quite different from FGIS. I noticed that they have very little inspection equipment at the labs. CIQ inspectors are very interested and motivated to better understand FGIS standards and grading methods, interpretations for factors, as well as sampling procedures. FGIS and FAS will continue outreach efforts and cooperative exchange programs with CIQ to learn more about grain inspection and grading methods used by FGIS.



Shenzhen CIQ Inspection Lab



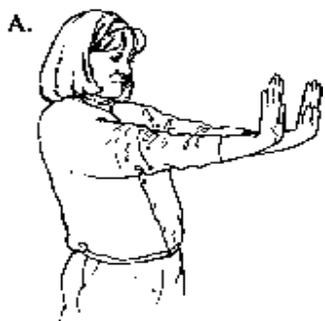
## Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Exercise

Amber McDonald-Lake, Washington, DC

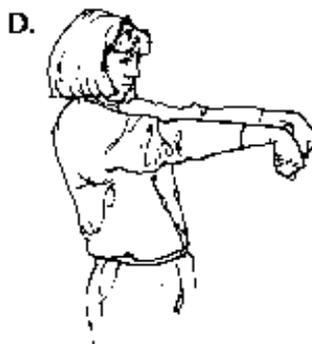
If you're feeling a little pain in the wrist, arm, shoulder, and elbow try these quick exercises below and find relief within a few weeks.

These exercises have been developed and tested by Dr. Housang Seradge at the University of Oklahoma Orthopaedic & Reconstructive Research Foundation. Studies there indicate that two out of three patients with mild to moderate carpal tunnel symptoms were able to avoid surgery by using these exercises - twice the success rate of other nonsurgical treatments. These exercises are more successful in patients with mild symptoms, and are not recommended for patients with severe symptoms. Patients who have persistent symptoms despite these exercises should discuss surgical treatment with their physician.

Remember doing a quick five minute exercise warm-up before starting work can help prevent work-related injuries.



**A.** Extend and stretch both wrists and fingers acutely as if they are in a hand-stand position. Hold for a count of 5.



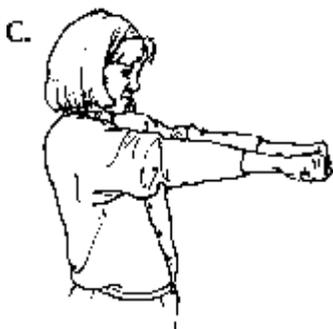
**D.** Then bend both wrists down while keeping the fist. Hold for a count of 5.



**B.** Straighten both wrists and relax fingers



**E.** Straighten both wrists and relax fingers, for a count of 5.



**C.** Make a tight fist with both hands.



**F.** The exercise should be repeated 10 times. Then let your arms hang loosely at the side and shake them for a few seconds.



## GIPSA-FGIS Mentoring Pairs Selected

### Mary Alonzo, Kansas City, MO, and Caroline Thorpe, Washington, DC

The GIPSA-FGIS Mentoring Program for June 2012 - May 2013, is in full gear. Several weeks ago over 25 mentoring pairs were identified to participate in the program. Due to the large number of mentee applicants as compared to the mentor applicants, participation in this initial year of the program had to be limited to those employees who had been employed within GIPSA for three years, and all other mentee applicants were waitlisted. Any employee who applied this year and was waitlisted will be given priority to participate next year. A special thank you and appreciation goes out to all who applied, especially those who were waitlisted.

On June 14, 2012, all participants were invited to a webinar on how the program would work. Pairs are now planning initial meetings and determining goals, as well as completing courses on AgLearn. Stay tuned for other updates and activities and congratulations to the new participants!

## Frequently Asked Questions About Individual Development Plans (IDPs)

### Caroline Thorpe, Washington, DC

#### **When are IDPs due and what do I need to do to submit one?**

July 31, 2012, is the due date for FY 2013 IDPs from your office. Remember to submit your IDP several weeks before this date to your supervisor or local Collateral Duty Training Officer to help ensure that the "consolidated" training plan from your office is done. To access the IDP form and written guidance go to: <http://inGIPSA.gipsa.usda.gov> and select Employee Resources/Training and scroll to the bottom of the page.

#### **What is the purpose of an IDP:**

As outlined last month: The intent of the IDP is to help employees perform more effectively on the job and enhance organizational effectiveness through developmental opportunities. According to the USDA directive 4040-10 (<http://www.ocio.usda.gov/directives/doc/DR4040-410.pdf>):

#### **An IDP is:**

- ◆ A clear statement of an employee's career goals.
- ◆ A map for attaining goals that specifies immediate and long-range developmental need.
- ◆ An individually-tailored action plan to develop specific competencies (knowledge and skills) needed to improve performance in the employee's present position or to prepare for new responsibilities.
- ◆ A written plan for scheduling and managing an employee's development.
- ◆ A tool for a supervisor to estimate resources needed for employee development training.
- ◆ An agreement between the employee and supervisor based on funds available to meet the employee's and the organization's goals.

#### **An IDP is not:**

- ◆ A corrective action tool for poor performance.
- ◆ An unofficial reward system.
- ◆ A contract.

#### **Are there priorities for the training on my IDP?**

Yes, training that is of a technical nature and is directly related to your job is usually of the first priority, and this can include soft skills such as communication (oral, written), continual learning, interpersonal, honesty and integrity, problem solving, and flexibility, interpersonal skills, and resilience. Next would be activities of developmental nature involving career development\* that can generally enhance performance in the organization. This might include networking opportunities or special emphasis programs or group conferences such as Blacks in Government, LULA, or Federally Employed Women. These may be opportunities that would help you perform your job more effectively within the organization.

*Continued, see IDPs on page 10.*



IDPs, from page 9

*\*Career Development Definition:* Career development is an ongoing, lifelong process that involves managing your career either within or between organizations. It also includes learning new skills, and making improvements to help you in your career.

#### **Is an IDP a guarantee that I will receive training?**

An IDP is a plan, it is not a contract. As a plan, depending on resources (time and money), it can change depending on office priorities and resources available. However, by writing out your training goals you are more likely to get the developmental activities or training that you and your supervisor or manager agreed upon.

#### **Why do an IDP if I am not certain I will get the planned training?**

People who write out their goals are more likely to meet them. While there is no guarantee of receiving the resources to complete the IDP activities, having a list of what your training needs are is helpful if resources become available. By writing out a well thought out plan this will make sure you are better prepared to take advantage of opportunities as they arise. Note: there are many other job related and developmental activities that are free and can be rewarding. These might be on the job, shadowing, details or other developmental options including books, or volunteer organizations.

#### **Will GIPSA pay for my college degree?**

No, the Federal government is not required to pay for college degrees unless associated with a special agency or Federal program (e.g. Intern). GIPSA only pays for courses if they are directly related to your job or may enhance development within the organization.

#### **Do I need to actively participate and outline activities on an IDP?**

Employees may decline the opportunity to develop themselves, but are required to complete the IDP form documenting that they are not interested in development at this time.

#### **Finally, who is responsible for my IDP?**

Employee Responsibilities are outlined in 5 CFR Part §410.303. Employees are responsible for actively pursuing: self-development; successfully completing training; identifying, with their agencies, training to improve performance; and identifying methods to meet those needs

According to CFR Part 410.201 agencies and departments are responsible for establishing programs, determining policy, resources and priorities for training and development. USDA has outlined these in the Departmental Regulation 4040-410 Creating Individual Development Plans (IDP) located at: <http://www.ocio.usda.gov/directives/doc/DR4040-410.pdf>

GIPSA News is the employee newsletter of the USDA Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration. Send your news, ideas, suggestions, comments, questions, or thoughts for the next issue to:

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by June 25, 2012

**Retiring?** To be included on our email distribution list after you retire from GIPSA, please send your email address to [Idelisse.Rodriguez@usda.gov](mailto:Idelisse.Rodriguez@usda.gov).

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