

The Federal Manager

COVER

Exceptional Public Servants Awarded Service to America Medals 3

FEATURE

Great Managers Lead with Core Values 10

DEPARTMENTS

President's Page 2
The Promise of a New Year

Policy & Legislation 15
What Federal Managers Can Expect From the Federal Budget

Meet Your Legislators 18
U.S. Representatives Tom Cole and John Garamendi

Making a Difference 22
FMA Regions Discuss Need for Leadership to Improve Workforce
Stanford Tours Beale Air Force Base and Holds Discussions with Chapter 381
Redmond Visits Chapter 6, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Addresses Monthly Luncheon
In Memory of Former FMA Leader Willy Castro
FMA-FEEA Scholarship Application

Federal Sector FYI 21

Retirees 27
Savvy Health Care Information

Legal Brief 30
What Would Bill Do?

FMA Corporate Partners



The Federal Manager (ISBN 0893-8415) is published by the Federal Managers Association, 1641 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-2818, to inform federal managers of management-related topics, professional development, and legislation affecting them. Statements of fact and opinion are made on the responsibility of the author alone and do not imply an endorsement by the editor, the officers or members of the Federal Managers Association® 2012. All rights reserved. Redistribution or reproduction of any part of this publication is prohibited without written permission. Printed in the U.S.A.



PRESIDENT'S PAGE



*FMA National President
Patricia Niehaus*

The Promise of a New Year

I hope you had a wonderful Holiday Season, and I wish you and your family a very Happy New Year.

It was certainly a busy end to a year full of new experiences for federal managers – not the least of which were furloughs and sequestration. I urge you to take action to stress to your Members of Congress the need to avoid future “experiences” like the government shutdown, furloughs, and the negative impact of sequestration on the federal workforce.

Give them personal examples of how you or your employees have been impacted. Both the House and the Senate will be in their home districts on the

following dates during the first part of 2014: January 20-24; February 17-21; March 17-21; and April 14-25. Please take the time to schedule visits with your Members of Congress to remind them that you are their Constituents and you vote. AND tell them how you want THEM to vote. Attend their Town Halls and other meetings and identify yourselves as FMA members. Why not make it a group outing for your chapter?

If one of your Members of Congress has a fundraiser that you’d like to attend, please contact Katie Maddocks in the National Office (KMaddocks@fedmanagers.org) to arrange funding for you and your fellow FMA members. You’ll make more impact in their Districts/States than we could in D.C. (more bang for our buck!). It is important that we show our support for our Members of Congress, just as we ask them to support us. PAC funds are intended and available to support our champions in Congress!

Please keep the Hatch Act in mind when you’re contacting your Members of Congress and when forwarding emails to your fellow managers. With the 2014 election coming up, it will be especially important to remember not to use your government emails or phones for anything political. Please don’t take the chance and subject yourself to potential discipline – the penalties include removal! As always, if the National Office doesn’t have your home email, please send it to Katie Redmond at KRedmond@fedmanagers.org.

When was the last time you invited a fellow manager to join FMA? As I’ve said before, there is strength in numbers and we need all the strength we can muster to counter the attacks on Federal Managers. Please take a moment to think about the managers you interact with and ask them to join our organization. After all, a *Century of Dedicated Service to America* speaks volumes about the value and prestige of FMA membership.

We are now accepting nominations for the Gil Guidry Award (FMA Chapter President, past or present) and the Manager of the Year (any FMA member). Winners will be announced at the National Convention in March. Your Regional Directors and our National Secretary, Dick Oppedisano, are all prepared to help with any nominations you’d like to make. Nominations must be received by Secretary Oppedisano no later than COB January 17, 2014.

Our National Convention will be March 9-12, 2014 and we’ll be back at the DoubleTree Hotel in Crystal City, just across the Potomac from Washington. We have a great agenda in the works so you won’t want to miss it! Our theme this year is *Federal Managers – True Patriots*. We also have a great training day lined up with the help of our partners at USDA and the theme of our training will be *A Leadership Toolkit for Challenging Times*.

Finally, thank you for all you do on a daily basis to serve our great country and for your dedication to the Federal Managers Association. I look forward to the promise of a new year! ■

FMA Magazine Staff

Publisher

Patricia J. Niehaus

Editor

Todd V. Wells

Associate Editor

Katie Redmond

Contributors

Katie Maddocks
Greg Stanford

Editorial Board

Patricia A. Spade
John C. Priolo
Sherman G. Williams

Advertising

Todd V. Wells

Circulation Coordinator

Latorea Wilson

Graphic Design and Production

www.digitdesign.net

FMA General Executive Board

National President

Patricia J. Niehaus

National Vice President

George J. Smith

National Secretary

Richard J. Oppedisano

National Treasurer

Katherine L. Smith

Region 1 Director

Michael E. Donovan

Region 2 Director

Dora L. Quinlan

Region 3 Director

Patricia A. Spade

Region 4 Director

Leonard F. Lew

www.fedmanagers.org

Annual Subscription Rate: \$30

Single Issue Rate: \$8.50

Advertiser/Subscription Inquiries

The Federal Manager

1641 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-2818
Tel: (703) 683-8700 • Fax: (703) 683-8707
E-mail: info@fedmanagers.org
www.fedmanagers.org

Article Submission

All materials submitted to *The Federal Manager* should pertain to public service managers. Copy should be double-spaced, no longer than 10 pages. High resolution color images, charts, or illustrations should be included if possible. Text should be submitted by email or on compact disc. Include a biography of the author.

Submit unsolicited articles to:

The Federal Manager

1641 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-2818
Telephone: (703) 683-8700
Fax: (703) 683-8707
E-mail: info@fedmanagers.org

Exceptional Public Servants Awarded Service to America Medals

By the Partnership for Public Service

The Partnership for Public Service has presented the prestigious 2013 Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals (Sammies) to a group of outstanding civil servants whose remarkable achievements ranged from developing a revolutionary new way to stop hospital acquired infections to saving the Air Force \$1 billion in energy costs.

In the midst of the government shutdown last fall and the ongoing environment of pay freezes, furloughs and budget cuts, the Partnership honored a group of inspiring men and women who have delivered on the promise of an effective government. They are representative of the countless outstanding federal employees whose work often goes unheralded, but who deserve praise and recognition.

"These individuals have persevered through all the challenges of the year to make a real difference," said Max Stier, the president and CEO of the Partnership for Public Service. "We are incredibly fortunate to have such smart and dedicated people working on our behalf. They are addressing our most pressing problems and their efforts are crucial for shaping the kind of future we all want."

In a letter of congratulations, President Obama said the 2013 Sammies recipients have "gone above what is required to ensure we have the reliable, responsive, and innovative federal government the American people expect and deserve."

"Let the achievements of this year's honorees and their extraordinary commitment to service remind us of the role each of us can play in building a stronger, more hopeful country now and in the years to come," said Obama.



Drs. Julie Segre and Tara Palmore, Federal Employees of the Year

President Obama met with the award winners and finalists at the White House and praised them for their accomplishments, sending a powerful message about his support of our nation's talented public servants.

The top medal, Federal Employee of the Year, was presented to a National Institutes of Health team of doctors for revolutionizing the way hospital-acquired infections can be identified and halted through genetic sequencing of the bacteria. An estimated 100,000 U.S. patients die annually from hospital-acquired infections.

A new award, the Honorary Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medal, was presented to Antonio J. Mendez, a former member of the CIA who ran a dangerous clandestine mission that secured the return of six American diplomats in 1980 during the Iran hostage crisis. Mendez's work, immortalized in the Academy Award winning movie "Argo," is representative of and pays tribute to thousands of intelligence officers who have helped protect our national security,

but whose exploits remain behind the cloak of secrecy.

Joining the Partnership in honoring the group of outstanding Service to America Medal winners were a number of private sector companies, including national sponsors Bloomberg, Booz Allen Hamilton, The Boston Consulting Group, Chevron, ConantLeadership and United Technologies Corporation.

The Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals is named in memory of business leader and visionary philanthropist Samuel J. Heyman who founded the Partnership for Public Service with his wife Ronnie to revitalize our federal government and to inspire a new generation to serve.

Nominations for 2014 Service to America Medals are being accepted at: servicetoamericamedals.org.

Here are the extraordinary stories of the 2013 Service to America Medal recipients:

continued on next page

Service to America Medals

Service to America Medals continued from page 3

Federal Employees of the Year Julie Segre & Tara Palmore *Superbug Code Breakers*

During a nerve-racking 12-month period in 2011 and 2012, a rare, deadly strain of bacteria that was resistant to nearly all antibiotics was spreading through the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Clinical Center, the nation's premier research hospital.

Every effort to halt the outbreak was failing until a team of NIH biomedical detectives led by Drs. Julie Segre and Tara Palmore used a revolutionary new technology to track and contain the infection.

In the end, 18 seriously ill patients acquired the bacteria and seven died from the infection – a tragedy for the patients, their families and the NIH. But the frightening episode prompted the NIH for the first time to sequence the bacteria's DNA to decipher how the pathogen spread from patient to patient, which then allowed the doctors to detect the origins of the infections, trace the transmission path and implement robust measures to put an end to the outbreak.

This use of genomics could radically transform the way hospital-acquired infections are identified and halted, leading to quicker response times and saving tens of thousands of lives. There are nearly 100,000 deaths a year in the U.S. attributed to these infections.

"It is a groundbreaking advance in one hospital that will now have an impact across the world and will become the standard," said Dr. Francis Collins, director of NIH. "We now have a new weapon in the battle to stop the spread of drug-resistant organisms."

The deadly multidrug-resistant bacteria strain known as *Klebsiella pneumoniae* first entered the NIH's Clinical Center in June 2011 from a patient who had been transferred from a health care facility in New York. The hospital thought it had taken steps to prevent patient-to-patient transmission, but another patient soon acquired the bacteria, followed quickly by multiple other cases.

By sequencing the DNA from bacteria from each of the infected patients, Segre was able to trace the strain to a single source, the New York patient. When

combined with traditional epidemiology tracking data, the genome sequence results showed the New York patient's bacteria were transmitted to other patients on three separate occasions. The sequencing allowed Segre and her colleagues to track the exact route of the infections as the microbes hopped around the hospital in ways that were unexpected.

Using the sequencing results, Palmore undertook intense infection control measures and vigilant hospital-wide surveillance to break the chain of transmission and stem the outbreak.

Career Achievement Medal Orice Williams Brown

Financial Guardian

During the past two decades, Orice Williams Brown has become a trusted expert for members of Congress on financial regulatory matters, from investigating hedge fund abuses in the 1990s to examining the full panoply of laws and policies put in place as a result of the 2008 economic crisis.

As the managing director of the Government Accountability Office's (GAO) financial markets and community investment section, Brown and her team have played a critical role in helping ensure new financial reform laws are effectively implemented and that citizens and businesses received the intended economic recovery assistance quickly and correctly.

In the past few years, Brown has overseen dozens of reports that carefully examined and offered recommendations to improve the \$700 billion Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), the Wall Street regulatory reform law, and initiatives to prevent housing foreclosures.

"Orice is a strategic thinker," said Patricia Dalton, GAO's chief operating officer. "She's good at perceiving what the issues are, determining the most important information and developing recommendations that are practical and will have the greatest impact."

In the wake of the financial crisis, Brown was instrumental in building and co-leading a multidisciplinary team to monitor the TARP program that created financial stability for major banks, insurers and the auto industry. The GAO has produced comprehensive reports every 60



Orice Williams Brown, Career Achievement Medal

days, and made more than 70 recommendations to improve Treasury's management of TARP-related programs and activities.

Brown also played a pivotal role in the first comprehensive audit of the Federal Reserve's credit facilities, which were established to respond to the financial crisis, and in more than 40 reports that analyzed various aspects of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, including potential impacts of regulations on the financial markets.

Gene Dodaro, the comptroller general of the United States, said Brown has provided expert testimony to Congress on complex financial matters and worked closely with senior officials in the executive branch to correct problems and improve program performance. "She has the best qualities of what you want in a public servant and is someone who stepped up in a national crisis and took on difficult issues with courage and excellence," said Dodaro.

Call to Service Medal Andrew Rabens

Empowering Young Foreign Leaders

As a 31-year-old State Department employee, Andrew Rabens has taken responsibility for an important task – building U.S. relationships with young people in the Middle East and North Africa who may one day become government, civil society and business leaders in their respective communities and countries.

Serving as the special advisor for youth engagement in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Rabens is working on several fronts to help empower young foreign leaders and familiarize them with American democratic institutions and society.

In 2012, Rabens organized the Active Citizen Summit, bringing 55 delegates from the Middle East and North Africa to the United States for 10 days to meet, learn, exchange ideas and discuss how to be effective leaders in their communities and countries.

"Andy was able to recruit these people by working with our embassies and design a program that really gave them the opportunity to meet each other, to see what their counterparts in different parts of the region were doing and what the United States has to offer," said Mario Crifo, the deputy director of public diplomacy in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs.

The young foreign leaders, ages 18 to 35, included delegates from all over the region, most notably from places where their political leaders might not talk with one another as a group (Iran, Israel, Palestinian Territories, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt), but whose youth leaders were willing to engage in discussions. It is estimated that 65 percent of the population in the Middle East and North Africa are below the age of 30.

Following the summit, a Qatari delegate



Andrew Rabens, Call to Service Medal

obtained private-sector funding to host a summit in Doha and worked with fellow delegates to expand his youth empowerment and development organization to the neighboring countries of Morocco and Algeria. Other initiatives that the delegates are pursuing are a campaign to end violence against women in Egypt and an online application for women to carpool in Saudi Arabia as a means to lower the high cost to women of working.

Rabens said he hopes that by helping to create networks and provide new insights, these young leaders will be better prepared to play more active roles in their respective societies. "Young people are the most important demographic right now," said Rabens. "It's important to look to the future and to start building relationships that will have influence down the road."

Citizen Services Medal Daniel Madrzykowski

The Fire Extinguisher

Dan Madrzykowski has spent a good portion of his 28 years in government burning down buildings to study how fire behaves, resulting in radical changes in firefighting practices around the country that are saving lives and protecting property.

"I burn things for a living," said Madrzykowski, a fire protection engineer with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). "We burn a building, change one variable and do it again."

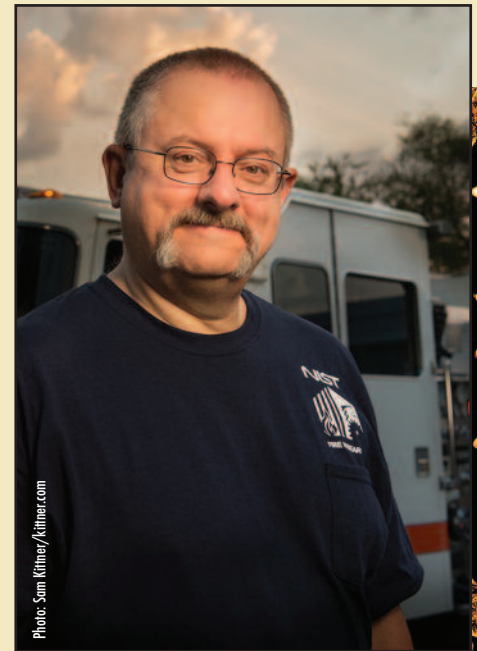
Working with fire departments across the country, Madrzykowski finds buildings that are scheduled for demolition and recreates previous fires in which firefighters were injured or lost their lives. He uses sophisticated research tools and fire-modeling software that help him analyze the blazes and then spreads the word to firefighters on what he has learned.

"Dan has been able to use science to show that the traditional practices don't always provide the best outcomes and, in some cases, they're putting firefighters in harm's way," said Willie May, NIST's associate director for laboratory programs.

Madrzykowski and his team have improved everything from ventilation and fire-suppression tactics to the protective equipment firefighters wear. He has had a

major impact on understanding, documenting and mitigating the dangerous problem of fire driven by wind, which occurs frequently on the upper floors of tall buildings.

In 2011, 70,090 firefighters were injured and 83 died in the line of duty, according to the National Fire Protection Association. During that same year, there were almost 1.4 million fires in the U.S., 3,005 deaths, 17,500 injuries and \$11.6 billion in economic damage.



Daniel Madrzykowski, Citizen Services Medal

The wind-driven fire research started in 1998, when Madrzykowski was called to study the dynamics of a 1998 Brooklyn blaze that killed three firefighters on the top floor of a 10-story building. When wind blew through a corridor with open doors and windows on both sides of the building, the firefighters were overwhelmed by the intense heat that traveled down the hallway.

Madrzykowski worked with fire departments in urban areas in five states, conducting fire tests in high-wind conditions. Thanks to his findings, fire departments across the country now are trained to consider the impact of wind on structure fires and employ innovative tactics to use the wind to their advantage.

continued on next page

Service to America Medals

Service to America Medals continued from page 5



John MacKinnon, Homeland Security and Law Enforcement Medal

Homeland Security and Law Enforcement Medal

John MacKinnon

Hunting Child Predators

Tracking down child pornographers and locating the young victims is like finding a needle in a haystack, but investigators from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) have had tremendous success through a combination of innovative forensic technology and old fashioned detective work.

Led by John MacKinnon, an ICE Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) team in Boston has focused on finding and rescuing exploited child victims by closely analyzing lurid photos and videos for even the smallest clues that might point them to the scene of the crime and the perpetrators. They monitor chat room logs, social media and the Internet, and they take advantage of international networks to post information and seek help as part of their inquiries.

The team's emphasis is placed on first locating the victims, a strategy that has helped lead investigators to the sexual offenders and opened up new avenues to pursue others who produce and trade

child pornography and abuse children. Since 2010, the ICE team's work has led to the identification of 162 child victims and the arrest of 52 individuals internationally and domestically. This success has resulted in the techniques of the Boston group being adopted agency-wide and internationally.

"Our goal is to find out who the child is and who took the photo," said MacKinnon. "We look at background clues in the photos or videos, such as a milk carton or unique carpet pattern or piece of clothing. If we find out where the objects were made, then we can figure out where a particular picture might have been taken."

One significant case began with the examination of a single image of a terrified boy clutching a stuffed animal that had been sent via the Internet to a federal undercover agent in Boston. The image was shared with law enforcement agencies in 13 countries.

A Dutch police investigator recognized the stuffed bunny as a familiar character in a series of Dutch children's books. The photo was broadcast on national television in the Netherlands, and within minutes, friends and relatives called the child's mother. This led Dutch police to arrest a man who previously had cared for the victim. Investigators later determined that the man, who had worked in day care, sexually molested 87 children under his supervision. Photos and online chats found on computers owned by the Dutch and Massachusetts men led to more than three dozen other suspects in seven countries, including Canada, Britain, Germany, Sweden and Mexico.

Bruce Foucart, an HSI special agent in charge, said MacKinnon has oversight over all of the child pornography investigations. "John and his team are established leaders in using forensic technology to identify victims. They are extremely dedicated and professional," said Foucart.

Management Excellence Medal

Kevin T. Geiss

Top Flight Energy Saver

In 2010, the U.S. Air Force adopted the motto "Aim High...Fly-Fight-Win," a fitting phrase that embodies the service's enduring commitment to excellence in the air defense of our nation.

Kevin Geiss, the Air Force's deputy assistant secretary for energy, is likewise committed, but to an even more expansive mission. His goal is to see America's airmen fly, fight and win in an environment that has reliable sources of energy and that places a new emphasis on conservation, alternative fuels and reducing costs.

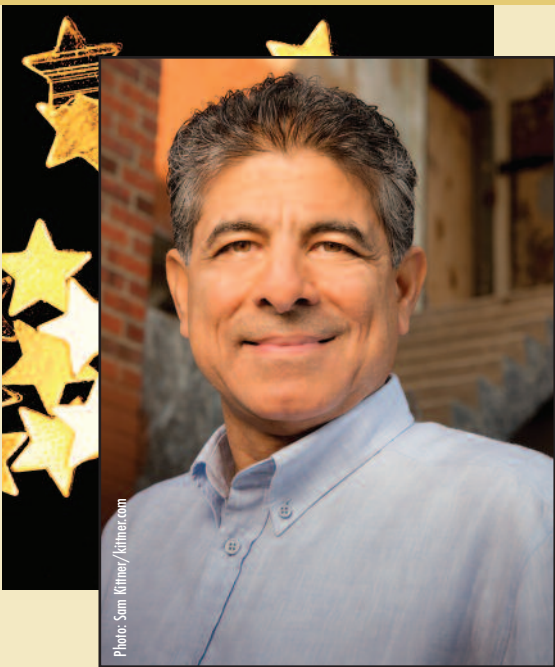
To reach these goals, Geiss stood up an Air Force energy office, crafted a strategic plan, began preaching a new way of thinking throughout the service and boldly implemented a series of highly successful energy reforms. These changes have saved more than \$1 billion by reducing fuel use by millions of gallons, and resulted in conservation initiatives that have lowered installation utility costs.

"No single individual has had more influence and impact in improving the Air Force's energy posture than Kevin Geiss," said Kathleen Ferguson, the Air Force's acting assistant secretary for installations, environment and logistics. "He has helped make the Air Force more energy secure and energy independent, and better able to deal with the constantly rising price of fuel."

The Air Force is the largest single consumer of energy in the federal government, spending more than \$9 billion on fuel and electricity in fiscal 2012. The energy bill constituted more than eight percent of the Air Force budget last year.



Kevin T. Geiss, Management Excellence Medal



Hamid Jafari, National Security and International Affairs Medal

Although energy prices keep rising and costs have increased, the initiatives instituted by Geiss surpassed the Air Force goal of lowering fuel consumption by 10 percent by 2015, achieving a 12 percent reduction in 2012 – almost \$1.2 billion in avoided costs – compared to 2006. In addition, the Air Force has achieved 51 megawatts of renewable energy generation at 56 installations. Geiss also has championed alternative fuels, including the certification of the entire Air Force fleet for unrestricted operations using 50/50 blends of traditional military jet fuel and synthetic jet fuel derived from renewable biomass.

“Kevin has the big picture in mind,” said Ben Steinberg of the White House Council on Environmental Quality. “He has gotten the Air Force to begin thinking about the importance of energy to its operations and how by maximizing energy use, it can better accomplish its mission at lower cost.”

National Security and International Affairs Medal Hamid Jafari

Creating a Polio-Free World

The elusive goal of ridding the world of polio is closer than ever now that the crippling disease has been halted in India, the largest of the four countries in which

the virus continues to exist.

Critical to this impressive achievement was Dr. Hamid Jafari, a medical officer from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Jafari managed a public health initiative between the government of India and the World Health Organization (WHO), directed a staff of more than 2,300 people and oversaw the delivery of about 1 billion doses of the polio vaccine to 172 million young children each year between 2008 and 2011. Many of these children were from migrant families or were living in hard-to-reach and high-risk areas.

“India was long thought to be the most difficult country to eradicate polio in the world, but Hamid’s technical and leadership expertise was able to prove the skeptics wrong,” said Dr. Bruce Aylward, WHO’s assistant director general. “He worked with the government to ensure it committed the resources, and he provided an innovative strategy, technical expertise and was a natural diplomat.”

Reports ranged from 559 to 874 cases in India annually between 2006 and 2009, comprising 43 percent of the confirmed cases worldwide. That number reached zero in January 2011 and a year later, India completed a designated 12-month period without a single occurrence. The next month, India was removed from the list of polio-endemic countries.

Polio is a contagious viral illness that mainly affects children and can cause



Dave Lavery, Science and Environment Medal

paralysis, difficulty breathing and sometimes death. In the late 1940s to the early 1950s, polio crippled about 35,000 people each year in the United States alone. With the widespread use of vaccines developed in the 1950s, the United States became polio free by 1979.

Dr. Rebecca Martin, director of the Global Immunization Division at CDC said Jafari, who was on loan to WHO, brought energy and fresh thinking to the National Polio Surveillance Project in India during his five year tenure that ended in March 2012. “Hamid had innovative solutions such as vaccinations at bus stops and on trains, and he found ways to reach the children of migrant workers. He identified where the populations were and made sure they were vaccinated,” she said.

Science and Environment Medal

Dave Lavery

Piquing Our Curiosity

In August 2012, members of NASA’s Mars Science Laboratory team endured an excruciating 14-minute wait for signals to arrive from Mars to learn if the rover Curiosity had survived its landing on the Red Planet.

After its entry, descent and perfect landing, the rover Curiosity settled in the Martian soil 154 million miles from Earth and began looking for signs of habitable environments, studying the planet’s climate and geology and helping NASA assess the potential of a future human mission.

The historic mission, which will rewrite the textbooks on the geology of Mars and shed light on the possibility of life-supporting environments there, was the culmination of more than a decade of perseverance, engineering breakthroughs and scientific innovations.

The NASA team leader for this Mars mission is Dave Lavery, who has brought to the project strong management skills, state-of-the-art-engineering knowledge, a deep technical understanding of the rover’s landing requirements and a vision of what could be accomplished.

“Dave has been on the cutting-edge of making this happen. He shepherded the development of the Curiosity rover

continued on next page

Service to America Medals

Service to America Medals continued from page 7



Antonio J. Mendez, Honorary Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medal

system through the complicated path from mission concept to reality," said Jim Green of NASA's Planetary Science Division.

The Curiosity rover already has used its cameras and drilling capability to locate evidence of water-bearing and clay minerals inside a drilled rock. Analysis of powder from a drilled mudstone rock indicates past environmental conditions that were favorable for microbial life. An analysis of the surface dust on Mars also points to volcanic origins.

Honorary Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medal Antonio J. Mendez

The Art of Deception

To friends and acquaintances, Antonio (Tony) Mendez was a quiet federal employee who worked for the American military, periodically traveling and living overseas and never talking about his job.

But inside CIA headquarters in McLean, Virginia, Mendez was known as the man who helped change the identity and appearance of thousands of clandestine operatives during the Cold War by creating disguises and fabricated documents and by developing convincing cover stories.

While the vast majority of these high-stakes operations took place behind the Iron Curtain and remain secret today, the most daring caper orchestrated by Mendez during his 25 years of anonymous service – the tense rescue of six American diplomats trapped in Iran in 1980 – was declassified in 1997 and has been immortalized in the Hollywood movie "Argo."

In 1979, 52 American diplomats were taken hostage in the U.S. embassy in Tehran – an ordeal that would last 444 days until Inauguration Day of January 1981. Unknown to the Iranian militants, six Americans managed to escape from the embassy during the initial takeover and were hiding in the homes of two Canadian diplomats.

That's where Mendez came into the picture. He created a fake film company, traveled to Iran posing as a Hollywood producer, supplied the six diplomats with false travel documents, gave them cover stories as members of a Canadian film crew, and coached them on how to behave and what to say. After many hair-raising moments, Mendez and a colleague escorted the Americans aboard a jetliner that took them to freedom in January 1980.

If the cloak and dagger operation had failed, it would have resulted in grave harm to Mendez, his colleague and the six

American diplomats. In addition, it would have embarrassed President Carter and the CIA, made life more difficult for the American hostages held at the embassy and put the Canadian officials at risk. Instead, the six diplomats returned home to much applause and celebration, while Mendez and his colleague quietly slipped away unheralded and unknown.

"To do this work, you have to be a romantic. You can't share it with anybody, but you get your satisfaction from within," said Mendez. "The job was harrowing and it was rewarding."

William Webster, the former FBI and CIA director, said the Iranian mission was emblematic of the creativity and daring that marked Mendez's distinguished career. "When other people thought something was impractical, he was able to do it and in a courageous way," said Webster.

Mendez's work is representative of and pays tribute to thousands of intelligence officers who have helped protect our national security interests, but whose exploits remain behind the cloak of secrecy.

Congratulations to each of the 2013 Service to America Medal winners!

If you would like to nominate a colleague for this prestigious honor, please visit servicetoamericamedals.org. ■



President Barack Obama meets with Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals finalists and winners in the East Room of the White House, Oct. 23, 2013.