

PRESS RELEASE: CHICAGO FEDERAL COMMUNITY AWARDS FEDS FOR LOCAL IMPACT *Chicago Federal Executive Board Announces 2016 Award Winners*

Chicago – May 1, 2016

In conjunction with Public Service Recognition Week, May1-7, 2016, the Chicago Federal Executive Board (FEB) is pleased to announce the winners of the 59th Annual Federal Employee of the Year Awards. Drawn from our local Federal community of over 170 agencies and offices and 45,000 federal employees, these employees and teams were nominated by colleagues and management as exceptional contributors. In our changing world, where safety and security are paramount, and the wave of Baby Boomers are advancing in age testing the robustness of Federal programs, these employees dedicate their professional lives to supporting the American public, often working tirelessly in “back office” roles where they may be hidden from view but making important, even monumental contributions.

The FEB awards represent the full spectrum of federal duties, ranging from individuals and teams working in specialized, highly technical science, technology and engineering, medical, legal, law enforcement, and research to public facing administrative/ clerical roles such as Social Security, USDA, Medicare and Medicaid. Years of federal service among nominees this year ranged from 2 – 48, meaning one of the nominees joined the Federal work force in 1968.

Winners are selected by a panel of judges drawn from the Executive Board membership. These judges identify those who stood out for their service to the public among the pool of nominees.

In total, the FEB will celebrate over 550 nominees and 10 winners who had the greatest impact in the Chicago region. Many of our Chicago area Feds are diligent in performing their daily work. This year, the winner of the Agency of the Year award recognizes the Department of Homeland Security’s Chicago Field Operations for Customs and Border Protection. In 2015, the Chicago Field Office developed and implemented a field-office wide mentor program with 121 employees or 11% of the staff participating. By design, the program is inclusive development, not accountability in employees to handle organization and coordinated 5 community service projects of their choosing; this requirement has been incorporated into the program to instill the need to serve in participants, while also benefiting the local community. Program evaluations revealed that participants feel more valued in the organization, have a greater level of trust in management, and increased confidence in their abilities. The program has been identified as an agency best practice.



The support work done by dedicated civil servants such as Ms. Verlon Johnson is critical to our federal community customers. In 2015, by developing and implementing new and innovative ideas, Ms. Johnson, Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Associate Consortium Administrator assumed a lead role in improving CMS’ efforts to increase consistency; effectively distribute accountability and support greater integration and collaboration in meeting the end customer needs and agency objectives. Her efforts are now recognized as the winner of the JFK Leadership Excellence Award.



Inclusion and empowerment of multiple internal entities with different needs has been a hallmark of her work, and she developed a plan to ensure better communication and collaboration on work products. Verlon led the effort in the realignment of the agency to better align work priorities and accountability for the several operating groups that must work together to achieve the agency’s goals in serving the public. This realignment resulted in improved knowledge capital, continuous quality improvement of work processes and enhancing the agency’s responsiveness to our Medicare and Medicaid customers.

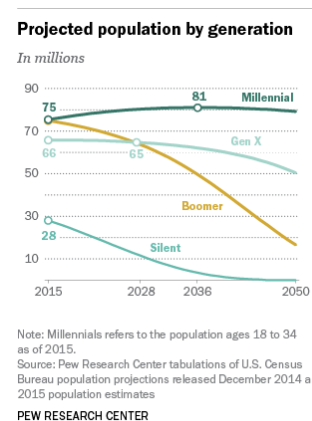


Figure 1 - Courtesy of CBS News

Please join us in recognizing all the nominees and winners for their efforts, and remember when opportunities arise, thank all who work selflessly in support of the public.

Category	Winner
Agency of the Year	Customs and Border Protection Field Office U.S. Department of Homeland Security
JFK Leadership Excellence	Ms. Verlon Johnson Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Call to Service Employee	Mr. Michael Krueger Public Buildings Service U.S. General Services Administration
Career Achievement	Ms. Katherine Dong Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Citizen Services Employee	Mr. Peter Jackson U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Citizen Services Team	Great Lakes Fishery and Ecosystem Restoration Project Team U.S. Army Corps of Engineers U.S. Department of Defense
Homeland Security and Law Enforcement Team	Red Light Bribery Investigations Team Federal Bureau of Investigations U.S. Department of Justice
Management Excellence	Mr. Carlton James Hines Information Technology Center Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Mission Support Employee	Mr. John Owen Economic Development Administration U.S. Department of Commerce
Mission Support Team	Out of Operating Room (OR) Airway Management Committee Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Federal Executive Boards coordinate programs between federal agencies outside the beltway. Through the combined efforts of our regional senior federal leadership, we:

- Provide communication during emergencies, including national disasters and terrorist threats
- Share special skills between agencies, including mediators and translators
- Connect to our community through outreach projects and philanthropic donations
- Provide local training for our workforce
- Are poised to facilitate large interagency projects

More information about the Chicago FEB: <http://chicago.feb.gov/>