

# Kelly's Corner



## The DOE Ombudsman

During the last two all-hands meetings, I have emphasized my commitment to looking at the health of our organizations, moving forward as a team, and having a unified commitment to improve and excel. I know that we can only do this if we all pull together and learn from each other and value what we all bring to the table. Recognizing that there may be differing views on what we do and how we can get to where we want to be, this may lead to differences in approach and opinions. Employees should feel free to express these differences to supervisors and coworkers alike. In stances where differences can't be resolved, I want to ensure that everyone is aware that there is a safe haven to resolve workplace matters. There are several avenues that can be used and one is the Ombudsman's Office. This office helps employees feel empowered to share their ideas, voice their concerns, and better complete the Department's mission. With that being said, I want to strongly endorse the Ombudsman's Office and plan to bring the Ombudsman to Oak Ridge to allow employees to hear firsthand about this office and ensure everyone understands that this is another independent alternative that is available.

See the Secretary's memo below.

*One year ago March 6, the Department of Energy established the Office of the Ombudsman. Earlier in my career, I watched a similar office at Stanford University provide a safe, independent, and confidential environment for university employees to resolve workplace matters. After spending time at the Department of Energy, I suggested the creation of the Office of the Ombudsman so that DOE Federal employees could benefit from that same sort of positive workplace resource.*

*Over the past year, the Ombudsman's experienced staff has begun to hold employee brainstorming sessions, help employees communicate with their supervisors, and assist Departmental leadership with complex situations involving many employees. Rita Franklin has led this effort and I am grateful for her leadership and the work of her team. Through their efforts, the Office of the Ombudsman is helping employees feel empowered to share their ideas, voice their concerns, and become more able to complete the Department's mission. I am thrilled to report that since its creation, the Ombudsman staff has addressed issues affecting over 550 employees. In the years to come, I am sure that the Office will become an increasingly important asset for the Department of Energy.*

*In addition to addressing our Nation's energy, environmental, and nuclear challenges, the Department has a commitment to provide employees with a constructive workplace. Please join me in expressing my gratitude to those in the Office of the Ombudsman charged with improving our work lives on a daily basis, and I would like to personally say congratulations to all who helped establish this office and those who continue to carry out its tasks.*

*The Office of the Ombudsman can be reached by calling (202) 586-0500 or by emailing [ombudsman@hq.doe.gov](mailto:ombudsman@hq.doe.gov).*

## My Commitment

During the last two all-hands meetings, we talked at length about the need for the Oak Ridge Office to become an organization intently focused on excellence and that recent reviews by the Office of Science identified a number of areas where we have the opportunity to improve. I want to reiterate that **I am fully committed** to addressing the issues identified in that report. The report discussed at length a need for us to address some "culture issues." Our goal is to develop a culture of learning and continuous improvement.

I have asked Sandy Smith to assist us in looking at our current culture, identify any areas that hinder our ability to move forward and help us map a direction for our changing roles and responsibilities. Sandy has been meeting with managers to gain a perspective and establish a baseline from their vantage point. He will administer a survey to gauge attitudes and understanding of new roles. From that baseline survey, we will be able to determine a path forward as we continue on the "journey of excellence."

If you are contacted by Sandy for a discussion, please feel free to be open and offer your honest perspective.

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## SC Information Technology Modernization Project (ITMP)

Many of you have heard about the OneSC IT Contract that has been in the planning for several months. The planning is over and the Office of Science (SC) is moving forward with the plan. SC has undertaken an initiative to stand up a new SC federal network. This project, called the ITMP, includes consolidating the existing independently managed IT networks based in Oak Ridge, Chicago, and SC HQ. The goal of this initiative is to provide an SC focused framework for the governance of IT services, to improve collaboration through the use of common applications and new technologies, to appreciate cost savings through these improved efficiencies, and to provide access for SC federal employees regardless of location or system by implementing Cloud services. Once implemented, key changes that users will experience will include: changes to the user login process; changes to the email naming convention (e.g., [first.last@science.doe.gov](mailto:first.last@science.doe.gov)); a common set of IT tools and applications; and, an improved capability to access the SC network from any location on any device. Additional improvements and efficiencies from this project are expected to come from the consolidation of three separate existing IT support services contracts into one common service provider.

*“Press forward. Do not stop,  
do not linger in your journey,  
but strive for the mark set  
before you”*

~George Whitefield

*“The journey of a thousand  
miles begins with one step”*

~Lao Tzu

## Federal Building Update

In the last update, employees were advised of the schedule that has been set for the tentative start of the move back to the federal building. While we have been out of the building, the Facilities Management has worked very hard to get some things done before our return. The following projects have been completed in the Joe L. Evins Federal Building:

- An asbestos abatement project on all floors. Asbestos containing materials within perimeter fan-coil convectors and sheet metal pipe chases were abated, ceiling tiles were removed, and other surfaces were wiped down.
- Entire space including above the ceiling was inspected by a licensed industrial hygienist to confirm the abatement process had been conducted properly.

There continues to be some ongoing projects:

- New ceiling tiles installation throughout the abatement area. (Complete on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor)
- Construction build backs of opened chases
- Clean up work from post abatement construction activities (ceiling tiles, sheet metal build backs, etc.)
- Installation of conduit drops supporting the new Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephone system (VoIP is an IP telephony term for a set of facilities used to manage the delivery of voice information over the Internet. VoIP involves sending voice information in digital form in discrete packets rather than by using the traditional circuit-committed protocols of the public switched telephone network ([PSTN](#)). VoIP is just another technology for phone service as opposed to analog, Integrated Switched Digital Network (ISDN), or digital. The VoIP phone sets and features that are being planned for the federal building will look and operate much like the existing key system, with multiple line appearances and intercom capabilities, but without the current system restraints of being tied to one system and not being able to cross throughout the building. In addition, there will be some of the commonly desired features such as caller identification, call logs, and multiple answerable lines. The new wiring that is being placed in the federal building in support of the VoIP effort is required for the quality of voice service.)
- Servicing HVAC units and other support equipment including emergency lights, exit signs, and bathroom fixtures

Additional projects that will be completed prior to re-occupancy:

- Limited floor space reconfigurations
- Building inspections, treatments, and actions to address any pest problems that may exist
- Cleaning of all office spaces