



Col. Julie Balten, right, Los Angeles District commander, joins David Van Dorpe, LA District's deputy district engineer, in leading the district's virtual town hall and end-of-year celebration Oct. 5 from the district's headquarters building.

End-of-year celebration

Story and photo by Stephen Baack
LA District Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District command team recognized district employees and highlighted their countless accomplishments throughout the fiscal year during an Oct. 5 virtual town hall and end-of-year celebration broadcast from the district's headquarters building.

Col. Julie Balten, LA District commander, joined David Van Dorpe, LA District's deputy district engineer, in leading the interactive event, which included recognition of not only organizations and teams, but also individuals, who went above and beyond.

"I feel so lucky to be your commander and to be here with all of you to celebrate all of our achievements," Balten said. "This is a huge team. We couldn't do anything and all of this we've presented here – and so much more –

without each and every one of you."

Although the mission to increase hospital capacity amid the COVID-19 pandemic started before the calendar year, it continued steadily thereafter. Balten highlighted the hard work and willingness of LA District employees in carrying out this mission.

"I think this is something that our district and our region should be so proud of," Balten said. "In such a short amount of time, we supported three hospitals and started with assessing 12. The number of people who raised their hands on New Year's Eve to be able to get up in the morning and start assessing on New Year's Day was incredible to me. It just shows that we're willing to run to the sound of the guns, so to speak."

Work on three projects – the Malibu Creek Ecosystem Restoration Project, Prado Basin Ecosystem Restoration and Water Conservation Project, and the Port of Long Beach Navigation

and Feasibility Study – have resulted in three chief's reports in fiscal 2021, which Balten said is "quite the accomplishment," especially at a district level.

LA District personnel also helped host groundbreaking ceremonies for major Veterans Affairs and military projects this year. These included the San Diego VA Medical Center Campus Spinal Cord Injury and Community Living Center in June and Edwards Air Force Base Joint Simulation Environment Facility.

Ribbon-cuttings for two new fire stations also were on the list of accomplishments – one at Edwards Air Force Base in December and another at March Air Reserve Base and in May.

Three maintenance dredging projects also wrapped up this year: Channel Islands Harbor, Oceanside and another in the Newport Bay Harbor, which also included jetty repair and

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Photo by Brigida Sanchez, Jacksonville District Public Affairs

Brooks O. Hubbard IV, center, Los Angeles District public affairs specialist, speaks with National-Local Government Liaison Michael Panik, deployed from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Detroit District, and Maj. ChaTom Warren, EFO-South officer-in-charge, about the ongoing response to Hurricane Ida. More than 760 USACE personnel are deployed and engaged, coordinating with local, state and federal partners in the affected areas.

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restoration. The LA District also completed the Port Hueneme Harbor deepening project in June.

Other big accomplishments include the completion of the \$100-million bridge-pier protection project near Prado Dam in May, the signing of the Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement for the Lake Elsinore Continuing Authorities Program 206 Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration in June and progress at the Brown Field Border Patrol Station Construction near San Diego.

Van Dorpe said the district has done “an incredible amount of work” this year that would be impossible to cover in full during the presentation. This includes more than \$1 billion in work, nearly \$125 million in labor and nearly \$10 million of work from other districts.

“We asked every division to bring in their own slides of accomplishments,” Van Dorpe said. “There was so much information that we really couldn’t boil it down in the limited amount of time we had. We decided to bring up certain slides here, but we’re going to have a much-expanded slide deck with a link via email, so everyone can see all the accomplishments that every division

reported out on.”

Last, but not least, Balten and Van Dorpe recognized individuals by name as end-of-year heroes, whose professionalism, dedication to duty and willingness to go above and beyond ensured the district was able to deliver the program and mission successfully.

“This list of end-of-year heroes is a sample of all the heroes within the district,” Van Dorpe said. “I love the work that I get to do here. I really feel like I’m working with a great group of people, working on a fantastic mission, and I’m continually challenged by what we do. Thank you, and I also look forward to all the great things we’re going to accomplish in the time to come.”

Balten added that it’s vital to take time out to rest and recharge and it’s also important to stay connected with friends, family and teammates as much as safely possible, especially during times of increased isolation during telework.

Balten closed out the celebration with some words of encouragement.

“Congratulations to everybody,” Balten said. “This year is going to be just as fabulous – if not better – than this past year. I know we can do it because we do it together.”

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The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District is working with the Flood Control District of Maricopa County, Arizona, to repair five levee systems using the Public Law 84-99 Rehabilitation and Inspection Program. Work is currently underway in the New River Dam outlet channel in Peoria. Here, Victoria Jurado (left), a geologist with the LA District and Jim Terstrie, a district construction representative, discuss the channel subgrade Sept. 28.

New River dam outlet channel repair benefits from emergency funding

Story and photo by Dave Palmer
LA District Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District is working with the Flood Control District of Maricopa County, Arizona, to repair five levee systems using the Public Law 84-99 Rehabilitation and Inspection Program.

Under the program, the Corps is authorized to supplement local efforts to repair levees and channels that are damaged due to flooding and other natural events.

"The federal channels in Maricopa County were damaged due to a storm event," said David Kingston, chief of the LA District's Emergency Management Branch. "Because Maricopa County maintained these channels to standard and kept them in an active status in the Corps' Rehabilitation and Inspection Program, we are able to execute the repairs with 100 percent federal funds."

Work is currently underway in the New

River Dam outlet channel in Peoria.

Victoria Jurado, a geologist with the LA District, visited the site Sept. 28-29 to evaluate the subgrade [foundation] of the channel repairs.

"The next step would be the lifts," Jurado said, as she described the project. "Lifts are the fill material – that meets specification – added in 8-inch lifts and tested to ensure 90-percent compaction."

Jurado went on to describe how the sides of the channel are built using a stair-step fashion and covered with a geo-fabric to keep finer parts of the packed fill from washing away. Riprap is then added, which acts like armor protecting the levees, to complete repairs to 816 feet of the 1,000-foot channel.

"The LA District has one of the largest PL 84-99 rehabilitation programs in the nation," said Mark Cohen, chief of the LA District's Operations Division. "Our work with Maricopa County is a great example of how the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers leverages

world-class engineering skills to address the infrastructure needs of local communities."

About Public Law 84-99

Public Law 84-99 is the discretionary authority given to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers by Congress to act and react to emergencies caused by floods, contaminated water sources, drought or dam failures. The authority allows the Corps to repair and/or rehabilitate any qualified flood control project (levee), whether it is federally constructed or privately owned.

Levee systems that are eligible for rehabilitation assistance under PL 84-99 following flood or storm damage, include those federally authorized, operated and maintained by a non-federal sponsor or non-federally built, operated and maintained by a non-federal sponsor. These levees remain eligible if operated and maintained to acceptable standards.

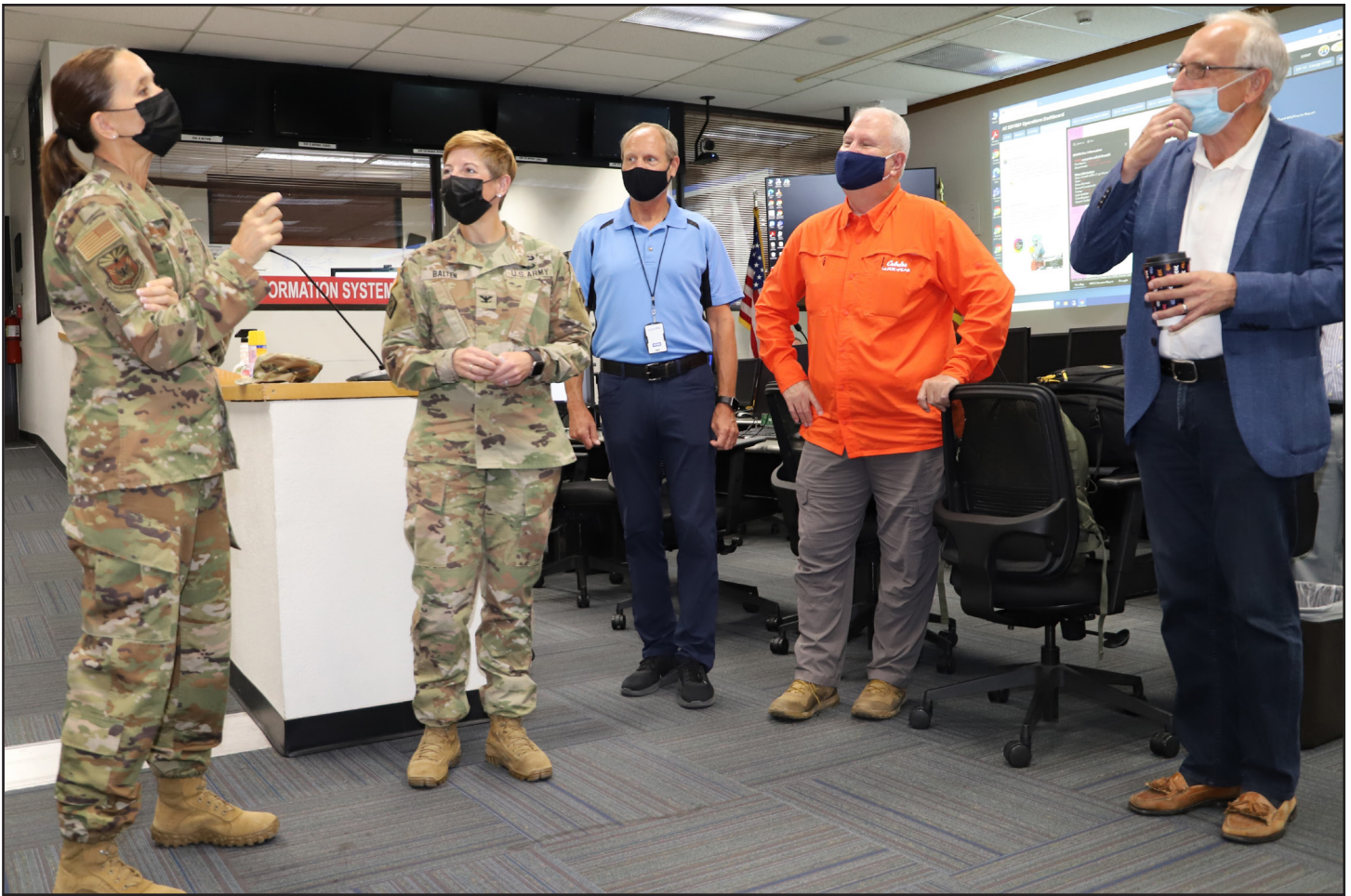


Photo by Robert DeDeaux, SPD Public Affairs

Adjutant General of the Arizona National Guard Maj. Gen. Kerry Muehlenbeck, center, discusses the importance of emergency response preparedness during a joint flood response exercise at the Arizona Emergency Operations Center Sept. 9 in Phoenix. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs, and the Flood Control District of Maricopa County staff conducted a joint exercise to evaluate flood response preparedness. The training featured various flooding scenarios at the Painted Rock Dam located 120 miles southwest of Phoenix.

LA District takes part in joint exercise based on historic Arizona flood

By Dave Palmer
LA District Public Affairs

PHOENIX — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs and Flood Control District of Maricopa County staff joined forces Sept. 9 to host an emergency exercise based on historic flooding in the state.

More than 100 representatives, including emergency responders and others with local, state and federal agencies participated in the exercise, according to Jake Van Tine, exercise planner with the LA District's Emergency Management Branch.

"The scenario was based on a real-world event from 1993," said Col. Julie Balten, LA District commander. "And, it's not the first time we have joined forces with our Arizona National Guard teammates and state emergency managers on an extreme flood

event with international implications.

"In August 2017, a flooding event in Nogales, Arizona, also was a complex mission with far-reaching responsibilities. Most recently, it was for the worldwide pandemic of COVID-19 and the FEMA alternate care facilities' mission. It is so comforting to know that this relationship is in place and endures, no matter the challenge."

The focal point of the recent joint exercise; however, was the Corps' Painted Rock Dam, located 120 miles southwest of Phoenix, a pivotal feature in the nearly 51,000-square-mile Gila River Watershed.

The purpose of the exercise was to evaluate flood response preparedness and communication across multiple agencies and how those agencies communicate the risks to the public. It also gave participants the opportunity to get to know each other before an emergency arises.

"The Painted Rock Dam exercise was a valuable opportunity to learn more about the dam, the facility response plans and the partners that we will be working with during an incident," said Maj. Gen. Kerry Muehlenbeck, adjutant general of the Arizona National Guard and director of the Department of Emergency and Military Affairs. "I am very pleased that the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and our emergency management team took time to strengthen these relationships and prepare for emergency complexities to keep the residents of Arizona safe."

Exercise Day 0-9 – January in Arizona

The mock scenario began with news of a La Niña event influencing local weather – with 150 percent of normal precipitation – but no serious flooding or impoundment at Painted Rock Dam, which is normally a dry basin. However, over the course of nine days, the situation escalates.

The first alert from the Corps to downstream communities starts with the release of 500 cubic feet per second of water from the dam. By Day 5, the situation has escalated with the release of 10,000 cubic feet per second of water, exceeding the limit for most downstream structures, including low-water crossings and bridges.

By Day 7, the Bureau of Reclamation is unable to reduce its upstream discharges to mitigate the impacts to Yuma and Mexico from the dam, which is now releasing 22,500 cubic feet per second of water, in an attempt to avoid a spillway flow. By Day 9, the dam is releasing 50,000 cubic feet per second of water, doubling the real-world historic flows of 1993, and amplifying the needed response.

“The Painted Rock Dam exercise allowed us to personally get to know the state and county officials that we would be working with when we have a real emergency,” said David Kingston, chief of the LA District’s Emergency

Management Branch. “It was also great that we had team members attending from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers South Pacific Division, supporting the exercise. They were able to see and understand all of the nuances of operating this project.”

“It’s so important to address the tough questions when we have these opportunities,” Van Tine added. “Just like a championship

team trains for the big game, so does the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and its partners.”

HISTORIC

The real-world peak outflow occurred on Feb. 27, 1993 at 25,600 cfs, water surface elevation didn’t drop below the spillway crest until March 16. On July 7, the dam was still releasing 2,200 cfs.

(Right) Los Angeles District Emergency Management Chief David Kingston and District Commander Col. Julie Balten answer questions during a mock press conference at the District’s field office Sept. 9 in Phoenix, Ariz.



Photo by Robert DeDeaux, SPD Public Affairs



Photo by Robert DeDeaux, SPD Public Affairs

Balten and Arizona Emergency Management Director Allen Clark discusses flood mitigation and emergency response preparedness at the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs Headquarters Sept. 9 in Phoenix.



Christopher Luna, left, shakes hands with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers civil engineer Neil Tugaoen, right, at the American Indian Science and Engineering Society National Conference Sept. 24 in Phoenix. Luna, a mathematics and physics graduate, discussed engineering possibilities with Tugaoen, who is a fellow Arizona State University alumni.

Corps recruits students at Arizona STEM conference

Story and photo by Robert DeDeaux
South Pacific Division Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers South Pacific Division was among several agencies recruiting potential employees during the American Indian Science and Engineering Society National Conference Sept. 24 at the Phoenix City Convention Center.

The AISES National Conference is the largest college and career fair in the U.S. for Indigenous students and professionals in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics field.

“Promotion of diversity in the federal workforce is a command priority,” said South Pacific Division Commander Col. Antoinette Gant. “I felt it was important to personally attend the conference, welcome any participant questions and support diversity in the STEM professions.”

More than 60 participants visited the Corps’ booth to discuss civil works projects and apply for available positions during the college and career fair. Event sponsors included NASA, Microsoft and Arizona State University.

“Of all the engineering firms, federal agencies and universities present, the Corps had one of the largest showings,” said Garrett Kaspala, a hydraulic engineer with the Division. “The presence of our division and district leaders shows our commitment to building a diverse office and finding exceptional candidates.”

The three-day conference featured more than 100 live and virtual sessions, as well as more than 180 in-person and virtual exhibits. Participants experienced professional development discussions, networking opportunities, student presentations, a college and career fair, awards and cultural events.

“The experience was an enormous success,” Kaspala said. “We met several outstanding

candidates and got a chance to have conversations about our programs and projects.”

At the conclusion of the college and career fair, the Corps’ Los Angeles District awarded a letter of intent to hire to Anabella Noguera, a senior civil engineering student at the University of California-Los Angeles. Noguera attended the event to support her local AISES chapter, make connections with other American Indigenous and explore career opportunities. She heard of the LA District’s VA hospital project and decided stop by the Corps’ booth to learn more about civil and structural engineering projects.

“I can’t thank the Corps enough,” Noguera said, after the presentation. “I’m honored to receive this offer. This is a career that I am passionate about pursuing.”

For more information about U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ careers, visit www.usace.army.mil/careers.

Strengthening partnerships



Photo by Dena O'Dell, LA District Public Affairs

Col. Julie Balten, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, signs a Feasibility Cost Share Agreement Aug. 24 for a post authorization change to the General Evaluation Report for the Murrieta Creek Study during a visit to the Prado Dam Resident Office in Corona, California, while Col. Antoinette Gant, commander of the Corps' South Pacific Division, and David Van Dorpe, deputy district engineer, LA District, look on. The Murrieta Creek project, located in Riverside County, California, is in partnership with the Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, with the purpose of reducing flood risk to the cities of Temecula and Murrieta and is also authorized for environmental restoration and recreation. The authorized project features include about seven miles of channel improvements; three bridge replacements; a 270-acre detention basin, with 163 acres of wetland restoration; and a 49-acre recreation park. The Corps has already constructed Phases 1 and 2A of the project.



AMERICA'S RECOVERY:
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BY

Inclusion

 *October*
NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

This year, the Office of Disability Employment Policy in the Department of Labor celebrates 20 years of helping advance opportunity for workers with disabilities across the Nation. As part of its mission, the agency remains at the forefront of emerging challenges in the workplace, such as developing comprehensive resources to ensure that workers grappling with the long-term effects of COVID-19 have access to the rights and resources they are due under disability law — including flexibilities, tools, and accommodations in the workplace.

Signed — President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.

Full presidential proclamation @ [go.usa.gov/xMd8u](https://www.go.usa.gov/xMd8u)



Photo by Dena O'Dell, LA District Public Affairs

Col. Antoinette "Toni" Gant, commander of the Corps' South Pacific Division, center; Cheree Peterson, SES, programs director, South Pacific Division, left; and Col. Julie Balten, LA District commander, right, arrive at Prado Dam Resident Office Aug. 24 in Corona, California.

South Pacific Division leaders reflect on Women's Equality Day

By Nancy Allen
South Pacific Division Public Affairs

Women's Equality Day, celebrated annually on August 26, commemorates the passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution in 1920, granting women the right to vote. This effort to gain legal recognition as equal citizens had its formal beginning in 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York, where the first women's rights convention was held. For more than 70 years, women led a peaceful movement to win the vote and gain full equality.

The 19th Amendment changed Federal law but women in some states—particularly those of color—were still blocked from voting after ratification. The voting rights of Native American women were not recognized until 1924. For Chinese American women, it was 1943, and for Japanese and other Asian American women it was 1952. It wasn't until passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965, that African American women were granted the right to vote.

Women's Equality Day not only gives us an opportunity to commemorate the efforts of the suffrage movement, but to reflect on the continuing struggle for equality in the workplace and the role

of women in our public life. Women in military, public service and government have long served this nation by working to clear barriers, enforce laws, implement new ideas, and change people's attitudes. Women have served in the United States Army since 1775 and remain an invaluable and essential part of the U.S. Army. Today, women make up 18 percent of the regular Army, the Army National Guard and Army Reserve, and 36 percent of the Army's civilian workforce. In May, Honorable Christine Wormuth was nominated to be the first female Secretary of the Army, and Lt. Gen. Laura Richardson was nominated to become the second woman in Army history to receive the rank of four-star general.

In honor of Women's Equality Day, leaders from across the South Pacific Division were asked to share their thoughts on women's equality in the workplace.

Q. When you think back to the beginning of your career, what kind of changes have you seen for women in the workplace?

Col. Antoinette Gant, PMP, South Pacific Division Commander:
When I attended the Engineer Officer's Basic Course, females

were placed on track that prepared them to serve in units that were construction focus only. Soon after, the benefits of preparing females for all tracks as an engineer were realized and a change was made. Additionally, there were certain career fields in the Army that were off limits to women. We now have females working side by side with their male counterparts in combat operations, obtaining ranger tabs, and serving as commanders in units that were male dominant.

Ms. Cheree Peterson, SES, South Pacific Division Programs Director: There have been SO many changes and all of them for the better. Changes ranging from big (multiple women in SES positions) to small (no one expects us to wear pantyhose or straight hair anymore), and I am pleased/proud to be a part of them. At the beginning of my career, I only knew of two female SES (I was at the Office of Management and Budget at the time) and very few GS-15s, and those that were at these senior levels tended to be single, never had children, and were solely career-focused. Women who had children were definitely shuffled to lower-level jobs or had to “hide” the fact that they were parents. I say hide in that they didn’t have to lie or anything, but the fact that they were mothers had to be invisible. The fact that this “motherhood” stigma has disappeared is true progress. I am also pleased that the women in leadership are a more diverse group than in the past, though there is still work to do in this area.

Col. Julie Balten, Los Angeles District Commander: There have been many positive changes in the Army since I began my career. Women were not allowed in combat units and therefore limited command opportunities. I am happy to say that all positions within the Army are open to women. I also witnessed the promotion of the first woman Engineer General Officer, and was witness to the first Engineer woman as a Major General and the first woman to graduate Ranger School.

Q. Is there a woman in history or current day whose personal story or accomplishments inspire you?

Col. Gant: There are so many.... I look at my own mother’s story who taught secondary education for over 30 years and then decided to obtain a doctoral degree and is now a Dean at a local university. Reading and hearing about others like Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Margaret Burcham, Coach Dawn Staley, Michelle Obama and our Vice President Kamala Harris have served as inspiration. Seeing their works, learning of the challenges they faced, and how they turned obstacles into opportunities continue to drive me in my quest to see the good in all, open doors for others to walk through and to serve without limits.

Ms. Peterson: Two former supervisors of mine have been inspiring to me throughout my career: Dr. Kathy Peroff, former SES at OMB, and Lorraine Howerton, first woman Chief of Staff in the House of Representatives. I worked for both of them early on in my career and the wisdom I learned from both of them has definitely informed my career and family decisions. At the time, I didn’t necessarily appreciate all that they went through to get to where they were, but I have a greater appreciation for how they paved the way for me to achieve my current positions. The battles that they fought, up-front and/or behind the scenes, made this job possible for me.

Col. Balten: There are so many women throughout history and current day who inspire me. A few from the list include the women in the West Point class of 1980, Col. (Ret.) Yvonne Prettyman-Beck, the first African-American Engineer Battalion Commander of the 84th

Engineer Battalion; and Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Jessica Wright, the first woman in the Army National Guard to become a helicopter pilot, who later became the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

Q. What role have mentors played in your professional journey? What have you learned from mentoring others?

Col. Gant: There has always been someone throughout my career who offered counsel; however, it wasn’t until more than 10 years in that I truly felt I had mentors who consistently played a role in my professional development. I’ve tried to be that constant for those I mentor. Everyone needs a board of directors. Those who will tell you not what you would like to hear but what you need to hear. What I’ve learned is there are more that desire to have mentors than there are people willing to invest the time to be a mentor. I’ve also learned how important it is to not just have a mentor but the need to have a sponsor as well. Mentors give guidance, sponsors open doors.

Ms. Peterson: I have had some great mentors throughout my career, most of them men, since it was mostly men above me. The one that made the biggest career difference for me was Joe Calcara. Joe was the one mentor who not only thought I had SES potential, but also made sure that my career would be varied enough to make me competitive to get into the SES cadre. He knew what the panels were looking for in Executive Core Qualifications and interviews and made sure that I had opportunities to bolster my application. He also heavily invested in helping me write my Executive Core Qualifications, which resulted in my ECQs passing though Office of Personnel Management the first time and in less than two weeks. He helped me to see that as a mentor, I need to be thinking ahead for my mentees about what they need to meet their career goals. I have also since learned that it is important to communicate with my mentees that they need to consider their whole lives in making career decisions from the get-go, that stepping back at times is okay, and also being real about the challenges of being a woman in leadership. It is much easier than it was, but there are still disadvantages. I also encourage others (and myself) to be consciously deciding to make sure

our mentees are a diverse group that reflect the community we live in. This sometimes means asking to be someone’s mentor or acting as someone’s mentor whether they know it or not.

Col. Balten: Mentors helped guide me and gave me encouragement. I feel mentoring is two-sided. I learned to listen better and that no one path is better than the other – we must create our own authentic paths to find success.

Q. What is one piece of advice you would give to those starting out in their career to help create a more equal workplace?

Col. Gant: This could be very difficult for someone starting their career as they are trying to figure it all out for themselves. Here are just a few nuggets for consideration: 1. Be aware of your own unconscious bias 2. Participate in diversity and inclusion training 3. Be the change/example you want to see.

Ms. Peterson: There is no such thing as a balance between work and homelife. The balance will ebb and flow, so I wish you the happiest imbalance that you can find!

Col. Balten: Never be afraid to be you!

Mentors helped guide me and gave me encouragement. I feel mentoring is two-sided. I learned to listen better and that no one path is better than the other – we must create our own authentic paths to find success.

– Col. Julie Balten,
LA District Commander



Photo by Brooks O. Hubbard IV, LA District Public Affairs

Col. Antoinette Gant, commander of the South Pacific Division, joined Col. Julie Balten, commander of the LA District began their day Aug. 25 with a briefing by senior leaders of the Port of Long Beach, taking a boat tour of the inner and middle harbor to get a close look at USACE projects past and present, as well as projects for the future. This was Gant's first visit to the LA District since taking command of the South Pacific Division July 9.



Photo by William John Reese, LA District Public Affairs

LA District Project Manager Priyanka Wadhawan, center in straw hat, leads the briefing as Chris Spitzer, District Senior Geological Engineer, orients project maps and information for Col. Antoinette Gant, commander, Corps' South Pacific Division, Aug. 26 from a vantage point in Elysium Park, Los Angeles.



Photo by William John Reese, LA District Public Affairs



Photo by Dena O'Dell, LA District Public Affairs

(Top) Col. Antoinette Gant, commander of the Corps' South Pacific Division, and Col. Julie Balten, Los Angeles District command, examine Reach 5 from a viewing platform over the Los Angeles River, Aug. 26. The Corps maintains about 11 miles of the Los Angeles River for the safety of millions of citizens down river.

(Left) From left to right, Col. Julie Balten, commander of the Los Angeles District; Col. Antoinette Gant, commander of the Corps' South Pacific Division; Cheree Peterson, programs director, Senior Executive Service, South Pacific Division; and Pamela Lovasz, chief of the Engineering Division, LA District, talk during a site visit to the Reach 9 Phase 5B portion of the Santa Ana River Mainstem project Aug. 24 in Corona, California.



Photo by William John Reese, LA District Public Affairs

(Bottom left) Col. Antoinette Gant, commander of the South Pacific Division, visited two major Los Angeles District projects Sept. 2 at Tibor Rubin VA Medical Center in Long Beach, California. She was joined by LA District Commander Col. Julie Balten, Deputy District Engineer David Van Dorpe and VA Project Manager Monica Eichler for a project brief, before taking a tour of the two big construction sites, including the interior of the new Mental Health Inpatient and Outpatient buildings, and the new Community Living Center. The senior leaders' site visit demonstrates the Corps' support and commitment for completing high-quality facilities for veterans.



Col. Julie Balten, commander of the Los Angeles District, presents the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Military Responder of the Year to the civilian award recipient Mohammed Siddiqui from the Los Angeles District. Siddiqui joined the 273rd Engineer Detachment based in Fort Worth, Texas, in 2019. He was responsible for working with an international team to evaluate facilities for contingency operations. In 2020 he deployed to Afghanistan in support of U.S. Forces – Afghanistan, where he performed analysis and design for critical infrastructure.

Responders of the Year

Col. Julie Balten, commander of the Los Angeles District, presents the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Civil Responder of the Year to the military award recipient Capt. Douglas A. Ritchie of the Los Angeles District. Ritchie was recognized for his service as a liaison officer and battle captain in Carson City, Nevada, in the spring of 2020 in the execution of a FEMA Alternate Care Facility mission as a response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. He later served as a battle captain and supported USACE efforts during the recent surge of COVID-19 infections in Southern California in January 2021.



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District completes two Newport Bay Harbor projects

Story and photos by
Stephen Baack
LA District Public Affairs

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. – After the placement of 4,500 tons of stone and 150 cubic yards of concrete, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District marked the completion of repairs to the east jetty at Newport Bay Harbor, with the area reopening to the public Aug. 25.

Maintenance dredging of the harbor, part of the same project and which started alongside the jetty repairs in April, wrapped up Sept. 10.

The jetty-repair portion of the project included concrete repair to the jetty itself and stone placement along the jetty walkway to raise the revetment height. The added stones serve to minimize the fall hazard and dissipate the force of the seawater, especially during rough conditions, swells and high tides.

“The intent of the jetty repair was to make it safer for the public, and it felt good to see the project completed so we could restore public access to the structure in this new-improved, safer form,” said Mark Golay, LA District Navigation Branch program manager.

In particular, the corner of the jetty had exposed rebar, and the existing stone was five feet below the jetty walkway, which presented a fall hazard. This project fixed both issues.

The LA District worked closely during

the project with the City of Newport Beach, the project’s nonfederal sponsor.

“This has been a really great effort, and the city is really happy,” said Chris Miller, public works manager with the City of Newport Beach. “It was a good, collaborative project. I think importing 8.5 million pounds of stone down a ramp and offloading without any complaints from the residents is a

major accomplishment.”

The dredging portion of the project comprised two parts: dredging of the harbor’s entrance channel, which started May 24, and dredging of Balboa Reach, which contractors finished May 20. All told, the completed dredging work has deepened the seabed in both sections back to the authorized federal depth of -20 feet Mean Lower Low Water, or MLLW.

Maintenance dredging of federal channels is a responsibility of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to ensure the waterways remain safe and navigable. This requires the removal of about 60,000 cubic yards of sediment in each section, Golay said.

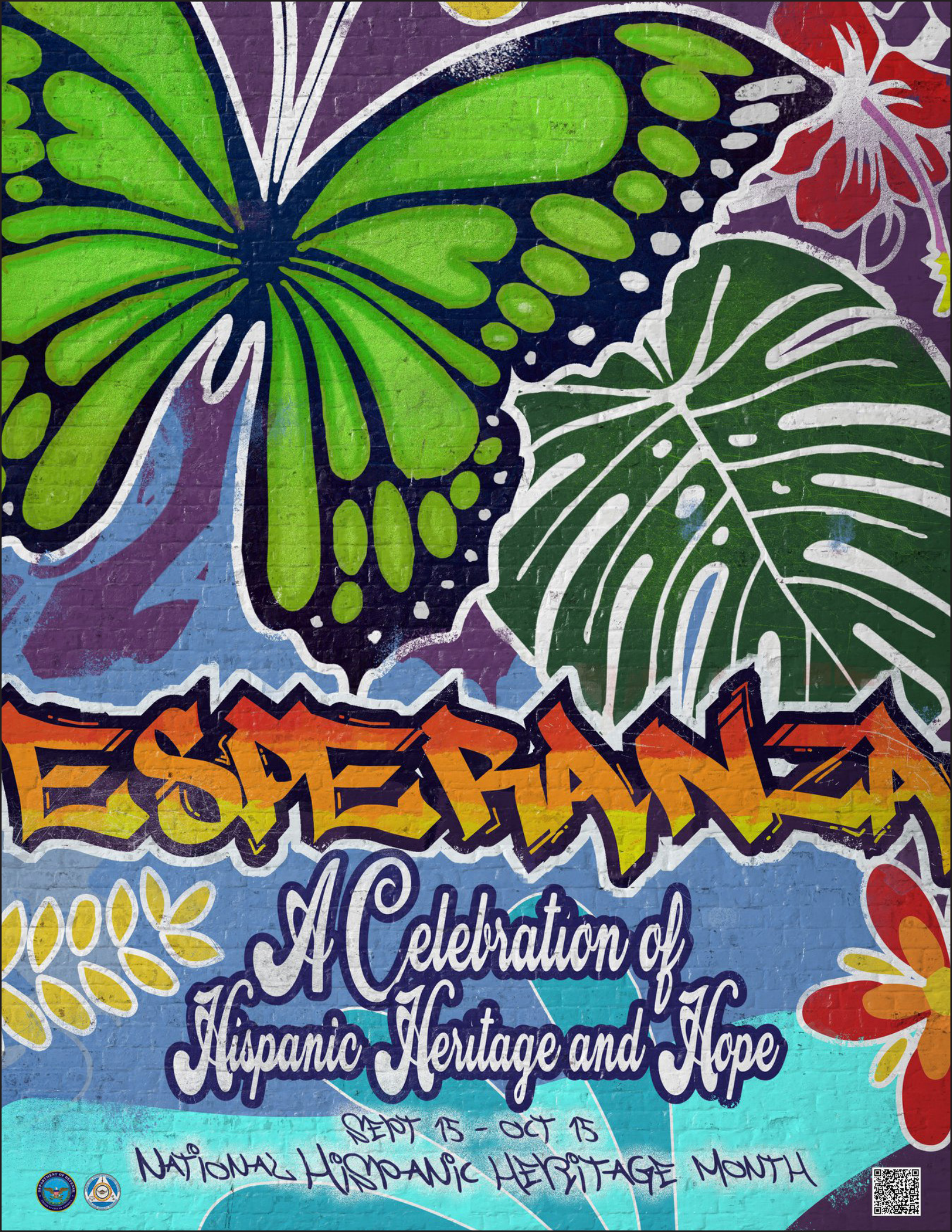
The contractor, Pacific Dredge and Construction LLC, placed the beach-quality dredged material from the entrance channel in the nearshore area along Balboa Beach to help renourish the peninsula beach, and it transported material from the main channel to LA-3, a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-approved ocean disposal site, which is located 4.3 nautical miles southwest of the harbor’s entrance.



Mark Golay, second from right, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District Navigation Branch program manager, accompanies Chris Miller, right, public works manager with the City of Newport Beach; Robert Silva, left-foreground, construction inspection supervisor with the City of Newport Beach; and Jorge Tomas, director of operations and sales with Pacific Dredge, on a walkthrough of the Newport Bay Harbor east jetty Sept. 1 in Newport Beach, California.



Maintenance dredging of the harbor, part of the same project and which started alongside the jetty repairs in April, wrapped up Sept. 10.



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Hispanic Heritage and Hope*

SEPT 15 - OCT 15

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

