

Falls City Engineer

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District

January/February 2023

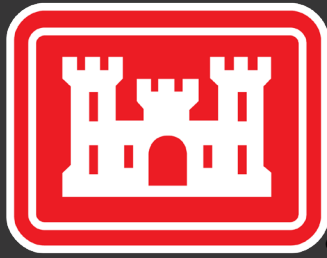
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National Roofing Program inspects Army Reserve facilities following Hurricane Ian

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Falls City Engineer

Vol. 15, Issue 1

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Tim McClellan, Louisville District National Roofing Program technical manager, inspects the roof at the Cape Coral Reserve Center in Cape Coral, Florida. (USACE photo by Abby Korfhage)

Commander's Comments

Team Louisville,

Happy New Year! I hope all of you were able to enjoy some rest and quality time with friends and family over the holidays. This year has picked up right where 2022 left off, as all of us have been very busy. With a new year comes change and 2023 will be no different. However, as I enter my last year as your commander, I know that the dedication and drive to excellence each one of you exhibits will remain unchanged and steadfast throughout the year.

We continue to lead across the region and deliver for our partners and stakeholders with world-class excellence. This is a result of our strong project delivery teams that remain focused on the definition of winning in USACE – safely delivering quality projects on time and within budget. As we move through February, I ask each member of our Louisville District team to put an emphasis on safety. Preventing accidents from occurring in the workplace requires each of us to fully participate in our safety program. Everyone is a safety officer!

We recently held our first in-person Louisville District Open House since the COVID pandemic began and it was a great success. We had more than 150 first-time attendees in the audience allowing our team to share details of all the great work you do with many new potential partners. I spoke with many of our previous and current contractors, and several made a point to tell me how much they enjoy working with the Louisville District. This is a testament to the professionalism and dedication of all of you.

As a reminder, February 19-25 is National Engineers Week. It's a time to celebrate how engineers make a difference in our world. Be on the lookout as we spotlight some of our own on the district's social media sites.



Col. Eric Crispino
Commander and District Engineer
Louisville District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

This edition is packed with outstanding stories to spotlight our continued success of delivering the program, as well as highlight the extraordinary contributions of others throughout the district. From soil remediation efforts in Evansville, Indiana, the National Roofing Program, reclaimed materials use at the Louisville VA Medical Center, to highlights of our dedicated employees' hard work and much more - this district continues to excel.

Thank you for what you do every day to make the Louisville District the great place it is.

Louisville Proud!

Eric D Crispino

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BUILDING STRONG®

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 Please conserve:
Think before you print.

Louisville District Dam Safety teams hosts emergency action plan tabletop exercise

Abby Korfhage, public affairs

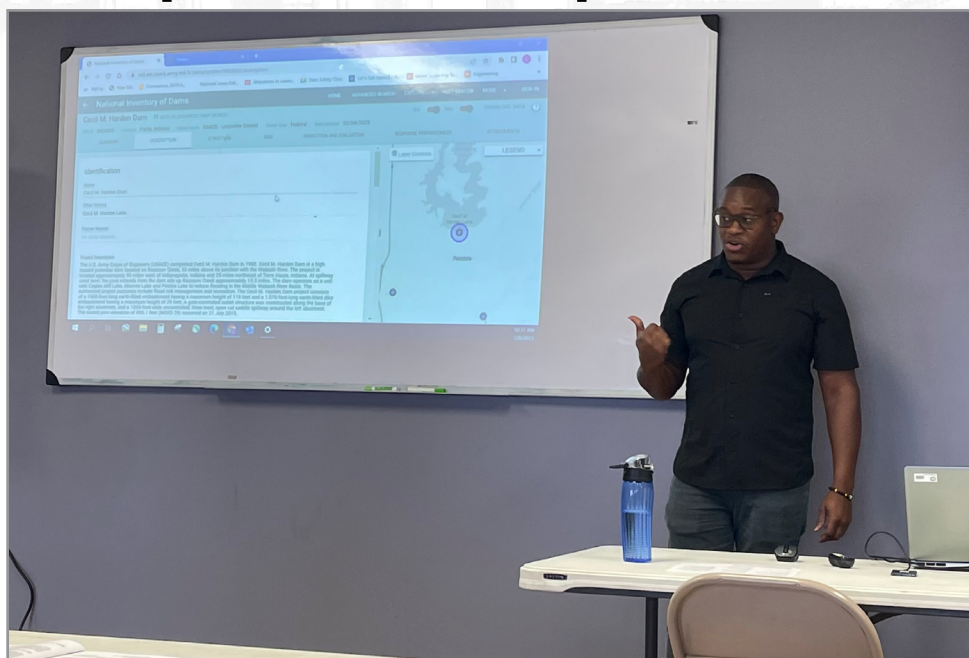
The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District Dam Safety team hosted an Emergency Action Plan, also known as EAP, Tabletop Exercise for Cecil M. Harden Lake Dam in Rockville, Indiana, Feb. 8, 2023.

Participants, which included representatives from several local and regional emergency management agencies and the National Weather Service, learned about the new updated USACE mapping products and went through several emergency action plan scenarios to ensure everyone had a better understanding of each agency's roles and responsibilities.

"It is important to have tabletop exercises," said Kyle Murray, Louisville District Dam Safety coordinator for the Middle Wabash basin. "The team simulated scenarios to build awareness about potential risks and what resources are available. The expected outcome is stakeholders are better equipped with information and new technologies available to aid in emergency planning. One of the elements that contributed to no fatalities at recent dam failures at Sanford and Edenville Dams (non-Federal hydropower dams in Michigan) was a recent tabletop exercise and the EAP for the dams."

The dam safety team organizes these tabletop exercises on a five-year schedule at the district's 17 flood risk management projects across Kentucky, Indiana and Ohio. The team includes John Bock, Dam Safety Officer; Ian Mitchell, Engineering Division chief; Ken Lamkin, Acting Dam Safety Section chief and Jackie Henn, Dam Safety Program Manager as well as the other current basin coordinators to include Scott Kelly, Green River basin; Roger Olsen, Upper Kentucky River basin; Megan Jones, Miami River basin; and Jim Kelly, Ohio River navigation projects, Duane Pfouts, instrumentation manager; Emily Anderson, geotechnical engineer; Chris Alvey, engineering technician; Tres Henn, geologist; John Baird, geologist and Tyler O'Daniel, Louisville District co-op.

"Tabletop exercises and EAPs are fluid; we welcome feedback from participants to improve our process and identify unique aspects of affected



Abby Korfhage

Louisville District Geotechnical Engineer, Kyle Murray, briefs the new USACE mapping products to participants who attended the Emergency Action Plan Tabletop Exercise.

areas downstream," added Murray. "The Louisville District emergency operations center is available to assist with emergency response preparedness. Local emergency managers, if they so choose, can provide their evacuation plans for inclusion into our EAP."

USACE provides information about its dams to other federal, state, and local agencies and the public to promote awareness, action and public safety. USACE remains committed to increasing transparency and providing critical information for potentially

affected communities and individuals so they can make informed decisions about managing their risk. The Dam Safety Program is responsible for communicating information known about dam performance and potential flooding consequences. The divisions and districts are working with key stakeholders to equip communities and agencies with important resources to assist with preparedness actions.

To date, the Louisville District's dams have provided more than \$9 billion in flood risk reduction benefits.



Abby Korfhage

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District Dam Safety team hosted an Emergency Action Plan Tabletop Exercise for Cecil M. Harden Lake Dam in Rockville, Indiana, Feb. 8.

USACE provides an update about the Rough River Dam

USACE Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Louisville District will implement Interim Risk Reduction Measures (IRRM) to ensure life safety and to further protect the integrity of Rough River Dam in Falls of Rough, Kentucky.

The IRRM implementation is based on a recommendation from a risk assessment that evaluated the existing condition of the dam and its foundation to assess the structure's ability to operate as designed in the event of a flood. The evaluation identified several IRRM until Phase II of the Dam Safety Modification Project is complete. Phase II of the project will consist of a new outlet works and cutoff wall and is awaiting additional funding.

"The risk associated with Rough River Dam does not meet current tolerable levels in its current condition; therefore, action must be taken to reduce risk to human life and property," said Will Ailstock, USACE Louisville District, Chief, Civil Programs and Project Management Section.

After thorough analysis, USACE technical experts recommend reducing water levels in the reservoir to relieve pressure on the dam. The Louisville

District will target a summer pool elevation (water level) at Rough River Lake of 490, which is 5 feet below normal summer pool, until long-term repairs to the dam can be completed. Additionally, the lake will operate on a delayed fill schedule. Typically, the reservoir begins holding back water for the recreation season on March 15. The operation of the dam will be revised to begin the rise to the new summer pool target approximately two weeks later beginning on April 1.

"These interim risk reduction measures allow us to reduce risk to the public and help to ensure that the dam is safe until long-term repairs to the dam can be completed," said Ailstock.

USACE will continue to monitor the dam, and implemented risk reduction measures will be re-evaluated annually. Adjustments will be made, as required, to ensure the safety of the Rough River community.

"Life safety and the integrity of the dam must be prioritized above all else," said Louisville District Commander Col. Eric Crispino. "As we take action to reduce risk to the public, we recognize that there may be impacts to recreation. We value our



partnerships with local, state, and federal agencies and all of those throughout the Rough River community. We will continue to work with them to lessen the impact of interim risk reduction measures where possible."

USACE will host a public meeting Tuesday, March 7, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. CST to discuss findings from the risk assessment and plans to implement interim risk reduction measures.

USACE officials will provide a brief presentation and be available to answer questions.

Military

New Scott AFB Area Engineer takes the reigns

Charles Delano, public affairs

David Helfrich is a name familiar to personnel at the Scott Air Force Base resident office. He was in that role for five years since he began his career with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, January 2018. Helfrich takes the helm as Scott AFB Area Engineer from Jay Fowler, who retired December 2022.

"My purpose in life is to help others, being with USACE allows me to fulfill this mission," said Helfrich.

In his new role, Helfrich's first order of business is to focus on filling critical vacancies, further develop Esprit de Corps, maintain and enhance the trust and confidence of the stakeholders, and improve the efficiency of the construction modification process.

"My goal is to create an environment where people like coming to work every day and are part of something bigger than themselves," Helfrich said.

Helfrich is one of few area engineers who are architects rather than engineers.

He wanted to become an architect since he graduated high school and enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1991. After serving five years, Helfrich separated from active duty and enlisted in the Army National Guard. He progressed to the rank of sergeant first class eventually earning his degree and commission in the Illinois National Guard. On Dec. 3, 2022, Helfrich attended his promotion ceremony where he was recognized as a colonel in the Illinois National Guard.

"My family has a strong military background," said Helfrich. "It dates back to the civil war."

When not in his role as area engineer or colonel, Helfrich spends much of his time with his wife and four children traveling to new destinations and enjoying the outdoors. During one of his trips to Colorado, Helfrich and his wife visited Doc Holliday's gravesite in Glenwood Springs. This was significant because it was his 25th anniversary and the movie that he and his wife attended on their first date was



David Helfrich, has recently taken the helm as the USACE Area Engineer for Scott AFB, Illinois. Here, Helfrich, who is a colonel in the Illinois National Guard, poses for a photo with his family members.

Tombstone, which featured the character Doc Holliday. In addition to traveling, Helfrich loves physical challenges and participates in endurance cycling, where riders often ride 100 miles or more.

Helfrich said he tries to exemplify his family motto which is "never give up."

Reserve

National Roofing Program inspects Army Reserve facilities following Hurricane Ian

Abby Korfhage, public affairs

When Hurricane Ian hit south Florida last fall, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers worked in partnership with local, state and federal agencies to respond to the natural disaster. Every year, USACE, as part of the federal government's unified national response to disasters and emergencies, deploys hundreds of people to provide technical engineering expertise and to promote capacity development at home and abroad. However, even after the FEMA mission assignments were closed out after Ian, USACE's support did not stop there.

In January, members of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District and their Army Reserve partners conducted 20 site visits across 14 cities throughout central Florida to inspect facilities that were hit by Hurricane Ian in late-September.

The team, which included Louisville District National Roofing Program Manager Tim McClellan, Army Reserve contractors Justin Reeder, and Resource Efficiency Manager Bud Lewis visited St. Petersburg, Pinellas Park, Cape Coral, Tampa, Clearwater, Lakeland, Orlando, West Palm Beach, Palatka, Fort Lauderdale, Miami, Gainesville, Ocala and Sanford, to perform roof assessments of damages to all Army Reserve facilities that were impacted by hurricane or tropical storm force winds from Hurricane Ian.

The district manages the National Roofing Program as part of the district's nation-wide Army Reserve mission. The NRP is a roof inspection and replacement program with the goal of minimizing cost through high quality design and construction. The program has installed more than 12 million square feet of roofs for Soldiers over the last two decades. These NRP roofs have never had a roof failure, even during previous hurricanes Katrina, Harvey, Sandy and Rita.

During the two weeks the NRP Team was in Florida, they inspected 13 facilities that have roofs that were replaced under the NRP and there were no failures on any of the NRP roofs, according to McClellan.

"We were also able to inspect 10 Army Reserve Facilities that had roofs that were not installed under the NRP," McClellan said. "Three of those facilities had wind and water failures from the hurricanes that



Abby Korfhage

In January, members of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District and their Army Reserve partners conducted 20 site visits across 14 cities throughout central Florida to inspect facilities that were hit by Hurricane Ian in late-September.

were not complete roof failures but that will need repairs."

Although those roofs were not a part of the NRP, the team will be providing guidance to the Army Reserve on how to repair those facilities to restore watertight conditions. Additionally, two facilities had roofs that were in poor shape and will be added to the NRP list for future replacement as they have reached the end of the design service life, according to the team.

Although it's not necessarily 'common practice' for the team to conduct site visits after a natural disaster, the Louisville District has been in the business of providing the long-term maintenance and repair of roofs for the Army Reserve for decades.

"We have conducted inspections in the past on leaking roofs, but this is the first time we have been requested to conduct a complete assessment of the inventory," McClellan said.

The team starts the inspection process with a visual inspection of the interior of the building and interviewing the building occupants to have a better understanding of where and when leaks may occur.

"A visual inspection of the underside of the roof helps to pinpoint any potential

locations for problems," McClellan said. "Then is followed by a visual inspection of the building from the ground and then an inspection of the roof from the top."

The rooftop inspection focuses on the locations identified during the interior walk and on areas of recurring problems.

"Often times we are able to locate potential issues when walking the roof through a change in the feel of the insulation," McClellan added. "If there are questions, destructive testing may be conducted to explore the conditions below the surface."

The Louisville District's National Roofing Program has executed approximately \$250 million in reroofing contracts for approximately 1,000 buildings at nearly 359 Army Reserve facilities across 46 states, American Samoa and Puerto Rico.

The NRP grew out of the National Roofing Initiative whose mission was to improve roofing facilities, minimize operational expenses and maximize the quality of work life for warfighters. The initiative began in 1997 and was later recognized by the Army Reserve through the Louisville District's Memorandum of Understanding in 2004 for nationwide execution. The NRI experienced early

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

success and was subsequently rebranded as the NRP. The NRP reduces energy use, is ecofriendly, eliminates maintenance, and most importantly, provides Soldiers great facilities for battle-focused training.

McClellan has worked on the NRP since 2012.

"I take pride in the National Roofing Program and the effect we have on the training environment for our Army

Reservists," McClellan said. "The NPR has provided over 900 new roofs for our Soldiers that allows them to focus on their job and training for 20 years instead of water dripping on their desk."

Environmental

USACE aids EPA, completes urgent cleanup of Evansville properties to protect residents

Charles Delano, public affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District acted quickly to complete urgent soil remediation for two Evansville, Indiana residences that had high levels of lead detected in the soil. The two properties, located within the boundaries of the Jacobsville Neighborhood Soil Contamination Superfund Site, were not among the original 250 properties scheduled for remediation in 2022.

The properties were considered a high priority by the Environmental Protection Agency and required immediate action to protect the health of resident children who are particularly susceptible to the effects of lead.

"Thank you so much for getting out there so quickly to eliminate the exposure pathway to these contaminated soils and fulfilling our mission to protect human health and the environment," said Beth Reiner, Region 5 EPA remedial project manager.

The identification of the lead in the soil began when Vanderburgh County Health Department tested the blood of a child who lived at one of the homes. The high levels of lead in the blood prompted the health department to conduct shallow soil sampling at the child's residence.

When the results of the soil samples collected from the front and back yard detected high concentrations of lead, the Vanderburgh County Health Department contacted EPA Region 5. With the EPA's focus on overall public health and safety, they determined that the situation needed immediate action. The EPA requested assistance from the Louisville District, which was tasked to address the properties that the EPA determined needed remediation.

The USACE Project Delivery Team met with the on-site construction representatives to determine if and how USACE could assist. The contractors responded quickly to prioritize the

remediation of the two properties.

"I'm proud of the team in their quick response and excellent execution of the work for the community and customer," said Corey Knox, USACE Louisville District Superfund program manager. "The PDT accomplished this effort by responding to an emergency request from the customer to ensure families living on the properties are safe."

The PDT, which consists of USACE representatives from construction, office of counsel, engineering, project management and contracting, quickly developed a plan of action in coordination with the EPA. The first part of the plan involved placing heavy landscaping fabric and mulch over the bare soil in the front and back yards, a dog pen area, and sections of the brick patio.

As the first part of the cleanup plan was being implemented, the EPA identified a second property with similar circumstances and requested priority remediation by the Louisville District.

The final soil cleanup of both properties, which was completed on Nov. 10, 2022,

required coordination with EPA to obtain access agreements, soil sampling and analysis, excavation and final restoration, including landscaping.

The EPA has identified about 4,000 residential properties in 12 neighborhoods in Evansville, Indiana that require remediation due to contamination caused by commercial and industrial manufacturing from the late 1800's through the mid-1900's. The Louisville District is supporting these efforts and has completed remediation of 250 properties in 2022 using contracted services by excavating and disposing of 15,280 cubic yards of contaminated soil and installing 21,305 cubic yards of clean soil and 439,642 square feet of sod.

A contract for \$51 million was awarded on Dec. 23, 2022, to continue the remediation of properties at the Jacobsville Neighborhood Soil Contamination Superfund site. To date, 2,480 properties have been remediated, and the remaining properties are scheduled to be completed by the end of 2025.



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District, in coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency, replaces contaminated soil with clean soil at a residential property, Nov. 9, 2022 in Evansville, Indiana. The remediation was prioritized by the EPA when high concentrations of lead were identified in a soil sample.



Michael Maddox

More than 70,000 cubic yards of earth materials have been reused in multiple ways in construction of the Louisville VA Medical Center in Louisville, Kentucky.

Re-used materials add value to construction project

Michael Maddox, public affairs

Since the beginning of construction of the Louisville VA Medical Center in December 2021, the site has seen a lot of change and one of the most noticeable early changes was it going from a 35-acre grassy field to much of the earth materials being collected and sorted in large piles on the south side of the property.

What some may think of as waste materials - the expected leftovers from earthwork, isn't going to waste. In fact, more than 70,000 cubic yards of material have been reused in multiple ways in construction on the site.

"Where those driving by may see piles of dirt and rock, we have seen valuable material that can be repurposed as we progress with construction activities for the hospital and other structures on the site," said Carl Lindsay, lead quality assurance representative on the Louisville VA Medical Center mega-project.

"The bedrock we have excavated has been crushed - allowing us to use it as fill

in several non-building areas as well as to create and maintain various haul roads, material staging areas, crane pads, and parking areas across the site," he said. "We have been able to use the soil for structural fill and as overburden during blasting activities."

"Currently, we also have 10,000 cubic yards of stripped topsoil that has been stored offsite with intentions of returning it to the site and using for planting in the future," Lindsay added.

Reusing materials found on site is not only eco-friendly, but has other benefits.

"The usage of the in-situ (originally placed) soil and crushed rock has been of great benefit to the project. As the original project intent was to export the onsite soil and import the balance in stone, we have been able to minimize the potential public disturbance associated with increased traffic related to extensive hauling operations," he said. "Additionally, the usage of crushed stone has generally allowed us to maintain a clean, easily traversable site, even through the bulk of the winter. Lastly, the re-use

of both has aided in cost savings for the project."

The \$900 million project includes the construction of a new 910,115 square-foot medical center, parking structures, a 42,205 square-foot central utility plant, roadways, sidewalks, and several other site improvements.

The new 104-bed, full-service hospital will provide world-class healthcare for more than 45,000 Veterans in Kentucky and Southern Indiana by integrating modern patient-centered care concepts to provide the best possible care for Veterans.

In addition, to specifically address the needs of women Veterans, the new hospital will include a Women's Health Clinic with four Patient Aligned Care Teams.

The project designed by URS-Smith Group Joint Venture is being constructed by Walsh-Turner Joint Venture II, Chicago, Illinois.

Construction is anticipated to be complete in 2026.

To learn more about the project visit: www.va.gov/louisville-health-care/programs/new-robley-rex-va-medical-center.

Emergency Operations

Levee Safety and Emergency Management collaborate to provide flood fight training to City of Frankfort

Charles Delano, public affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District Emergency Management personnel provided flood fight training to members of the City of Frankfort Street Division, Feb. 9, 2023, in Frankfort, Kentucky.

The training consisted of manual and automated sandbagging techniques using the automated sandbagging machine and constructing flood mitigation structures like boil rings and levees using sandbags.

“It is reassuring to see a levee sponsor take their responsibility to operate their levee system seriously,” said Neil Cash, Louisville District Levee Safety Program Manager. “This training strengthens our partnership with the local sponsor which will prove to be vital during the next flood event.”

Louisville District Emergency Management has been conducting flood fight training with municipalities since 2015. Many of the recipients of the training are Levee Safety Program sponsors who want to become more familiar with USACE flood fighting capabilities while getting hands-on flood fight training.

“An effective response to a disaster,



Charles Delano

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District Emergency Manager Bob Burick explains how to build a levee using the pyramid placement method during flood fight training, Feb. 9, 2023, in Frankfort, Kentucky. The Louisville District Emergency Management team also provided training on other flood fighting techniques and an overview of USACE capabilities for fighting floods.

starts with being prepared,” said George Minges, Louisville District Emergency Operations chief. “Flood fight training for municipalities helps build capability and confidence at the local level.”

The training with the City of Frankfort resulted from discussions about flood fighting that occurred during a levee safety inspection of the Frankfort and South Frankfort Levee Systems.

The City of Frankfort Street Division superintendent indicated that his staff had limited experience in constructing sandbag closures. After collaborating with Louisville District Emergency Management, a more hands-on training event was scheduled.

“This is the first time we have had this type of training from the Army Corps of Engineers,” said Daniel Doss, City of Frankfort Street Superintendent. “I wanted to make sure if we had to put up flood fight material that it was put up correctly.”

Through the Levee Safety Program, USACE and levee sponsors partner to manage more than 1,600 levees across the United States. The program, which is intended to improve consistency and coordination on how levee-related activities are implemented across USACE, includes levee inspections, risk assessments and sharing levee information.

“Having Emergency Management as a resource to provide flood fight training to our sponsor is a great help with achieving our mission,” Cash said.



Charles Delano

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District Emergency Manager Bob Burick explains the purpose of a boil ring during flood fight training, Feb. 9, 2023, in Frankfort, Kentucky.

Spotlight

Louisville District hosts more than 400 contractors at annual open house

Michael Maddox, public affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District held its annual open house at the Marriott Hotel in downtown Louisville, Kentucky, Feb. 2. More than 400 contractors attended the event, which included presentations by district leaders followed by an open networking session where attendees could talk individually to the district's contracting officials and senior staff. The event also showcased upcoming work for projects within the Louisville District boundaries.

Louisville District Commander Col. Eric Crispino opened the event by sharing an overview of the Louisville District and its mission.

Several senior leaders also shared information on their respective programs. One of those district leaders was Rachael Haunz, chief of the Military, Energy Resilience Conservation Investment Program (ERCIP), Environmental and IIS Programs. Haunz gave an overview of the programs she oversees as well as project statuses and upcoming opportunities. She also spoke to the crowd about ERCIP and its relation to the district's missions and its goals to support the Army's climate strategy.

"Right now our ERCIP projects are mainly focused on micro-grids – a combination of generators, solar photovoltaic and other sources to create redundancy. Basically, the concept is that if there is an event of a power outage, you



Louisville District Commander Col. Eric Crispino opened the event by sharing an overview of the Louisville District and its mission.



Crystal Harbin, District deputy for Small Business, center, and Anne Mulhall, Executive Officer, talk to one of the contractors who attended the Open House Feb. 2, 2023.

want to be able to support your mission-critical tasks without degradation," she explained.

Haunz also went on to speak about risk management and risk-based decision making in the process of working district missions.

"We are looking to you all as our partners in both the AE (Architect-Engineer) community as well as the construction community. You all have an overview of projects and risks, things that work and don't work, that we may not see," she said. "So, I would encourage you that if you see something that you think is out of place, out of line, that is going to impact the way we execute and deliver our projects, you need to just say it."

"The commander mentioned 'Don't wait, elevate,' That is a key component – don't wait until the project gets awarded or ready to advertise. If you let us know, some of what you tell us can go into our discussions with our installation partners and we may be able to make changes, and if we can't make changes everyone understands the risk and we are more successful when you incorporate risk-based decision making into how we do business," Haunz added.

Cristie Mitchell, Reserve Support Programs Branch chief, who gave an overview of the district's Army and Air Force Reserve program, added to Haunz's comments by discussing the importance of partnership.

"We're focused on delivery and what that means is we have to deliver on our commitments. That means delivering within scope of the contract costs and delivering on time," she said. "I understand there are going to be challenges along the way, but the important part is how we work through this together to find solutions because this is truly a partnership. At the end of the day, we all have the same goal – building quality facilities."

Other presentations included the future state of the district, Civil Works, Veterans Affairs and Architect-Engineering opportunities.

Crystal Harbin, District deputy for Small Business, said the event was a success with more attendees than in the past.

"I look forward to our open house every year and it was great to be in person for the first time since 2020," Harbin said. "This event provides a great opportunity for networking with firms that have current contracts with us and making connections with new firms that are pursuing work. Of our total attendees, 150 were first-time attendees. Making these new connections is critical as our program keeps growing."

"Being able to provide details on our upcoming projects allows us to partner with industry earlier in the acquisition process which has proven to be a win-win situation for everyone. Delivering the program is vital and events such as this ensure we stay on the path towards success," she added.

Co-op student following in father's footsteps working at USACE

Michael Maddox, public affairs

Being a member of a team can often feel like being part of a family, and sometimes team members actually are family. That's the case for Will Jasper and his father, Kevin Jasper.

Will is a part-time Quality Assurance Specialist working on the Louisville VA Medical Center mega-project, and his dad, who has been with USACE for 33 years, is Deputy Chief of Planning, Programs, and Project Management Division for the Louisville District. Kevin is temporarily assigned to the Nashville District as the Interim Chief of the Integrated Project Office.

Will started his work with the district by completing a co-op in the Levee Safety section from January to May 2022. In that position, he helped with levee inspections and reports.

"It was nice to have that experience and see what the district office was like before I got the opportunity to come out to the VA site. I like the fact that there are so many different opportunities within the Corps, especially being a co-op, I have the opportunity to try out different things if I want to," Will said.

The following fall he began working on the Louisville VA project as a full-time QA Specialist from August to December 2022. He said he plans to keep working part-time as a QA while going to school with hopes of doing full-time during summer break.

Will said learning about USACE and its mission influenced his interest in getting hands-on experience working for the Corps.

"My dad is definitely the main reason why I wanted to come work for the Corps. With my dad working here, he pushed me to apply and get an internship here so that I would be set up the same way that he is through his job with the Corps," he said. "He has always spoken highly of his jobs here and told me about a lot of cool opportunities that he's had during his time here."

Will said he finds his current job interesting because every day brings something new.

"There's no such thing as a typical day in this position. You never know what is going to happen on any given day," he said. "Most of the time we are out in the field, assisting with inspections, watching backfill or watching concrete being placed, and then we gather the information we got from that



Michael Maddox

Will Jasper is a Quality Assurance Specialist working on the Louisville VA Medical Center project and student at the University of Louisville's J.B. Speed School of Engineering.

and come into the office and write a daily report," he shared. "Basically, we read through specs and drawings and watch any work being done in the field to make sure that the work is being done correctly so that we can ensure that the quality of the project is what we expect."

"I enjoy that each day is different so that you don't get into a routine of doing the same thing every day and getting bored or tired of the work you do. It is nice to have the flexibility of not having to be in the field all day every day, but always have the opportunity to go outside if you need a break from the desk," he added. "I still haven't decided exactly what I want to do after graduation, but I could see myself staying in a position like this so that I have the flexibility of being behind the desk as well as being in the field."

Besides being a USACE co-op employee, Will is a student at the University of Louisville in the J.B. Speed School of Engineering where he is earning a degree in Civil Engineering graduating in May 2024. He said he could see himself coming back to work on the project after graduation to see the project through to completion.

"I'm still not sure what exactly I want to do after graduation, but if it is possible, I would like to be able to come back to this

project and see what the job looks like as the building becomes a finished product. I have seen the job site when they were working in the ground, on backfill and drilled piers, and started to work their way up, so it would be cool to come back and be a part of the team that helps it become a finished product," he said.

No matter what he does after graduation, Will said he is thankful for the opportunity he's had at the Louisville District.

"Having the opportunity to work for USACE this early in my career has been pretty cool. My dad worked hard to make it into the Corps, so it feels pretty good to be able to start my career here so young," he said. "Working as a co-op for USACE gives me a great entry point into the workforce, and it is nice that I have the opportunities to bounce around and try out different jobs before I commit to one after graduation."

Kevin said he's proud of his son's accomplishments with USACE.

"I'm very excited he has given USACE an opportunity - his experience with the DVA Louisville Project is a unique opportunity that will serve him well in the future," he said. "USACE has a great need for young engineers such as Will and my hope is his experience will demonstrate to others the value to the nation we provide, and they come join us."