



MISSION: INTEGRATION

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NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2024

HANFORD MISSION

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# MISSION: PARTNERSHIP

At the heart of our success lies the strength of our collaborations.

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## OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT



As we wrap up another remarkable year, I want to reflect on the theme of this month's newsletter: partnership. At the heart of our success lies the strength of our collaborations, both within HMIS and with our One Hanford partners.

This year, we have seen incredible examples of partnership. From cross-contractor projects to community initiatives, we continue to demonstrate the power of working together.

Partnerships are what helped us achieve our highest award fee to date as HMIS. Partnerships are what drive innovation, cost savings and continuous improvement.

Where we are already one quarter into a new fiscal year (how did that happen so quickly?) and starting a new calendar year, let's continue to foster these partnerships. Whether it's by sharing knowledge with a new co-worker, serving as a spotter for a colleague while driving, building new connections with our One Hanford contractors or continuing to provide the best value to the government, we have countless opportunities to strengthen our impact.

Thank you for your continued contributions - I am proud to lead such a dynamic and talented team!

## 5 MINUTES WITH JILLIAN ESPARZA



We had a chance to chat with Jillian Esparza, director of Internal Audit, who we learned is a dedicated hockey mom. When she's not cheering on her boys or billet son at the rink, or watching an Anaheim Ducks game, she can be found experimenting in the kitchen or exploring a good book. Here are a few more things she shared:

### 1. What brought you to Hanford?

I started at Hanford in 2005 as an intern in the Procurement and Finance organizations with Fluor Hanford before accepting a full-time position in Finance and Accounting in 2008 after I graduated from Washington State University (Go Cougs!).

### 2. What made you want to be a leader?

From early on, I've always had the desire to be a leader. I've had some amazing mentors and managers who have helped me learn and grow.

### 3. Who is a mentor that has made an impact on you?

My first mentor in Finance was Lori Chafe. She always stressed the importance that you don't need a title to be a leader. That was one piece of advice I took to heart over the years, and it helped shape who I am today.

### 4. What does this month's theme, *partnership*, mean to you?

Partnership means we are working together to accomplish a shared goal by listening to each other and being approachable to new ideas and change.

### 5. When you're having a tough day, what do you do to turn things around?

If I'm having a tough day, I like to take a short walk or just take a moment. I love coffee anytime of the day or night, so Starbucks always helps turn things around!

### 6. What's something about you that people would be surprised to know?

Many might be surprised to know that my husband and I are a host family for the Tri-City Americans. We've had 12 players live with us over the last eight years ranging from 14 to 21 years old. It's been a great experience for my two boys who love having older brothers. We love being a part of each of our billet sons' lives and keep in touch with many of them.

## RAPID FIRE

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## RECOGNITION

 To submit an item for our Mission: Accomplished section, please email [hmiscomm@r1.gov](mailto:hmiscomm@r1.gov)



### 45 Years of Personal Growth at Hanford

*Contributor: Dustin Arbogast*

Meet Marta Cushman, a heavy-duty truck driver with 45 years of experience on the road. Starting out at just 26, Marta joined Hanford in an entry-level position with the janitorial team. From there, she steadily worked her way into a serviceman position and eventually becoming a truck driver. Over her decades at Hanford, she's taken on countless roles, from driving trucks and forklifts to helping with equipment and furniture moves.

Before her career at Hanford, Marta held a variety of jobs, including working in orchards and warehouses, where she

sorted apples and potatoes, and as a dishwasher. Inspired by the potential for stability and strong benefits, she worked her way into the trucking field and never looked back. Raised by adoptive parents who were military veterans, she learned early the value of hard work and dedication.

Marta has seen countless changes at Hanford: new companies, reorganizations and the shift from manual to automatic trucks, which she says is a practical improvement for onsite driving. She says the work has been consistent and she appreciates the supportive environment and her relationships with long-time coworkers. Marta's commitment to safety—always doing her 360 checks and looking out for others—sets a positive example. Her years in the field have made her a pro at handling various tools and securing loads.

Thank you, Marta, for all you do and for the countless times you've made an impact over the last 45 years!



## MISSION: PARTNERSHIP



### TEAM FOCUS: Roads & Grounds

*Contributor: Jill Harvill*

The Roads & Grounds team is responsible for maintaining over 270 miles of active paved roadways, miles of unpaved roads and parking lots on the Hanford Site. Roads & Grounds manager James Marquardt said his overarching goal is to protect the safety of drivers.

The Roads & Grounds team includes six heavy equipment operators, 16 Teamsters, one supervisor and one manager. James likes the day-to-day challenges of the job. The team is hard-working and takes great pride and ownership in their work.

A critical part of their scope is managing winter weather on the roads. This includes the Snow Removal Plan, which they start developing in July. Snow season is all-hands-on-deck, requiring coordination of all the transportation operations teams.



Back row (L to R): Anthony Palomarez, Jacob Doshier, Dan Peite, Jordan McMahan, Nick Echols, Jim Davis, Mike Hughes, Dan Record, Dan West, Shaun Church, Brian Waddingham, Ron Smith, Clint Nevills and James Simpson. Middle row (L to R): Manuel Pesina and Richard Cooper. Front: Red Long. Not pictured: Judy Ravenling, Christopher Morris, Matt Moorman, James Ireland, Curtis Kudronowicz, Bob Byrd and James Marquardt.



The Roads & Grounds team clears snow on Route 4 in a previous winter.

Advanced planning and routine communication with contractors and meteorologists help the team make timely, informed decisions in winter, such as pre-treating surfaces for snow removal. The team uses nine snowplows, several truck mounted plows and tanker trucks for liquid de-icer to help provide a safer commute to and from work.

Employees can make snow and ice removal safer and more effective by adhering to instructions on weather notices. Do not report to work until instructed – the Roads & Grounds crews need time to safely clear roads and parking lots without you or your vehicle in the way. It's also helpful to park in cleared areas to leave room for plows to do their job.

Thank you for helping keep us safe while traveling on Site!



Students spent a half-day in the classroom training on a computer simulation to learn how to operate the control system.

## MISSION: PARTNERSHIP

### IMS Completes First WLAN Operator Training

*Contributor: Shane Edinger*

Progress continues on the development of a Hanford Water Local Area Network (WLAN) that will ultimately tie all of the Site's water systems together in one network-controlled system. A major milestone in that effort was recently achieved as 50 employees completed the first WLAN operator level training.

The class included Water & Sewer Utilities operators, instrument control technicians and engineers working on Project L-895, which will upgrade and modernize the raw water system in the 200

West Area. The project is moving into the operational acceptance testing phase, so the WLAN training was necessary for operators to properly operate the control system software.

The day-long training included a morning classroom session where students used a computer simulation to learn how to operate the control system. In the afternoon session, they utilized live equipment, including the raw water system test loop, to replicate the training in the field.

"We tried our best to provide real-world, hands-on training in the environment," shared Adam Palomarez, who serves as the chief

enterprise architect with Information Management Services. "We wanted to get as close as we could to actual operations so they'll be prepared when the system comes online next year."

The W&SU operators, instrument control technicians and engineers with Project L-850, the new 1.1-million-gallon sanitary water tank, will complete the training next, followed by the team with Project L-897, the Central Plateau Water Treatment Facility.

"This is a major milestone for these reliability projects," Palomarez added. "It's the culmination of a tremendous amount of work to join the IT infrastructure and physical water system infrastructure. IT project teams and construction teams have been working in parallel during the construction phase to integrate the two systems, and it took a lot of coordination between all the teams involved to make sure things were completed in the right sequence to reach this successful outcome."



With help from HMIS' Testing & Commissioning group and our subcontractor, Verus, students experienced live training with field equipment as they utilized the raw water system test loop and control system in the 200 West Area.



Tony Jimenez (front of room) shares an update on restoration efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene at the National Response Coordination Center in Washington, D.C.

ESF #12 Region IX Coordinator Bill Eaton (left) talks with Dr. Elaine Ulrich, senior advisor with DOE's Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security and Emergency Response, during his deployment to North Carolina to support recovery efforts.

## MISSION: PARTNERSHIP

### Hurricane Season Keeps the ESF #12 Team Busy

*Contributor: Shane Edinger*

When disaster strikes across the country, members of HAMMER's Emergency Support Function (ESF) #12 team can be found on the frontlines of the Department of Energy's efforts to restore critical energy services, such as electrical and fuel supplies.

This year proved especially challenging as team members provided critical support for six hurricanes and two tropical

storms, as well as severe flooding events in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana, and a wildfire in New Mexico.

"HAMMER has directly supported DOE's ESF #12 team since 2003, providing response expertise and hands-on, custom training to help DOE meet its responsibilities for energy restoration assistance during natural disasters and emergencies," shared Paul Vandervert, HAMMER director. "It's one of the cornerstones of our National Programs."

In September, Hurricane Helene packed winds topping 130-mph as it made landfall in Florida and then moved north, bringing

heavy rainfall to Georgia, Tennessee, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana. Nearly six million customers lost power during the storm.

Hurricane Milton followed a few weeks later, making landfall in central Florida with 110-mph winds. HAMMER's ESF #12 team supported response and restoration activities in the aftermath of both storms for 28 consecutive days.

"It sounds crazy, but we send our team members into those areas before the storm hits and get them set up in a safe location," said Tony Jimenez, an ESF #12 deployment coordinator at HAMMER.

"They ride out the storm and then serve as our eyes and ears on the ground, giving us reports and assessing what's happening there and telling us where resources will be needed most."

HAMMER staff work long hours in the field alongside other responders. They also coordinate deployments and support the ESF #12 team with safety oversight, logistics and finance tracking to assist in the restoration of energy services after a disaster or major disruption.



Attendees ask questions and meet plan representatives at one of the informational meetings to learn about the new benefits offered for 2025.

## ONE HANFORD

### HEWT Makes Major Changes to 2025 Benefit Options

*Contributor: Shyanne Palmus*

After decades of having similar medical benefit plans, the Hanford Employee Welfare Trust (HEWT) is changing providers and implementing new plans. The HEWT is overseen by a board of trustees, representing plan sponsors, and is administered by the HMIS Workforce Solutions benefits department.

The change will affect more than 13,000 current employees, retirees and dependents as the HEWT aims to address rising healthcare costs and remain competitive in employee recruitment and retention. The goal? Provide comprehensive, cost-effective and high-quality healthcare benefits within a large, national network to eligible employees.

The process was intensive, requiring detailed analysis of current and potential plan providers and options, adjustments to payroll and benefits systems, providing detailed information

to employees as well as one-on-one support during the transition of benefits.

The HMIS Benefits team also facilitated three days of meetings for employees and retirees to attend presentations, ask questions and meet representatives from the new providers. Over 2,000 people attended the meetings, asking engaging questions.

The enhanced benefits provided by the new plans, through Premera Blue Cross (medical) and VSP (vision), offer robust coverage with a strong local and national presence.

Overall, the implementation was successful and enrollment of 12,894 plan participants has been completed. The HMIS Benefits team will continue to monitor the new plans for effectiveness and cost trends, and review employee feedback. Still have questions? Call the HEWT Benefits Helpline at (509) 376-6962 or email [Benefits-HEWT@rl.gov](mailto:Benefits-HEWT@rl.gov). For plan information, visit the **HEWT Benefits webpage**.



Shoutout to the HMIS Benefits team, who took on this massive task and continues to provide guidance to employees and retirees! (L to R) Nicole Stegall, Teresa Roske, Tiffany Orr, Nancy Aubertin-Pipkins, Rhonda Renz, Melissa Slahtasky, Amy McMurrich, Jason Queral, Melissa Alvarez, Dana Klepper-Mitzel and Kelly Nite.

## ONE HANFORD

### HFD Drilling for Readiness

Contributor: Melissa Ver Steeg

As we shared in our May Newsletter, the Hanford Fire Department regularly participates in drills at the Waste Treatment & Immobilization Plant (WTP). As Hanford prepared for its first shipment of anhydrous ammonia, the quantity and significance of drills increased.

Hanford firefighters received specialized training from the vendor and the Ammonia Safety and Training Institute, and resources ramped up for each drill. All platoons, actual equipment and full



The Hanford Fire Department participates in a drill simulating an anhydrous ammonia leak at the Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant.

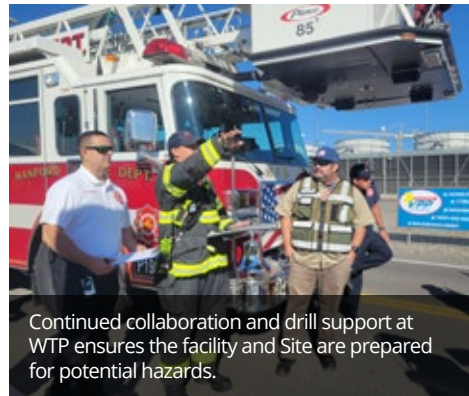
demonstrations were used with minimal simulations to ensure preparedness and to demonstrate readiness to begin accepting ammonia on Site.

With 19 drills at the facility this year, the HFD reflected on the success these drills made over time. "Having so many drills really helped us calibrate with the facility," shared HFD Battalion Chief José García. "When these drills first started, it took some time to iron out expectations from both the facility and the fire department. Drills this fall showed a solid performance from our team."

During review of a drill in September, the fire department was commended for its performance being the best of several drills witnessed this year. This is a testament to how much work the teams at WTP and the HFD put into preparing for keeping the Hanford Site safe.

As preparedness needs evolve, it's collaboration and commitment like this, by the One Hanford team, that will ensure safe success of the Hanford cleanup mission.

**These readiness drills and additional training proved valuable with the HFD's quick response to the WTP anhydrous ammonia concern on Dec. 20.**



Continued collaboration and drill support at WTP ensures the facility and Site are prepared for potential hazards.



Pictured with Hanford Field Office Manager Brian Vance (far right) are HMIS employees (L to R) Rachel Teel, Amy Basche, Joy McCrea, Jennifer Henriksen, Grant Ryan and Jon Kon.

## ONE HANFORD

### 77 of 77 Recognition Event

Contributor: Melissa Ver Steeg

HMIS was recognized by the Hanford Field Office during a celebration with individuals from federal and state agencies and One Hanford contractors, for its role in helping the Site complete the 77 environmental permits needed to begin treating waste for the Direct-Feed Low-Activity Waste Program. As the Site integrator, HMIS collaborated with OHCs and provided subject matter expertise across the water and air permitting efforts, while working closely with regulatory agencies.



Scott Cannon, Hoisting & Rigging program manager, demonstrates how Hanford utilizes cranes using a scale-sized crane.

## ONE HANFORD

### Hanford Careers Featured at STEM Day

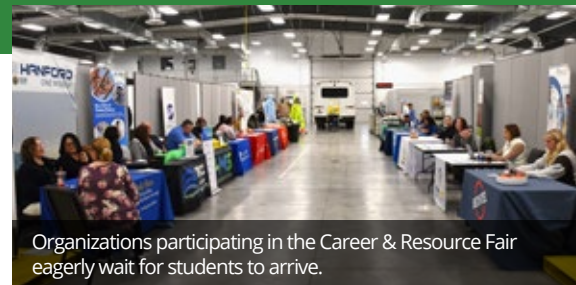
*Contributor: Shyanne Palmus*

About 40 high school students from Prescott and Dayton visited HAMMER to learn about career opportunities in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) at Hanford. The STEM Day also gave these students the chance to see the One Hanford mission up-close.

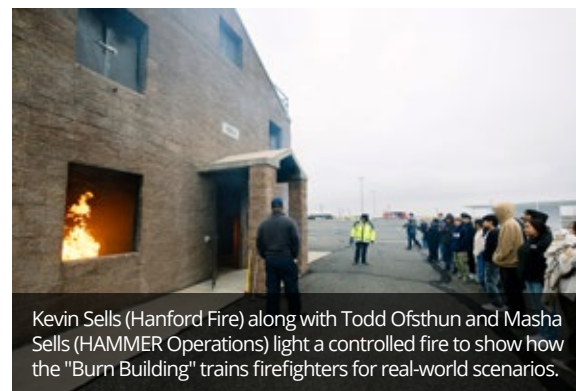
Hosted by HMIS, in partnership with The STEM Foundation, this event highlighted our efforts to build pathways for

students to pursue STEM careers while encouraging future workforce development aligned with the One Hanford cleanup mission. Students experienced hands-on demonstrations and presentations, including search and rescue, health and safety, hoisting and rigging, fall protection and fire response.

A Career & Resource Fair gave students the opportunity to chat with representatives from One Hanford contractors and local educational institutions. Students were impressed with the variety of career options available and surprised there were so many opportunities Hanford.



Organizations participating in the Career & Resource Fair eagerly wait for students to arrive.



Kevin Sells (Hanford Fire) along with Todd Ofsthun and Masha Sells (HAMMER Operations) light a controlled fire to show how the "Burn Building" trains firefighters for real-world scenarios.



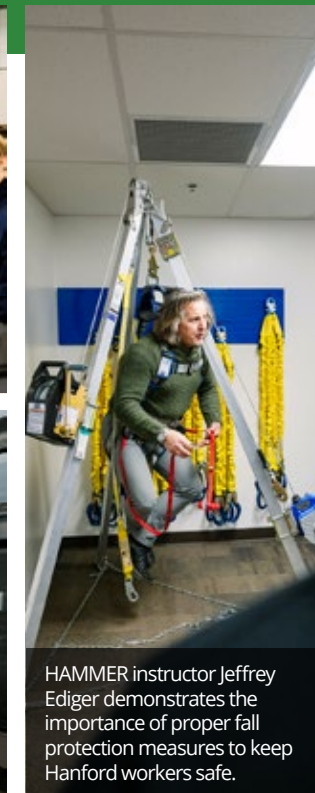
Carrie Jacobs, HAMMER Beryllium and Asbestos program manager, demonstrates how to properly don respiratory equipment.



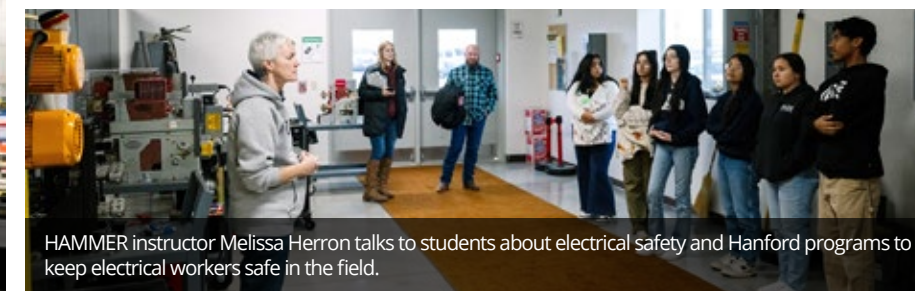
Brittany Robertson, nuclear chemist for PNNL's Nuclear Material Processing team, talks to students about technology used for PNNL careers.



Ben Culver, HAMMER Industrial Safety Training manager, guides students through the Search & Rescue Building.



HAMMER instructor Jeffrey Ediger demonstrates the importance of proper fall protection measures to keep Hanford workers safe.



HAMMER instructor Melissa Herron talks to students about electrical safety and Hanford programs to keep electrical workers safe in the field.

## ONE HANFORD



Meet the team charged with keeping our snowplow trucks in peak shape! (L to R) Jeff McGuire, Alberto Vieyra, Charlie Richelieu, David Cornejo, Kris Huffines, Brett Bouche and Ryan Woodyard.

### Off-Season Maintenance Aims to Prevent Snowplow Downtime

*Contributor: Shane Edinger*

When winter weather hits, it's 'all-hands-on-deck' for our Transportation Services team as they often work around the clock during a winter storm, making sure the Hanford Site's 270 miles of roadways are clear of snow and ice so employees can get to work safely.

HMIS maintains a fleet of nine large snowplow trucks and more than 20 smaller trucks with plows attached to tackle whatever Mother Nature throws at us each winter. If one of those trucks is out of service and stuck in the repair shop when a big storm hits, it can really hamper the crew's efforts to get the roadways cleared.

With that in mind, the team of maintenance mechanics with Fleet Services began to think proactively this past spring about preventative maintenance work that could be done on the plow trucks in the off-season to minimize or even prevent breakdowns during the winter.

"We did a preventative maintenance inspection on each truck after the snow season," shared Travis Larson, a maintenance specialist with Fleet Services. "We discovered that almost all the trucks had significant rust and corrosion issues with the air brake components, which are critical to safely operating those vehicles." The team spent time this summer replacing the damaged adjusters, air dryers, primary and secondary air tanks and valves on the trucks.

"With these inspections, our mechanics looked at the trucks with a more detailed focus on what we can do to fix a potential problem now and stay ahead of the curve," said Rick Thompson, HMIS' Fleet Maintenance manager. "With these increased efficiencies, it will hopefully translate into less downtime in the repair shop and that will directly correlate to less overall cost."



Mechanic David Cornejo changes the brake air dryer and brake valves underneath a snowplow.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### HFD Firefighters Shop for a Cause

*Contributor: Dustin Arbogast*

HMIS Family volunteers teamed up with the Hanford Fire Department's Union Firefighters, Local I-24, to help shop and wrap presents for more than 100 local foster kids! Great job everyone!



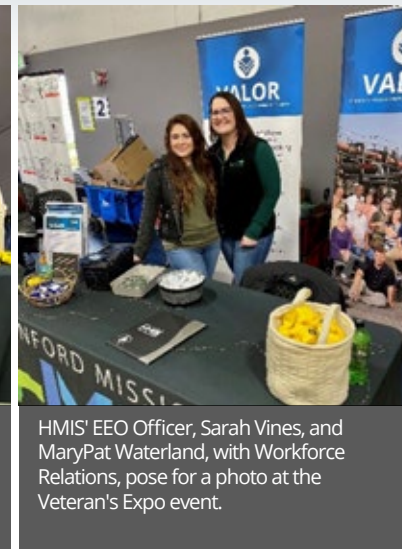
### Providing Resources to Local Veterans

*Contributor: Shyanne Palmus*

We were proud to attend the annual Tri-Cities Veterans Resource Expo last month, hosted by **Columbia Basin Veterans Center!** This event provides free employment resources, VA benefits information, housing services, social services, counseling and more to veterans and their families. Our Veterans Advocacy for Learning, Opportunities and Resources (VALOR) program is designed to provide support and resources to our employees, prospective employees and other members of the community who have honored us with their military service. Learn more about the VALOR program [on our website](#).



HR specialist, Mitch Davis, and Workforce Resources & Development program manager, Jim Whalley, ready to meet local veterans and provide information and resources.



HMIS' EEO Officer, Sarah Vines, and MaryPat Waterland, with Workforce Relations, pose for a photo at the Veteran's Expo event.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### HMIS Family Volunteers Build Bikes and Bright Futures

Contributor: Dustin Arbogast

For the 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, Bikes for Tikes brought together an incredible community of volunteers at the Three Rivers Convention Center. This annual event saw over 1,600 bikes assembled in just a few hours!

Bikes for Tikes has grown into one of the largest volunteer events in the region, touching the lives of thousands of children. But these bikes are more than just a toy—they are a source of freedom, identity and cherished childhood memories. For many kids, receiving a bike is a milestone moment they'll never forget.

HMIS is proud to partner with UA Local Union 598 Plumbers and Steamfitters to sponsor this impactful event. Together, we are helping to build brighter futures, one bike at a time.



## HMIS FAMILY



### Holiday Acts of Cheer

Our HMIS Family volunteers have been spreading holiday cheer, one act of kindness at a time! This holiday season, they packed Thanksgiving meal boxes, delivered donations, teamed up with organizations and served as personal shoppers to bring joy to families. THANK YOU to everyone who helped make the season memorable!



# HOLIDAY ACTS OF CHEER

CONTINUED

