



**NASA Ombudsman Program
2013 Annual Report**

- **Informality**
- **Independence**
- **Confidentiality**
- **Neutrality**

Background and History of the NASA Ombudsman Program

Established in January 2004 the NASA Ombudsman Program has employed 46 Ombudsmen at its Centers and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California (through 2011). In the nine full years of operation the Ombudsmen have dealt with 2,443 cases brought forward from employees and contract workers.

The Ombudsman provides an additional and supplemental channel of communication for employees and contractors to raise significant issues and concerns that they perceive could impact safety, organizational performance, or mission success. The program is based upon the principles of informality, independence, confidentiality and neutrality. These principles are summarized as follows:

- **Informality** – NASA Ombudsman Program functions outside all formal management, administrative or criminal processes. Ombudsman does not serve as an agent for notice to NASA. The Ombudsman assists the visitor in accessing appropriate formal systems, offices or processes as needed.
- **Independence** – Ombudsman is not encumbered by line management functions and in their Ombudsman role reports to the Center Director or Deputy Director.
- **Confidentiality** – Ombudsman maintain complete confidentiality as to the identity of visitors, except under various circumstances, and at the sole discretion of the Ombudsman. More details of these in NPD 2025.1.NASA Ombudsman Program.
- **Neutrality** – Ombudsman does not serve as a representative or advocate of any visitor's concerns within NASA, however, Ombudsman does advocate for fair processes and administration.

A more detailed definition of these principles and how they apply to the Ombudsman Program can be found in NASA policy, NPD 2025.1, NASA Ombudsman Program.

The majority of the cases over the years have been of an Organizational Performance nature (leadership, performance, relationships, etc.), while small percentages have related to Mission Success and Safety concerns. Of all visitors that come to the Ombudsman most receive some kind of coaching on how to take action themselves, others are referred to formal resources, and in a few cases the Ombudsman may mediate or escalate the issue to aid issue resolution.

Calvin F. Williams, Assistant Administrator for Strategic infrastructure provides oversight of the Ombudsman Program.

2013 Highlights

NASA-Wide Survey

In 2013 the Ombudsman Office distributed a survey to gain feedback regarding the Program. A strong response rate gave us valuable information. Here are some key messages-

- 94% of those who had used the Office they felt they were treated respectfully and that the Ombudsman took precautions to meet with them in a private and confidential manner.
- 77% of those who hadn't used the Office said they would, if the need arose
- 79% of those who used the Office felt they left better prepared to deal with their issue on their own and that the Ombudsman helped them consider options to resolve their issue.
- From the comments section it was clear that there were several respondents who needed more information about what the Ombudsman could really do and what kind of issues could be brought to the Ombudsman. In addition, more clarification was requested regarding the services of the various formal resources and how the Ombudsman Office differed from these formal resources. We learned that contractors were not clear that this resource was available for their use.
- There were several comments regarding trust and a sense that using the Ombudsman service could be detrimental to one's career.

Actions

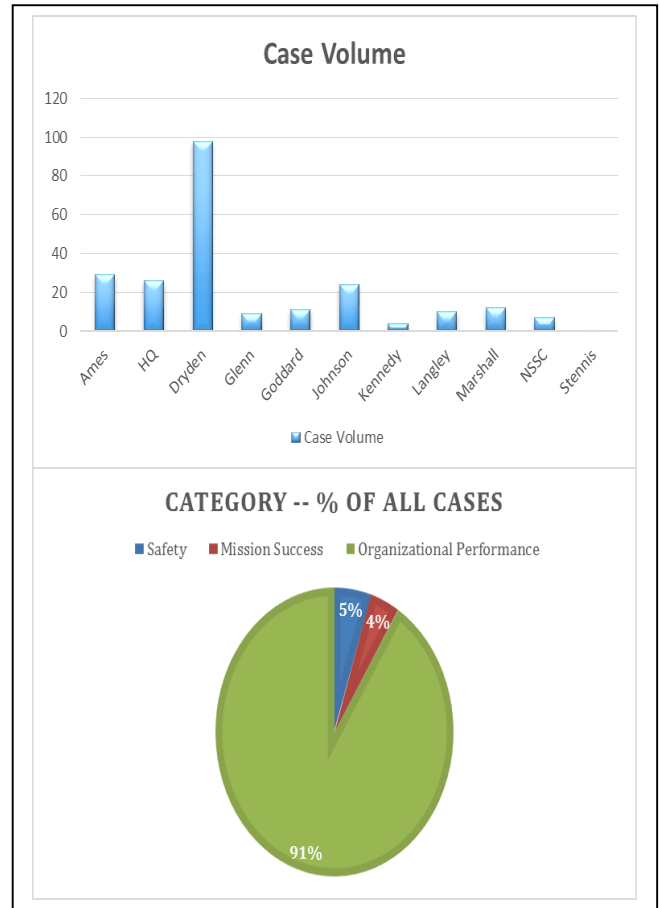
In 2014 and beyond the Ombudsman Program will work to improve its services by doing the following-

- Increase awareness and communication strategies by being more visible in each center and providing one significant outreach every three months (posters, brochure, article etc.)

- Target communication for the contractor population to ensure they know what types of issues are appropriate to bring to the NASA Ombudsman
- Ensure that email, website and phone numbers are easy to find and readily accessible for each Ombudsman in each center
- In each contact with users /potential users of the Ombudsman Program, the Ombudsman will highlight the strategies used to protect confidentiality and emphasis that the visitor makes the decision as to what action is taken, if any
- Work with formal resources to provide a directory of resources and explanation of when and how to use each

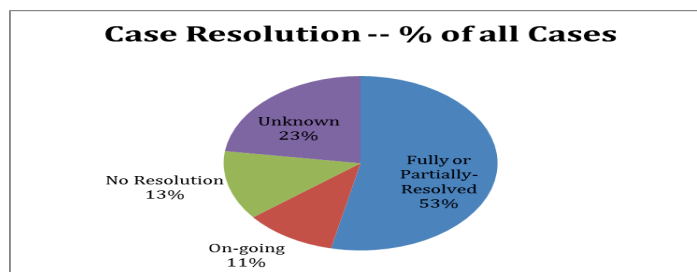
Cases and Trends

- The total number of cases in 2013 was 230 and this was 7% less than 2012.
- Of the 230 cases 91 % were from the Organizational Performance Category, 5 % were Safety, 4% were Mission Success and 1% fell in the “Other” category.
- Of the 230 cases the Ombudsman dealt with, 75% were from Civil Servants and 25% were from on-site contractors
- In the Job Itself category issues were raised regarding heavy workload and also issues regarding job duties not being challenging or interesting to the employee. As staff reductions have occurred in some centers, staff has been slotted into jobs that may not always be the best fit.
- Flexible work arrangements- some employees reported a disconnect between encouragement to use programs like Telework and the reality of their supervisors allowing this arrangement.
- The Career Development category accounted for several cases. Employees brought forward issues of not receiving development from their supervisors, Ladder Promotions not happening when they should and supervisors and employees not being aware of the resources inside NASA for development (on-line courses, workshops etc.).
- Leadership Issues (23% of all Organizational Performance Cases) often focused on intimidating behavior by a supervisor or lack of communication between boss and employee regarding job expectations or actual performance. There was a general theme around the need for clearer and more measurable goals and closer monitoring and more timely feedback regarding job performance. Many voiced a belief that their supervisor had little interest their on-going growth and engagement.
- Safety concerns focused on role clarity and who ultimately has the responsibility to ensure safety, conflicts within a team that could damage execution of safety standards and workload issues, which could hinder an individual’s ability to execute all safety measures.

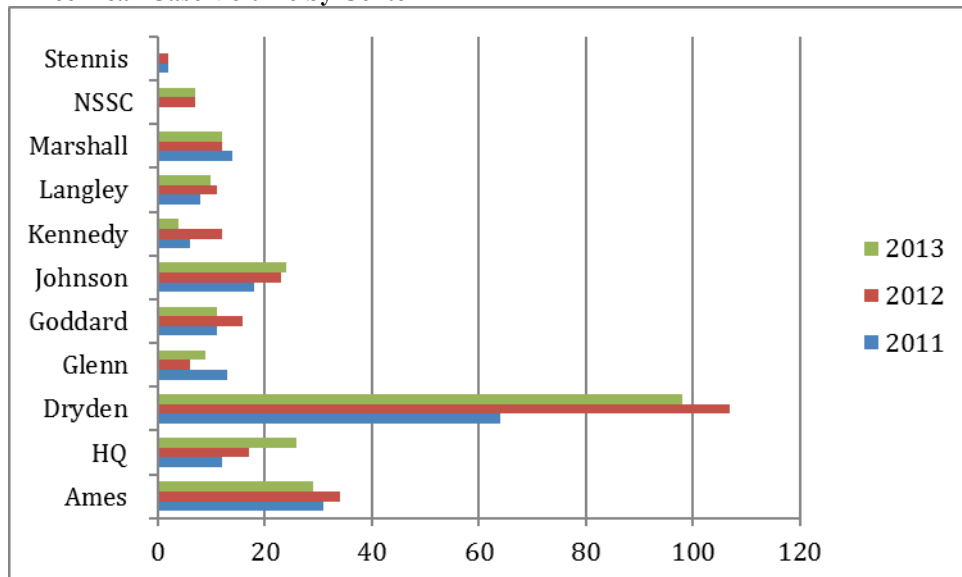


What Was The Ombudsman Able to Do?

- Escalate concerns to those who could investigate and make changes (with permission of the visitor)
- Coach the visitor on strategies he/she could use to improve communication and achieve more desirable outcomes
- Clarify policy or point to formal resources
- Bring parties together to facilitate a conversation designed to get results desirable for all parties
- Have formal resources look at policies and practices that may be driving undesirable actions and consider changes to these policies
- Draw attention to where policies are not being followed
- Encourage the organization to enhance or realign resources when necessary
- Provide reality testing.



Three-Year Case Volume by Center



NASA strives to provide multiple options for dispute resolution. It is best if issues are resolved as close to a situation as possible. If escalation is needed here are some of the **formal** “on the record” options you might consider:

- Your immediate supervisor
- Section or Division Manager
- Employee Relations Office (formal investigation and consultation on work related issues)
- Employee Assistance Program (personal issues of wellness, stress etc.)
- Ethics Office (business ethics and integrity issues)
- Equal Employment Office and Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Human Resource (Human Resource policy issues, performance, job status and treatment issues)
- Office of Security and Program Protection
- Office of Safety and Mission Assurance
- Office of Inspector General

The Ombudsman Program is the only “off the record” informal option.

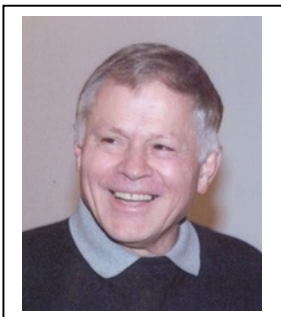
Special Thanks to those Ombudsmen who have moved on to other responsibilities.

- Kirk Seablom--GRC
- Sheri Brown--GSFC
- Tim Ferris--KSC
- Nick Kepics--LaRC



**Your NASA Ombudsmen
2013 Annual Report**

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- **Neutrality**



AMES RESEARCH CENTER-ARC

Jim Arnold

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Dr. Jim Arnold has been with NASA for 51 years and has served as an Ombudsman for 3 years. His contributions have included research, branch management, a tour of duty at NASA Headquarters (Aerothermodynamics Program Manager) and division management. Jim has worked in many technical areas including aerothermodynamics, computational chemistry, thermal protection systems (TPS) research and development, arcjet testing, advanced life support, and nanotechnology. His mentoring program has enhanced the career development for many who advanced to the highest ranks of leadership, management, and research in NASA.



AMES RESEARCH CENTER-ARC

Jack Boyd

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Jack Boyd serves as Senior Advisor to the Center Director, the Senior Advisor for History, and the Center Ombudsman. Jack started at Ames in 1947, when it was the Ames Aeronautical Laboratory and was still part of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA). His own work as an aeronautical research engineer involved wind tunnel studies of supersonic and subsonic aircraft and included major contributions to theories of conical camber. He later did early research on the design of unpowered planetary probes to explore Mars and Venus, and he helped develop early configurations for the Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo capsules. Beginning in the mid-1960s, Jack increasingly served in managerial positions at NASA Ames. He served as

Executive Assistant to the Ames Center Director, Deputy Director of Dryden Flight Research Center, Deputy and Associate Director of Ames Research Center, and Associate Administrator for Management at NASA Headquarters.



DRYDEN FLIGHT RESEARCH CENTER-DFRC

Louise Boyd

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Assistant Associate Director of at Dryden, Louise Boyd has been employed by NASA for over 30 years. The first 21 years were spent at the Kennedy Space Center, where she participated in various assignments that ranged from software engineering to workforce planning and human resources management. She also represented the Agency on a detail in the Executive Office of the President/Office of Management and Budget, Science and Space Programs Branch. In 2004, she transferred to the Dryden Flight Research Center. Her assignments have included human resource management, strategic work force planning, and performance improvement. She has been an Ombudsman for 4 years. She is passionate about helping others succeed. She

has served as an informal and formal mentor most of her NASA career.



DRYDEN FLIGHT RESEARCH CENTER-DFRC

Albion Bowers

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Al Bowers is the Associate Director of Research in the Research and Engineering Directorate at NASA's Dryden Flight Research Center, Edwards, CA. In this position, Al is responsible for defining NASA Dryden's strategic direction for the Center, including advanced aeronautical designs, research, and space technologies. Prior to his present position, Al served as Director of Dryden's Aeronautics Mission Directorate and as a project manager. He also served as the Chief of the Aerodynamics Branch of Dryden's Research Engineering Directorate from 2002 to 2004, acted as Deputy Director of the Research and Engineering Directorate from 2004 to 2008, and acted as the Special Assistant to the Associate Administrator

of Aeronautics in 2008. Al earned a Bachelor of Science in aeronautical engineering and a Master of Engineering from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. He began his career with NASA in the Graduate Student Research Program in 1982.



DRYDEN FLIGHT RESEARCH CENTER-DFRC

George Grimshaw

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George Grimshaw has been a NASA employee at Dryden Flight Research Center for over 28 years and an Ombudsman for 3 years. He is currently Dryden's Shuttle Transition and Retirement Manager, leading the turn-in of local Shuttle assets for disposition. Prior to that he was the Shuttle Operations and Project Manager and led Shuttle landing and postlanding processing support at Dryden. George was also the Avionics Branch Chief at Dryden for 8 years, leading the avionics technician workforce in the maintenance and modification of Dryden's aircraft fleet. He began his career at Dryden as an avionics technician in 1984.



DRYDEN FLIGHT RESEARCH CENTER-DFRC

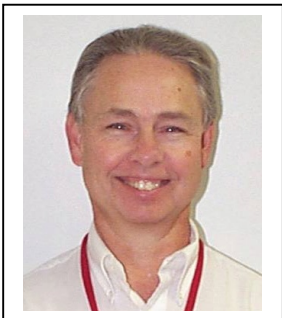
Kevin Reilly

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Kevin Reilly has been employed with NASA for almost 12 years. Previously, he worked for The TYBRIN Corporation as an F-16 System Program Manager for Foreign Military Sales to Bahrain and Egypt after retiring from the United States Air Force. While in the Air Force, he flew over half of his 20-year career as an operational test pilot in Boeing B-52s and Northrop Grumman B-2s. Kevin also had experience in crisis action. At Dryden, he initially worked as a system safety engineer supporting numerous Center projects. Due to his operational flight experience, he became the Quality Assurance Branch Chief for 3 years, and when Dryden inherited the Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA), he was asked to become

the Chief Safety Officer for the SOFIA Airborne Platform Project (APP). He recently joined the Management Systems Office as a Management and Program Analyst overseeing all Center processes. Kevin joined the Dryden Ombudsman team in June 2010.



DRYDEN FLIGHT RESEARCH CENTER-DFRC

Keith Williams

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Keith Williams has been employed by NASA for 7 years. Prior to this, he was employed by Honeywell Technical Services and assigned to various military and NASA contracts in management roles. In 2001, Keith retired from Honeywell and came to work at Dryden Flight Research Center (DFRC) as a support contractor assigned to the Management Systems Office (MSO). In May 2006 he began his NASA career at Dryden as the supervisor of the MSO responsible for ensuring management system (MS) integration, evaluation of MS system performance, and management of the DFRC MS documentation system. Keith has been an Ombudsman for 4 years as the DFRC Ombudsman lead.



GLENN RESEARCH CENTER

Marsha Nall

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Marsha Nall has been employed by NASA Glenn Research Center (GRC) for over 30 years and is brand new to the ombudsman role. She currently manages the Glenn Human Research Program (HRP) and is responsible for implementation of an interdisciplinary bioengineering program. This is a complex and unique space exploration research and technology development program focused on mitigating risks to health, safety and performance of astronaut crews during long duration spaceflight. The GRC focus is in the areas of exercise countermeasures, computational physiology and medical capabilities. Marsha started her career at NASA performing research in support of both aeronautics and space systems. She has held both systems engineering and project management roles in development of the International Space Station

(ISS) electrical power system and in large facility-class experiment payloads for ISS. Marsha received her Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from The Ohio State University and her Master of Science degree in Civil Engineering from Case Western Reserve University.



GLENN RESEARCH CENTER

Michael Zernic
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Michael J. Zernic has served NASA for nearly 30 years in a variety of project management duties primarily in power systems and communications systems. He has contributed to the International Space Station (ISS) Program, the Advanced Communications Technology Satellite (ACTS) Experiments Program, several aeronautical communication technology demonstration projects, and the Constellation Program. He currently serves the Space Communications and Navigation (SCaN) Program. Michael holds a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Dayton and a M.S. in Industrial Engineering from Cleveland State University



GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER-GSFC

Ed Rogers
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Dr. Ed Rogers is the Chief Knowledge Officer at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, MD. He received a Ph.D. from Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations focusing on the role of cooperation in high tech firms. In the early 1980s, he performed 5 years of international relief work in Southern Lebanon. Prior to returning to academic work at Cornell, Ed operated a private consulting practice focused on knowledge workers and intelligent enterprise. His research and publications apply game theory models to human behavior in organizations. He has consulted with a number of organizations on building conceptual transparency and leveraging collective knowledge. Before joining NASA, he taught

strategic management and entrepreneurship at Cornell, Duke, and the University of Alabama in Huntsville.



GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER-GSFC

Kim Weaver
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Kim Weaver has been with NASA for 16 years and is a new Ombudsman. Kim is currently an astronomer in the Laboratory for High-Energy Astrophysics, using space-based satellites to study galaxies and super massive black holes. Kim has served in a variety of roles at NASA including the Associate Director of Science for the Goddard Space Flight Center Astrophysics Division, Program Scientist at NASA HQ for the Spitzer Space Telescope, and Press and Education/Outreach liaison for the NASA HQ Astrophysics Division. As the Press and Education/Outreach liaison, Kim participated in discussions regarding policy, procedure, and methodology, and worked internal and cross-discipline communications strategy issues.

Kim is also an occasional media spokesperson for NASA.



GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER-GSFC

Torry Johnson
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Torry A. Johnson has been with NASA for over 10 years and as a new Ombudsman has served for almost 6 months. Torry currently functions as the Assistant Deputy Director of Hydrospheric & Biospheric Sciences in the Earth Science Division at Goddard Space Flight Center. In addition, he heads up the Agency's Tribal College & University Project.



GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER-GSFC

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Dr. Winterton is the Senior Advisor for Education and Leadership Development in the Suborbital and Special Orbital Projects Directorate of the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center/Wallops Flight Facility in Virginia. Prior to her current position, Joyce also served as NASA's Assistant Administrator for Education, directing the development and implementation of the agency's education programs that strengthen student

involvement and public awareness of its scientific goals and missions. Joyce earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in home economics education from Utah State University in Logan. She completed her doctorate in teacher education and administration at Colorado State University in Fort Collins.



HEADQUARTERS-HQ

Rex Elliott

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Rex Elliott began working for NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in 1983 through the Presidential Management Internship Program. For the next 25 years, Rex focused his career in the field of procurement, serving as a contracting officer for 19 years and working on a variety of contracts, including several for development of spaceflight hardware but also facilities construction, services, high-performance computing, and scientific research. Rex also served collateral duty as an Equal Employment Opportunity Counselor for 10 years. In 2008, Rex transferred permanently to NASA Headquarters to become the Contractor Industrial Relations Officer for the Agency, helping to ensure NASA complies with all labor laws affecting contractor employees. He also serves as the policy person for NASA Employee Exchanges and as a Contracting Officer Representative (COR) on a number of contracts for NASA's Logistics Division. Rex has been an Ombudsman for NASA Headquarters for 5 years.



HEADQUARTERS-HQ

Ruth McWilliams

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Ruth McWilliams has been with NASA for almost 7 years and with the Ombudsman Office for 2 years. She currently serves as the Executive Officer to the Associate Deputy Administrator for Strategy & Policy. Ruth leads the team rewriting NPD 1000.5, Policy for NASA Acquisition, and facilitates the annual HQ call for detailees. She has previously served as the Mission Support Council (MSC) Executive Secretary and a Program Analysis and Evaluation Office (PA&E) budget and program analyst.



JOHNSON SPACE CENTER-JSC

Donna Blakshear-Reynolds

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Donna Blakshear-Reynolds is the Division Chief, Multiprograms Division under the JSC Office of the Chief Financial Officer. Donna began at Johnson Space Center in 1981 as a Presidential Management Intern and has served in progressively more responsible positions involved in budgeting, program planning, and analysis, as well as program evaluation. Donna's educational background includes a Bachelor of Arts in Government, University of Texas at Austin; Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government, MPA; and postgraduate study in public policy at the University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School of Finance.



JOHNSON SPACE CENTER-JSC

John Casper

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John Casper has been with NASA for 29 years and has served as one of JSC's Ombudsmen for 1 year. Prior to joining NASA, John served in the Air Force as a fighter pilot with 229 combat missions, a test pilot, commander of a flight test squadron, and project manager at Air Force headquarters. He was selected to be an astronaut and came to JSC in 1984. A veteran of four space flights, he was the pilot on STS- 36 and commander on STS-54, STS-62, and STS-77. He has also served as Director of Safety, Reliability and Quality Assurance; senior advisor to the Columbia Mishap Investigation Team; Deputy of NASA's Return to Flight Planning Team; Manager of the Space Shuttle Program's Management Integration and Planning Office; and Associate Program Manager of the Space Shuttle Program. John is currently in the Associate Manager for Program Integration on the Orion Multi-Purpose Crew Vehicle (MPCV) Program.



KENNEDY SPACE CENTER-KSC

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Hortense Burt is currently the Teacher and Student Programs Lead within the External Relations Directorate's Education Programs and University Research Division at NASA's John F. Kennedy Space Center (KSC) in Florida. In 2000, Burt joined NASA as a flight assurance manager in the Expendable Launch Vehicles Safety and Flight Assurance Office, where she was responsible for developing and implementing flight assurance activities. She was the Mission Assurance Manager on both Mars Exploration Rover Missions A and B and the Deep Impact missions. In 1992, she was promoted to the position of program safety manager and lead engineer for all Delta launches from Cape Canaveral AFS.



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Justin is currently the civil engineering lead within the Construction of Facilities Division of the Center Operations Directorate at NASA's John F. Kennedy Space Center (KSC) in Florida. In 2000, Junod began his career with NASA as a cooperative education student in the Facilities Engineering Division where he spent 10 years serving in the roles of project manager, lead design engineer and construction manager for Institutional and Programmatic facilities and systems. He is a graduate of the University of Central Florida where he received a Bachelor of Science in civil engineering and a Master of Science in industrial engineering.



LANGLEY RESEARCH CENTER-LaRC

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Rolla has been with NASA for 7 years and has served as one of LaRC's Ombudsmen for 5 years. Prior to NASA, Rolla worked with DoD and retired from the Air Force after 22 years of active duty service. Rolla is a Financial Management Specialist with the Office of Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) and has been involved in all phases of the planning, programming, budgeting, and execution processes. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Social Psychology from Park University, Parkville, MO and a Master of Science in Human Resource Management from Troy University in Troy, AL.



LANGLEY RESEARCH CENTER-LaRC

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Jim is one of our newest Ombudsman and started his professional career in 1972 when he entered the United States Air Force, serving until 1980. His last duty station was Langley AFB, Virginia and he's been in Southeastern Virginia ever since. Jim became a Civil Servant with NASA in 1980 and worked at many of the facilities as an engineering technician and Group leader. He became a Test Director at the 8' HTT in 1995 and is still located there. He enjoys the diverse workforce and the dedicated people that work at LaRC and is looking forward to his duties as a LaRC Ombudsman.



LANGLEY RESEARCH CENTER-LaRC

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Venita began her career with NASA as a cooperative education student in the Public Information Branch at Marshall Space Flight Center. She is a graduate of Tennessee Technological University and Hampton University with a BS degree in English-Journalism and an MS degree in Management respectively. Venita has over thirty years of federal experience, the majority of which has been with NASA. She has enjoyed assignments in Public Relations, Human Resources, Equal Employment Opportunity and Logistics Management at both Marshall and Langley. She served as a Recruitment Manager, Senior Human

Resources Specialist, Disability Program Manager, Diversity Workforce Manager and is currently the LaRC Supply and Equipment Management Officer as well as the Center's Property Disposal Officer. Venita considers herself fortunate to have enjoyed such a diversified and fulfilling career with NASA and looks forward to this opportunity to serve as a LaRC Ombudsman.



LANGLEY RESEARCH CENTER-LaRC

Shannon Walker

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Shannon began her career as a legal secretary for a law firm in Hampton in 1982. In 1987, she was selected for a civil servant job with the Department of Defense in Norfolk, where she was a contract management assistant. She transferred to NASA LaRC in 1990 as a secretary in Programs and Resources Division (now referred to as CFO). She later worked in the Office of Procurement for several years, and then in the Engineering Directorate. She moved to the Science Directorate in 2000, where she has held several roles (secretary, administrative officer, management and program analyst). She is now a Contracting Officer's Representative for the Science Support Services Contract. Shannon has enjoyed working with all the

different people in each organization throughout her career and is looking forward to doing her best serving as a LaRC Ombudsman.



MARSHALL SPACE FLIGHT CENTER-MSFC

Pamela Caruso

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Pam Caruso has over 30 years experience in the Space and Missile Defense community and worked at DoD prior to joining NASA. She currently supports the Engineering Director as Lead for Engineering Partnerships. She has a Bachelor of Science from University of Alabama in chemical engineering, and a Master of Science from the University of Alabama in Huntsville in engineering. Pam has served as an Ombudsman 2 years.



MARSHALL SPACE FLIGHT CENTER-MSFC

Susan Cloud

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Susan Cloud has 31 years with NASA and 6 years with the Ombudsman Program. She currently is Special Assistant to the Director of Human Capital and Acting Director of Diversity and EEO. Susan has a B.A. from the University of Alabama and a J.D. from Cumberland School of Law, Samford University.



NASA SHARED SERVICES CENTER-NSSC

James C. Barnett

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Jim Barnett has been with the NSSC Business and Administration Office since 2006, where he served as Lead, Institutional Services and is currently appointed Industrial Property Officer for the NSSC Agency-wide contracts. His background has been in Center operations including construction, facility management, and safety. As a mechanical engineer he came to Stennis Space Center in 2001 from the Navy's Gulf Coast Construction Office. Earlier in his 30-year Government career he served as a Naval Officer and performed various Civil Service supervisory and management roles.



STENNIS SPACE CENTER-SSC

Karen Lee Vander

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Karen Vander has been with NASA for 21 years and is the Lead, Safety, Quality, and Management Systems Division in the Office of Safety and Mission at Stennis Space Center (SSC) where she also

serves as the Mishap and Close Calls Program Manager for SSC. She has worked as a Test Operations Engineer on several rocket propulsion test projects such as the Space Shuttle Main Engine (SSME) and 250K Hybrid Rocket Motor. She has also worked as a Systems Engineer on several construction projects. Karen has been the SSC Ombudsman for over 7 years. She has also recently retired from the United States Air Force Reserve with 23 years of service.