

## **Beatrice Disman – 2013 Roger W. Jones Award – Commitment to Effective Continuity of Government through Career Development of Future Leaders**

Ms. Disman is an exceptional leader in the federal government, well-known for her comprehensive knowledge of federal and state benefit programs and her passion for providing quality service to the public. She is recognized as one of the agency's most innovative leaders, and one that constantly strives to bring out the best people have to offer. One of her roles that she considers most important is the imparting of her knowledge and experience to others in our agency. She has demonstrated this commitment through her actions to develop the skills, knowledge and abilities of SES candidates nationally and her own employees in the New York Region.

One of the ways Ms. Disman has been most effective in training new leaders for the agency is in her willingness to volunteer as a mentor to individuals in the SES candidate program. She is much sought after as a mentor because she is recognized as one of the Social Security Administration's outstanding leaders. Despite her demanding schedule as the agency lead executive for Medicare and ACA and her role as the Regional Commissioner for the New York Region, she still makes time to mentor a number of SES candidates. The candidates greatly benefited from her guidance, and have gone on to assume positions of leadership within the agency. Even after the formal programs end, Ms. Disman's influence on her former mentees development continues because they look to her for ongoing advice and counsel.

She has also hosted a number of SES candidates on assignments in the New York Region. In the past several years, she has provided development assignments in the NY Region to 6 SES candidates, including one in the position of Deputy Regional Commissioner. Candidates gain needed experience by shadowing her and her executive team through their daily work day. She has designed a complete mentoring program for them. During the four to six months the SES candidate works in the region they are given three developmental matrixes to complete. They first complete an orientation matrix where they are exposed to the work of the various components in the regional office to gain an understanding of the specific duties and issues involved in the running of the components. The candidates then must complete an operations matrix. This involves exposure to the various field office components including the local Social Security offices, area director office, teleservice centers and account number sites. This gives the candidates a perspective of how the Social Security Administration works with the public and the problems and issues that arise during normal day to day operations. The third matrix is a career development position where the candidate will run a component in the New York Region. Ms. Disman is generous with her time in meeting with the candidates while they are on assignment to the region and they benefit from observing her visionary and innovative approach to providing service to the public, and in her ability to inspire the people who work for her to achieve extraordinary results in a very challenging environment.

Ms. Disman is committed to continuous learning and development toward the goal of having a diverse and able pipeline of future leaders for the agency. Toward that goal, she has implemented career development programs for all employees from management and supervisory ranks to lower graded employees. She has designed several regional career development programs, in particular the Regional Supervisory Development Program (RSDP) and the Regional Leadership Development Program (RLDP). The programs are aligned with the Social



Security Administration's Critical Competencies and Performance Assessment and Communication System (PACS), allowing for better identification, training and assessment needs of the next generation of leaders. These programs provide opportunities for those with the potential to fill the gap created by the retirement wave to enhance their abilities, broaden their skills, and expand their expertise. By aligning the programs with the Social Security Administration's Critical Competencies she has assured that participation in the programs will give participants the skills they need to assume greater leadership responsibilities. A large number of employees have participated in these programs over the last five years, and many have gone on to occupy positions of leadership in the region.

The Regional Supervisory Development program is an 18 month program where GS 11 and GS 12 participants are placed into GS 12 supervisory positions for one year followed by a management analyst position for 6 months. The exposure allows the participants to experience new and challenging assignments, creates confidence, leadership and management skills. GS 12 employees are given a temporary promotion to a GS 13 and assigned to management analyst positions.

The Regional Leadership Development Program focuses on the region's succession management strategy. It is a 12 month program where GS 12 and GS 13 participants are placed in two 6 month assignments involving increased leadership and management responsibilities and helps to develop future leaders.

The region has also established a Regional Office Developmental Opportunity program where short term assignments of 30 to 120 days are provided to GS 12, 13 and 14 field employees to gain the experience of working in the regional office. This program provides developmental needs and helps achieve succession management strategy with this cross-component experience.

The New York region also has a Regional Experience program which is a one year program for GS 12 regional office employees with no prior supervisory experience to work as a supervisor in the field and for GS 12 supervisors with no prior management analyst experience to work in an analyst position in the regional office. Exposure to various positions in the agency broadens the employees' perspective and increases their skills.

The programs discussed above are part of the succession plan Ms. Disman has implemented in the New York Region. Both in the formal development plans and by creative use of temporary promotions and details, she has ensured the continual development of the executive and management staff, broadening the experience of the individuals involved and creating a skilled pool of candidates who will fill the vacancies as the current leaders retire. To ensure that these programs continue to evolve to meet changing needs over time, she has created a Regional Succession Board headed by her Director of Human Resources to continue the focus on developing employees at all levels.

Ms. Disman's extensive mentoring activities and sponsorship of developmental opportunities for employees at all levels have been invaluable to the agency's succession planning efforts. But perhaps her most far reaching impact comes from the manner in which she leads by example. All of those who have worked with her in New York and throughout the agency, have seen what a tireless, compassionate, dedicated leader can accomplish when she refuses to accept anything but the best work from herself and others, and become better leaders themselves thanks to the

opportunity to work with her. Bea Disman demonstrates daily her strong commitment to bringing about effective continuation of government by helping to develop the careers of people who will serve as managers and executives in the future federal service.