

2013 Roger W. Jones Award for Executive Leadership  
Nomination of Keith Washington  
Commitment to Effective Continuity of Government

Keith Washington strongly believes in developing staff at all levels, including future managers and executives within the Department of Transportation (DOT). Upon his arrival at the Maritime Administration (MARAD), which is a sub-agency within DOT, he identified the need to foster and develop future leaders in an agency in which a vast percentage of current managers and executives were retirement-eligible. Mr. Washington was instrumental in realizing the importance of a Workforce Analysis, which pinpointed the need to develop managers and executives and to prepare them for leadership positions within MARAD. He developed the MARAD Strategic Human Capital Plan, which identified succession planning as the greatest issue facing MARAD.

In developing this Strategic Human Capital Plan, Mr. Washington created a Statement of Work and, in concert with the acquisition office, he reviewed the proposals and selected a vendor. When the succession plan was finalized, he used the information to establish hiring plans that identified succession planning, attrition trends, and recommended ways to close the skill gaps when federal or contract employees retire or leave the organization. Once these gaps were identified, Mr. Washington worked with the Human Resources Office to announce and solicit applications for position openings. As a result, MARAD was able to hire and train specialists at a rate that matched projected losses and maintained a consistent level of service for MARAD customers. With Mr. Washington's leadership and guidance, these plans are currently being implemented to identify future managers and executives in the organization and steps are being taken to develop them for future leadership positions within the organization.

Mr. Washington has executed this principle on an individual level as well. Upon his arrival he identified the Deputy Associate Administrator for Administration (DAAA) as a potential young leader within the organization. Mr. Washington has mentored and fostered the DAAA to ensure that he is prepared to step into a senior leadership position when the opportunity arises. Mr. Washington helped identify competency gaps for this individual and identified and implemented solutions to close those gaps. He was supportive in helping this individual apply and be accepted in the Federal Executive Institute (FEI) for Leadership for a Democratic Society program to help the DAAA develop into a superior leader. Mr. Washington's efforts to develop the DAAA into an effective leader have been noticed across the agency. An example of this is the fact that the DAAA has recently been put in charge of Department-wide and multi-agency task forces.

Mr. Washington has also taken steps to foster support for other potential leaders across the organization by forming a human capital task force, which is developing and implementing a system to help identify and prepare potential leaders in the organization. This task force will enable MARAD to successfully replace senior leaders as they retire or leave the organization without loss of corporate knowledge within the organization. Another avenue Mr. Washington has utilized for succession planning is the Pathways Internship program. This program is bringing in educated, bright, and motivated individuals into the organization. He has interviewed potential candidates and has hired numerous students using this program. These new employees will become the future leaders within the government.

The Deputy Secretary of Transportation has personally recognized Mr. Washington's efforts in a myriad of initiatives. These initiatives include: improving DOT's overall score for the recent Employee Viewpoint Survey, moving DOT from 35<sup>th</sup> place in 2010 to 9<sup>th</sup> in overall employee

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satisfaction in 2012. Supporting the first DOT Professional Development Day, this covered topics ranging from mentoring to reaching executive potential, partnering with local area high schools, and arranging a number of internships for students at DOT to expand interest in pursuing transportation related jobs. Finally, through Mr. Washington's outstanding negotiation skills, he successfully worked on behalf of the Department's Executive Agent Hiring Unit to obtain funding to expand the services of DOT's automated staffing unit. This initiative has led to the selection of higher quality candidates dedicated to improving the transportation system for the American people.