



# WORKERS' SPOTLIGHT

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## FORMER WORKER MEDICAL SCREENING PROGRAM REACHES MILESTONE – 100,000 SERVED

The Former Worker Medical Screening Program (FWP) was mandated by the U.S. Congress as part of Section 3162 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1993 (Public Law 102-484). Since 1996, the FWP has provided ongoing medical screening examinations, at no cost, to all interested and eligible former Department of Energy (DOE) Federal, contractor, and subcontractor workers from all DOE sites. The medical screening exams offered by the FWP are designed to detect work-related health effects from a range of potentially hazardous exposures. Individuals who are found to have any abnormal medical findings are referred to their personal physicians or a specialist for additional testing and diagnoses.

Exams are offered at clinics in communities near DOE sites, as well as through a large network of health clinics nationwide, to

allow services to be provided near most workers' residences. In fact, this vast network of clinics has allowed the FWP to provide participant exams in all 50 States, Canada, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines.

A major milestone was reached in June of this year – over 100,000 medical screening exams have now been provided to former workers since the inception of the program. Since 1996, the program has made great strides in addressing the occupational health legacy of the Department's 70-plus years of nuclear weapons design and production. We, at the Office of Health, Safety and Security, are especially proud of the emphasis we place on the importance of serving our workers. Many millions of dollars have been spent addressing the environmental legacy of DOE's work, but it is equally important to recognize the human legacy.

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## A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

By Greg Lewis

While working at the Department of Energy, I have had the opportunity to visit almost every active site and have had the pleasure of interacting with hundreds of current and former workers and their families at town hall meetings. Although the passion these workers show for their work and their accomplishments is always impressive, the thing that is most striking to me at various meetings is the excitement and happiness many of the current and former workers

experience when they are reunited with former coworkers. It's remarkable the bonds that many of these workers have, even 10 to 20 years later. While technical knowledge is certainly important, a close knit group who cares about each other and supports each other will allow a group to perform at a level that is greater than the sum of its parts.

I think we are fortunate to have such a close knit group here in the Office of Worker

Screening and Compensation Support (HS-14), and I firmly believe it is one of the most important factors in our ability to perform our jobs well. Over the past months, we have been featuring the different HS-14 employees (with one or two exceptions sprinkled in) in the "getting to know our staff" section of the newsletter, and this month's feature is me. If

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## GETTING TO KNOW OUR STAFF



Greg Lewis began his career at Department of Energy (DOE) almost 10 years ago (January 2004) as a program analyst with the EEOICPA Program and has been with the program ever since. Mr. Lewis had been both an analyst and the program manager for the EEOICPA program when he was promoted to the Director of the Office of Worker Screening and Compensation Support

(HS-14) and became involved with the Former Worker Medical Screening Program (FWP). Mr. Lewis has been heavily involved in facilitating major EEOICPA projects, including the Department of Labor Site Exposure Matrices and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health site profile, as well as special exposure cohort research efforts.

Prior to joining DOE, he worked as a housing coordinator for a homeless

shelter in upstate NY. Mr. Lewis earned a Masters in Public Policy (MPP) degree from the American University in Washington, DC, and a BA degree with a major in Mathematics from Wesleyan University in Connecticut.

When not at work, Mr. Lewis plays ice hockey, bikes, hikes, camps, and generally tries to get outside as much as possible. ■

## USPSTF RECOMMENDS ANNUAL LOW-DOSE CT SCANNING FOR EARLY LUNG CANCER DETECTION

By Steven Markowitz, MD, FWP Principal Investigator

The United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) issued a draft recommendation in July 2013, endorsing the annual use of low-dose CT scan for the early detection of lung cancer in high-risk smokers. This type of screening was initiated on a pilot basis by the Department of Energy (DOE) in 2000 for high-risk former workers at its three gaseous diffusion plants in Oak Ridge, Portsmouth, and Paducah and is now used at multiple DOE sites as part of the DOE Former Worker Medical Screening Program (FWP).

The USPSTF decision is important, because it will lead to insurance coverage for this screening method for high-risk smokers by Medicare and private health insurers. The USPSTF, a Federal committee constituted by independent medical and public health experts, based their recommendation on a National Cancer Institute study published in 2011 that found annual screening with low-dose CT scans prevented at least 20% of lung cancer deaths among high-risk smokers. The USPSTF recommends screening for current and former smokers from age 55 to 80 who smoked the equivalent of a pack a day for 30 years or two packs a day for 15 years. Smokers who quit less than 15 years previously are among those recommended for screening.

The DOE FWP has pioneered the use of low-dose CT scanning for lung cancer screening among high-risk DOE workers who may have been exposed to asbestos,

beryllium, radiation, and other lung carcinogens. Since 2000, over 12,000 former nuclear weapons workers nationwide have received free CT scan-based lung cancer screening at 11 DOE sites in Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Nevada, Idaho, Colorado, and Washington. The screening was initiated by one of the DOE former worker medical screening programs, sponsored by the United Steelworkers, the Atomic Trades and Labor Council, and the City University of New York. To date, the program has found 96 lung cancers, with the majority at an early stage, when treatment is most effective. In the absence of screening, only 15% of lung cancers are usually detected in early stages.

Approximately 160,000 people in the United States die each year of lung cancer, and most have an advanced stage of the disease when it is diagnosed, making successful treatment unlikely. Low-dose CT scan screening makes early detection of lung cancer possible, when the cancer is most treatable.

Former DOE workers who meet specific age, smoking, health, and occupational criteria may be eligible for the free screening through the DOE FWP. Additional information regarding the program and low-dose CT scanning can be found on the FWP Web site at <http://www.hss.energy.gov/HealthSafety/FWSP/formerworkermed/>. ■

## 100,000 SERVED *cont.*

The FWP is a prime example of DOE's commitment to its workforce and demonstrates the feasibility and value of conducting targeted medical screening programs for occupational diseases.

Additional information regarding this program can be found on the FWP Web site at <http://www.hss.energy.gov/HealthSafety/FWSP/formerworkermed/>. ■



### TRIVIA QUESTION

The poem, *Ode to Autumn*, was written by which famous poet?

## JOHNS HOPKINS FORMER WORKER PROGRAM IN NEW MEXICO

By Rebecca Trujillo, Lead Interviewer and Office Manager  
Johns Hopkins University (JHU) Former Worker Program  
(FWP)

The JHU FWP for the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) and the Albuquerque Sandia National Laboratories (SNL) is located in Española, New Mexico, approximately 22 miles from Los Alamos and 90 miles from Albuquerque.

My name is Rebecca Trujillo, and I am the primary interviewer for the program. Each former worker has an exposure and medical history interview in an attempt to capture his/her exposures during their employment at the Labs. I am a LANL former worker, having retired from the Lab in 1999. I have been with the program since January 2000, when we started offering exams to former workers. Over 3,060 former LANL and SNL workers have been through our program initially; another 490 have returned for re-screening. We invite workers who were exposed to asbestos, beryllium, radiation, and silica (SNL) to return every 3 years for re-screening.

Española is a small town, and so when I go to the local Wal-Mart, I run into folks from both Española and Los Alamos. Most of our participants recognize me right away and come up to me to update me on their health, thank me for the program, and some of them tell me that they are recovering from an illness which was detected by our program. They are ever so grateful for being alive.

The program has been good for our community because we have many participants who do not have medical insurance and have not had a physical exam in years. Many of them were hurt on the job and left without insurance; others were involved in a Reduction in Force and lost their jobs, and, therefore, also their benefits. They are thankful for being able to return for a second exam.

We work closely with the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Resource Center, also located in Española. The Center refers individuals to us for a medical exam and screening, and upon screening, if an illness is found that may have been caused by exposures at the Labs, the program will refer them to the Resource Center to file a claim. The EEOICPA has also been a blessing to the SNL/LANL communities because there are quite a lot of sick folks who have been compensated for an illness and now

carry a DOL Medical Card to cover expenses for that illness.

Our medical providers come from Baltimore at least three times a year to do exams and screenings. SNL exams have been administered at the University of New Mexico Family Practice Center in an attempt to reach our former workers in their own community. When we don't have enough participants from SNL to warrant exams there, many will travel to Española to get an exam. The Española Hospital performs our X-rays, and JHU uses the hospital's equipment to conduct hearing tests. We rent a clinic located on the campus of the Carlos Vigil Middle School for the duration of the exams.

If you happen to walk in to our clinic during exams, you will be uplifted by laughter and chatter. Some folks waiting for exams haven't seen each other for years, and there is always teasing and hugging going on. Everyone is received as family.

Security is always addressed by most of the participants because they do not want to divulge anything that was "secret or confidential" during the performance of their job. I reassure them that I do not want to hear any classified information.

As a former LANL worker, I can address technical areas and issues that will help the interviewees to remember exposures at their jobs that require screening. Some former workers have been gone too long to remember technical areas at the Lab, and I can jog their memories by using maps.

I am honored and grateful to be interviewing these former workers who are so loyal to our country. At the end of the day, I feel that my day was productive. ■

### DIRECTORS NOTE *cont.*

you have been reading the newsletter, I hope you have a better idea of who we are and what makes us tick.

I am extremely proud of our group and know that the worker community holds us all to a high standard. Now that you know the staff of HS-14, please feel free to reach out to us to ask a question or make a request; we will do our best to assist. ■

## Calendar of Events September



- 5 9:00 am Local Event  
X-10/Y-12 Asbestos Retiree Meeting  
Shoney's, 3739 West US Highway 9, Lake City, TN
- 10:30 am – 1:30 pm FWP Event  
Iowa Army Ammunition Plan  
Commemoration Luncheon/Presentation by DOL  
Burlington Memorial Auditorium, Banquet A&B  
200 North Front Street, Burlington, IA
- 6:00 pm FWP Event  
K-25 AGRE Meeting  
USW Union Hall, 133 Raleigh Road, Oak Ridge, TN
- 12 11:00 am Local Event  
X-10 Guards Meeting  
Shoney's, 1100 US 321, Lenoir City, TN
- 13 10:30 am – 1:30 pm FWP Event  
Iowa Army Ammunition Plan  
Commemoration Luncheon/Presentation by DOL  
Iowa State University's Reiman Gardens, Conservatory Complex,  
Garden Room  
1407 University Blvd., Ames, IA
- 17 9:30 am FWP Event  
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory  
Joint Outreach Task Group Town Hall Meeting  
Cresta Blanca Ballroom, Robert Livermore Comm. Ctr.  
4444 East Avenue, Livermore, CA
- 12:00 pm Local Event  
X-10/Y-12 Machinists Local 480 Retiree Meeting  
Local 480 Hall, Oak Ridge, TN
- 5:00 pm Local Event  
Y-12 Gage Lab  
Gondolier, 729 Briarcliff Ave, Oak Ridge, TN
- 6:00 pm FWP Event  
Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory/Sandia-CA  
Joint Outreach Task Group Town Hall Meeting  
Four Points Sheraton, 1603 Powell Street, Emeryville, CA
- 19 8:00 am FWP Event  
Mound Retiree Luncheon  
Golden Coral, 8870 Kingsridge Drive, Miamisburg, OH
- 28 11:00 am - 7:00 pm Local Event  
Idaho National Laboratory – Idaho Falls Community Fest  
Tautphaus Park, Idaho Falls, ID

## October

- 1 8:00 am FWP Event  
Mound Retiree Breakfast  
Bob Evans, 220 Byers Road, Miamisburg, OH
- 9:00 am Local Event  
Y-12 Retiree Meeting  
Shoney's, 204 S Illinois Avenue, Oak Ridge, TN
- 2 7:15 am Local Event  
X-10 Retiree Meeting  
Shoney's, 8529 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, TN
- 9:00 am Local Event  
Y-12 Inspector Group Meeting  
Shoney's, 1100 US 321, Lenoir City, TN

## October cont.

- 2 11:00 am Local Event  
Y-12 Guards Meeting  
Shoney's, 1100 US 321, Lenoir City, TN
- 4:30 pm FWP Event  
X-10/Y-12 ATLC Council Meeting  
ATLC Union Hall, 109 Viking Road, Oak Ridge, TN
- 3 9:00 am Local Event  
X-10/Y-12 Asbestos Retiree Meeting  
Shoney's, 3739 West US Highway 9, Lake City, TN
- 6:00 pm FWP Event  
K-25 AGRE Meeting  
USW Union Hall, 133 Raleigh Road, Oak Ridge, TN
- 10 11:00 am Local Event  
X-10 Guards Meeting  
Shoney's, 1100 US 321, Lenoir City, TN
- 12 11:00 am Local Event  
Fernald – 5 Year Anniversary Event of  
Fernald Visitor Center and Cold War Day of Remembrance  
Fernald Nature Preserve, 10995 Hamilton Cleves Highway,  
Harrison, OH
- 15 12:00 pm Local Event  
X-10/Y-12 Machinists Local 480 Retiree Meeting  
Local 480 Hall, Oak Ridge, TN
- 5:00 pm Local Event  
Y-12 Gage Lab  
Gondolier, 729 Briarcliff Ave, Oak Ridge, TN
- 17 8:00 am FWP Event  
Mound Retiree Luncheon  
Golden Coral, 8870 Kingsridge Drive, Miamisburg, OH
- 25 TBD National Day of Remembrance for Nuclear Weapons Program Workers  
National Atomic Testing Museum  
Las Vegas, NV

For a complete list of calendar events, visit:

[http://www.hss.doe.gov/healthsafety/FWSP/Formerworkermed/events\\_calendars.html](http://www.hss.doe.gov/healthsafety/FWSP/Formerworkermed/events_calendars.html)

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**Trivia Answer:** John Keats