



**Nuclear Waste
Partnership**

An Amertum-led partnership with BWXT and Orano

INTEGRITY

SAFETY

OWNERSHIP

RESPECT

SALT OF THE EARTH

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

TEAMWORK

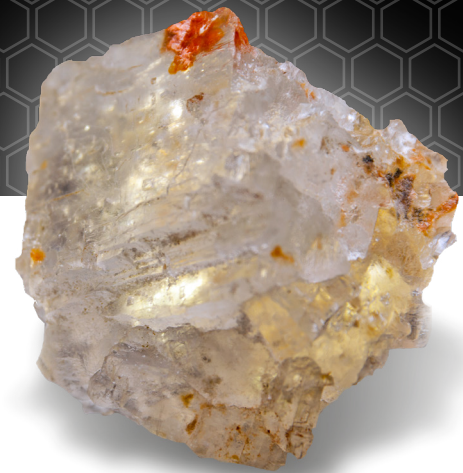
SEVENTH ANNUAL

SALT OF THE EARTH AWARDS CEREMONY

NOVEMBER 3RD, 2022



SALT OF THE EARTH



SALT OF THE EARTH

noun – 1. an individual or group considered as representative of the best or noblest elements of society.

2022 marks the seventh annual presentation of the Nuclear Waste Partnership Salt of the Earth awards, the highest employee recognition given by NWP. The award recognizes significant contributions to the WIPP mission that exemplify and reinforce the NWP core values and expectations.

In its seventh year, dozens of nominations were submitted for consideration, but only 18 employees

are being recognized as WIPP's Salt of the Earth. All NWP and subcontractor employees are eligible for consideration and are nominated by their coworkers. Nominations are then reviewed by a team of employees who make recommendations to senior management. Awards are presented to individuals who exemplify one or more of the six core values – Safety, Integrity, Ownership, Respect, Teamwork, and Continuous Improvement.

A MESSAGE FROM SEAN



I am honored to present to you the 18 Salt of the Earth award winners for 2022. This year's honorees have made significant contributions across the organization. Their embodiment of our core values is inspiring, and they are more than deserving of the highest employee recognition award that Nuclear Waste Partnership has to offer.

It is especially impressive that these award winners were nominated by those who know them best, their co-workers, who see their hard work and dedication on a daily basis and took the time to nominate them.

While they don't go above and beyond because they are seeking recognition, each of these exceptional employees should feel a great sense of pride in the very important part they play at WIPP, a project that is critical to our nation. Thank you for everything you do to ensure our success!

Sean Dunagan
President and Project Manager
Nuclear Waste Partnership



SALT OF THE EARTH

OWNERSHIP

RUDY AYALA ES&H – RADIOLOGICAL CONTROL



During his eight years at WIPP, Rudy Ayala has constantly demonstrated his willingness to help his teammates and has used his invaluable radiological control knowledge and field expertise from his 44 years of professional experience to lead by example. He has also educated and influenced new and less experienced radiological control technicians. One recent example was when he noticed that WIPP's Pu-239 check sources for portable Bladewerx continuous air monitors only lasted for an average of nine months or less. Typical PU-239 check sources across the DOE complex can last for 10 years or longer if protected by proper source containers and used and handled properly. He not only identified that the

initial source container was inadequate or inappropriate to hold the source in place, but also designed a container using his experience and creativity. His ingenuity and determination to find a better solution led to the procurement of form-padding source containers, which cost just \$10 per container for a much better and safer source container. Thanks to his outstanding efforts, WIPP has a better radiological and safety conscious work environment

Nominated by Dr. Hung-Cheng Chiou

ASHLEY WALDRAM REGULATORY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Ashley Waldram demonstrated exemplary initiative and leadership in taking ownership in the development of recent mission essential responses to New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) information requests. She volunteered to take the lead in developing the updated red-line strikeout (RLSO) attachments of the combined 10-year Permit Renewal Application with the Class 3 Permit Modification Request for replacement Panels 11 and 12, developing the RLSO attachments for the entire renewal package. She also presented at a public town hall information meeting on the submittal. She developed an internal quality review process and led the review team in order to ensure a quality product.

She led by example by putting in numerous hours through the entire process until the document was complete, accurate and ready for submittal. To support requests from the general public, she developed a pdf package consisting of the updated RLSO and the unchanged portions of the original 10-year Permit Renewal Application. She also volunteered to develop the response to NMED's request pertaining to the 2016 Settlement Agreement and Stipulated Final Order. She again volunteered to develop the response to the NMED's Technical Incompleteness Determination on the 10-year Renewal Application. She coordinated the responses, compiled them into final documents, led the internal review process and prepared the final products. The work quality on these deliverables exceeded expectations, including NMED's.

Nominated by Rick Chavez

INTEGRITY

LAURA GARCIA ENGINEERING – FIRE PROTECTION



Laura Garcia exhibits NWP's core values each and every day. She is the only qualified cognizant systems engineer (excluding management) in the fire protection engineering group. She is the fire protection cognizant systems engineer for six fire protection systems and is also the subject matter expert for a multi-year fire protection systems upgrade. Working on the upgrade has required extensive code research, field work, and diplomacy while working with vendors and Project Subcontract Technical Representatives. An example of the challenges she must work through was an improper installation of fire alarm initiating devices (pull stations) and notification systems (horn/strobes).

More than 150 devices were installed at heights not permitted by fire codes, which was noticed during acceptance testing. While it would have been easy to turn a blind eye to an inch or two discrepancy, she took ownership to ensure the life safety systems were correct before the work was accepted. This was not easy. Contractors are never happy about going back and redoing work, but she handled it delicately and firmly, while still showing the contractors respect and dignity. After all, WIPP will likely be working with these contractors in the future, and WIPP's success depends on the success of its contractors. Correcting these deficiencies also required much more work for her, but Laura knew it was the right thing to do!

Nominated by Larry Bryant

DEANA PEARCE HUMAN RESOURCES



Deana Pearce consistently receives compliments from employees and management regarding her dedication to assisting employees as a member of the HR Employee Benefits Team. As part of her job, she is responsible for all of the auditing requirements within the benefits realm. She takes this very seriously and is very passionate about it. Recently, she independently performed a very tedious and time-consuming audit, which showed multiple employees without a particular type of benefit. This benefit is a very sought-after one, as it provides a monetary benefit if used. It was determined that due to an administrative error by ADP, this benefit was accidentally dropped and had been absent from enrollments for two years. She took the lead in the entire process when discovered. She performed an extensive audit, contacted the employees who were affected, restored their faith in the enrollment process, and generated a detailed spreadsheet that provided retroactive premiums due from ADP and the employee. She could have assigned the entire process to ADP, as this was their error. But she did not, as she cares for her employees and their benefits and wanted to personally ensure the error was corrected.

Nominated by Kimberly Mull

SALT OF THE EARTH

RESPECT

ROSIE CAMPBELL ES&H – INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE



Rosie Campbell's greatest attribute is her honesty and having a questioning attitude. She is always willing to admit when she has made a mistake and will always speak the truth when it comes to the discussion of issues and problems that arise in the normal course of work. There have been several occasions that she has brought issues to the attention of management when other employees were unwilling to do so. This attribute and her willingness to speak up have made the Environmental Safety & Health (ES&H) Department better. Upon beginning work at WIPP, she quickly became a "go to" technician, assisting Industrial Hygiene (IH) with ongoing air monitoring and sampling, and she has fully embraced

her role as Sr. Watch on the 7/10 B ES&H crew. She has been part of a small group that has worked diligently in identifying, cataloging and ensuring the appropriate signs and labels are on all confined spaces at the site. She was also instrumental in starting a weekly meeting for all IH technicians to discuss any and all issues needed, with actions stemming from the discussions relayed to the appropriate management, which has promoted positive change within the IH group. She has also been involved with IH procedure revisions, providing great insight and candor to ensure that revisions will be workable for staff. Her work allows the manager and senior IH professional to focus on the technical aspects of procedures, and her input provides the language to make procedures workable for the technicians.

Nominated by David Crnich

WILL RODRIGUEZ IRM – TECH SUPPORT



Will Rodriguez regularly shows his integrity when dealing with a large number of people on a regular basis. He is always kind and courteous to whomever he is helping, despite whatever rudeness or verbal berating is being sent his way. He will also take on difficult customers who are belittling his staff and ease some of the stress of the team. He is able to calm upset people down, get situations under control, and maintain his own composure. He will also take ownership of mistakes made and takes pride in the work he puts out. When he is assigned a task from management, he takes ownership and completes the task at hand and will often go above and beyond and deliver more than

what was asked of him. He is also willing to go back and fix any issues that may arise from projects that were not even originally in the work scope of what was asked of him. If something does not meet manager expectations, he takes ownership of that project and will return to the drawing board to create another strategy, execute it, and continue to present his work to management until they are satisfied.

Nominated by Sage Darling

TY ZIMMERLY ENGINEERING – GEOTECHNICAL & MINE



Ty Zimmerly stepped up this year in a huge way to ensure that the certification of Panel 8 occurred. When the WIPP team needed a person to step in at the last minute due to unforeseen circumstances with the Professional Engineer (PE) for the review of the panel for certification, he jumped in and toured the PE around and answered all of his questions. He made sure the geotechnical engineer, the ventilation engineer, the mining engineer, and the continuous air monitor cognizant engineer — as well as the mining operations manager and Maintenance — were available to assist, demonstrating integrity and ownership. He was able to fill this critical role due to his heavy involvement throughout

certification preparation. His technical knowledge from being the lead mining engineer, as well as his dedication to ensuring all aspects of preparation were completed even if outside of his R2A2, was a significant contributor to WIPP's success in getting the final certification of the panel.

Nominated by Nichole Lundgard

TEAMWORK

CHERYL ARMIJO CENTRAL CHARACTERIZATION PROJECT



Cheryl Armijo always offers to help, always questions if things could be made better, and is the smiling face everyone likes seeing at work every day. One example of her dedication to the team was during a recent site audit. There had been significant turnover in training, and the remaining employee was a recent hire. Site audits are always stressful, even for seasoned employees, and this employee was going to have to go through it all by themselves (with

management help). She had spent some time in training previously and was able to work with this employee to help coach them and work with them through the audit and beyond. The team benefitted greatly from her willingness to go above and beyond her normal work scope to mentor and train someone when it was really needed.

Nominated by Joshua Houghton

TRAVIS CARRASCO

SITE SERVICES TEAM – MAINTENANCE



Travis Carrasco integrates NWP's core values into his daily life at the WIPP site, as well as exceeding job expectations daily. He is a Project Subcontract Technical Representative (PSTR) for the Site Services Team, which he joined just eight months ago. He is self-motivated and has a drive that his team admires. He works closely with site engineers and always provides valuable feedback. Recently, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) informed WIPP/ NWP Environmental personnel that the storm water drainage ponds required wildlife exclusion fencing. Due to design issues, work was delayed for months. After scaling back the design, the team was told to proceed with work, and there

were just 70 days to complete fencing installation around ponds 1, 2 and 3. After receiving the "go ahead," he mobilized a crew of eight subcontractors, complete with heavy equipment, to complete the ground preparation and to extend the berm on the west side of pond 3. His speedy action was instrumental in completing the fence installation around all three ponds two weeks ahead of the NMED-directed completion date. Working in collaboration with his PSTR teammates, Travis personified teamwork!

Nominated by Armando Benavidez & Michael Holder

JEREMY FRIIS

SITE SERVICES TEAM – MAINTENANCE



Jeremy Friis' work personifies NWP's core values. He is a Project Subcontract Technical Representative responsible for managing the automatic fire suppression system. He was recently informed by the (AFSS) subcontractor that it was unable to secure a new insurance provider and its policy would be expiring soon. Additionally, the AFSS subcontractor is responsible for performing preventive maintenance (PMs) and repairs for the fire suppression systems installed on liquid-fueled waste handling and mine operations equipment. Without fully-inspected AFSSs, this critical equipment would have to be tagged "out of service." Hearing this news, he sprang into action by identifying all of the equipment that

would need AFSS PMs or planned repairs over the next two months. After identifying seven pieces of equipment that would be immediately impacted by a shutdown, he assembled representatives from Waste Handling, Mine Operations, Work Control, Quality Assurance, and Fire Protection Engineering to prepare and approve the required packages; ensure that the equipment was moved to an accessible work area; and mobilize the subcontractor to work backshifts and weekends to get all of the equipment inspected and/or repaired before the policy expired. In a stunning display of teamwork, he was able to complete all of the PMs/repairs and return all seven pieces of equipment back to service by close of business on the final day of the policy period.

Nominated by Michael Holder

ESTEBAN PICAZO

SITE ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE (RES)



Esteban Picazo is an integral part of the Site Environmental Compliance team. He has a cheerful and can-do attitude and a calm presence. He is a consummate professional in all of his National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutant (NESHAP) program duties and then goes above and beyond expectations to support the team, the customer and the mission. One of his accomplishments recently was to support the 700-C fan NESHAP emission calculations and report development, including the review of emissions calculations for several regulatory packages, such as the request for U.S. EPA approval of 700-C fan startup; the January 31, 2021, startup of the 700-C fan; and the 40-hour test

of the 700-C fan. To meet the customer's expectations, he changed his work schedule from days to nights and weekends to accommodate the review of many emission calculations and reports to ensure an expedited turn-around. While other team members worked during the day to review data, perform emission calculations and complete reports, he worked nights and weekends to review the calculations and reports. In addition he has been an outstanding mentor and trainer. He is always available to answer questions and provide an in-depth background of the regulatory requirements. He is a trusted member of the team and has the complete trust of the regulator.

Nominated by Ashley Urquidez

MELISSA WEST

SITE SERVICES TEAM – MAINTENANCE



Melissa West is the perfect example of an individual who conducts herself in a manner that every employee should strive to attain. She is always willing to help others in her group and in other departments and is also quick to offer assistance when she sees that it's needed. She actively listens and then offers advice to help employees. It is not uncommon for her to work more than 40 hours a week, and even on her days off, she will do what she can to help someone. She began as an administrative assistant and now plays multiple roles in the office. She started scheduling training for everyone in her group, including sub-contractors. She also assumed the responsibility of training

fellow admins after a large amount of turnover. She learned how to do purchase requisitions to help out the Site Technical Representatives (STRs) with their contracts, and now other departments come to her for help. She also helped to take work off of the STRs by training to become an Administrative Site Technical Representative and now oversees several of the subcontracts with the Site Services group. In this role, she was integral to the improved safe operations of Janitorial Services. After two minor cart accidents, she held a safety stand-down. She reiterated reporting requirements, established a cart sign-in/sign-out policy, and rolled out a new site orientation program that recaps safety standards and policies and includes a walk-down of restricted areas/facilities.

Nominated by Armando Benavidez, Chris Bowden, Travis Carrasco, Michael Holder & Rosemary Sahl

SALT OF THE EARTH

CONTINUOUSIMPROVEMENT

PARKER HAMEL ES&H – RADIOLOGICAL CONTROL



Parker Hamel consistently exemplifies each of NWP's core values, but over the past year, he has best exemplified continuous improvement. He has gone above and beyond his job scope as a radiological control technician, providing support as a subject matter expert, being actively involved in Level 1 radiological control procedure reviews, and participating in the validation process for new and revised procedures. He has also been proactive in researching vendor guides and providing feedback for the development of the procedure for newly-installed Tennelec 6LBs counting systems, and he has been actively engaged in system set up and customizing procedures for the Apex

Alpha/Beta software program. He has been instrumental in providing his knowledge and expertise in training other personnel on the Apex Alpha/Beta software for the Tennelec 6LBs. Recently, he volunteered to do a deep dive into learning a complex technical program to customize radiological control survey reports and has since applied his knowledge and skills to customize those reports to meet the needs of the radiological control program. He also actively engages in the Level 1 procedure reviews and validation walkdowns without hesitation, while cultivating a strong questioning attitude and offering suggestions for improvements. Overall, he has grown professionally and technically and has become a valuable asset to the radiological control program, including playing a key role in the success of the new Tennelec 6LB counting system implementation.

Nominated by Marissa Anaya

DAVID MARTINEZ CONTRACT CLOSEOUT & TRANSITION



David Martinez is the embodiment of continuous improvement. He employs an ever-improving approach to all activities he performs. Once he completes a task, he performs a self-evaluation of the process and looks at lessons learned for ways to improve future performance. He was a natural at managing the Lean program, as he continuously looks for ways to eliminate "no value added" actions from processes to allow the focus of the activity to be on safe and compliant execution. He even managed to "Lean" the Lean program by streamlining Lean training and reducing less value-added activities to enable some Lean events to be performed in three days versus four to minimize

impact to day-to-day operations. He sets the bar high, and while he holds himself accountable to those standards, he also helps his stakeholders through coaching, mentoring, and providing any and all support needed for successful implementation of identified process improvements.

Nominated by Bonnie Barnes

KRYSTAL O'BERRY ES&H – INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE



In less than a year, Krystal O'berry has not only learned how to do the Industrial Hygiene (IH) technician job well, but she has also taken on additional roles as the custodian of all of the IH sampling records and software. In just her first few months, she questioned why all of the monitoring equipment wasn't under the same kind of engineering controls. She was then tasked with becoming a software custodian, and in a month, she learned the procedure and appropriate software and wrote an upgrade plan. She has gone beyond the expectations of her work scope and continues to strive to improve her work environment. When she first started working

underground, she was not afraid to ask questions to not only ensure samples could be collected but that she was located in safe areas while performing her job. Now, underground staff routinely volunteer to wear sampling equipment, when in the past, they were sometimes reluctant. The success of the implementation of the underground sampling and monitoring plan is due in large part to her efforts. She constantly strives to get better at her job. She always asks how things could be done better, has learned additional tasks, and has excelled at everything she has been asked to do. She often says she wants to do her job to the best of her ability. She does that and more every day she is at work.

Nominated by David Crnich

ROMAN VILLARREAL IRM – CYBER SECURITY



Roman Villarreal inherited a cyber security program under heavy scrutiny. As a result of his leadership, the program is now established as a respected and solid program. To accomplish this, he had to first focus on closing 11 Office of Inspector General (OIG) Management Alerts and 40 OIG recommendations, with a response to a Mission Information Protection Program Audit that included nearly 500 recommendations and findings. FY2022 has been a year of continuous improvement for WIPP's cyber security program. Multiple new policies, plans and procedures were updated, trained and implemented. Many updates to the infrastructure were completed to not

only address security concerns, but to also modernize and stabilize the WIPP network. While working with and leading improvements to the cyber security program, he also continued to lead day-to-day cyber security operations, which include responding to threats, monitoring for threats and appropriate activity, and document preparation and review for the introduction of new technologies, Statements of Work (sitewide), configuration management and more. He is often the "go-to" person for complex issues and for issues that seem impossible to resolve. He and his team have been audited four times this year. There have been no findings issued by the OIG, which was a direct result of his leadership and contributions to the cyber security program. He receives high praise from all levels. He is noted for his steady demeanor, deep technical knowledge in multiple disciplines, and willingness to help anywhere he can.

Nominated by Bart Simpson

SAFETY

JAY CARTER
FIRE DEPARTMENT

Since Jay Carter arrived at WIPP, he has offered suggestions that will improve the efficiency of the Fire Department, EMS and rescue response and used his more than 20 years of experience to initiate frequent company-level training. Recently, on his way to work, he was the first on the scene of a vehicle accident. He called 911 and rendered EMS care until emergency responders arrived, which resulted in saving the life of an employee. When commended, he was very humble and stated that he did what anyone would have done. He later identified methods to improve the ability of Fire Department personnel to effectively deliver care and personally took charge of ordering needed

equipment. He always performs his work duty and then some without being prompted while showing the utmost respect for his co-workers, which has had a very positive effect on department morale and on crew continuity of his shift.

Nominated by Alfredo Florez & Juan Moreno

CURTIS NESBIT
ES&H – RADIOLOGICAL CONTROL

Curtis Nesbit is an exceptional individual. He is passionate about and takes personal responsibility for the safety of personnel within his scope. He is actively engaged, applying his degree knowledge and experience to anticipate and mitigate potential hazards. His above-and-beyond attitude has also landed him a prestigious spot on the Radiological Assistance Program team. Being an employee for more than 10 years proves his commitment to WIPP's mission. A few examples of many include recognizing the danger of workers using welding torches while wearing flammable personal protective equipment (PPE) in a contamination area. His awareness instigated a policy

that flame retardant suits must now be worn over PPE to protect workers. While working as a team lead, in the underground, he alerted the Underground Facility Engineer of abnormally high diesel exhaust fumes and guided radiological control technicians to a safe location. Recently, he observed a broken strap along the back (ceiling) in the underground transition line change-out area. He took action to protect others by blocking off the area and making notifications. As a result, perpendicular cords are currently being put in place along the back to prevent potential injuries in this high-traffic area. This is just a glimpse into a few of his many contributions.

Nominated by Tracy Olson

“YOU DON’T HAVE TO HOLD A POSITION
IN ORDER TO BE A LEADER.”

– HENRY FORD, FOUNDER OF THE FORD MOTOR COMPANY

“WHAT YOU DO HAS FAR GREATER IMPACT
THAN WHAT YOU SAY.”

– STEPHEN COVEY, AUTHOR AND EDUCATOR

“PERFECTION IS NOT ATTAINABLE, BUT IF
WE CHASE PERFECTION WE CAN CATCH
EXCELLENCE.”

– VINCE LOMBARDI, LEGENDARY GREEN BAY PACKERS COACH

“A PERSON ALWAYS DOING HIS OR HER BEST
BECOMES A NATURAL LEADER, JUST BY
EXAMPLE.”

– JOE DIMAGGIO, FORMER NEW YORK YANKEES OUTFIELDER
& HALL OF FAME BASEBALL PLAYER



SALT OF THE EARTH

OUR CORE VALUES

SAFETY

- TAKE YOUR SAFETY AND THE SAFETY OF OTHERS PERSONALLY
- SPEAK UP AND LISTEN UP
- CONDUCT ALL ACTIVITIES IN A DELIBERATE MANNER
- STOP AND QUESTION WHEN UNCERTAIN
- ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN SAFETY INITIATIVES AND IMPROVEMENTS

INTEGRITY

- TELL THE TRUTH
- FOLLOW THROUGH WITH YOUR INTENTIONS AND COMMITMENTS
- DO THE RIGHT THING
- SET THE EXAMPLE

OWNERSHIP

- OWN OUR LEGACY AND SUCCESSSES
- OWN YOUR WORK AND LEARN FROM YOUR EXPERIENCES
- HOLD YOURSELF AND OTHERS ACCOUNTABLE
- SELF CHECK TO ENSURE QUALITY OF YOUR WORK

RESPECT

- ACTIVELY LISTEN; VALUE OTHERS' OPINIONS
- DON'T BLAME OR SPEAK POORLY OF ORGANIZATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS
- SEEK TO UNDERSTAND — RATHER THAN TO BE UNDERSTOOD
- RECOGNIZE THE IMPACT YOUR WORDS AND ACTIONS HAVE ON OTHERS
- TREAT OTHERS THE WAY THEY WANT TO BE TREATED

TEAMWORK

- WORK TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE THE MISSION
- ACTIVELY RECOGNIZE EACH OTHER FOR OUR CONTRIBUTIONS
- THINK OUT LOUD AND OPENLY SHARE IDEAS
- COMMUNICATE “WHY”

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- NEVER STOP LEARNING; IMPROVE EVERY DAY
- BE CURIOUS; DON'T JUST QUESTION
- ACTIVELY IDENTIFY EFFICIENCIES AND IMPLEMENT SOLUTIONS
- HAVE A BIAS FOR ACTION TO FIND AND FIX PROBLEMS