

October 2008



# EEO REVIEW

Produced monthly by the State Equal Employment Management Office (SEEM)...

## MESSAGE FROM THE SEEM

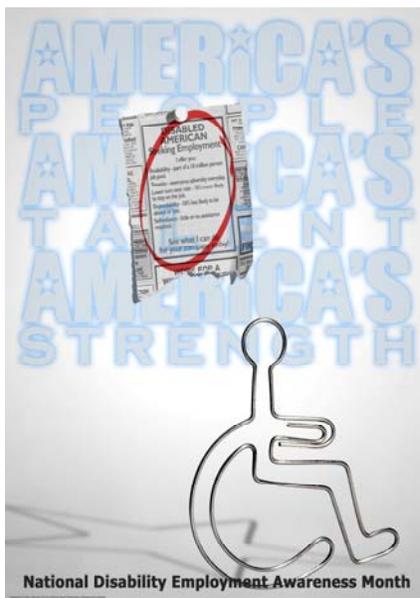
Welcome Back? It was a long summer and I am glad to be back in Virginia.

First I need to express sincere gratitude to SGM Haddock for all of his hard work in the EO office while I was TDY. I got back just in time to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month on September 16<sup>th</sup> at SMR. It was a great event for all who attended; we were entertained by Panamanian Dancers (some of our soldiers even joined in), we had authentic home made dishes thanks to MSG Frances Dailey. This year's event was coordinated by SSG Sharon Averhart and SPC Lori Mason. The guest speaker for this event was SFC Clara Vargas; SFC Vargas shared her inspirational story of coming to America at a young age as the youngest of 8 children. Her story epitomizes the diversity of the Virginia National Guard. It was truly a memorable event and I can't wait until next year's observance.

On to October this month is full of things to observe from Bosses Day, Yom Kippur, Columbus Day, Autumn, United Nations Day, Disability Awareness Month and Halloween. Wow, it's going to be a busy month! Enjoy!

**Stand up for what's Right!**

## NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH 1-31 OCT 2008



### What is National Disability Employment Awareness Month?

Congress designated each October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM).

This effort to educate the American public about issues related to disability and employment actually began in 1945, when Congress enacted a law declaring the first week in October each year "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. In 1988, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to "National Disability Employment Awareness Month."

## Visit the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) Website...



JAN's mission is to facilitate the employment and retention of workers with disabilities by providing employers, employment providers, people with disabilities, their family members and other interested parties with information on job accommodations, self-employment and small business opportunities and related subjects. JAN's efforts are in support of the employment, including self-employment and small business ownership, of people with disabilities.

<http://www.jan.wvu.edu/>

## Quotes of the Month

"It is important to note that having people with disabilities in the workplace is valuable to the individual and to businesses," said Neil Romano, assistant secretary for the Labor Department's Office of Disability Employment Policy. "People with disabilities are the next great wave of diversity, and diversity fosters innovation to drive our economy and our nation into the future."

"Full access to community life for Americans with disabilities is an imperative and this year's theme conveys the tremendous contributions that these Americans can make in the workplace," said Secretary Chao.



**SFC (RET) DANA BOWMAN  
"IT'S NOT THE DISABILITY... IT'S  
THE ABILITY"**

Dana Bowman has astounded the nation and the world with his drive, determination, and will to succeed. He is a retired Sergeant First Class with the U.S. Army where he was a Special Forces Soldier and a member of the U.S. Army's elite parachute team, the Golden Knights. Dana Bowman is a double amputee. He lost his legs in an accident during the annual Golden Knights training in Yuma, Arizona, in 1994.



On February 6, 1994, Bowman gained worldwide attention when he and his teammate Sgt. Jose Aguillon collided in midair during the team's annual training.



(Dana and Jose Aguillon, Golden Knight Partner.)

Bowman and Aguillon were practicing a maneuver known as the Diamond Track. The maneuver calls for the jumpers to streak away from each other for about a mile and then turn 180 degrees and fly back toward each other crisscrossing in the sky.

Bowman and Aguillon had demonstrated the Diamond Track more than fifty times without a mistake, but this time was different.

Rather than crisscrossing, the two skydivers slammed into each other at a combined speed of 300 miles per hour. Aguillon died instantly. Bowman's legs were severed from his body, one above the knee and one below the knee. Bowman's parachute opened on impact. He was taken to a hospital in Phoenix where doctors closed his leg wounds and stopped his internal bleeding.



(Dana while attending Guard Diversity Conference March 2008)

Nine months later, he turned this tragedy into a triumph when he became the first double amputee to re-enlist in the United States Army. Bowman re-enlisted in the United States Army airborne style, skydiving with his commander into the ceremony, making his dream a reality. This achievement is just one example of Bowman's many successes under adverse circumstances.



(Dana in Freefall)

After Dana's re-enlistment, he became the U.S. Parachute Team's lead speaker and recruiting commander. Dana has been fortunate to have the opportunity to let his speeches touch so many from the physically challenged to the able-bodied. He strives to show physically challenged people can still work and excel in today's society and military. Dana emphasizes the words amputee and uselessness is not synonymous.



(Dana at speaking engagement)

Dana has given more than 400 speeches in the last few years and has been featured in magazines such as Sports Illustrated, Reader's Digest, People and many more. There have also been numerous television programs which focused on Dana and his story. Some of the programs include: Dateline, A Current Affair, Real TV, NBC Person of the Week, Day and Date and Extra.



**Dana Bowman**  
Outstanding Disabled Veteran  
of the Year 1995  
Disabled American Veterans

Dana retired from the United States Army in 1996. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in commercial aviation at the University of North Dakota in May of 2000.

Dana spends a great deal of his personal time working with other amputees and disabled or physically challenged people. "Dana inspires other amputees to walk again. His future plans are to continue to speak to the public and fly helicopters.

**For more information in regards to SFC Dana Bowman's experiences visit:**  
<http://www.danabowman.com/index.html>

