

# GCE·xpress

## Government and community relations

### GCE Team Member of the Year 2023 - Hayli Gourley

Hayli works on the food services team at Global Connections to Employment (GCE) in Tacoma, Washington at Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

Hayli started working at GCE 13 years ago as a dining facility attendant. She immediately wanted to advance and set out to learn just about every food services job there is. About two years ago, she signed up for the GCE Lead Program to learn how to support a team. Hayli also took the SERV Safe test multiple times, each time scoring higher. She persevered and dedicated herself away from work and in study sessions with the management team until she passed. Then she got her big promotion to shift supervisor.



Hayli leads two teams: 1) pots and pans, a 5-person team and 2) the clipper room (dish room), a 4-person team. She has a hectic schedule, but she coaches and mentors team members in a collaborative and productive way. "Depending on the work area, I show team members how to do the job. I got help (once) too, so I know how to help others the same way I learned," Hayli said. "I show them step-by-step how to do the best they can." For example, one of the most important tasks in the dish room is to make sure they monitor the water temperature for sterilization purposes. Someone must check it every 30 minutes. She also keeps an eye out for customers who need assistance. If she can't help them, she personally escorts them to someone who can.

Hayli's supervisor, assistant project manager Doreen Weed, said, "Hayli is a selfless person. She always puts others ahead of herself and always strives to do bigger and better."

## A note from Dwight

In my last forums, I mentioned that we were tweaking our reward and recognition program. In addition to our Team Member of the Year, we also will recognize a Team Member of the Quarter.



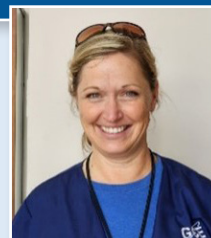
Dwight Davis  
GCE President

Selected every three months over the course of the year, the Team Member of the Quarter will receive a certificate, gift card, and my personal thanks for doing great things for GCE. Additionally, these team members will be automatically considered for the Team Member of the Year. Any team member can nominate a fellow team member for this award. In addition to work-related accomplishments, I ask that you highlight any other non-work-related examples of living our mission of "helping people." For instance, our Team Member of the Year for 2023, Hayli Gourley, volunteers at a local food bank. Our Team Member of the Quarter for the first quarter, Felix Vasquez, has been with GCE for 10 years and spoke no English when he started. He has since learned English, and Felix went on to earn his high school diploma after joining our team at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, D.C. He has received numerous compliments from the home administrator, staff and residents, and he has missed only one day of work in those 10 years due to an illness. We will announce our Team Member of the Quarter for the second quarter at the end of April. Nominations are due by April 15. I encourage you to nominate a deserving team member for this recognition!

## Contract site promotion news - Fort Knox, Kentucky custodial team

### **Terrie Keller**

Terrie was hired in May of 2022 as a GCE custodian. In June of 2023 she was promoted to shift lead 2 and in February 2024 to barracks supervisor. People love to work on Terrie's team. She is caring and helpful and has high standards for the quality of work her team produces. Terrie is always smiling, and her team loves her.



### **Patty Brown**

Patricia "Patty" Brown was hired in August of 2022 as a tools and parts attendant. In February of 2024, she was promoted to quality control inspector. Patricia had previous experience working in quality control. She is very attentive and thorough with assignments. She is a compassionate team player regardless of any challenge.

### **Garry Rotruck**

Gary Rotruck joined GCE in February 2023 as a general maintenance worker. In February of 2024, he was promoted to quality control inspector. His experience in quality control while serving in the Army made him a perfect fit for GCE. He always has new ideas for process improvements, making him super helpful to the team.



### **Destany Adams**

Destany Adams joined GCE in January of 2023 as a custodian and was promoted to an administrative assistant in February. Some of the key reasons Destany was recently promoted: she is always willing to help out, she is extremely organized, and she has an amazing attitude when asked to fill in as a team lead and warehouse supervisor.

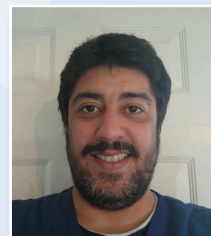
### **Marilin Planche**

Marilin Planche joined GCE in July 2023. She was hired as a custodian and promoted to shift lead I in March of this year. Chad Cheek, assistant project manager at Fort Knox, said, "Marilyn has stepped in numerous times to help with the training of others and is always promoting the success of the organization." She exceeds expectations when it comes to quality work and helping others.



### **Angel Hernandez**

Angel Hernandez was hired in May of 2023, and he was promoted to shift lead I in February of this year. His prior position of custodian made him the perfect candidate for his new role. Angel is willing to work with anyone at any time. "Super dependable" and "a key player on the team" best describe Angel.



### **Shayla Kendall**

Shayla Kendall joined GCE in April 2023 as a custodian. She was promoted in February of this year to her new role of shift lead II. Shayla never turns down a request for help from her fellow team members. When a difficult assignment comes from management, Shayla is the first to step up to help. She has great leadership skills, which is very beneficial in her new role.



## Recognition highlights

### Team Member of the Quarter Award - *Felix Vasquez*

Congratulations to Felix Vasquez, GCE Team Member of the Quarter award winner. Liz Garris, GCE project manager at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, D.C., said, "Felix is a fabulous team member and a huge asset to the GCE food service department. He is truly deserving of this award. He is incredibly flexible when it comes to job assignments and tasks." Felix is responsible for setting up the canteen, individual condiments, crackers, coffee, cappuccino machines, hot tea and milk machines at the Armed Forces Retirement Home. He ensures that paper goods are available throughout the day, and he sweeps and mops, cleans tables and maintains the dining area. When Felix first applied for a job at GCE, he didn't speak English. Determined to learn, he attended school to learn English. Now he can enjoy casual conversations with team members and residents. Felix also earned his high school diploma since joining GCE. He consistently arrives at work with a smile on his face, offering happy greetings to coworkers and residents. He has received numerous compliments from the administrative office, food service contracting officer's representative (COR), and various residents .



## Safety in the workplace

Typically, I use this space to discuss safety concerns important to GCE team members. This month, I would like to use this opportunity to give positive feedback and thank some folks who have been instrumental in reducing injuries at GCE.

First, thanks to everyone for their efforts to reduce injuries and promote safety at GCE. In the past five years, we've decreased our number of injuries per year by half. We still have some work to do because even one injury is still too many. However, we are certainly making great strides.

Second, everyone has contributed toward making GCE a safer place to work. I don't have enough space to thank each person, but I plan to recognize specific team members more often going forward.

Thanks to Betty Geren. She always partners with me on safety issues at her sites and is willing to listen to me talk about safety for hours, if necessary. Two of Betty's sites made dramatic changes and have greatly improved safety. I also give a big thanks to Natasha Hall, Doreen Weed and their team at JBLM, as well as Mikala January, Heatherlee Martin and their team at Fort Johnson. They all worked very hard to make their sites safer and have significantly reduced injuries. They routinely assist me in developing safety strategies. Although Don Stewart has only recently started as a project manager at JBLM, I am confident he is going to continue what Natasha started.

Pam Cox and her team at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in D.C. custodial services have not had an OSHA recordable injury in more than eight years. That goes back to before I came to work at GCE! Pam of course would say she doesn't do anything special. However, she works very hard to ensure every team member at her site is fully trained in every task they perform. She ensures each team member knows the process for cleaning, and then she holds them to a very high standard. Unsafe work is not permitted – ever. That's a pretty good recipe for preventing injuries!

Thanks to Yvonne Lockstead and Tammy Ramos at Whiting Field for always being available to help answer questions or develop ideas.

Storage space is always at a premium on all of our contracts. Our contract site at Department of Defense Education Activity, Fort Campbell, has a great deal of equipment, making it easy for the storage area to become cluttered and lead to potential trip hazards. Marissa Ervin and Cassandra Taylor organized the area, and it looks fantastic. Cassandra took it upon herself to contact the base about the chemical removal process and was able to get rid of chemicals left behind by the previous contractor. She did so at no cost to GCE, saving us thousands of dollars in disposal fees.

Most of you know proper lifting is important to me. When I was younger, I did not lift properly, and it led to numerous back issues. I often encourage proper lifting on my site visits. I would like to thank Tamaro "Mario" Robson from MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa for always taking the time to lift properly. Several times I witnessed Mario lifting properly during a recent visit. Even when he was not aware I was watching, he always lifted correctly.

Ultimately, team members at the sites are doing the hard work related to safety. Again, I want to thank everyone at GCE for their efforts in practicing safety. If there is anything I can do to assist your site, please let me know. If I didn't recognize you for assisting me this time, I hope to in the near future.



**Jonathan Broussard**  
Safety professional

## Benefits planning and Social Security

### Work Incentives Planning & Assistance (WIPA)

GCE offers benefits planning and counseling services to team members receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). Work Incentives Planning & Assistance (WIPA) promotes employment through informed choice and the effect of work on individual benefits. WIPA services increase financial freedom and enhance self-sufficiency by assisting team members with managing their benefits in a responsible way.



**Katrina Simpkins**  
Senior director of community  
employment services

#### Services include:

- Informing and educating beneficiaries and their stakeholders about SSI/SSDI benefits and work incentives
- Conducting a comprehensive analysis presenting options for consideration
- Providing benefits counseling, advocacy and support planning

#### Services do not include:

- Assistance with the SSI/SSDI application process
- Legal representation or assistance with the SSA appeals process
- Tax or investment advisement

For additional information regarding your Social Security benefits or work incentives, please contact Talethia Shakes at [talethia.shakes@gce.org](mailto:talethia.shakes@gce.org) or (850) 495-3097.

## Quality is key to contract site success

### Quality inspection changes for CompuClean

As many of you know, we are transitioning sites that currently use TAMS for Quality Inspections to a new system called CompuClean. So far, the feedback has been fantastic. One of the great aspects of this system is the Corrective Action (CA) process that is built in.



**Jeremiah White**  
Quality program manager

It is more robust than TAMS and is much easier to navigate and address issues to tailor performance at every site.

Why do we need a more robust CA procedure at GCE?

- Performing CA's will prove to our customers that we take quality seriously.
- Our customers can see the actions we're taking every day to provide the services they require.
- CA's can show where you and your site may need training to improve.
- It will assist project managers in holding team members accountable.

On a final note, GCE's quality data is not only used for purposes of Internal Quality Scores, but also for our future and the Business Development process. Many times, when we are responding to an opportunity to provide services (a new contract), we must prove our past performance. One of the ways we do this is with our quality data. We need to show that we perform the quality processes that we say we do. I believe we all want a bright future for GCE and that we will "never settle" for status quo. You all strive for that.

Thank you for all you do.

## Helping Hands

Many of our team members experience unforeseen financial hardships. That is why we established the Helping Hands program. This employee-assistance program provides emergency assistance to those in need. Money comes from donations by fellow team members throughout the year. It can be just a dollar from your paycheck bi-weekly to help. Donations have helped team members experiencing needs like car repairs on the primary car used by a team member to get to work, a medical condition or complex illness, funeral expenses for a spouse/child/parent, unexpected home repairs, food assistance, and support when a team member must take an unexpected leave from work without pay. Ask your supervisor or project manager for more information.

Keep up with GCE stories and recognition by following us on Facebook , LinkedIn, and Instagram.

