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NRCS Cultural Diversity Event



CULTURAL DIVERSITY

to them. At the NRCS, we are valuing diversity by cultivating a diverse workplace, whereas the differences in employees are appreciated. Having a clear understanding of what it means and the importance of it, would foster an environment where

“Celebrating many cultures, many communities, ONE world”
 April 3, 2012 11:00 am until 2:00 pm @ the Whitten Bldg Patio - NHQ

Everyone has their own interpretation of what Cultural Diversity means

people would appreciate cultural variety and differences. Inclusivity does involve many people from different cultural backgrounds, communities and walks of life; mixed all together in one world. It is undeniable that the world we live in is a mixing bowl; therefore, we are gifted with boundless resources of cultural diversities that will allow us to learn

from each other. Once you have an understanding, you are in a better position to embrace it, and apply it to your day-to-day living experiences. Hope to see you there!

*By Michael Coates,
 Executive Assistant
 Regional Conservationist Office*

HOTLAW

Disclosure of medical information entitles custodian to award Price v. U.S. Postal Service, 111 LRP 65651 (EEOC OFO 09/29/11)

Ruling: The U.S. Postal Service violated the Rehabilitation Act when a supervisor disclosed a custodian’s confidential medical information in front of coworkers, entitling him to \$2,000 in non-pecuniary damages.

What it means: The absence of supporting evidence may affect the amount of non-pecuniary damages available in specific cases.

Summary: A laborer custodian for the U.S. Postal Service alleged that the agency subjected him to discrimination based on disability (heart disease and high blood pressure) when his supervisor disclosed his confidential medical information in front of coworkers. The EEOC found the agency violated the Rehabilitation Act and ordered it to conduct a sup-

plemental investigation on compensatory damages. The agency found the custodian was entitled to \$1,000 in non-pecuniary damages.

On appeal, the EEOC found the agency’s award was insufficient and awarded the custodian \$2,000 in non-pecuniary damages. The custodian testified that he was humiliated, embarrassed, and ashamed that his private medical history was aired in front of coworkers. He said he suffered sleeplessness, loss of self-esteem, high blood pressure, fatigue, and erectile dysfunction. His son said he was tired and depressed all the time. The agency noted that the record did not include medical documentation connecting the high blood pressure and other medical prob-

lems with the disclosure of his medical information. The EEOC agreed with the agency that the custodian was not entitled to pecuniary damages. The custodian submitted a list of medications he was prescribed and their costs, but noted that he could not provide documentation for a period of one year. The EEOC found he failed to establish a nexus between the medications and the disclosure of his medical information. The custodian requested reimbursement of his co-pays for doctor visits but did not submit receipt or other evidence establishing an entitlement to reimbursement.

“Challenge each other to be Civil to one another. After all, it is the Right thing to do.”

*-Gregory Singleton,
 NRCS, CRD Civil Rights Director*

**NRCS Civil Rights Division
Civil Rights Compliance Review Success Stories**

“Living in Harmony with the Land”



**NRCS District Conservationist
Bart Devillier with Organic Farmer
Dr. Jess Crosier**

Through the **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**, Dr. Jeff Crosier, Conservationist in the Caribbean Area, received financial and technical assistance to establish fencing, pipelines, heavy use area protection pads, and watering facilities; and accomplish pasture and hay land planting (interseeding legumes and pollinator species), and nutrient management; and constructed a seasonal high tunnel and heavy use area winter feeding pad. Because Dr. Crosier wanted to take his operation a step further and improve existing conservation practices, he applied and was approved to receive additional financial assistance through the **Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)**.

NRCS developed a conservation plan that is specific to Dr. Crosier’s farm. NRCS also provided technical assistance, management

and implementation support, and information on conservation practices. Dr. Crosier has implemented many best management practices to improve his farming operation, and as a result, water leaving his farm is cleaner, there is minimal soil erosion, and his soils and farm animals are extremely healthy. Recently, through a special NRCS Organic Initiative, Dr. Crosier installed a seasonal high tunnel on his farm to raise heirloom tomatoes and peppers—adding to the crop diversity of the Pines Ranch. Together, we can help people help the land!

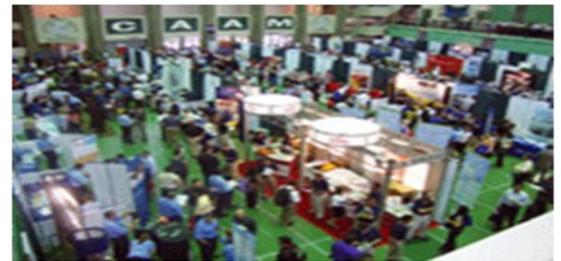
NRCS Caribbean Area (NRCSCA) Superb Commitment to Program Outreach

NRCSA is committed to ensuring that its programs and services are accessible to all customers, and they place an emphasis on reaching beginning, underserved and socially-disadvantaged farmers and landowners. An adjunct to their success in this endeavor is their ability to identify and address potential barriers that could prevent their underserved customers from full participation in NRCS Programs.

Outreach Summary: FY 2011

In FY 2011, NRCSCA provided Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) and outreach to over 4,830 clients through over 1,450 separate activities and contacts. Approximately 60% of the financial assistance distributed was provided to beginning, limited-resource and/or socially-disadvantaged farmers. Technical assistance and outreach was

provided to clients this year through training workshops, onsite investigations and evaluations, conservation plans, technical consultations, advisory committees, newspaper and newsletter articles, radio appearances, conference presentations, public meetings, informational mailings and email blasts, outreach publications (factsheets, brochures, reports), posters and exhibits, NRCS Caribbean Area website, and personal contacts. A breakdown of activities includes:



- **1,062 Personal Contacts**
- **9 Trainings & Workshops**
- **44 Public/Informational Meetings**
- **26 Newsletters, Brochures & Factsheets**
- **13 Newspaper Articles & 2 Radio Talk Show Appearances**
- **18 Youth Agriculture & Natural Resources Education & Outreach Presentations**
- **33 Conference & Fair Exhibits & Presentations 63 Public Notice Mailings &**

National Organization of Professional Women in NRCS (WiN)

Submitted by Sharyn Alvarez, National FWPM and National HEPM, Acting



The WiN Planning Core Team and Interim Officers are pleased to announce that the National Organization of Professional Women in NRCS or WiN is officially open for membership. Since its inception almost 3 years ago, the idea turned organization, has made great leeway. In July 2009, a group of NRCS Federal Women's Program Managers decided it was time for an employee resource group for women of NRCS. They pledged to establish this organization and a core group set out to get it done. On January 2010, WiN received an official letter of support from Chief Dave

White. In 2011, WiN was recognized as a 501c3 Non Profit organization. The goals of WiN are to improve networking, support, and advancement opportunities for women employed by NRCS; to serve as a liaison in the development of family-friendly employment policies with NRCS; to address current workplace barriers that impede the growth and advancement of women; to promote an employee's advancement potential by providing information on career planning, upward mobility, specialized training, continuing education opportunities

and balancing work and family; and to motivate all female employees to be proactive in creating and achieving a successful career with NRCS. As of March 15, WIN is open to receive membership

For more information about WIN log on to our website link: www.winnrcs.org

FEDERALLY EMPLOYED WOMEN (FEW) CONFERENCE 2012



July 16 — 20, 2012
Detroit Michigan

Defining It!

Workplace Bullying

Workplace bullying is the repeated and unwanted actions by an individual or group intending to intimidate, harass, degrade or offend. It is also the abuse or misuse of power and psychological violence.

Examples of Workplace bullying

- Being shouted at or humiliated
- Targeted for practical jokes
- Blamed without justification
- Excluded or socially isolated
- Excessive micromanaging
- Purposely withholding vital information or manipulating workplace assignments

Next issue we will discuss the effects of bullying on the individual and the workplace.



NRCS CRD Director's Corner

A word from the desk of Gregory Singleton, Director, NRCS Civil Rights Division

During the last fifty years, there have been historic strides made to ensure that the civil rights of all are protected. We have seen monuments erected to honor our Civil Rights leaders, witnessed the constant evolution of our Civil Rights laws and participated in efforts to make our communities and workplace more inclusive. Nonetheless, we have a long way to go. That need for progression prompted me to delve more deeply into what, if anything, I can do to

contribute to the continuum that is Civil Rights.

As I tossed around ideas, as if I was an expert juggler, suddenly it hit me; I could do the Right thing and be Civil towards others. I could start a movement of my own and watch it catch on like facebook or twitter. I began to have grandiose ideas of everyone saying "just CR me". I could change the world.

But then in my most euphoric moment, I walked outside of my office to share

the good news and BAM! I was hit with a sudden barrage of accusations, incidents, phone messages from EEOC, 5 ROP's and even a letter from one of our customers. And it wasn't a hello, hope all is well letter. At that moment I realized my naiveté had gotten the best of me and that I need you and we all need each other to change the world. So, I came up with a novel idea, why not start in our world, the world we know as NRCS. Why not challenge each other to be Civil to one another. After all, it is the Right thing to do.

-Gregory Singleton

DID YOU KNOW?



We're on the Web!

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/about/civilrights>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex (including gender identity and expression), marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TAR-GET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD.)

*To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll free at 866.632.9992 (English); 800.877.8339 (TDD); 866.377.8642 (English Federal-relay) or 800.845.6136 (Spanish Federal-relay)

*For the Program Discrimination Complaint form and instructions visit the NRCS CRD website.



NRCS Civil Rights Division

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DIRECTOR'S OFFICE		
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Nettie Moment	EEO Specialist	301-504-2164
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Civil Rights Division

VISION:

To be an inclusive diverse and equitable Agency that delivers programs in a manner based on and consistent with fairness availability and accountability.

MISSION:

To be an inclusive, diverse and equitable Agency that delivers programs in a manner based on and consistent with fairness, equality, availability and accountability while ensuring that applicants and employees are treated with respect, dignity and free from discrimination.