

BIG Is Growing at the DDC

Blacks In Government Chapter Membership on the Rise

By Polly Charbonneau, DDC Command Affairs

Membership in the Defense Distribution Center Susquehanna East Chapter of Blacks In Government (BIG) has doubled in the last year. Sherman E. Summerville, DDC Susquehanna East Chapter President and DDC Mobilization and Planning Specialist, attributes this growth to “individuals in the workforce becoming more aware of our agenda here locally and the national headquarters goals as well.”



Several members of the DDC Chapter of BIG gather to talk, left to right Chuck Palmer, John Dennis, Sherman Summerville, Keith Harvey, and Steve Coiley.

Those goals are varied and exciting. “One of the most important programs,” said Summerville, “is the Information Super Highway competition — it’s a tool to develop youth in our community. This competition is for high academic achievers at the junior or senior level of high school. They develop a web page and compete beginning at the Chapter level, advancing to the Regional competition and the last stop is the National level competition. This year the national competition will be judged in Atlanta, Georgia during our Delegates Assembly and National Training Conference in August 2002.

“Last year our local competitor, Mr. Shawn Ray Williams, placed second and received a lucrative U.S. savings bond from the National Training Headquarters, and numerous accolades from our Region and our Chapter. Both of his parents are employed at DDC and DDSP and were very supportive of him. He is now a freshman at Shippensburg University.”

At the national level, BIG initiatives include the Annual National Training Conference, broadcast on CNN and C-Span; participation in the National Alliance for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) federal sector summit on federal workplace discrimination; and recent participation in the Civil Rights Rally and Town Hall discussion on “Protecting Civil Liberties in the Wake of September 11, 2001.” BIG also donated to the Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund in the wake of the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001.

BIG has also recently submitted written testimony to Congress supporting passage of HR 169, Notification of Federal Employee Anti-discrimination Retaliation Act (NO FEAR BILL), a disparate treatment rectification program.

Additionally, BIG is partnering with the Girl Scouts of the USA to aid their national effort to provide access and motivate girls about employment in the fields of math, science, engineering and technology.

BIG is mandated to promote equity, excellence and opportunity through employee advocacy, professional development, and empowerment of African-Americans and others dedicated to justice and equity at all levels of government.

There are approximately 250 Chapters nationwide spread across 11 regions. The membership base consists of federal, state, and local government employees inclusive of government retirees, military, and corporate associates.

The DDC Chapter consists of those individuals on the installation of DDSP to include all tenet activities. “Our Region has three Chapters in the greater Harrisburg area,” Summerville said. “Mechanicsburg Chapter called ALMECH and the greater Capitol area called the Capitol Chapter and of course our Chapter here in New Cumberland.”

It seems all BIG members are as busy as Summerville. One member, Mr. Roger Dixon, DDSP Mechanical Equipment Operator, just received his Doctorate in Divinity and broadcasts a radio show every Thursday at 1130 on 720AM. Mr. Steve Coiley, DDC Logistics Operations, along with several other Chapter members, are involved in the Capital Region United Way Allocations Board, which has a direct impact on how funds are allocated within our community.

BIG local members also participate in the United Way Day of Caring. Several members of the DDC Chapter are involved with the Boy Scouts, Youth Athletics as coaches and referees, and church, civic and community endeavors that are too numerous to list.

As the President of the DDC Susquehanna East Chapter, Summerville’s role is to preside at all meetings of this Chapter and the Chapter’s Executive Committee; act as an ex officio member of most committees; and make appointments to the Parliamentarian and standing/special committee chairs.

Summerville also guides and enforces the implementation of policies that have been approved by the Regional Council and



Sherman Summerville, BIG DDC Chapter President. If you are interested in joining BIG, contact Sherman for more information.

recommends to the Regional Directors changes in policies and procedures that he believes will improve BIG initiatives. He also presents the Chapter's annual report at the final meeting of the year and provides general supervision over the affairs of this Chapter.

Summerville joined this Chapter in the year 2000. "My biggest reason for joining is community service — I saw in this Chapter the potential to significantly contribute to our surrounding communities. I also believe in the principle tenets of this organization."

One of the goals of the national organization is to promote professionalism among blacks in government. The DDC Chapter does that by providing training and staying abreast and informed about federal government service as well as what's happening at the local and national level. "This awareness and training is not only offered to our members, but employees throughout the Command and installation," Summerville said.

"What Blacks In Government has done for me personally and professionally is to reinforce my convictions that most of us have a genuine sense of civic pride in the workplace and the

community in which we live," Summerville said. "Given this, BIG has helped me in developing a broader understanding of what lies ahead and the many challenges inherent in all of us in becoming decent honorable human beings traveling through life's journey to our final destination."

Summerville has worked at DDC since 1999. Before that he spent 26 years on active duty in the U.S. Army. He spent most of his career in distribution, "at both the wholesale and retail level supply support activities. My last assignment was Logistics Sergeants Major for a field level activity under the auspices of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics for the Army at the Logistic Integration Agency."

Any New Cumberland-based employee can join BIG, contact Summerville at 770-8837, or any BIG member for more information. "I certainly encourage all to consider joining and to take advantage of the wonderful training opportunities offered at the National Headquarters National Training Conference held annually in August. It provides value added to both our personal and professional lives. We will continue to advocate fairness in the workplace through excellence, equity, and opportunity.



DDC Commander Holds Town Hall Meetings With Employees

By Stacy L. Umstead, DDC Command Affairs

BG James H. Pillsbury, USA, Commander, Defense Distribution Center (DDC), held two Town Hall meetings with DDC Headquarters employees this quarter.

DDC employees viewed a DoD video entitled *War on Terrorism*, a ten-minute reflection of the events of September 11, 2001 and the weeks that followed.

BG Pillsbury provided a brief overview of his CAPSTONE training. He stated that the emphasis of the various briefs and tours provided to the CAPSTONE attendees during their 6-week training was the importance the role of "logistics" plays in the war against terrorism. He commended his DDC

workforce for being an integral part of the logistics pipeline and putting the focus on the customer.

BG Pillsbury re-emphasized the importance of Business Systems Modernization (BSM) to DLA and the customer. In addition, the new *BSM Desk Guide for Employees* was distributed to all employees.

BG Pillsbury also shared the DLA Strategic Plan with DDC employees.

DDC holds several Town Hall meetings a year to keep DDC employees informed of new initiatives and to allow employees an open forum to ask the Commander any questions they may have.