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NNSA Administrator Jill Hruby outlines goals, praises NNSS workforce in town hall meeting

LAS VEGAS, April 11, 2022 - Jill Hruby, Under Secretary for Nuclear Security of the U.S. Department of Energy and Administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), visited Las Vegas recently to tour the Nevada National Security Site (NNSS) and talk with employees. In addition to her time at the NNSS North Las Vegas Facility, she toured the Site and the Remote Sensing Laboratory at Nellis Air Force Base.

In her visit, Hruby hosted a virtual and in-person town hall for all NNSS employees during which she outlined her priorities, including her vision for the NNSS and its role in stockpile stewardship, the global environment and nonproliferation. She also discussed her focus on building and maintaining a world-class workforce within the NNSA.

Hruby touched on the urgency of the NNSA's mission, its opportunities to "bring science, product and infrastructure to the next level of innovation and maturity," and how the NNSS is supporting that work.

"My mantra as NNSA Administrator has been to 'Innovate, Collaborate, and Deliver,'" she said. "The NNSS exemplifies collaboration. National security initiatives from the National Laboratories are executed here through seamless integration of Laboratory and NNSS staff with operational expertise of the Site."

Hruby said the NNSA's top priority is to execute, in a cost-effective manner, the significant commitments it has across the board. "Maintaining our competitive edge will require us to deliver new technologies and procedures, and to reinvigorate capabilities to enhance nuclear security, arms control and naval reactors."

She praised Mission Support and Test Services LLC (MSTS), the management and operating contractor at the NNSS, and the government-industry partnership as a whole. "The core of the model, the idea of using the best practices in U.S. industry and academia to do government work, is brilliant, and brilliantly American. Mark Martinez and the entire MSTS team are a prime example of how the model brings us excellence."

Her vision for the NNSS and its role in stockpile stewardship, the global environment and nonproliferation included acknowledgements of the breakthroughs and milestones achieved in subcritical experiments and the Enhanced Capabilities for Subcritical Experiments project; expectations for expertise and answers on increasing proliferation

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challenges; and a commitment to work with allies to mitigate global nuclear risks while also promoting access to safe, peaceful use of nuclear power to help combat climate change.

Hruby addressed continuing hiring and retention challenges across the country. “NNSA’s ability to achieve its mission ultimately depends on the ability to recruit, develop and retain a highly skilled workforce of national security professionals, especially the next generation of leaders and experts,” she said.

“To succeed, we must provide a supportive working environment for employees of all races and ethnicities, genders, identifications, orientations and religions. We cannot bring the best and brightest into NNSA without providing a supportive environment. I am a strong supporter of, and have personally grown as a result of, diversity, equality and inclusion efforts.”

Hruby recently approved funding to support midyear compensation increases across the Nuclear Security Enterprise. As a result, the NNSS allocated \$6.5 million to increase pay for part-time and full-time non-bargaining employees, which went into effect March 28. Additionally, \$2 million was set aside to directly support recruitment, retention and performance initiatives.

The compensation increase follows an announcement in early March of new benefits for non-bargaining employees. The new benefits increased holiday hours from 80 to 96 beginning in 2022. It also rolled out student loan repayment for individuals who graduated within the last three years with a degree that applies to their current job. Student loan repayment enhances the existing education training assistance program that provides tuition assistance to current students enrolled in approved courses at an accredited higher education institution. Non-bargaining employees are eligible for up to \$5,250 each year to either apply toward qualifying student loans or current tuition assistance. Non-bargaining employees who work at the Site, located 65 miles north of Las Vegas, are also eligible to accrue up to 40 hours of additional paid time off each year.

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The NNSS and its related facilities help ensure the security of the United States and its allies by: supporting the stewardship of the nation’s nuclear deterrent; providing nuclear and radiological emergency response capabilities and training; contributing to key nonproliferation and arms control initiatives; executing national-level experiments in support of the National Laboratories; working with national security customers and other federal agencies on important national security activities; and providing long-term environmental stewardship of the NNSS’s Cold War legacy.

The NNSS is managed and operated by Mission Support and Test Services LLC (MSTS). MSTS is a limited liability company consisting of Honeywell International Inc., Jacobs Engineering Group Inc., and HII Nuclear. The NNSS falls under the jurisdiction of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), an agency within the U.S. Department of Energy. The Site’s operations are government-controlled and contractor-operated, and are overseen by NNSA’s Nevada Field Office, headquartered in North Las Vegas.

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For more information on the NNSS, visit www.nnss.gov.

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