



January 25, 2017

Aircraft Division team earns DOD acquisition workforce development award



(From left to right) The Honorable Frank Kendall, former Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics; members of the Airborne Anti-Submarine Warfare Systems Engineering team, Aircraft Division, Luis Fortuño, Dr. Mary Eileen Farrell, Karen Frech, John Joseph; The Honorable Robert O. Work, Deputy Secretary of Defense and Gen. Paul J. Selva, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Not in the photo, Carlton Brown and Donato Russo, Airborne Anti-Submarine Warfare Systems Engineering team, Aircraft Division.

NAVAL AIR WARFARE CENTER, AIRCRAFT DIVISION, PATUXENT RIVER, MARYLAND – An Aircraft Division team was recognized for developing unique ways to recruit, train and retain a new generation of engineers and scientists.

The Airborne Anti-Submarine Warfare Systems Engineering Division team was among a sea of acquisition shining stars at the 2016 Defense Acquisition Workforce Awards ceremony held Dec. 8 at the Pentagon Hall of Heroes in Arlington, Virginia.

Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics (USD AT&L) Frank Kendall presented the Silver Winner (Small Organization) to the team. He was joined on stage by the Robert O. Work, deputy secretary of defense and Gen. Paul J. Selva, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

“It was an honor for me and the team to get this award,” said Luis Fortuño, division



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director, Anti-Submarine Warfare Systems Engineering Division. “The three biggest challenges we face when it comes to workforce development are recruitment, training and retention.”

“Just like other government agencies, we have an aging workforce that will be retiring over the next several years. We have had a lot of success in recruiting a new generation of engineers and scientists into our ranks,” said Fortuño.

The second challenge faced was to develop and broaden the skills of novice and journeyman workforce, said Fortuño. In general it takes five to 10 years to develop a scientist or engineer who has command of all competencies needed to perform Airborne ASW Missions, and to develop systems that support this mission, he added.

“We are accomplishing this by aggressively using Section 219 funding to provide our acquisition workforce with as many opportunities as possible to develop their technical knowledge and skills,” stated Fortuño. For example, over the past five years, seven employees have pursued graduate degrees.

“That makes it possible for them to translate warfighting needs into definable technology requirements in order to develop effective airborne anti-submarine warfare systems suitable for employment against current and future complex underwater battlespace threats.”

“I’m proud of everything the team has done to find, train and retain these young engineers and scientists so they can use their considerable talents to give the fleet the best equipment possible now and into the future.” said Rear Adm. Shane Gahagan, NAWCAD commander. “The exemplary efforts of the Airborne Anti-Submarine Warfare Systems Engineering Division have improved the qualifications and professionalism of the acquisition workforce.”

The annual Defense Acquisition Workforce awards recognize individuals and organizations who distinguished themselves in the field for best practices, professionalism and excellence.