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# TVA HONORS ITS VETERANS

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SERVICE TO THE NATION ★ SERVICE TO THE VALLEY

The Tennessee Valley Authority values the skills and experience that military veterans bring to the organization. Those who have served in uniform are able to leverage for TVA their strengths in many areas, including leadership, teamwork, performance under pressure, flexibility, respect for procedures and strong adherence to safety standards. Further, they have an acute understanding and respect for TVA's mission - that of service to the people of the Tennessee Valley.



This Veterans Day, TVA Nuclear pays tribute to those employees among us who have served, or continue to serve, in our nation's armed forces. While these men and women are rightfully proud of their service, they are most often humble about it as well. Consequently, we may not know that those who work beside us are veterans, or are National Guard or Reserve. So in this special issue of TVA Nuclear News, we share the stories of some who have served bravely to protect our country and our freedoms, and who continue to serve here in the Valley using the skills and experience they gained, and may continue to gain, while in uniform. While we can't feature everyone in this special publication, we can absolutely say "Thank You!" for your service.

Joe Grimes, *TVA chief nuclear officer*



## TVA Actively Supports the Military Guard and Reserve

In addition to leveraging the skills and experience military veterans bring to the company, TVA offers continual support of employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve. In fact, TVA recently signed an official Statement of Support with the U.S. Department of Defense Office of Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve (ESGR). As a signer of the document, TVA has agreed to act as an advocate for those employees who serve in Guard and Reserve units.

"TVA recognizes the important role our Guard and Reserve plays in our community and national defense – and we are steadfastly committed to supporting our employees who choose to serve our country," said Kathy Black, TVA senior vice president for Human Resources & Communications.

"It is with pride and without reservation that we endorse this Statement of Support on behalf of the TVA and our employees," said Black.

TVA has received several awards for the company's support of employees serving in the National Guard and Reserve. Recently, the ESGR presented TVA with the ESGR's Above and Beyond Award, which signifies that TVA continually demonstrates support for its Guard and Reserve employees.

## BY THE NUMBERS:

1,974

Current TVA employees who are military veterans or reservists.

954

Approximately 48% of those work in TVA Nuclear.

26.7%

Percentage of military veterans/reservists in TVA Nuclear of 3,567 employees.

# KIM JONES

Meet Kim Jones, senior secretary for the director of engineering and site projects at Sequoyah Nuclear Plant, and administrative assistant for the site's senior manager for site projects. Jones started at TVA as a contractor in the 1980s with Company Manpower in TVA's Repro-Graphics department. She would eventually find a different role here, but not before she spent over five years on active duty with the United States Army.



In 1988, upon completion of Army boot camp in Fort Jackson, South Carolina, Jones began training for her job as a maintenance management clerk in Fort Lee, Virginia. Essentially, the job would involve a heavy amount of logistics and planning for Army supplies and soldiers. She went on to spend the next 25 months with Headquarters Company 1st Infantry Division Forward (IDF) at Cooke Barracks in Göppingen, Germany.

**“In an instant, everyone’s mindset changed from ‘we’ll get to go home soon enough’ to ‘we may actually not make it home.’”**

From there, she continued her job duties at Kelley Hill Barracks in Fort Benning, Georgia. But it was Jones’ time spent in the Persian Gulf where she grew to learn the true measure of her own abilities,

and the trust she would place with those in her battalion.

When Jones first arrived in Saudi Arabia, she never thought the U.S. would actually go to war. But on her first night, while she and her battalion slept outside looking up at the stars, they heard a formation of planes flying overhead. Then the lights on the planes went out, and they could hear the sounds of bombs exploding in the distance. America was at war, and Desert Shield was about to become Desert Storm.

“In an instant, everyone’s mindset changed from ‘we’ll get to go home soon enough’ to ‘we may actually not make it home,’” said Jones.

It was at that moment when Jones learned what it truly meant to rely on those around her at work. Each soldier in her battalion needed to do his or her job well to accomplish their mission, and for everyone to make it home safely.

Jones has found that principle to be the same here at TVA.

Everyone is vital for success, so each employee has to be focused on being safe and doing their jobs to the best of their abilities.

“We’re all relying on each other to achieve TVA’s mission,” said Jones. “We have to respect and support each other – every role, from the top on down.”

After her tour in the Army, Jones came back to the states and looked for work at TVA. On the surface, it was the company’s reputation and her fascination with working within nuclear power that attracted her.

But Jones is also one of many TVA family legacies. At one point her father was a contractor as well as a laborer for TVA. Her sister and nieces have all worked here as well. The company is in her blood.

“This company is part of who I am, so I really felt called to come back here,” Jones said.

Eventually she found work at Sequoyah in the custodial department. She also started going to school again, and after some time was promoted to her current role.

Jones is grateful she is able to offer TVA the skills she learned in the Army.



Jones (left), with her battalion and First Lady Barbara Bush; Saudi Arabia, November 22, 1990 (Thanksgiving).

“The team building, the executive support, the organization and detail-oriented aspects of logistics, working under pressure – all of it has been useful for my job,” she said.

“I served in the Army for five years, eight months, and 15 days, and I loved every minute of it,” Jones said.

Now, Jones is happy she can leverage all that time in uniform to help Sequoyah and everyone who lives and works here in the Tennessee Valley.

# ALLEN HUMPHREY III

Allen Humphrey III served for 22 years on active duty with the United States Marine Corps (USMC).



While serving, his primary job was that of a “metrologist,” which involved calibrating and repairing test measurement and diagnostic equipment (TMDE). This was ideal work experience for Humphrey’s post-military career at TVA.

Before Humphrey began work at TVA, he served at a number of Marine commands across the country and around the world. Japan, Saudi Arabia and Virginia are just a few of those places, and offer proof that he understands what it is to be flexible with change.

Now, Humphrey serves as an I&C (Instrumentation and Control) outage coordinator at Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant.

While he remains “semper fidelis” (always faithful) to the Corps, his primary focus now lies with successfully coordinating outages for I&C at TVA’s nuclear plant in Athens, Alabama.

As it turns out, it was mostly a matter of chance that brought Humphrey to TVA after he left active duty.

“My intent was to move to California once I retired from the Marine Corps,

but then I met my wife in Alabama... the rest is history,” said Humphrey. Humphrey is one example of the many family legacies that have worked at TVA over the decades.

“My grandfather was a TVA electrician in the Shoals area in the 60s, so I’ve always heard about TVA and its reputation for providing power to the Valley,” he said.

When Humphrey saw the job announcement for TVA, he knew it was a perfect fit for him with his calibration background. Marines are well-known for their discipline, and Humphrey is no exception. He claims the most valuable skillset he learned, which he found to be useful at TVA, is to pay attention to details.

“No matter what job you are performing, if you take a moment to think about what you are about to perform, you will minimize mistakes,” said Humphrey.

**“No matter what job you are performing, if you take a moment to think about what you are about to perform, you will minimize mistakes”**

At his shop at Browns Ferry, he knows they cannot afford repeat maintenance due to poor craftsmanship or human performance errors that could impact plant performance.

“We focus intently on the job at hand, work in teams, and perform peer coaching - all disciplines that help elevate TVA nuclear to higher standards of safety,” said Humphrey.

The Marine Corps also taught Humphrey what it is to be technically and tactically proficient. By the end of his military career he was responsible for reviewing all Marine Corps ground force procurements

for calibration requirements. He was also in charge of ensuring his marines and civilian technicians across the globe had the training and equipment required to maintain the TMDE throughout their lifecycle.

“At TVA and here at Browns Ferry we pride ourselves at being proficient, so our goal is to perform the right work at the right time and the right way,” said Humphrey.



Humphrey in his USMC uniform; 2004.

In the Corps, Humphrey called that principle “one shot, one kill.” In both instances, the main goal is to avoid mistakes and complete the job safely and error-free the first time.

After 22 years Humphrey retired as the most senior enlisted Marine in his occupational specialty.

“From the first day I joined the Marine Corps, leadership traits and principles were skills that were ingrained in me until I retired, and I still live by them today,” he said.

Now Humphrey also lives by TVA Human Performance and nuclear safety culture traits on a daily basis. He is a great example of someone at TVA who lives and breathes safety at home and at work.

“My neighbors probably think I’m strange because I wear gloves, leather shoes and safety glasses when working on my lawn, but I think ‘better safe, than sorry,’” he said.

# WILLIAM “BILL” ISRAEL

William “Bill” Israel is a veteran of the United States Air Force (USAF). For four years he worked as an electronic countermeasures technician at the former England Air Force Base in Alexandria, Louisiana. While there, he served as part of the Tactical Air Command 23rd Tactical Fighter Wing, also known as “The Flying Tigers.” Now Israel enjoys his career as a senior program manager for TVA’s Integrated Excellence Plan and Change Management Process (IEP/CM).

After basic enlisted training, Israel spent 13 months at a technical school at Keelser Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi, where he learned about countermeasure technology. While in school, he took on the extra duty of singing as first tenor in the Keelser Air Force Base Male Chorus. As part of a four-part a cappella group, he sang for dignitaries and represented the USAF at local social events.

“It was definitely a nice break from the technical training, and it actually helped improve some of my fundamental skills of working in synchronicity with others, and

**“I knew my technical skills would be applicable, and I had heard great things about the level of integrity held by those who worked here”**

performing with accuracy and precision,” said Israel.

Israel said he chose the countermeasure job and schooling because he thought it would offer him the

highest technical challenge, while also involving an interesting job skill.

“Countermeasures fascinated me because the technology involves tricking or deceiving radar, and other detection systems - like a guided surface-to-air missile (SAM) shot by an enemy,” he said.

Israel found gratification in working as part of a cohesive team, and having a direct impact on the level of safety for his command. He loved the idea of being able to help protect his ‘birds’ in the sky.

“We used to say ‘missed by an inch is missed by a mile,’ because as long as the missiles missed the target, we did our job,” he said.

Israel is grateful that he is able to use many of the skills he gained in uniform.

“One of the best things I learned in the Air Force was the importance of doing my job right the first time,” he said.

All of those fighter pilots in his air command depended upon his systems working 100 percent accurately in a battle environment. During an exercise at Nellis Air Force Base in Clark County, Nevada, he witnessed first-hand how his equipment performed to mask the aircraft as required.

“Because I did my job correctly, those pilots safely and effectively completed their deployments,” Israel said.

Israel was attracted to a job at TVA for several reasons, including the alignment he saw between his military job and those at the company’s nuclear department.



Bill Israel at TVA Nuclear in Chattanooga, Tennessee; 2015.

“I knew my technical skills would be applicable, and I had heard great things about the level of integrity held by those who worked here,” said Israel.

Today, Israel’s job at TVA involves managing a pair of programs in the Performance Improvement Organization (IEP/CM). Along with identifying gaps to excellence, Israel also helps TVA avoid emerging problems in the company’s many processes while bringing about change towards industry best practices.

“We focus on the top gaps to excellence that, if addressed effectively, will make the most impact on performance,” said Israel. “The concept was basically the same when I was working with the Flying Tigers and countermeasures, only now I’m applying that experience towards nuclear technology and clean energy for the Tennessee Valley.”

# BRIAN McNUTT

Brian McNutt is a busy man. Not only is he a shift manager at Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant, he is also a chief master sergeant with the United States Air Force Reserve (USAFR).



McNutt began his military career in 1987 as a nuclear machinist's mate with the United States Navy. He served on board USS Augusta, a fast attack nuclear submarine out of Groton, Connecticut. Cold winters and long deployments taught him the meaning of hard work and patience.

"Submarines offer a truly unique lifestyle, and my time on the boat really improved my sense of discipline, teamwork and attention to detail," said McNutt.

Having successfully transitioned from working alongside more than

works as chief enlisted manager and superintendent of an Aerial Port squadron at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Alabama. When called to duty, he is in charge of running the cargo and passenger terminal at the air base. Currently, McNutt is mobilized on an extended reserve duty deployment on the A4 (Logistics) Staff with US Air Forces Central Command (AFCENT) in the Middle East.

McNutt was attracted to TVA for a number of reasons. For starters, he knew it was a place he could advance using the skills and knowledge he gained, and continues to gain in the military. He also knew TVA to be a military-friendly supporter.

"Knowing TVA is a company that values the skills veterans bring to the company, and that they would support me as I continued to serve in the Reserve, were huge factors in my deciding to work here," McNutt said.

For McNutt, it is a combination of elements that have helped prepare him for his success at Browns Ferry.

"Aside from the obvious technical skills, living on a submarine taught me rather quickly how to adapt to working with people of diverse ethnic, social and economic backgrounds," he said.

As with most work environments, McNutt found teamwork to be absolutely essential in the military in order to achieve the mission and to strengthen the armed forces as a whole.

"It's the same concept here at TVA," said

McNutt. "When we support our fellow employees, we improve the organization."

As a unit supervisor at Browns Ferry, and later as a shift manager, McNutt said he spent a lot of time coordinating between Operations and other work centers to accomplish the daily work schedule. "This skillset and experience really came in handy when I was deployed to Iraq in 2008," he said.

During that time, one of McNutt's main responsibilities was to coordinate the movement of fallen soldiers home. This duty was not only challenging to him emotionally, but it required precise synchronization between several agencies and organizations to ensure swift and honorable movement out of the combat operations area.



McNutt (second from right) with his crew, and an F-16 in Jordan; 2015.

One part of that duty, which McNutt said was "unfortunately routine," was coordinating a ramp ceremony for the soldiers' remains as they were loaded onto the aircraft by their squad mates. Ramp ceremonies are ritualistic memorials for soldiers killed in a war zone, and are held at an airfield where a plane waits to take the deceased's remains to his or her home country.

"Although my part in the overall process was a small one, I felt it deserved my best effort to return each service member home to their families," McNutt said.

McNutt is clearly a great example of someone that considers small details as important as large ones. "Every decision we make has a direct effect on some part of our job here, and that is to serve and improve the lives of people here in the Valley," he said.



McNutt on a Blackhawk helicopter ride from Bagram to Kabul; 2015.

140 men in an enclosed metal tube, McNutt is now a senior enlisted man in the USAFR. While in uniform he

# DANIEL KRAUSE



Meet Daniel Krause. Once a crewmember on board a naval nuclear aircraft carrier, he now works as a chemistry first line

supervisor at Watts Bar Nuclear Plant. The uniforms may have changed for Krause, but the nuclear science and fundamental skillsets have not.

After basic enlisted training, Krause spent the next 18+ months immersed in Naval Nuclear Power and Prototype schools. The intensive schooling pipeline is necessary to prepare those going to the fleet to help manage the nuclear technology on board naval vessels.

“The Navy is the only place I know that provides an intensive hands-on training course on a live, nuclear reactor to a kid straight out of high school,” said Krause.



Daniel Krause, in his Navy uniform; 2002

in Ballston Spa, New York. Finally, with four-plus years under his belt, he was ready to get his sea legs. The nuclear aircraft carrier USS

Nimitz awaited him in Newport News, Virginia. Eventually he would help transition the ship to her new home port in San Diego, California, and then onto an

extended deployment at sea in 2003 as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. During his time on the carrier, Krause was able to expand his skillsets as the training coordinator and lead plant supervisor. Beyond his daily duties, he grew increasingly knowledgeable and respectful of the technology before him.

“I was given the chance to operate and work on one of the most complicated war machines ever built by man,” he said. “The ship was essentially a small floating city powered by the science of splitting atoms.”

Beyond the technical aspects of a carrier, serving in the military in an operational combat zone quickly taught him discipline and focus.

“You have to think on your feet and be able to deal with changing and stressful situations,” he said.

Krause is proud of his time in service, and grateful that it prepared him for a second career in the nuclear industry. Not only did he learn how to operate a steam plant, he also gained key organizational and leadership skills. One of the reasons Krause has helped TVA maintain success in nuclear power generation is because he knows how to maximize the power of

individual differences in people.

“I learned how to effectively manage people with widely varying backgrounds, and direct them into

**““ You have to think on your feet and be able to deal with changing and stressful situations ””**

cohesive teams to accomplish the mission at hand,” said Krause.

Krause found the same concept to be true here at TVA. In fact, his entire Navy experience may be attributed to his success today in the commercial nuclear industry, and specifically here at TVA.

“I wouldn’t trade my Navy experience for anything,” he said.



Krause, with his wife Amanda; 2015.

“But I do know that I will never stop learning new things and applying them to my life at home and at work.”

Clearly, Krause cares very much about the people he works with, and toward serving those in the Tennessee Valley.

“The carrier life is behind me, but now I have new shipmates - they just wear different uniforms,” he said.

# FRANK BONILLA

Frank Bonilla is a 22-year veteran of the United States Navy. He is also a leader and team builder at Sequoyah Nuclear Plant.



Before coming to TVA, he spent his military years on both land and sea, protecting our nation's freedom. He learned how important it was to not only operate and maintain the mechanical propulsion systems on board ships, but develop and lead organizations as a whole.

Now Bonilla is proud to call Tennessee his home, and TVA Sequoyah his passion.

Among his list of Naval duty assignments, Bonilla served as a nuclear machinist's mate on board the nuclear aircraft carriers USS Theodore Roosevelt, USS Enterprise and the USS Nimitz. He also served as the command master chief for both Nuclear Power Training Unit in Charleston, South Carolina, and the USS Antietam, a guided-missile cruiser. After retiring in 2004, Bonilla hung up his Navy uniform and eventually found his home at TVA as the mechanical maintenance superintendent at Sequoyah Nuclear Power Plant.

"My wife and I really fell in love with the Tennessee area and people," he said. "It's a real pleasure and an honor to be serving the area in which we live and work."

**“We are here to achieve something, and it takes focus and effort from everyone”**

Bonilla has more than a few sea stories to tell from his time in the service. For him the Navy was truly

not just a job, but an adventure. His career took a dramatic shift in 1990 when he was promoted to the rank of chief petty officer.

"All of a sudden I went from 'wrench turner,' to one charged with leading and developing the future leaders of our naval forces," he said.

As a Navy Chief, Bonilla discovered his passion for something more than operating and fixing the mechanical systems on ships. He appreciated the ability and responsibility to develop and lead individuals, groups and commands to levels of personal and organizational excellence that others had so easily dismissed or considered impossible.

"I always volunteered to take over and lead those groups that needed to be turned around," he said.

In 2002, Bonilla reported to the USS Antietam as command master chief (CMC). It was there where he found the perfect opportunity to strengthen his ability to lead people. Prior to his arrival on board, he was told that the ship was the poorest in overall performance

among its class in the Pacific fleet. After assuming command, he asked the commanding officer what his expectations were for him as his command master chief.

"His response was simply, 'Master Chief, you run the ship, I'll fight the battles,'" said Bonilla.

Two weeks later the ship and crew set sail for a routine two-

week training deployment. During that time, the war in Afghanistan commenced and the ship did not return until November of that same year, 11 months later. When they returned to San Diego, the crew was not the same as when they left. Every award that the crew could have won was now proudly displayed on the ship's bridge wing. The largest and most obvious award was an oversized "E." This was the 'Battle E Award,' which the crew earned for demonstrating the highest state of battle readiness for their ship's class. It was then that Bonilla truly valued and realized how powerful leadership tools could be.

"By fully adopting the Navy's three core values of honor, courage and commitment, we turned our people and our organization totally around," he said.



Frank Bonilla and his crew at Sequoyah. L-R/CW: Tom Beasley, Jerry Roberts, Richard Bookout, Martin G. Smith, Matt McAllister, Napoleon Dawson, Martin J. Smith, Shan Anderson, Frank Bonilla (not pictured: Seth Rogers, Nick Hensley, Todd Hoback); 2015.

Bonilla has found striking similarities to the effective methods of leadership between the military and TVA. The Navy gave him extensive experience in adaptability, effective communication and building organizational trust.

"By using many of the same skills now listed as TVA Competencies, we have the ability to lead and reach new levels of excellence here in our organization," said Bonilla.

# JEFF MOSER



Jeff Moser began his career in nuclear power with 11 years of active duty service in the United States Navy.

For four-and-a-half years he called the nuclear aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis and San Diego, California, his home. It would be another four-and-a-half years spent at Naval Nuclear Power Training Command (NNPTC) in Charleston, South Carolina, before he found his current job with TVA Nuclear in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Moser is quick to acknowledge that his time in uniform was absolutely essential to both his employment and continued success at TVA. He remembers his days in uniform as both interesting and exciting.

“The Navy is a great place to not only learn about nuclear power, but to find courage in oneself in daily situations,” he said.

Moser recalled one particular instance on his ship where he faced a challenging situation with his supervisor. He had just reported to the ship and was helping with work on the turbine generators.

“There were four of us working on the machine that day, one of which was our supervisor,” he said. “I happened to be the ‘new guy’ and was there to start learning.”

He recalled pulling the brushes off the end of the generator for inspection. During removal, he noticed they were bolted on incorrectly. The lock washer was beneath the washer, when it should

have been on top of it. “As a kid from small-town Nebraska whose father owned a construction company, I was familiar with how washers/lock washers were supposed to be installed,” said Moser.

Moser made a comment to his supervisor about the incorrect alignment, and that he would be happy to fix it. However, his supervisor told him that he should install it exactly as he found it.

“I told them I wouldn’t because it was wrong,” Moser said. “This went back and forth for a few minutes, with my supervisor eventually screaming at me and walking off the job site.”

A young, impressionable Moser was left standing there thinking he was going to be in a lot of trouble. A few minutes later, the plant leading petty officer (LPO) appeared with Moser’s supervisor in tow, along with the technical manual.

“To my relief, we referred to the manual, confirmed I was right, and I put the turbine generator back correctly,” he said.

This type of questioning attitude is what helped the ship operate as it was intended – safely. It is also an attitude that Moser continues to carry with him here at TVA.

“I like that it’s a core value here,” he said. “It is always good to stop when unsure and make sure the action you are taking is the right one.”

Moser pointed out that he also enjoys the camaraderie and teamwork here at TVA.



Moser receiving an award on board USS John C. Stennis; December 30, 2002.

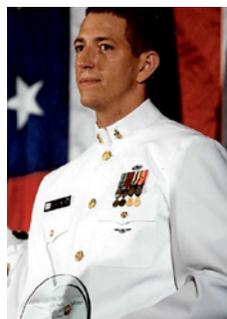
“You aren’t going to enjoy everything you have to do,” he said. “But the people you work with and their attitude can make those moments bearable.”

Moser admitted that when it comes to managing nuclear power and the people who make it possible, there are several fundamental similarities between the Navy and TVA.

“We are here to achieve something, and it takes focus and effort from everyone,” he said. “There is a difference between telling people they have to do something vs. explaining to them the reason of why they have to do it.

“They still might not like it, but they can respect why it needs to be done,” he continued. “This concept is true whether you’re working on a naval vessel or here in the Tennessee Valley.”

In 2008 Moser hung up his Navy uniform for the last time. He left active duty as a chief electrician’s mate, and headed straight for TVA. The mid-south was appealing to him, for both quality of life and career opportunities. With his days at sea behind him, he can now enjoy home life with his family and a steady job as a nuclear duty officer at TVA.



Moser receiving the 2007 Chamber of Commerce Navy Armed Forces Volunteer Service Member of the year in Charleston, South Carolina station at NNPTC.

# JEREMY RICKS

Jeremy Ricks served eight-and-a-half years of active duty service as a nuclear electrician's mate with the United States Navy. He grew up in the mid-south, and has always held an interest in nuclear technology. His long-term goal of working at TVA eventually came to fruition, as he now works as an electrical and Instrumentation and Control (I&C) designer at Watts Bar Nuclear Plant.



"My wife and I are both from this part of the country, so we knew we would come back to Tennessee one day," said Ricks.

After his time in the Navy, Ricks attended Tennessee Technological University (TTU) where he eventually earned his degree in electrical engineering. Immediately afterward, he was at a job fair at TTU when he was introduced to a nuclear recruiter. The timing was right, and he was able to secure an interview



Ricks with his wife Jenny at the 101st Enlisted Submarine Ball at Kings Bay, Georgia; April 20, 2002.

for an I&C Engineer position at TVA. Soon after, he was hired in the company's design group.

Ricks identified several parallels that he

learned in the Navy that are directly related to what he does now as a design engineer.

"All of the Human Performance tools used at TVA like "STAR" (stop, act, think, review), procedural compliance, stop when unsure, two-minute rule and circle slashing of procedures can be traced back to similar attributes and rules used in the Navy," Ricks said.

Ricks credits working on Navy vessels for much of the practical knowledge and experience he uses here at TVA. As an electrician's mate on a nuclear submarine, he learned how to work on machinery, and to analyze system longevity based on installation and maintenance of machine components.

"Understanding how it all works, and having to troubleshoot a motor, generator, breaker, switchgear, and circuits in general, makes the design work I do now much easier," said Ricks.

For many veterans, it is sometimes easier to recall the tough lessons learned in uniform, more than the great achievements.

"There is a Human Performance attribute that is used at Watts Bar called 'be here now,' for when an important task is being performed or briefed," said Ricks. "While in the Navy, I learned this lesson the hard way."

The experience came during Ricks' first patrol on the nuclear ballistic submarine USS West Virginia when he was standing the auxiliary electrician watch in the engine room. It was drill day and they had just simulated a required reactor scram. Ricks was in charge of manning the Emergency Propulsion Motor and answering the bells for the ship's required speed.

"Honestly, I was not 'here now' when the 'over speed' alarm came in," he said. "What came next was a loss of both ship's propulsion and

the Emergency Diesel Generator that the crew had just loaded on to recover the propulsion plant."

Thankfully Ricks was able to recover propulsion and get the boat back on track, but he was immediately relieved of duty and then had a heart-to-heart conversation with the captain of the boat. From that day forth, he made sure that whatever he was doing, he was not distracted; concentrating on the task at hand and nothing else was the number one priority.

"This lesson has kept me out of trouble here at TVA and hopefully will continue to do so for the rest of my career," he said.



Ricks performing a medium voltage cable inspection for a Very Low Frequency test on the 6.9kV Emergency Diesel Generator cables at Watts Bar; 2015.

Ricks was honorably discharged from the Navy in 2006. He is proud of his military experience and relies on it daily to perform his job successfully at Watts Bar. As a nuclear electrician's mate he was taught lessons that cannot necessarily be gained in a college classroom.

"For all the great moments and the lessons learned, I'll always be grateful for the preparation the Navy gave me to help support Watts Bar and the people here in the Valley," Ricks said.

# JOYCE ARTIS



To say Joyce Artis is committed to serving her country is an understatement. Not only did she serve 14 years of active duty service with the United States Navy, she is currently enlisted with the United States Navy Reserve (USNR) and

works for TVA to help serve the nine million people of the Tennessee Valley.

In 1980 Artis came to the conclusion that she wanted to have a career in engineering. The university she was attending before enlisting did not have an engineering school, so the military was an easy choice. By joining the Navy she was able to have both a job and schooling at the same time.

“When I found out the Navy had a nuclear power program, I leaped at the opportunity,” said Artis.

Artis was able to travel the world while on active duty and supported a number of naval commands, in a

**“I’ve always felt called to serve my country, and I’m happy I’ve been able to do so in a number of ways”**

variety of roles. Her duty stations have included: Ballston Spa, New York; Charleston, South Carolina; Gaeta, Italy;

and several Navy commands in Virginia. Among her individual duties, she has worked as an instructor and as a radiological control supervisor at a number of Navy nuclear commands.

Now Artis’ day job is as a work control senior reactor operator and shift technical advisor at Watts Bar Nuclear Plant. Meanwhile, her “weekend warrior” duty for the USNR is as the Leading Chief Petty Officer for a Navy Hospital Support Unit at Naval Operations Support Center Knoxville. In addition, Artis is a Blue and Gold Officer for the United States Naval Academy, where she assists candidates with the application process.

“I’ve always felt called to serve my country, and I’m happy I’ve been able to do so in a number of ways,” she said.



Artis and her husband Sherman; February, 1990.

During her active duty time as a naval reservist, Artis will occasionally be called to provide

reserve force augmentation to naval shipyard personnel in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii and Norfolk, Virginia. These teams of reserve component Sailors (like Artis) become a mobilization force when the Navy needs to “surge” its maintenance infrastructure.

“It’s obviously a great excuse to visit places like Hawaii, but it’s also a way for me to help support the fleet’s readiness and response to fulfill their missions,” Artis said.

Artis was attracted to TVA because she felt her experience could help the company fulfill its mission. Her engineering background has proven useful in helping Watts Bar stay on track with safe operations. She is thankful the Navy taught her the skills she needs



Chief Artis (middle) at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, with her daughters Midshipman (now Ensign) Melanie Artis (left), and Ensign (now Lieutenant Junior Grade) Brittany DeMarco (right); Spring, 2014.

to perform the complex technical work at Watts Bar.

“I’ve traveled the world, worked on a lot of machinery, and with a wide variety of people,” said Artis. “I find myself relying on that experience every day to do my job well.”

# LESLIE LINK

Leslie Link joined the United States Navy on September 10, 2001. The next day her world, and that of every American, would change forever. She will always remember her first days in uniform as a bit chaotic.



“It was definitely a shocking way to start out,” Link admitted.

However, those first days of boot camp gave her a solid foundation for the next eight years she would spend handling stressful environments on both land and at sea.

After basic training, Link completed 18 months of intensive nuclear power and electrician training at the Nuclear Power Training Command in Charleston, South Carolina. Afterwards she reported to San Diego, California, where she would work as a nuclear electrician’s mate on board the nuclear aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis. For the next six-and-a-half years she helped the ship complete three extended deployments and other special missions at sea.

Link’s primary duty on board was to help ensure power was provided throughout the ship. She also supported maintenance and troubleshooting for the ship’s two nuclear reactor plants and their respective electrical equipment. While these are usual duties for such a role, Link had an unusual experience during her time on board – her sister was her shipmate.

“For four years my sister was stationed with me on the ship - also as a nuclear electrician,” said Link.

In fact, Link is third-generation Navy. Her father was a nuclear machinist mate and her grandfather an aviation technician.

After six-plus years on board, Link had performed virtually every possible aspect of her job. But it was the fundamental aspects of her daily duties that made a lasting impression on her.

“All that time at sea and working with my crew was so valuable,” said Link. “That’s where I learned how to work well with others, voice my concerns, troubleshoot and problem-solve, be a leader, do my job with attention to detail, maintain high standards for craftsmanship and most of all – how to do my job and still have fun.”

After her enlistment was up, Link sought to continue her career in

nuclear power. She came to TVA by way of her husband, who was at the time a safety manager at Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant. Now she is proud to work as a senior analyst in performance improvement at Browns Ferry.

“Everything I did in the Navy prepared me for work here at TVA,” said Link.



Link (right), receiving her enlisted surface warfare specialist pin and award; February 21, 2007.

Link feels honored to have given eight years to the Navy, and carries the same level of pride at TVA.

“I have an enormous amount of pride for serving,” she said. “I find it really interesting that when I meet fellow veterans from any branch of the military, it’s like talking to a family member.”

Link continued, “I think it’s the experiences we go through and the pride felt for having served. I still have a lot to learn, but the Navy gave me a good set of skills to start and TVA is letting them grow.”

**Please join us in thanking those who have served in uniform,  
and who continue to serve here in the Valley!**

