



10/7/2020

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

– Helen Keller

The necessity of interdependence, one of the Forest Service’s [core values](#), is undeniable during these trying times. Facing the challenges around us alone would be daunting, but luckily, we don’t have to. Whether personal or professional, the chances that someone is having a similar experience to yours are good. But in order to get the most benefit from our interdependence, we must be willing to share our experiences. Did you find a way to help a customer or coworker virtually which you used to do in person? Are you looking for a solution to minimize distractions while working from home? Whether you’re the one asking questions or answering them, opening the lines of communication and embracing our interdependence can bring about the solutions we seek.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month Kickoff

October is National Disability Employment Awareness (NDEAM) Month! The purpose of NDEAM is to educate and bring awareness about disability employment issues and celebrate the many contributions of America's workers with diverse abilities. This year's National theme is "Increasing Access and Opportunity" and marks two very important milestones: the 75th observance of NDEAM and the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Reducing Barriers for People with Disabilities: An Interactive Discussion

Disability inclusion involves creating an environment where people with disabilities are valued for their strengths and have the same opportunities to succeed. This interactive presentation will focus on the multifaceted factors that influence identity, provide tools to respect the differences of others, and discuss ways to increase access and opportunity for people with disabilities.

Dates: October 7, 2020

Time: 11:30 a.m. Alaska / 12:30 p.m. Pacific / 1:30 p.m. Mountain / 2:30 p.m. Central / 3:30 p.m. Eastern & Atlantic Standard

Duration: 2 hours

Type of Session: Webinar

How to Join: <https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/cr-1000/> or **Dial-in:** 888-251-2949 or 215-861-0694

Access Code: 5311044#

Hosted by: Office of Civil Rights, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Branch

National Mentoring Program Open Season for Protégés is Postponed

The National Mentoring Program open season is postponed and will accept applications in **January 2021**. Welcoming a new platform, the program will accept both mentor and protégé applications during that time.

Mentoring provides employees with opportunities to broaden their experience, accomplish development goals, and cultivate new skills. Mentoring is an excellent way to transfer institutional knowledge and convey the agency's values, commitments, and expectations.

A protégé is an employee who is paired with a higher-grade mentor for the purpose of furthering the protégé's professional development.

- Protégés are paired with a mentor one to two grade levels above their own
- Up to 15% official time is approved for use
- Protégé and mentor pairings are between six months to one year long
- After the mentoring period, protégés are expected to give back one year as a mentor

Employees in grades GS-13 and lower who are interested in being a protégé, obtain your supervisor's approval and then apply in January on the [National Mentoring Program Portal](#).

Mentors in all grades are needed and interested employees are encouraged to apply to become a mentor. Mentoring is a rewarding experience that enables you to grow your leadership skills while contributing your knowledge, guidance, and support to the protégés professional development. If you are interested, obtain your supervisor's approval and then apply on the [National Mentoring Program Portal](#).

For more information, visit the [WEPO Training and Employee Development \(T&ED\) site](#). For questions, contact Doralee Cumpian, Program Manager, at our [T&ED Mentoring Program shared mailbox](#).

National New Leader, Middle Leader, and Senior Leader Programs Survey

The Senior Leader Program (SLP) cohorts 13 and 14, FY 19 and FY 20 Middle Leader Program (MLP) graduates, and National New Leader Program (NNLP) cohorts 3, 4, and 5 will soon be receiving an email asking them to complete a survey about their experience as participants in these programs.

WEPO strives to achieve the USFS management goal "To excel as a high-performing agency" by providing effective leadership development programs. The results from this anonymous survey will be used to identify improvements to the Senior Leader Program. As a participant or graduate of a leadership development program, you have valuable insights that will assist our improvement efforts, and we would appreciate your feedback.

Look for the email survey invitation from Linda Colón, WEPO Training & Employee Development Evaluation Manager. For questions, contact Linda.Colon@usda.gov.

Check Your Inbox! Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey 2020

To allow agencies the opportunity to focus on challenges with COVID-19 and other societal issues, Office of Personnel Management (OPM) delayed the 2020 annual FEVS administration until September 16, 2020 – October 28, 2020 with the hopes of maximizing employee participation. Your viewpoints are important because they help us gauge our progress and determine areas to improve our Work Environment. Please save the date and be on the lookout for an e-mail from OPM and take the time to respond to the survey.

Upcoming Work Environment Webinars, Courses, and Events

Training and Employee Development

New Employee Onboarding Webinars

This series is designed for newly onboarded employees who need a “quick start” to the Forest Service. The webinars are available as a two-day webinar series featuring presentations covering many topics such as leave, work schedules, health and life insurance, Paycheck8, AgLearn, retirement, and the Thrift Savings Plan. Specialists are available to answer your questions during the presentations. For the complete 2020 schedule and presentation recordings, please visit our [Training & Employee Development webpage](#).

Dates: October 20 - 21, 2020

Duration: 6 hours each day

Time: 7:00 a.m. Alaska / 8:00 a.m. Pacific / 9:00 a.m. Mountain / 10:00 a.m. Central / 11:00 a.m. Eastern & Atlantic Standard

Type of Session: Webinar/Adobe Connect Meeting

How to Join: [Adobe Connect](#) (Audio is available through your computer speakers)

Resilience & Personal Effectiveness

The Resilience & Personal Effectiveness program has several [upcoming offerings and many recorded webinars](#) intended to help change our response to stressors, cope with anxiety, and build resilience through medical and science-based techniques.

Mindful Parenting & Caregiving

Join us for a webinar with tips and science-based methods to support parents, caregivers, co-workers, supervisors and managers of employees with caregiving responsibilities as we support one another as a team effort. We are not alone in the pandemic and virtual schooling as we juggle emails, texts, meetings, school, cooking breakfast, lunch, dinner and all the snacks in-between.

Date: Thursday, October 8, 2020

Time: 9:00 a.m. Alaska / 10:00 a.m. Pacific / 11:00 a.m. Mountain / 12:00 p.m. Central / 1:00 p.m. Eastern & Atlantic Standard

Type of Session: Webinar/Adobe Connect Meeting

How to Join: <https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/cr-1000/>

Call In Number: 1-888-251-2949 or 215-861-0694 Access Code: 2049974#

Please plan to join the audio through the conference line. The conference call line will open 5 minutes prior to the webinar start time.

If the automated recording indicates the conference line is full, please use overflow information:

Dial In: 888-251-2949 or 215-861-0694 Access Code: 6034336#

Hosted By: Michelle Reugebrink, Work Environment & Performance Office

Recorded Webinars

Noticing Our Response to Our Stressors & Anxiety: Foundation for a Healthy and Productive Response (Part 5 of 5) *Can be attended as a 5-part series or individually.

At times like these, it can be difficult to remain calm and focused. It's easy to get caught up in fearful or worried thinking about what might happen. Stress and anxiety are a part of life, especially during these times of uncertainty—however they don't need to control your day.

<https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/pazmhgwvr7i8/>

Playing time: 1 hour

Hosted By: Michelle Reugebrink, Work Environment & Performance Office

Additional Tools and Resources

Seasonal Affective Disorder

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that comes and goes with the seasons, typically starting in the late fall and early winter and going away during the spring and summer. Find out more at <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/seasonal-affective-disorder/index.shtml>

Better Beverage Choices

What you drink is as important as what you eat. Here are 10 tips for making better beverage choices: <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/ten-tips-make-better-beverage-choices>

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Visit this [sharepoint site](#) for more information on the Employee Assistance Program.

National Institute for Mental Health

The National Institute for Mental Health is a great source of information to help us navigate these challenging times.

[Mental Health Resources](#)
[Shareable Resources on Coping with COVID-19](#)