

# Labs Ledger: LANL Special Edition

## July 2018

News & views about working at LANL Lab

### **UPTE Communication to all Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) Staff & Employees on Awarding of New M&O Contract**

### **UPTE Applauds the Selection of a New LANL Non-Profit Contractor that Supports Research, Development and Better Employee Relations; UPTE Urges the New Triad Contractor to Adopt Structural Reforms, and Offers to Work with the New Management**

As most know by now the Department of Energy (DOE)/National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) announced and confirmed on Monday that the bid team of the Battelle Institute, UC, and Texas A&M (the 'Triad' team) was awarded the contract to manage LANL, the only one of the three principal bid teams in the competition that is non-profit.

What many LANL staff and employees may not know is that UPTE, the University Professional and Technical Employees Union representing staff and employees at LANL, LLNL, and UC campuses, has made returning the Labs to not-for-profit management the focus of its efforts for years. Of course, we were not the only ones advocating for this outcome, but neither should our efforts in providing a voice for LANL staff and employees in the selection process, by vigorously campaigning for a non-profit LANL contractor be discounted.

As focus of these efforts, last year UPTE members drafted a document summarizing the problems the existing LANS M&O contract has caused, and proposed a positive blueprint for a new management structure that would address these problems. This Framework document is linked on our website, <http://www.upte.org/local/lanl/>.

On the same website you can view the Press Release that UPTE issued in June applauding the DOE/NNSA decision. We have also sent a letter to the three entities making up Triad Awardees urging them to adopt structural reforms on organizational culture change and employee safety. Among the additional reforms suggested in the Framework document which UPTE believes are keys to the success of the endeavor to return LANL to a focus on scientific and technical mission success in the national interest are:

1) Scientific Leadership Council (SLC) and Streamlining of Management: We recommend that the number of Directorates, Divisions and intermediate management layers be sharply reduced, with the Division Leaders accountable directly to a lab-wide Scientific Leadership Council (SLC), whose membership is chosen for excellence in key scientific/technical disciplines vital to LANL's mission success, with fixed terms, chaired by the Laboratory Director.



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2) Science & Engineering Employees Council (SEEC): We recommend formation of an SEEC composed of LANL non-management technical staff and employees, selected by their peers to participate in the ongoing planning and decision-making process in advisory role to management. LANL staff and employees should be free to openly express opinions on improving procedures in their workplace to the SEEC or directly to management without negative consequences or reprisals.

3) Management Transparency: All unclassified information about LANL management structure, review criteria and procedures, salaries, benefits, compensation, increases, including any special adjustments should be in the public domain and non-proprietary, except for any information in personnel files that is protected by privacy laws.

4) Technical Staff and Employee Assessments: The annual performance review process should be based on clear, objective criteria, developed in coordination with the SEEC, and include an opportunity for all employees to submit letters, including self-assessments and information addressing points of a formal review to be included in their personnel files.

5) Employee Rights: We urge the new management to respect the right of employees to organize and to form, join, or assist labor organizations and unions, such as UPTE. Union access to general staff and employee e-mailings, and/or meetings on the LANL site and premises should be allowed. We likewise urge the new management to establish a transparent complaint resolution process in coordination with the SEEC to include binding arbitration on any disciplinary action affecting pay or job classification, and establish an objective just cause standard for any such disciplinary action.

Additional recommendations for revitalizing the scientific capability of the Laboratory, necessary both to accomplish its national security mission, as well as recruiting and retaining high-quality staff, and improving morale and productivity in a cooperative effort with the new management can be found in the Framework document at the UPTE LANL website above.

UPTE is planning to sponsor a Town Hall in the next few months on concerns and suggestions for working with the new management to improve LANL together. We urge the incoming Triad management team not only to permit, but to welcome this Town Hall on the LANL site, as an opportunity to gather constructive input from LANL staff and employees, in a free and open atmosphere, without fear of reprisal.

This is a critical juncture in the history and future of Los Alamos. If there was ever a time to put aside cynicism and apathy to make your voices heard, this transition period to new management is it. We welcome your suggestions. Please send all comments to [lanl@upte-cwa.org](mailto:lanl@upte-cwa.org). If you support our goals of a better LANL, please consider joining us and adding your voice to ours.

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