



# CommuniQUÉ

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 0 2



## AGENCY DELIVERS GOLD-MEDAL SERVICE

*INS' effective liaison, cooperation, and coordination contribute to the seamless security at the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City*

*See page 8*



*Health Services administrator describes 'surreal' N.Y. ground zero experience*

*See page 6*



*Black History Month celebration highlights preservation of racial justice*

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## Examples of partnerships making U.S. more secure

The INS is pursuing several productive partnerships to prevent terrorists and other criminals from exploiting U.S. freedoms, Commissioner James W. Ziglar said in a Feb. 1 speech before the National Immigration Forum. He cited the following examples:

- Pursuing thousands of leads related to Sept. 11 with the FBI and other members of the Joint Terrorism Task Forces.
- Working with the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control to identify and freeze the assets of terrorist organizations and their various front groups and to pursue removal proceedings, when possible, against principals and directors of those organizations and fronts.
- Expanding ongoing data sharing with the Department of State to ensure immigration inspectors at all U.S. ports of entry have access to the Consolidated Consular Database, which includes visa information and photos of visa holders. INS inspectors have been trained to use the system to detect and prevent fraud.
- Working with the Departments of State and Justice on new criteria for scrutinizing visa applicants. Additionally, INS agreed to accelerate a planned reassessment of six countries participating in the Visa Waiver Program.
- Hosting the first U.S. Border Patrol-Native American Border Security Conference, which brought Native American leaders to Washington, D.C., to discuss ways to strengthen security at the Northern and Southwest borders.
- Working with Homeland Security Director Thomas J. Ridge to develop bilateral border policies with Canada and Mexico.
- Working with the Coast Guard, Customs, Department of Energy, and the Department of Defense to improve container inspection and tracking as well as develop devices to detect chemical, biological, radiological and other nuclear weapons.

## ZIGLAR SPEAKS ABOUT IMMIGRATION POLICY, INS' EXPANDED ROLE FOLLOWING SEPT. 11

**E**VEN in the face of terrorist attacks, the United States must be steadfast in welcoming people from around the world in search of hope and freedom, Commissioner James W. Ziglar said Feb. 1 at the National Immigration Forum conference.

"The events of Sept. 11 were caused by evil, not immigration," Ziglar told the pro-immigrant group based in Washington, D.C. "We cannot judge immigrants by the actions of terrorists."

The commissioner said demands for swift, dramatic action are understandable, but the INS' response must be guided by a commitment to do what is right and effective, not by "what makes us feel better at the moment." He pointed to building productive partnerships with organizations that share INS values as key to preventing terrorists and other criminals from exploiting U.S. freedoms.

### New ways to partner

As such, he said the INS is working closely with the Coast Guard; Customs; the FBI; the Departments of Defense, Education, State, and Treasury; and Office of Homeland Security to make the nation more secure. In addition, he said the INS is pursuing new ways to partner, such as the January U.S. Border Patrol-Native American Border Security Conference, the first of its kind, which brought Native American leaders to Washington, D.C., to discuss ways to strengthen security at the Northern and Southwest borders.

"Out of tragedy comes opportunity, and this opportunity is quite unique. I'm proud of it," he said of the conference with, he termed, "the only real Americans."

Ziglar emphasized that the agency will work to encourage legal immigration but will maintain a hard line against those who break immigration laws.

"Our message is loud and clear. Flouting of U.S. immigration laws must and will stop," he said, noting "we'll be tough in enforcing laws but tender in dealing with people."

### No shadowing

He said the INS is working with the Departments of State and Education and a



Commissioner Ziglar addressing the National Immigration Forum conference.

half dozen other federal agencies to carry out the Presidential Directive on student visa abuse issued in November. But he said when the foreign student tracking system is in place next summer, no student who comes to the United States legitimately to study will have anything to fear.

"These people are not going to be shadowed," Ziglar said. "They just need to live up to the terms of the visa. If they do, they won't have a problem. If they don't, they will have a problem."

The commissioner also spoke of his decision to suspend international adoptions from Cambodia. He said he understands how painful it is for prospective parents to find out they can't bring a child to the United States, but the INS must put the best interests of the child ahead of those of U.S. citizens who want to adopt.

"It is a difficult, emotionally wrenching issue, and it's one we have to deal with, and we have to do it with compassion but in a way that reflects our values," he said. The INS must be able to determine whether children from Cambodia are truly orphans before adoptions there can be permitted, he explained.

### A moral imperative

"I hope everyone in the country agrees that, that is a moral imperative," he said. "I make no apology for the INS' strong stance on questionable adoptions. We are not going to aid and abet child trafficking."

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◀ Commissioner Ziglar receives an aerial tour of southern New Mexico from El Paso Sector Deputy Chief Jerry L. Armstrong (across from Ziglar), and Assistant Chief Patrol Agent David B. Ham (far right).

▶ San Juan District Director Myrna O. Péré and Ramey Sector Assistant Chief Carlos Marrero meet with the commissioner during his visit to San Juan Feb. 6.



▶ Border Patrol Agent Aaron Tovar from the Santa Teresa, N.M., Border Patrol Station meets with Commissioner Ziglar.

▶ Pictured with the commissioner (second from right) in San Juan are Border Patrol Agent Edwin Rodriguez (left), Assistant Chief Bert Gomez, and Ramey Sector Acting Chief Carlos Marrero (right).



▶ Pictured during the commissioner's visit to San Juan are (left to right) Assistant District Counsel Jorge Ramos; SDAO Francisco Soto; SSA Agnes Piñeiro; AOIC St. Croix, Keith Williams, APD St. Thomas, Ronnie Smith, Assistant Chief Bert Gomez, Commissioner Ziglar, District Director Myrna O. Péré and Deputy District Director, Roberto Ramos.

For the full stories on the commissioner's visits to Puerto Rico and the Southwestern border, please see pages 7 and 15, respectively.

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**James W. Ziglar**  
Commissioner

**Joseph Karpinski**  
Director of the Office of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs

**Monica Jerbi**  
Editor

**Don Abalos**  
Graphic Design

**Wendy Wirth**  
Assistant Editor

# HEADQUARTERS *News*

## **BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION HONORS HERITAGE, PRESERVATION OF RACIAL JUSTICE**

ASSISTANT U.S. Attorney General for Civil Rights Ralph F. Boyd Jr. brought the dream alive at the INS' Black History Month celebration Feb. 13, honoring African-American heritage and the preservation of racial justice in America.

"Our mission as a nation is to bring about and preserve as much justice, as much fairness, and as much opportunity for as many people as we are able," he said.

Boyd, the keynote speaker at the Headquarters event, delivered an inspiring address with the theme, "Heritage and Horizons: The African-American Legacy and the Challenges of the 21st Century." It highlighted the challenges we face from century to century and how we succeed by coming together as a nation.

Boyd used Sept. 11 as an example of the nation pulling together with a "renewed sense of purpose and service" for positive collective action.

"It's impossible to speak meaningfully about the challenges that lie ahead of us without talking about Sept. 11," he said, urging the audience to welcome these post-Sept. 11 challenges as a nation and as a people.

"Look for, and embrace the challenges that face us," he said. "The challenges in these trying times is to treat all people with dignity and respect."

Boyd pointed to INS people as at the center of the "renewed sense of purpose and service. "Many heroes are here in this room steadfastly pursuing a job that is now front and center for America's mission," he said.

### **Remembering where we come from**

Touching on the event's heritage and horizons theme, Boyd spoke about the importance of remembering the past.

"To carry out our mission in 2002, it is important to remember where we come from and what it took us to get here," he said.

Boyd went on to say that even though the nation started on an "often rocky road to justice," we must recognize and appreciate what we've achieved. "Just look around the room and take in and appreciate the diversity reflected in this gathering," he said.

He also spoke about the importance of a better America for every American. "We must promote steadfastness in our goal in making certain that no person in America is needlessly left behind," he said.

### **Promoting quality education for all**

Using education as a primary example of an area that needs improvement in the United States, Boyd emphasized that like Dr.



Boyd speaks about the challenge of treating all people with dignity and respect.

Martin Luther King Jr., we must ask hard questions that get to the heart of problems and get to the bottom of things. "We must do that as well if we are to continue to make America a better America."

Despite the progress that we have made, he noted that significant gaps in education and income levels still persist in the United States along racial and ethnic lines.

"We still have a lot more work to do before we can say with some real measure of confidence backed up by some statistics that race is no longer the fault line for dramatic disparities in education," he said.

### **Honoring history and heritage**

Boyd said the Black History Month gathering created camaraderie and offered an opportunity to remember the past in such a way to "inspire us to further constructive action, action that we take as individuals and collectively as a people and as a nation."

In welcoming remarks, Assistant Deputy Commissioner Michael Becraft noted that it is not only important to recognize the great heroes of African-American history, but it is also necessary to keep heritage in mind.

"It is important to America and America's legacy, and it is important to our children," he said.

With that, Boyd gave the audience this to think about: "We're not finished. There is still much to be done."

## **BUSH REQUESTS \$10.7 BILLION FROM CONGRESS FOR 'SMART BORDERS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY'**

THE president's Fiscal Year (FY) 2003 budget proposal requests \$10.7 billion for a new border security initiative aimed at keeping pace with expanding trade while safeguarding against terrorist attacks and illegal immigration.

"My budget provides the resources to combat terrorism at home, to protect our people, and preserve our constitutional freedoms," President Bush said in his budget message.

The \$10.7 billion for border security, a \$2 billion increase, includes funding for the INS to develop a new entry/exit visa database and tracking system; increase the number of Border Patrol agents and inspectors, particularly on the Northern border; and, in total, add more than 2,200 new positions.

The White House sent its \$2.1 trillion budget proposal to Congress Feb. 4. The budget proposal increases INS' total budget to \$6.3 billion, 23 percent more than the budget enacted in FY 2002, and the Department of Justice as a whole to \$30.2 billion, almost 21 percent over the prior two years.

"Defending our nation and defending the citizens of America against terrorist attacks is the first and overriding priority of the Department of Justice," Attorney General John D. Ashcroft said. "The president's budget supports the department's reorganization to refocus law enforcement efforts to fight the war on terrorism."

A key element of the proposed budget's border security initiative is the entry/exit visa database, funded at \$362 million. The comprehensive land, sea, and air system will speed entry of routine, legitimate traffic and dramatically improve the INS' ability to deny access to those that should not enter. In addition, it will match arrival records against departure records and will improve the agency's ability to detect foreign nationals who overstay their visas.

In a Jan. 25 speech about his budget proposal, President Bush noted the INS estimates that 40 percent of the people in the United States illegally simply overstayed their visas.

"Forty percent of the people who are here illegally came because of the generosity of America, were given a period of time in which they could stay, and then they didn't leave," he said. "And one of the things we want to make sure of is we find the 40 percent to make sure they're not part of some al Qaeda network that wants to hit the United States."

The president's FY 2003 budget proposal also asks Congress to increase INS' enforcement budget to \$5.3 billion, an increase of \$1.2 billion primarily targeted at building greater homeland security and

combating terrorism. It provides \$711.7 million and 1,790 positions for INS border enforcement operations.

This includes increasing the number of U.S. Border Patrol agents by 570 to a record level of more than 11,000 agents, more than double the level in FY 1993. Of these new agents, 285 will be deployed to the Northern border. It also includes 1,160 new immigration inspectors. Of these, 460 will be deployed to land border ports, 615 to airports, and 85 to seaports.

In addition, the budget proposal asks for \$19.7 million and 137 new positions to enhance cooperation with other federal law enforcement agencies and the intelligence community in an effort to advance national security and homeland defense against possible terrorist cells in the United States. In the wake of Sept. 11, the White House discovered that information on the hijackers' activities was available through a variety of databases at the federal, state, and local government levels as well as within the private sector. Overall, the budget proposal requests \$700 million to improve intelligence-gathering and information-sharing between agencies and throughout all levels of government.

Other highlights include:

- \$50.5 million to improve existing detention facilities and expand alternatives to traditional detention operations.
- \$40 million to support the restructuring of the INS.
- \$143.5 million and 286 new positions to support several initiatives aimed at providing improved administrative support for INS enforcement and service operations.
- \$100 million for backlog elimination efforts aimed at achieving a six-month processing time standard for all immigration benefit applications. These funds represent the second installment of the president's five-year, \$500-million initiative to improve customer service and achieve and maintain a universal six-month processing time standard for all immigration benefit applications.

*"Defending our nation and defending the citizens of America against terrorist attacks is the first and overriding priority of the Department of Justice."*

*—Attorney General Ashcroft*

*Continued on page 13*

# INS NEWS *of Note*

## IMMIGRATION HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATOR CARES FOR RESCUE WORKERS AT GROUND ZERO

This article is the second in a series of first-person accounts by INS people and partners detailing their contributions to the search, rescue, and relief efforts following Sept. 11. This article is about the experience of an administrator in Immigration Health Services in Elizabeth, N.J., who was among the some 60 medical and support personnel from the Washington, D.C., Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) sent to the World Trade Center ground zero between Sept. 20 and Oct. 2.



“SURREAL” is how Richard Lawson describes his first shift in the World Trade Center ground zero, six square blocks of twisted rubble surrounding “the pile”—a 75-foot-high mound of wreckage from the center’s 110 imploded floors.

“As we walk around the ‘pile,’ building after building are destroyed. Some are total rubble; others are burnt hulks of twisted steel and concrete, total destruction,” he remembers. “It is hard to wrap my mind

around what I am seeing. Inches of dust still covers everything, and smoke rises from the pile from the fires that burn beneath.”

Then he noticed the firefighters, he said, several thousand, like ants crawling over the pile, in bucket brigades of a hundred or more in a line.

“They were bringing out remains in buckets. They were only finding pieces of them,” he said.

Lawson remembers watching a bucket brigade of firefighters find remains of their own. At ground zero, there was a constant roar of equipment, except after the discovery of the remains of a firefighter or police officer amid the rubble. Then everything came to a stop, and there would be silence while the body was placed in a body bag and covered with an American flag.

“The first time you see that it’s touching,” he said. “After the 50th time you’re seeing it, it just gets to be very painful.”

Lawson and the other health professionals staffing INS detention facilities work for the Department of Health and Human Services’ Division of Immigration Health Services (DIHS). Through a long-standing agreement, DIHS medical staff, Public Health Service (PHS) commissioned officers, civil servants, and contract employees are assigned to 11 INS facilities nationwide.

A commissioned public health officer and pharmacist, Lawson volunteers for both the Commissioned Corps Readiness Force (CCRF) and the Washington, D.C. Public Health Center DMAT. After New York Gov. George Pataki declared a state of emergency in Manhattan following Sept. 11, the president, through the



Two different shots of “the pile” at the World Trade Center ground zero.

Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Public Health Service, ordered DMAT teams in.

Lawson was assigned to a clinic setup in the American Express Building, and much of the health care his team provided was for minor injuries ranging from objects in the eye to blisters on hands and feet. Since the clinic was so close to the pile (in the first days of Lawson’s deployment, it literally came up to the door), they also were given the task of distributing clean underwear and socks and providing energy drinks and juice. Mostly, they provided a listening ear.

“You’re part of the human race. It doesn’t take much to sit down and listen, just listen,” he said, noting many of the firefighters he spoke with had lost dozens of colleagues and friends. “It got inside of me. I was glad to go home.”

One of Lawson’s most vivid memories is the night he ate dinner at a cafeteria on Church Street and his walk home.

“Windows are still falling out of the buildings closest to the pile, so we walk two blocks away. The fire escapes of the building we pass are filled with two to three feet of debris and all the windows are broken,” he remembers. “We pass the Morton’s steak house and are overcome with the stench of rotting beef. As we turn a corner in the road just off the site, a field of teddy bears are lying in a small park area.”

About 500 teddy bears were there, he said, from family members of those still missing. Some of the bears had notes written on their bellies, and others had notes, pictures or flowers pinned to them.

“We take a minute to read a few—children telling their daddies they love them and will see them in heaven, a newlywed saying goodbye to his wife, a mother telling her son how proud she has always been of him,” he said. “After a few, I couldn’t read anymore.”

“Tears are never far from my eyes,” he said of his experience. “I doubt my heart will ever recover.”



# INS NEWS FROM *the Field*

## SACRAMENTO BENEFITS AND ENFORCEMENT WORK TOGETHER ON MARRIAGE FRAUD CASE

By Sharon Rummery

WHEN a woman has four husbands, and two of them show up at INS with applications to adjust their immigration status in the same week, that's bad timing. When both wind up at the window of the same immigration information officer, that's bad luck. But when it does happen, it can mean a 13-count marriage fraud indictment like the one handed down by a Sacramento grand jury Feb. 27, as a result of Operation Live Oak.

When the Sacramento immigration information officer noticed the photo of the petitioning wife and recognized it as one she'd seen earlier that week, the spooked husband grabbed the paperwork and left the INS information room in a rush. Alerted to the possible fraud, Supervisory District Adjudications Officer Sheryl Souza had her information office crew search through the whole week's worth of filings. Eventually, they found the other photo, and learned that the petitioner was a familiar immigration preparer from Yuba City, about 50 miles north of Sacramento.

"She'd changed her hair color and make-up, but her look couldn't be disguised," Souza said.

Information officers were alerted to be on the lookout for her photo and her distinctive handwriting. So when, a few

weeks later and close to the deadline for billing 245(I) applications, the husband reappeared with his adjustment package, it was accepted as if nothing were wrong, then referred to Special Agents Carol Webster and Luz Dunn of Investigations.

The district adjudications officers of the Adjustments of Status Unit went on alert too, finding dozens of adjustment packages that showed alterations in important documents.

"Everyone who found application packets that showed alterations, sent the paperwork down, and we'd call the applicants in for interviews," said Webster. "Lots of leads came from those interviews. So many people were on the ball—we in investigations thank them."

Endless and tedious scanning of the Buffalo Examinations Tracking System for Yuba City addresses brought the rest of the cases to light. Webster checked similar sequences of A numbers. She ran the files on Choice Point to find out with whom the people were living and then checked their status.

By the time it was over, a grand jury handed down fraud indictments for marriage fraud and making false statements against Cindy Lee Garcia, 40, and Linda Mae Padilla, 39. Between the two of them, they'd wed seven men who were seeking

permanent resident status. Garcia, the woman whose photo was recognized by the officer, was separately charged with seven counts of immigration fraud and 11 more counts of making a false statement to the INS. All of the men were charged with a single count of marriage fraud—a wide-reaching case by any measure.

Garcia's charges also included altering birth certificates, a divorce decree, tax returns, W-2s, and fabricating letters from employers. Webster arrested her just after she completed her sentence for violating her probation on an earlier fraud conviction.

"We're pleased that the U.S. Attorney's accepted our case," Webster said. "These are complex cases, and defendants don't get very long sentences. Prosecutors measure their success by the amount of time defendants get in sentences. With nine defendants—each with his or her own attorney for a prosecutor to work with—this case is labor-intensive."

"We're grateful to the U.S. Attorney's Office for accepting this case," said Officer-in-Charge Susan Curda. "It's our firm belief that the only way to maintain integrity in our legal immigration system is to prosecute fraud and illegal immigration schemes."

## COMMISSIONER VISITS SAN JUAN DISTRICT

THE San Juan District and U.S. Border Patrol Ramey Sector hosted INS Commissioner James W. Ziglar and his wife, Linda, Feb. 6 during their second visit to the San Juan District.

Upon Ziglar's arrival, Director Myrna Péré briefed him on operations and challenges the district faces due to its geographical location and area of responsibility. Border Patrol Acting Chief Carlos Marrero followed Director Péré with a briefing of Border Patrol initiatives in the western part of Puerto Rico and the sector's success stories.

A highlight of the visit was a luncheon the commissioner and his wife had with the heads of most federal agencies in Puerto Rico. During the luncheon Ziglar expressed his appreciation for their support of the San Juan District Office.



Meeting with Commissioner Ziglar (second from left) are Assistant Chief Bert Gomez (left), District Director Myrna O. Péré, and Acting Chief Carlos Marrero (right).

# BORDER PATROL AGENTS ASSIST SECRET SERVICE WITH GOLD-MEDAL SECURITY AT WINTER OLYMPICS

By Nina Pruneda-Muniz



Photo by Nina Pruneda-Muniz

Senior Agent Robert Garcia (top left) and Agent Robert A. Booth (front center) attend a briefing.

WHEN it comes to preventing terrorist attacks, there's only a gold medal—no bronze or silver for almost saving lives.

And that's exactly what Operation Gold Medal at the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics turned out to be—a gold-medal effort, “history in the making” representing the highest measure of security ever taken at the Olympic games.

“Any time you participate in this type of special operation and have no major incidents and everyone involved returns safely home, you have to consider it a success,” said Charlie Whitmire, commander of the Border Patrol Tactical Unit (BORTAC).

Part of Operation Gold Medal, beefed up in response to Sept. 11, involved calling up 250 Border Patrol agents from the Southwest border region and Puerto Rico, to assist the U.S. Secret Service with security. Another 90 INS employees—from Detention and Removal, management, investigations, examinations, etc.—also were called up from around the nation to support standard INS operations.

## A monumental task

With 70,000 visitors a day, 3,500 athletes from 80 nations, and 12,000 media representatives, Operation Gold Medal's objective was a monumental task: ensuring the only remarkable events would be those involving the spectacular performances of the athletes in their events. The Border Patrol agents assigned to this security detail, under the direct field command of the Secret Service, provided security at two

separate venues: Park City and Deer Valley, Utah.

As part of their duties, Border Patrol agents maintained security 24-hours a day, enduring temperatures from below 5 to 30 degrees. Because of the cold conditions, agents were provided with boots, jackets, pants, gloves, hats, and other thermal clothing, all provided by the Secret Service. They also worked extended hours, generally 12-hour shifts.

“Each individual made sacrifices in being part of this successful operation which included being separated from families, celebrating birthdays and anniversaries away from home, and working extended hours,” said Steven Branch, officer in charge at the Salt Lake City Sub-Office.

## General public appreciative

As a consequence of the agents' dedication to their duties, the general public welcomed them. Business owners, competitors, and local law enforcement agents were extremely appreciative of the added law enforcement presence and commended the Border Patrol for their professionalism and willingness to assist.

“The employees detailed as part of this operation did nothing but further enhance the reputation of the INS as a proud, professional agency that rises to the challenge as evidenced by the numerous commendations received,” Branch said.

Whitmire said the integration of BORSTAR, Sector Special Response Teams (SRT), and BORTAC personnel in one focused mission showed that Border Patrol

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Photo by Nina Pruneda-Muniz

Border Patrol agents filing out paperwork before they get their assignment.



Photo by Nina Pruneda-Muniz

Utah's mountain beauty.



The Olympic torch above Rice-Eccles Stadium.



The University of Utah Rice-Eccles Stadium.



Photo by Nina Pruneda-Muniz

Maintaining security.



Photo by Nina Pruneda-Muniz

The Denver District Enforcement Agents (from left to right) Stuart Hoff, Dave Arnold, Bill Simmo, David Senko, Gary Aston, Ritchie Saucier.





Photo by Nina Pruneda-Muniz

An Immigration inspector checking in Olympiads at the airport.



A building near Medals Plaza with Olympics decorations.

“This is the first time agents have been utilized in this capacity.”

—Whitmire, BORTAC commander



Detention Enforcement Team: (back row left to right) John Johnson, Mike Wheeler, Wayne Richardson, (front row left to right) Albert Sosa, and Wayne Richardson.



Photo by Nina Pruneda-Muniz

Detention Enforcement Officers Javier Esquivel (left) and John Gaitan of Harlingen with Supervisory Detention Enforcement Officer Wayne Richardson looking on.

A letter from the Denver District Acting Director

Thanks to all who helped make Operation Gold Medal a success

THE INS has a long history of involvement with international events occurring within our borders. This includes both summer and winter Olympic Games. Each event has presented new challenges and opportunities for the agency. The Salt Lake City 2002 Winter Olympic Games were no different.

The Denver District began planning for the games in 1997. The planning goals were to:

- Identify the core mission (i.e., Salt Lake City Sub-Office responsibilities during the games)
• Identify the resources necessary to support the core mission
• Ensure coordination with and support of other INS responsibilities during the games
• Support other law enforcement agencies in ensuring the safety of the games
• Develop an operational plan and after-action report to assist INS in planning for future events



Michael M. Comfort

The plan for Operation Gold Medal was completed in collaboration with Central Region and Headquarters managers and staff. As can be imagined, the planning for the games was affected by the events of Sept. 11.

The metropolitan Salt Lake City community is actively engaged in both benefits and enforcement issues involving foreign nationals. In relating specifically to the games, the community's concerns ranged from being unable to pursue applications for benefits to enforcement actions targeted to the removal of large numbers of illegal foreign nationals during this period. In the years before the games, the community was continuously assured that the Sub-Office would maintain the pre-games levels of benefits and enforcement involvement and service during February 2002.

This became the core mission of Operation Gold Medal. To ease community concerns and fears, the District and Sub-Office leaders, public affairs specialist, and community relations officer met frequently with community leaders and advocates, Congressional staff, law enforcement leaders, and media representatives. This investment in the community reaped huge rewards during the games and will continue in the future. INS officers were continuously and unanimously complimented by all for the professional manner in which they carried out their respective duties and responsibilities.

The success of Operation Gold Medal can be credited to the caliber of the on-site leadership as well as officers and support personnel detailed to Salt Lake City. All activity was managed from the Olympic Support Center (OSC), located in the Sub-Office. Throughout the games, the local staff and detailees worked together as a cohesive team. The watch commanders and deputies provided critical foresight and decision-making to ensure the appropriate response to all situations. This complemented the professionalism and enthusiasm of all involved in this endeavor, resulting in efficient and effective action by the entire staff. From the INS' perspective, the games went on without incident.

Effective liaison, cooperation, and coordination were also imperative to Operation Gold Medal's success. To carry out the core mission, INS was engaged not only at the OSC, but also in the Olympic Intelligence Center (OIC) and the Olympic Coordination Center (OCC). The OIC, under the aegis of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, was responsible for all intelligence activities

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## OFFICER IN CHARGE CHOSEN TO ACCOMPANY OLYMPIC FLAME FROM ATHENS TO ATLANTA

AFTER years of planning, the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympic Games took place in a blink of an eye, said Steven Branch, officer in charge at the Salt Lake City Sub-Office, who was chosen for a once in a lifetime opportunity.



Salt Lake City Sub-Office Officer in Charge Officer Steven Branch (left) at the Olympic flame ceremony in Athens Olympic Stadium.

"I was selected to accompany the delegation having the pleasure of traveling to Athens to bring the Olympic flame from Greece to the United States," he said. "I am grateful to have been part of such a great experience."

The entire trip, conducted in 48 hours, is a memory he said he will treasure for the rest of his life.

### Memorable 48 hours

"Within those memorable 48 hours I traveled almost halfway around the world, visited the ancient Acropolis, attended the Olympic flame ceremony at the Athens Olympic Stadium, attended a reception hosted by the U.S. Ambassador, conducted an inspection of the passengers en route back to the United States, and delivered the flame to the Olympic torch run kickoff ceremony in Atlanta," Branch said.

"It was only after I arrived back in Salt Lake City later that afternoon that I took time to catch my breath and allow these truly memorable recent events to sink in," he said.

Headquarters chose Branch for the assignment, and he was the only person from the INS selected. The only other federal agency represented in the

delegation was the U.S. Customs Service; the rest of them were from local and state agencies in Utah.

Branch, who has been with the Denver District's Salt Lake City Sub-Office for just over three years, said he remembers the years of planning, the numerous meetings and teleconference calls, and countless revisions to Operation Gold Medal's operations plan.

### Proud of INS employees

"It was evident from the beginning that to have a successful operation, it would take a team effort involving the Salt Lake City Sub-Office, the Denver District, Central Regional Office, Headquarters, and other districts and sectors. The dynamic team that was assembled meshed together remarkably," he said. "I was proud to see how all the employees worked together as an INS family, all the programs unified as an INS team with a clear vision of the INS mission."

He offered his thanks and appreciation to all the employees who were partners with him and the Sub-Office staff dedicated to ensure a successful operation.

### Over in a blink of an eye

"What an honor to be a part of the Olympic Games, representing the INS as an integral part of a designated national security event working hand in hand with numerous federal, state, and local enforcement agencies," he said. "The Olympic Games took forever to arrive. But when they did, it all happened in the blink of an eye!"

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## OLYMPICS

*Continued from page 8*

agents could pull together in one unit to accomplish any task.

"A lot has to be said about the participation of Border Patrol agents at an event of this magnitude," he said. "This is the first time agents have been utilized in this capacity."

### Gold-medal fun

Even though the majority of the time was spent working, some agents were able to take advantage of some of the Olympic environment by participating in activities, such as skiing, snowboarding, and attending

some of the events when tickets were purchased. As a measure of their appreciation, local establishments also made certain that agents were provided with all the necessary amenities.

"The agents didn't expect to come out here and snowboard, but they enjoyed the snow and being out there learning another hobby," said Agent Peter Hermansen. "Their top-notch, gold-medal service definitely earned them some well-deserved, off-duty, gold-medal fun... and memories that will last a lifetime."



The Watch Commander's Office: El Paso District Director Luis Garcia (sitting on desk) briefs Denver District Assistant District Director for Investigations John Torres (middle) and San Antonio District Director Ken Pasquarrell.

## GOLD MEDAL

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prior to and during the games. The INS manager and staff at the OIC were at once full partners with all other intelligence agencies. As the games progressed, the INS took the lead on several issues and was key to their resolution.

Because of the leadership displayed and competence of the officers, the INS was one of only two other agencies among the many agencies involved in the OIC requested to brief FBI Director Robert Mueller during the games. Also important was the role played by INS managers assigned to the OCC played. They provided invaluable guidance and direction to the various law enforcement and other support

agencies regarding immigration matters during the games. Finally, the OSC administered support to the Entry Response Team at Salt Lake City International Airport and Border Patrol Agents assigned to security details at the games' venues.

My heartfelt appreciation is extended to all the men and women of the INS who contributed to the overwhelming success of Operation Gold Medal.

**Michael M. Comfort**  
*Denver District Acting Director*

### ANSWERING THE CALL OF DUTY ... IN THE COLD



Daniel Quarrell, an Immigration Inspector stationed at the Dalton's Cache, Alaska, Port of Entry, standing in the 23 feet of snow that had fallen as of Feb. 25.

The back of the Dalton's Cache Point of Entry, situated along the Klehini River on Haines Highway, 40 miles north of Haines, Alaska, and 800 miles south of Anchorage.



## ZIGLAR

Continued from page 2

Also on the subject of children, Ziglar said a newly created Office of Juvenile Affairs will work to better serve the roughly 5,000 juvenile immigrants who enter the country each year unaccompanied by adults.

"We need to do better protecting unaccompanied minors," he said. "This is a long overdue project."

The office will develop new guidelines for shelter, care and treatment, including finding ways to minimize detention times and improve living conditions. The office also will coordinate services provided to juveniles by field offices; develop effective case management systems; and ensure children are returned to their families, as appropriate, with the "utmost compassion and dignity."

"Having the Office of Juvenile Affairs report directly to me will guarantee consistency, accountability and integrity in the agency's treatment of juveniles," he said.

The new office is part of the INS restructuring plan announced by Attorney General John D. Ashcroft in November. The plan calls for separating the agency's enforcement and service functions. The goal is to make the agency more accountable, improve customer service, and foster cooperation with law enforcement agencies.

"I know people think the INS doesn't like change. We like change," Ziglar said. "The folks at the INS want to be perceived differently. They want to be perceived the way they are, not the way people think they are."

# HEADQUARTERS *News*

## **CAMBODIAN ADOPTIONS SUSPENDED UNTIL SYSTEM IS SET UP TO VERIFY CHILDREN ARE REALLY ORPHANS**

COMMISSIONER James W. Ziglar suspended adoptions of Cambodian babies recently after the Department of State and the INS found evidence of baby stealing and selling.

"I understand the overwhelming heartbreak prospective parents feel when they discover that they can't bring a child to the United States, a discovery that usually comes after great financial and emotional expense," Ziglar said at a recent immigration forum.

He said he supports immediate implementation of the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption and the companion Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000. The United States is a signatory to this Convention, which awaits formal implementation. It ensures that children are not taken from birth parents through fraud, force, or sale and requires that children be "pre-approved" as adoptable and eligible to immigrate before a family meets and adopts them.

"I intend to fashion a system that accomplishes that goal now," he said.

### **Examination of existing procedures**

The commissioner has instructed the INS to re-examine existing adoption procedures to determine how they can be modified to prevent, if not eliminate, what he termed "heart-wrenching circumstances" where families discover that they can't bring a child to the United States, often at great financial and emotional expense.

"It is imperative that we establish a child's true legal status and identity and that we protect American families from being defrauded or unknowingly participating in an adoption where the child is not a true orphan," he said.

The suspension did not affect the 32 families that the Department of State had scheduled for visa appointments in January in Cambodia. A dozen other families with orphan adoption petitions in dispute were given the opportunity to bring their prospective adoptive children to the United States under certain conditions, including returning them if they were proven to not be orphans.

The suspension stemmed from reports the INS received in September 2001 of two Cambodian children, one four days old and the other six months

old, who were abducted from their birth mothers. The birth mothers contacted a Cambodian nongovernmental organization for assistance to locate their babies.

### **Discovery of falsified documentation**

INS officers quickly discovered that one of the children had been matched for adoption in the United States. Although the Cambodian government already gave permission for the child to be adopted, the supporting documentation—birth certificate, certificate of abandonment, certificate of orphan status, and biography of the child—had been falsified. Both children were returned to their birth mothers.

The U.S. Embassy in Cambodia also identified other orphan petitions requiring further investigation, including reports of children being sold for food. The resulting INS review found Cambodian orphanages lacked a systematic approach to record keeping which, in turn, raised questions about the adoption system's reliability in verifying orphan status.

Since the suspension, Ziglar said the INS has been working with the Department of State and Cambodian government officials to establish a comprehensive adoption system—one with integrity, accountability, and transparency—where children will be properly identified and the circumstances of their adoptions investigated up front.

"If we had not done that," Ziglar said in reference to the suspension, "the Cambodians would never have taken the actions they have been taking now."

### **Letter to prospective parents**

On Feb. 7, Ziglar issued a letter to prospective U.S. parents seeking to adopt in Cambodia. In the letter the commissioner explained why the suspension decision was made and how the INS has dedicated additional resources to resolve the issue quickly.

"All of us at INS, both here in the United States and overseas, are working literally day and night to bring this situation to an honorable and joyful conclusion," his letter said.

## ZIGLAR ADDRESSES FIRST DATA MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT ACT TASK FORCE MEETING

COMMISSIONER James W. Ziglar addressed the first INS Data Management Improvement Act (DMIA) of 2000 Task Force meeting Feb. 20 at Headquarters, stressing his willingness to work with the committee in devising methods of facilitating travel and commerce while enhancing security at our nation's borders.

The proposed electronic entry/exit data system, the first item the new committee is examining, was a key part of Ziglar's address.

"An effective and efficient entry/exit system is extremely important to the INS and to this administration," he said. "Since Sept. 11 there's been no question in anyone's mind that the level of security at our borders has gone up and will continue to be up and will have to be looked at constantly as we go forward in the future."

He went on to say that he is personally very interested in the issue: "I came out of the private sector and have a great sensitivity to economic impacts of most anything. The last thing I think that we want to do is create an entry/exit system that unnecessarily impedes the flow of commerce and people across our borders. It's the lifeblood of our economy, and we are very, very concerned that this system work to both ensure security and keep our economies healthy and growing."

The principal purpose of the first meeting was to introduce the members to each other and to discuss future activities. There also was an overview of DMIA requirements, a brief overview of the current status of the entry/exit system, comments from each task force member, and an open period for public comment.

The task force consists of Assistant Commissioner for Inspections Michael D. Cronin, serving as chairperson on behalf of the attorney general; seven officials from federal, state, and local governmental groups; and nine representatives from private industry trade and travel organizations.

Mr. Cronin, a career immigration officer, serves as the principal point-of-contact between INS and a wide variety of trade, travel, and transportation interests; other government agencies active at ports-of-entry; and numerous foreign governments, which wish to coordinate with or learn from INS border control activities. Task Force Executive Director Dominica Gutierrez is a career immigration officer with expertise in a wide range of immigration areas and international issues that affect travel and migration to the United States.

Under the DMIA Act of 2000 and the Patriot Act of 2001, the attorney general established the task force in consultation with the secretaries of State, Commerce, and Treasury as well as the Office of Homeland Security. After focusing initially on the entry/exit system, it will address such issues as improving traffic flow; enhancing systems for data collection/sharing; optimizing technology, resources, and personnel; and increasing cooperation between public and private sectors, federal and state and local agencies, and affected foreign governments. Annual reports with task force findings, conclusions, and recommendations are made to Congress, with the first report due Dec. 31.

"There's a tremendous interest these days in the issue of entry/exit, and that's one of the key areas that the task force needs to focus on, but it is not the only area," Gutierrez said. "The task force has a much broader mandate in terms of looking at ports-of-entry, the flow of traffic, and how we can address the commercial facilitation needs on one hand in conjunction with increased security concerns on the other."

*"An effective and efficient entry/exit system is extremely important to the INS and to this administration,"*

*—Commissioner Ziglar*

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### BUDGET

*Continued from page 5*

- \$3.7 million for a training program designed to promote awareness, recognition, and identification of women and children who are victimized by organizations that violate the criminal provisions of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000.
- \$120.5 million to improve operational infrastructure on the Northern and Southwestern borders, including construction, alteration and leasing of station buildings; construction of border roads, fence, and vehicle barrier systems and border lighting systems; and emergency maintenance and repairs to existing infrastructure.
- \$50.5 million to process and adjudicate immigration benefits applications.

## ON LINE 'CHECKBOOK' NEXT STEP IN IMPROVING FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

By Soraya Correa

INS is taking the next major step in improving its financial management operations by expanding the use of the agency's Federal Financial Management System (FFMS). The Office of Financial Management (OFM) is rolling out FFMS to INS Headquarters and field offices across the United States for all obligations and payments processing.

The rollout of FFMS provides INS staff with FFMS Desktop, which provides real-time access to obligation and payment data from INS desktop PCs. In a sense, FFMS Desktop will be the program office's checkbook. With FFMS Desktop, INS users will have the ability to:

- Conduct on-line, real-time queries to determine status of funds and payments
- Process obligations using electronic forms and electronic approvals
- Generate reports

Today, INS managers and staff responsible for managing the agency's dollars depend on several outdated, stand-alone financial systems and numerous printed financial reports to track program funding and expenses. FFMS Desktop will replace three legacy financial systems resulting in:

- Reduction of duplicate data entry-with a single system, users will only need to enter financial information once
- Reduction of data entry errors and improved reliability-built-in real-time error checking will identify problems as they occur and improve financial data integrity and accuracy

The OFM staff at Headquarters, the Dallas Finance Center, and the Debt Management Center have been using selected FFMS core accounting functions for several years to record field overhead and other financial transactions to a Standard General Ledger, track debt collection, and compile financial reports. However, FFMS screens used in OFM are set up for accountants. FFMS Desktop provides a windows-based, user friendly "front-end" built specifically for all system users.

### Deployment Schedule

The Office of Financial Management and the Office of Budget will start using FFMS Desktop April 1. Using their experience with the system, they are refining the agency's financial processes

and are in the process of rolling out FFMS to the remaining Headquarters offices.

### Training Opportunities

OFM is scheduling a series of training courses to prepare INS personnel to transition to FFMS. Each office will receive e-mail notifications of the planned training dates and available slots for users based on the particular office's scheduled cutover date. Because FFMS Desktop training is instructor-led and provided "just in time," OFM is working with the Office of Information Resources Management (OIRM) to establish additional classroom facilities at Headquarters to accommodate training for all Headquarters users. For INS field offices, OFM and OIRM are establishing a portable classroom to deliver training in areas where INS training facilities may not be available. In addition to the instructor-led training courses, OFM is developing a series of videos that will be broadcast on INS TV and sent out to offices to provide an overview of the system and its use at the INS.

Judy Harrison, assistant commissioner for financial management, said OFM is looking forward to hearing from users of the system as they move to the new way of doing business.

"FFMS Desktop is an exciting and significant change for INS. It represents a major step toward creating a seamless financial management system," she said. "For the first time, managers and staff will use a single financial accounting system to pay bills, track obligations, and create financial statements."



Director of Financial Systems Development and Maintenance Donna Jarosz and Director of Financial Systems Modernization Soraya Correa observe Jennifer Bianco using the Federal Financial Management System (FFMS).

Photo by Bruce Cohen



## SECURITY OFFICER TRAINING RESTRUCTURED POST-SEPT. 11

IN the aftermath of Sept. 11, the Office of Security in the Burlington, Vt., Administrative Center restructured the former week-long Security Officer Training and incorporated an additional week of hands-on physical security training.



Mike O'Brien of the Batavia Detention Facility performs a combination lock-changing drill.

The training, which took place the weeks of Jan. 7 and 17, included conducting a site survey, compiling critical information for report writing, hands-on communication security training, and a combination lock-changing drill.

Attendees included security representatives from Baltimore, Miami, New Orleans, Batavia, Portland Sub-Office, Vermont Service Center, Miami Border Patrol, New York Asylum, and Arlington Asylum Office. The Office of Security staff provided the

attendees with training, covering all disciplines of security, including personnel/contract security, information security, physical security, communication security, and operation security.

Each employee received a certificate of completion for participating in the training and credit was provided for the two-week session. The Office of Security worked in conjunction with the Burlington Administrative Center Human Resource and Development Office, and credited hours were entered into the OnTrack system.

The Office of Security has been conducting security officer training since 1999, with sessions held twice a year, or upon request. Full-time and collateral duty security officers are encouraged to attend, as well as employees responsible for security-related duties.

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## COMMISSIONER ZIGLAR VISITS SOUTHWEST BORDER

By Robert Cordero

IN his first official visit to the Southwest border, Commissioner James W. Ziglar and an entourage from Washington visited El Paso and Tucson over a four-day span in February to become familiar with operations and to greet Border Patrol agents and INS inspectors.

"We are pleased to have had the opportunity to host the INS commissioner in his first visit to this area," El Paso Sector Chief Luis Barker said. "His convictions and strong sense of dedication made an impression on the men and women of this sector, which will help all of us be the best we can possibly be in the challenging days that will follow."

Among those accompanying the commissioner on the visit was his Chief of Staff Victor Cerda, Executive Associate Commissioner for Field Operations Mike Pearson, and Associate Border Patrol Chief Robert Harris. Central Regional Director Robert Wallis and Assistant Regional Director Frank Chavarria also joined the entourage in El Paso.

Ziglar met the first day with El Paso Sector Deputy Chief Jerry L. Armstrong and agents of the Lordsburg Station and was briefed on increasing activity in the "boot-heel" of New Mexico. After lunch, the entourage got an aerial view of southern New Mexico en route to the second busiest traffic

checkpoint in the nation, I-10, west of Las Cruces.

His other activities that day included a briefing by Las Cruces Station Patrol Agent in Charge Steven A. Higgs; a tour of the National Canine Facility; a viewing of the infrared cameras on Monument 3 mesa, a tabletop mountain overlooking the three states of Texas, New Mexico, and Chihuahua, Mexico; and visits to the Border Patrol Processing Center and the dedicated commuter lane.

At the Bridge of the Americas the next morning Ziglar announced plans to add 70 Border Patrol agents and 50 INS inspectors for El Paso in 2002. Afterwards, Acting Chief Patrol Agent in El Paso Jerry Armstrong provided the commissioner with an operational briefing at El Paso Sector Headquarters. Deputy Chief Armstrong then walked the entourage over to El Paso Station for a meeting with agents before they were given a tour of the El Paso Intelligence Center; an aerial tour of the Fabens, Texas, area; and a line tour of one of the sector's busiest narcotic corridors.

Throughout his visit, the commissioner found time to meet and take photos with several agents, and address their concerns.



Assistant Chief Patrol Agent of the El Paso Sector Paul Beeson greets the commissioner at the Lordsburg, N.M., airport.

Photos by Greg Leyva

## KIDNAPPED MAN RESCUED IN EL PASO

Alert Border Patrol agents in El Paso recently rescued a 20-year-old man locked in the trunk of his own vehicle. The victim had been kidnapped at gunpoint near Little Rock, Ark., by three felons who left him in the trunk for more than 18 hours.

Agents located the man after the subjects attempted to “roll through” the inspection lane unchecked. Suspicious mannerisms, and the cold nose of a Border Patrol canine, alerted agents to the presence of a disoriented and scared man, who later told his horrible tale.

## INSPECTOR ENFORCES LAW IN PRIVATE CAPACITY

Special Operations Immigration Inspector **J.D. Jackson** recently assisted the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RDMP), in a private capacity, during a theft in progress at Vancouver International Airport.

Jackson noticed a suspect trying to evade a couple of Air China travel representatives as he attempted to get away with somebody else’s luggage. The Air China representatives shouted for help, and Jackson, who was closer to the thief than the RCMP officer, prevented the thief from escaping until the RCMP officer could take him into custody.

*To get an blurb published in **Communiqué’s** “INSide” column, e-mail it to [ins@casals.com](mailto:ins@casals.com) or mail it to **Communiqué**, 1199 North Fairfax Street, Third Floor, Alexandria, Virginia 22314.*

## LAREDO SECTOR RECRUITMENT FLOAT EARNS STANDING OVATION, SECOND PLACE PRIZE

**MAKING** children and Border Patrol recruitment the focus of the Laredo Sector’s float in the 105th George Washington Birthday Parade in Laredo, Texas, this year not only earned the Border Patrol a standing ovation, but also second place in the “Commercial Float” category.

“Everyone stood at attention and saluted the judges as we passed the judges and grand stands,” said Ramiro Garcia, Laredo Sector recruitment coordinator, whose group was tasked this year for the first time with creating the float. “The judges and everyone seated at the grandstands stood up and applauded us.”

The 105th George Washington Birthday Parade is part of a two-week festivity of events drawing thousands of people from all over the state of Texas and Mexico. The events allow spectators to get a look at how participants demonstrate their involvement in the community.

“We have had a float in the parade since I can remember as a young child,” Garcia said. “In all the years I have attended the parades, this is the first year that the Border Patrol was so well received and acknowledged by the community.”

This year’s parade theme was “Stars and Stripes Forever” in honor of the fallen heroes of Sept. 11. Chad Wamsley, a Border Patrol agent in Laredo, came up with the concept of merging that theme with a recruitment theme: “The Future Generation of the United States Border Patrol.”

A semi-tractor pulled the float built on a lowboy 35-foot trailer. Children of Border Patrol agents between the ages of 8 to 10 volunteered to ride on the float. They dressed in their parents’ rough duty short sleeve shirts to signify that they are the future generation of homeland protection—as they grow into their shirts.

“We had the United States flag along with the U.S. Border Patrol flag and a seasoned agent in full uniform handing over the banner to a child representing the turning over of the reins to the new generation,” Garcia said.

The float also displayed many Border Patrol items and replicas, such as a model helicopter, a jet ski, a bicycle, and a real K-9 basset hound puppy. The entourage included the sector’s color guard bagpipe and drum section, two explorers carrying a recruitment banner, two patrol agents in full dress uniform on horseback, two pickup trucks with agents and their children, and a PT Cruiser playing hip hop and patriotic music. In total, the entry included a dozen agents and their spouses, 20 Border Patrol Explorers, and 18 children.

“The kids and parents involved were so full of joy and honored,” Garcia said, noting it was the first time the children participated in the parade. “The children were so happy to be alongside their

parents, and the agents were happy to have them.”

Creating the float was no small task. It took a maintenance service crew and the two recruitment coordinators, Danielle Hernandez and Garcia, 30 hours of work to accomplish their mission in designing a float that would make the agency proud.



The float in the 105th George Washington Birthday Parade in Laredo, Texas. At right, Amanda Villarreal and other children of Border Patrol agents depicting “The Future Generation of the United States Border Patrol.”

“We are very proud of the Laredo Sector’s staff for the unlimited support of this project and to all the participants,” Hernandez said. “This project was a huge success and hit.”

Garcia said he was honored to be tasked with such an important event that also turned out to be a great morale booster.

“I feel that this small contribution/participation will go a long way to promote the service and recruitment,” he said. “We have received many compliments from the community for a job well done and our commitment to securing our great nation.”