



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
PROGRAM EXECUTIVE OFFICE, MISSILES AND SPACE
5250 MARTIN ROAD
REDSTONE ARSENAL AL 35898-8000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

SFAE-MSL

SEP 15 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR Director, US Army Acquisition Support Center, 9900 Belvoir Road, Building 201, Suite 101, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5567

SUBJECT: 2015 Army Acquisition Executive's (AAE) Excellence in Leadership Award Engineer and System Integrator of the Year Nomination

1. I am pleased to nominate Dr. James C. Kirsch, Director, Systems Engineering Directorate, Joint Attack Munition Systems (JAMS) Project Office, for the 2015 Army Acquisition Executive's Engineer and System Integrator of the Year Award.
2. Dr. Kirsch is recognized for outstanding support of the Army's Joint Attack Munition Systems products, including the Hellfire family of missiles, the Hydra rocket, and specifically the Joint Air-to-Ground Missile. As the JAMS Chief Engineer, Dr. Kirsch demonstrated expertise and leadership in successfully managing the technical efforts of the \$4.6B Acquisition Category ID program. His tireless support of the program and ability to identify and implement technology insertions that achieve significant savings in accordance with Better Buying Power initiatives led to extraordinary cost and schedule efficiencies. He skillfully led the program through a lengthy and tumultuous Technology Development phase and postured it for a highly successful Engineering and Manufacturing Development phase.
3. Point of contact for this action is Ms. Whitney Martin, 256-313-4565, or e-mail: whitney.n.martin8.civ@mail.mil.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "L. Neil Thurgood".

L. NEIL THURGOOD
Brigadier General (P), USA
Program Executive Officer,
Missiles and Space

Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology

2015 Army Acquisition Executive's (AAE) Excellence in Leadership Award

Nomination Submission Format

Nominating Organization:

Joint Attack Munition Systems (JAMS) Project Office, 5250 Martin Road, Redstone Arsenal, AL 35898; POC: COL James Romero, 256-876-1141

Nomination Submission POC:

Terry Bradford, 256-313-2052, terry.l.bradford18.civ@mail.mil

Name, Grade, and Position Title of Nominee(s):

James C. Kirsch, Ph.D., Director, Systems Engineering Directorate

Nominee Employing Organization (Command/Unit/Organization or Activity):

Program Executive Office, Missiles and Space, Redstone Arsenal, AL

Nominee Business Address: Joint Attack Munition Systems Project Office, SFAE-MSL-JA, 5250 Martin Road, Redstone Arsenal, AL 35898

***Select Award Category for Your Nominee From the List Below:
(Please check only ONE box.)***

Army Acquisition Executive's (AAE) Excellence in Leadership Award for

Logistician of the Year

Business Operations Professional of the Year

Contracting Battalion/DCMA Team of the Year

Contracting Brigade/DCMA Team of the Year

Contracting Professional of the Year

Contracting NCO of the Year

Engineer and System Integrator of the Year

Science and Technology Professional of the Year

Defense Exportability and Cooperation Professional of the Year

Acquisition Support Professional of the Year

Product Management/Product Director Office Team of the Year (05 Level)

Product Management/Product Director Professional of the Year (05 Level)

Project Management/Project Director Office Team of the Year (06 Level)

Project Management/Project Director Professional of the Year (06 Level)

Summary

Specific Achievements:

Dr. James Kirsch serves as the Chief Engineer and senior technical authority for all Joint Attack Munition Systems (JAMS) products, including the HELLFIRE family of missiles, the Hydra family of rockets, and the Joint Air-to-Ground Missile (JAGM). His tireless support, commitment, and technical expertise proved to be absolutely critical in shepherding the JAGM program through a Request for Proposal (RFP) Defense Acquisition Board (DAB) and RFP release from July 2014 to February 2015. He provided expert technical insight into an extremely complex design at every service and OSD-level meeting leading up to the DAB, informing the decisions of both the Army Acquisition Executive and the Defense Acquisition Executive to approve the JAGM Acquisition Strategy and Source Selection Plan (SSP). He made a direct impact in improving our leaders' ability to understand and mitigate technical risk (Better Buying Power 3.0) while posturing the program to enter the Engineering and Manufacturing Development (EMD) phase on schedule in July, 2015. Dr. Kirsch's dedication ensures that JAGM's dual-mode sensors will provide a significant advantage and increased lethality and survivability for US and coalition aviators in the future fight.

Dr. Kirsch was the lead author and reviewer of the technical portions of the JAGM EMD Acquisition Strategy and SSP, and actively framed those documents to promote an effective competitive environment in accordance with Better Buying Power 3.0 to ensure that a world-class product is fielded to the Warfighter in time to mitigate emerging capability gaps. He played a key role in developing the JAGM incremental capability strategy by focusing the initial increment on a developmental guidance section to be mated to an existing, combat-proven and affordable warhead. Focusing the restructure on maturing the missile guidance section and leveraging the proven HELLFIRE missile bus, Dr. Kirsch was able to reduce cost, risk, and schedule by the use of modular open systems (Better Buying Power 3.0). The overall strategy includes Government-owned interfaces and requirements for the guidance section, warhead, propulsion, and control actuation system. In achieving this strategy while improving the Government's return on investment in DoD laboratories, he leveraged subject matter expertise from the Aviation & Missile Research, Development, & Engineering Center (AMRDEC). He tasked AMRDEC to further develop and mature a Government-owned warhead design and an Insensitive Munitions rocket motor for future increments. This comprehensive strategy of furthering AMRDEC technology through the component qualification level promotes and enables future competition at the component level (Better Buying Power 3.0).

Value of the Nominee's Contributions:

The JAGM program restructure is a clear example of Dr. Kirsch's achievement in dramatically advancing the program beyond the traditional acquisition framework. Under his technical leadership, a strategic plan was developed to balance the technical risk of each added capability against schedule and affordability goals. As a result, program costs were significantly reduced, as was the EMD schedule – by an entire year! He identified and eliminated less productive processes and streamlined documentation requirements to speed capability to the Warfighter in the near term while planning and preparing for future capability improvements through well-defined interfaces to mature AMRDEC-developed components.

Dr. Kirsch led a comprehensive requirements analysis to identify significant cost drivers ahead of design maturity in EMD. He partnered the results with the user community and developed proposed trades as well as simulation studies depicting the capability impacts. He then negotiated requirements which were implemented in a performance specification and contract requirements package and removed those imposed on industry that were identified as unproductive. As he has

done in the past, Dr. Kirsch once again demonstrated his remarkable ability to navigate key conflict areas with the prime contractor to reach technical resolutions that keep the program moving forward. As a direct result of his efforts over the last year, the key elements of the strategy developed under his leadership have been met and the program is on track for a successful EMD phase. Simply stated, Dr. Kirsch is the single greatest contributor to the JAGM program's continued resurgence and success.

Demonstration of Leadership:

Not only is Dr. Kirsch extraordinarily technically competent, but he is also one of the Army's great leaders. As the JAMS Chief Engineer and Systems Engineering Director, Dr. Kirsch expertly leads a team of approximately 70 engineers (direct employees) and more than 150 Government matrix and support contractors, as well as developing and managing the technical support from organizations across Team Redstone and the Department of Defense (DoD). Despite being the JAMS expert on three different programs and traveling in support of them on a near-weekly basis, he is always available to Product Managers and his subordinate engineers for coaching, mentoring, and technical advice. He selflessly elects to travel in support of a program milestone instead of sending the Chief Engineer for that particular product line so that they can learn their craft in and among the program technical team.

Dr. Kirsch demonstrated exceptional ability in leading negotiations with multiple industry partners prior to proposal submissions. Leading the discussions between the program office and the prime contractors on the scope of work and performance specifications, he identified areas that could be less onerous while still providing low risk solutions to meet program objectives. The end result was a scope of work and performance specification that met the user's requirement as well as the program goals while maintaining the contractors' proposals within the available budget. Dr. Kirsch insisted that the program provide a draft RFP to industry for comment, and incorporated much of their feedback into the final proposal.

During the drafting of the JAGM RFP by the technical team, Dr. Kirsch again covered down on all required engagements that could potentially distract the team from completing the RFP within the program schedule. The office continuity that he cultivated enabled his subordinate JAGM Chief Engineer to remain focused on the day-to-day activities required for developing the requirements package. When not on temporary duty providing technical insight to senior Army and OSD leaders, Dr. Kirsch makes himself available to the entire workforce, who collectively value and seek his input. He goes out of his way to engage with all levels of the workforce, despite this constant engagement contributing to tremendously long days – but all are greeted with a smile and his consistently positive outlook, and absolutely never with complaint. Although Dr. Kirsch is a civilian, he embodies the greatest attributes of a warrior leader and sets an incredible example in establishing and following the highest standards.