



COUNCIL OF THE INSPECTORS GENERAL ON INTEGRITY AND EFFICIENCY

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Federal Inspector General Community Honors Outstanding Accomplishments at Annual Awards Ceremony

The Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) hosted the Federal Inspector General community's 26th annual awards ceremony today at the Ronald Reagan Building.

The Honorable Jason Miller, Deputy Director for Management at the Office of Management and Budget and CIGIE's Executive Chairperson, the Honorable Mark Lee Greenblatt, Inspector General for the U.S. Department of the Interior and CIGIE Chairperson, Tammy L. Hull, Inspector General of the U.S. Postal Service and CIGIE Vice Chairperson, and members of CIGIE's Executive Council presented 84 Awards for Excellence in areas such as auditing, evaluations, inspections, investigations, information technology, law and legislation, ethics, and DEIA to individuals and teams from CIGIE's 74 member agencies. Award winners were selected by panels of senior leaders from across the Inspector General community.

"The exceptional accomplishments that we celebrate today reflect the significant and meaningful work happening across the Inspector General community," CIGIE Chairperson Greenblatt said. "This morning's ceremony showcased the critical work done by OIGs on issues ranging from violent gangs to veteran suicides, from cyber-fraud to cyberstalking, from the conflict in Ukraine to the evacuation from Afghanistan. The ways in which the individuals and teams recognized today have effected positive change in the Federal Government and provided value for the American taxpayer are inspiring and energizing. CIGIE congratulates all the award winners. They are outstanding representatives for their offices and the IG community at large."

"The work the IG community does is so impressive and gratifying," CIGIE Vice Chairperson Hull said. "The efforts of today's award winners collectively have a positive impact not only on the operations of the Federal Government, but on the everyday lives of people across the country and around the world."

CIGIE also recognizes a limited number of individuals and teams with prestigious Special Category Awards. This year's Special Category Award recipients are:

- **The Alexander Hamilton Award, CIGIE's highest honor, was presented to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) OIG's team that reviewed the medial records of 480 patients with suicidal behavior events, VA policy, staff training, and survey results of over 3,000 clinicians to identify actions needed to prevent veterans' deaths by suicide.**

The VA OIG team evaluated VA care providers' completion of required lethal means safety (LMS) training on simple interventions that educate and encourage veterans and caregivers to

use safe firearms storage practices, which are critical in preventing suicide.

The team made seven recommendations to facilitate suicide prevention by enhancing oversight, provider training, and lethal means assessments and interventions, while reducing barriers to firearms access discussions. As a result of their work, the VA is taking important steps to improve lethal means suicide prevention. These include convening subject matter experts to update the VA's national policy on suicide prevention training, strengthening the LMS curriculum, and amending VA medical record templates to ensure care providers assess, discuss, and document firearms access and safe storage concerns with veterans.

- **The Gaston L. Gianni, Jr. Better Government Award recognizes an individual or group whose efforts, accomplishments, and actions enhance the public's confidence in government and exemplify the highest ideals of public service. This year, two teams shared the award—One from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) OIG, and one from the Architect of the Capitol (AOC) OIG.**

The USAID OIG team secured and analyzed evidence that allowed USAID to hold officials from the U.N. World Health Organization (WHO) accountable for sexual exploitation and abuse of women and children in Africa.

The USAID OIG investigation found substantiated widespread abuse by WHO staff and partners. Based on referrals by USAID OIG, USAID debarred two individuals and suspended and proposed debarment of eight additional people responsible for the assaults in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The AOC OIG team investigated misuse of taxpayer funds and ethical violations by the former Architect of the Capitol to ensure accountability and integrity and to enhance the public's confidence in senior Government leaders.

The AOC OIG investigation revealed a series of egregious actions by the former Architect of the Capitol, and the team's work led to bipartisan calls for the Architect's resignation. President Biden removed the former Architect in February 2023.

- **The Glenn/Roth Award for Exemplary Service, which honors work of significant value to Congress, was presented to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) OIG's team that reported on VA's failures to care for and compensate veterans exposed to burn pits, highlighting the urgent need to pass legislation that ensures veterans received the healthcare and benefits to which they are entitled.**

The VA OIG team's evaluation of persistent errors in processing burn-pit-exposure benefit claims and their analysis of a broken registry exam process provided Congress with crucial data and compelling evidence to inform legislation addressing these problems. At the time, Congress was considering the Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act, which would make it easier for veterans to prove that burn pits caused their disabilities, provide toxic exposure screening to every veteran enrolled in VA health care, and improve research and treatment.

The PACT Act was signed by President Biden on August 10, 2022, and is perhaps the largest expansion of veterans' health care and benefits in history.

- **The Barry R. Snyder Joint Award honors multi-agency collaborations on matters of importance to the OIG community. This year that award was presented to a joint team of individuals from the six OIGs—the Department of Defense, the Department of Justice, the Department of Labor, the Department of Health & Human Services, the Office of Personnel Management, and the Department of Veterans Affairs—and the Pandemic Response Accountability Committee for their outstanding cooperative effort to produce a groundbreaking report that provided key insights into telehealth services and its program integrity risks in Federal healthcare programs.**

The report revealed dramatic increases in telehealth use during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, when 37 million individuals used more than \$6 billion in telehealth services across the examined Federal programs. The report went on to identify and discuss the risks for fraud in the telehealth field, including the risk of billing for the same service twice, inappropriately billing the most expensive level of service, and billing for services that are not suitable for telehealth.

The team’s work successfully highlighted for policymakers that looming decisions about the emerging future of telehealth flexibilities must balance changing consumer demand with necessary protections against fraud, waste, and abuse.

- **A. Phillips**, a Special Agent with the U.S Agency for International Development (USAID) OIG, received the **Sentner Award for Dedication and Courage** in recognition of her uncommon selflessness, dedication to duty, and courage related to her tireless efforts to improve USAID OIG operations and her groundbreaking work on a violent crime gang task force.
- **Phyllis McKissick**, the Director of the Division of Administration within the Office of Investigations at the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) OIG, received the **June Gibbs Brown Career Achievement Award** in recognition of 40 years of significant and sustained contributions to the success of DOL OIG in combatting fraud, waste, and abuse in DOL programs and operations and in combatting labor racketeering in the American workplace.
- **Jon-Paul Correira**, Assistant Special Agent in Charge at the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) OIG, received the **Award for Individual Accomplishment** in recognition of tireless efforts as a leader within the CIGIE investigations community to create and staff an impactful policy working group, educate CIGIE agencies on the peer review process, and provide guidance to the OIG community.

The complete list of awards, recipients, and citations is available online at: [2023 CIGIE Award Ceremony Booklet](#)

For additional information, please contact Andrew Cannarsa, Executive Director, CIGIE, at (202) 292-2603, or andrew.cannarsa@cigie.gov.

The Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) is an independent entity established within the executive branch to address integrity, economy and effectiveness issues that transcend individual government agencies and aid in the establishment of a professional, well-trained and highly skilled workforce in the Offices of Inspectors General. For more information about CIGIE and the Inspector General community, please visit <https://www.ignet.gov/>. To find and read reports from the federal Inspectors General, please visit <https://oversight.gov> and follow [@OversightGov](https://twitter.com/OversightGov) on Twitter. For information on actions by Inspectors General concerning the pandemic visit <https://www.pandemicoversight.gov/>.