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

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

SFAE-MSL

MAY 27 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR US Army Acquisition Support Center (ATTN: Ms. Vicky Deguzman), 9900 Belvoir Road, Building 201, Suite 101, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5567

SUBJECT: Department of Defense Acquisition Workforce Achievement Award Nomination for Dr. James C. Kirsch

1. It is with great pleasure that I nominate Dr. James C. Kirsch for the Department of Defense Acquisition Workforce Achievement Award.

2. Dr. Kirsch distinguished himself while serving as the Chief Engineer for the Joint Attack Munition Systems Project Office. He accomplished his duties in an exemplary manner and provided outstanding organizational leadership, expert strategic vision and insight, and superior managerial and supervisory accomplishments.

3. The point of contact for this action is LTC Philip Rottenborn, 256-313-0132, or e-mail: philip.g.rottenborn.mil@mail.mil.

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

2015 Defense Acquisition Workforce Individual Achievement Award
Contact Information

Category: Engineering

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DoD Component or Agency Name: Department of the Army, Civilian

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NOMINATION NARRATIVE:

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 sheparding 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 HELLFIRE bus. 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 architecture. 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 lead the day-to-day program activities of 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.

CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE
2014 DEFENSE ACQUISITION WORKFORCE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
ENGINEERING
FOR
JAMES C. KIRSCH, PhD

AWARD CITATION:

Dr. James C. Kirsch is recognized for outstanding support of the Army's Joint Attack Munition Systems (JAMS), specifically the Joint Air-to-Ground Missile (JAGM) from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015. 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 as he sheparded the program through a lengthy and tumultuous Technology Development phase and postured it for a highly successful Engineering and Manufacturing Development phase.