

THE SQUARED SCOOP

December 2011

This will be the last edition of The Squared Scoop.
We will be going digital and getting social to keep our news more timely.

Save the Date: All Hands Meeting

The All Hands Meeting has been tentatively scheduled for February 20, 2012, in the Grange Conference Room at headquarters.

AMP Mentor Relationship Yields First AMP-Initiated Corporate Project

In June, Elena Foukes joined M Squared as a part of the third class of Applied Management Professionals (AMP). The mentor component of the program was created to introduce AMPs to the M Squared corporate culture and to be able to teach the young professionals some of the nuances of client delivery in a government-consulting environment.

During their mentor meetings, Andrew Slawter and Elena Foukes identified an opportunity to develop a corporate project that would strengthen the AMP Program and add value to AMP client delivery. In their afterhours discussions they quickly identified a need to increase the level of the program's quality assurance. With the help of her mentor, Elena developed a Plan of Action and Milestones for a Quality Assurance Management Plan (QAMP) to be delivered as a component of the AMP Program. In early August, they met with the President of M Squared Strategies, Kendall Lott, to present the proposed plan which included a project overview, a list of deliverables, a work breakdown structure, and a cost benefit analysis. This endeavor marked the

first time that an AMP-Mentor relationship led to the creation of a corporate project. The project was particularly unique in that it is focused on the sustainability of the AMP Program, and on the quality of client delivery as a means to achieve that sustainability.

Some of the deliverables Elena will produce as part of the QAMP include the development of a Quality Assurance Guide for the AMP Program Director's use in future program years, guidelines to ensure the creation of successful projects, guidelines to set and manage client expectations, and suggested communication flows to enable effective reporting of AMP activities. In addition to quality assurance, the project includes case studies focused on the AMP Program achievements during the 2011 Program for the creation of marketing materials.

Elements from the QAMP can also be applied to other areas of M Squared. The Quality Assurance Management Plan will be incorporated into the 2012 AMP Program as M Squared Strategies continues to strive for professionalism, transparency, accountability in all the company undertakes.

M Squared to Accelerate the Pace of Professional Development

M Squared expands on the ethos of the AMP Program to young professionals interested in consulting. The Professional Apprenticeship for Consulting Excellence (PACE) Program aims to accelerate the pace of young professionals' development by giving them the access and training needed to be successful in management consulting and federal government practice. Through this program, we will expand the M Squared brand into new universities, build new relationships with prime consulting firms, and elevate the level of talent working in the public sector consulting space by training the next generation of federal practice consultants. The PACE Program looks to further help meet the government's critical needs by continuing the public service mission of M Squared Strategies.

Please contact Erin Bankey, the PACE Program Coordinator at Erin.Bankey@msquaredstrategies.com to learn more about how you can be involved!

Visit our PACE Program web page and like us on Facebook!



Interim All Hands Meeting a Success

Twice a year, the entire M Squared company meets under one roof for a face-to-face meeting to collaborate on corporate improvements, receive company updates, and establish a common understanding about the future direction of the company. The Interim All Hands Meeting (IAHM) in August had a packed agenda and was tremendously successful. The new FSL team took over the duties of planning and leading the IAHM and brought a fresh style to this meeting. Alan Chvotkin of the Professional Services Council kicked off the meeting by providing a briefing on the market and policy within the consulting industry. The IAHM 2011 also included updates on M Squared's corporate marketing from Whitney Starring, news on Deltek and the rollout of new on-boarding programming and process from Andrew MacDonald, and M Squared's strategic planning efforts by Sarah Nurse. In addition, the 10 Applied Management Professionals presented their corporate projects, demonstrating their added value to the company beyond client work over the summer in the areas of corporate marketing, business development, and corporate giving. Switching gears away from presentations, the FSL team led a pair of activities to capture feedback and encourage group interaction to help improve the on-boarding process for new hires through a new on-boarding checklist and corporate identity quiz. Finally, Kendall Lott concluded the meeting by recognizing a few employees for their hard work and contributions to the company: Ed Adelman, Andrew MacDonald, Andrew Slawter, Whitney Starring, Sarah Nurse, Jeremy Nurse, Brenda Maynor, and Mary Flannery.



Meeting Managers Showcase & Training

Can a meeting that only gets half way through the scheduled agenda be considered successful? Absolutely!

The Meeting Managers Training in September is an excellent example. The afternoon training was a great success, despite only finishing half way, as it showcased current M Squared supported meetings by each Meeting Managers. These presentations described each meeting's significance, benefits, and where M Squared has brought direct value. We also documented a long list of the various tools that M Squared uses to support the meeting. In total, M Squared has seven Meeting Managers (and counting) supporting 19 meetings!

Andrew Slawter brought forth his vast M Squared experience in meeting management and facilitated an informative and entertaining training session on meeting minutes, proper documentation, and procedures. Hard to believe meeting minutes could actually be fun!

Outputs captured from the meeting will help M Squared develop common standards and train future Meeting Managers. With time shortened from the original schedule, we were only able to get through half of the agenda. The second half of this training session resumed in mid-October and focused on further improving M Squared's meeting management through using technological tools and writing clearer, more effective action items. Thank you all for your participation and feedback!

Preparing our Organizational Leaders and Facilitators to Better Serve Government Clients

Erin Bankey led a training session on group dynamics to better inform the company's work with organizational design, project management, and facilitation. In collaboration with Dr. Sam Steen of The George Washington University, the course covered the five stages of group development and useful techniques to mitigate group problems. Examples raised during the group discussion demonstrated that an understanding of how people interact in groups is essential in client delivery and relevant for our work.

Offering internal training sessions is part of the FSL's effort to provide professional development for M Squared employees. The slide deck and presentation notes can be found under Corporate Meetings on SharePoint.

Be looking for more upcoming training offerings from FSL, including strategic communications, interest-based problem solving, leadership development, and conflict resolution! Based on the feedback received so far, project management, process design, proposal writing, and organizational change management are also popular requests for future trainings.

Please feel free to email the FSL team with additional suggestions or requests for desired trainings. We look forward to your valuable input!

How Much Do You Know About Organizational Design?



The Organizational Design Symposium, led by Nic Turrentine, was designed to educate the participants about the subject and explore avenues to outline the M Squared Organizational Design Service Line. Brian St.Sauveur, Andrew Slawter, and Wes Cronkite prepared and delivered presentations based on literature they reviewed regarding the subject. Each of them gave informative and engaging presentations that delved into the specifics of Organizational Design, including various models used.

The symposium also consisted of a variety of brainstorming and discussions sessions exploring areas of Organizational Design that M Squared is currently providing and future areas to grow. These outputs will help develop the core documentation when we are designing how the Organizational Design Service Line will operate. This Symposium was exceptionally educational to all the participants and valuable to the company.

A special thanks to Brian St.Sauveur, Andrew Slawter, and Wes Cronkite for taking extra time beyond their normal work schedule to prepare materials for the symposium and to all participants for attending!

UPDATE

Department of Veterans Affairs

M Squared Strategies assisted the government with closing out FY 2011 with a 3-day Lockdown and a draft of the FY 2012 Budget Operating Plan. There are many constraints on the budget this year, which ranges from the continuing resolution, rescission from Congress, lack of FY 2012 Appropriation, to the reprioritization of the Presidential initiatives.

How successful were we? Participants and sponsors in the room have repeatedly voiced M Squared Strategies' success in keeping agenda and conversations on track. M Squared Strategies has a proven track record of adding an environment of professionalism, having quick reaction time, and being effective problem solvers.

From a contract standpoint, the government granted us a 30-day extension ending October 5th and we are anxiously awaiting another 45-day extension ending November 18, 2011. We are partnering with a prime called Exeter for the follow on work with ITRM. As soon as the Task Order drops, we are in a good position to win the follow on work in the ITRM space!

M Squared Strategies has been supporting HPTI on the VRM PMO PCM contract. In addition, we have supported the FY12 VRM Operating Plan development.

M Squared Strategies' support has focused on acquisition planning, and assistance has been in maintaining the acquisition database and associated files of acquisition artifacts. The maintenance of the acquisition status and awarded contract artifacts has allowed the VRM initiative executives to focus their attention on an acquisition strategy aligned to the business requirements.

M Squared Strategies' support for FY12 VRM Operating Plan development has focused on providing OIT budget information

and aligning the FY12 VRM Operating Plan workplan deliverable to planned FY12 acquisitions. This alignment has proved vital in the FY12 budget prioritization process as it demonstrates the linkage between resource fulfillment and the delivery of needed business capabilities.

During the VLER IPT in Altoona, PA, the ISI Team along with the VLER AMPs attended a post-meeting gathering at VLER IT PMO Director Gerry Lowe's barn (or what was once a barn and is now a bar). The IPT was held several days before Gerry's weekend-long Annual Celtic Fling Party which includes Highland Games. Mike is pictured in the barn with the Celtic Spear that was to be used as part of the Highland Games that weekend.



The AMPP VLER team officially reconvened in October to continue their successful summer project. Led by Jenny Weng, Alexandra Reames and Rachel Brody are both working remotely while they finish their graduate degree programs to continue lending support and expertise in improvement for the contractor onboarding process. Since the end of the AMP Program, the VLER team's work has progressed and become a wider Veterans Affairs policy as their contractor onboarding deliverables were used in the HR Lockdown in November. Additionally, the team has again been invited to the VLER IPT conference in Park City, Utah and is looking to further support the initiative in other process improvement projects.

AMPP Closeout

The 2011 AMP Program came to an end in August to rave reviews. The closing reception was a celebration of the AMPs' accomplishments of all their projects from the summer while marking the beginning of new relationships with our current and future clients. The AMPs were afforded a most memorable and rewarding experience as they were paired with some of the best and brightest Executives in the Federal Government. Moreover, the AMPs were tasked with solving real problems that were plaguing our clients, which they most certainly tackled with the utmost of professionalism and efficient execution. These real-world problem-solving challenges provided a practical and transferrable experience that will inevitably enrich the respective academic pursuits of the AMPs.

The AMPs completed the following client projects:

- VA VLER: Budget Process Design and Onboarding Process Design
- VA ITRM: Orientation Guide and CDCO Process Documentation
- DOT: SOP Development, Asset Management, and Customer Account Management

The 2011 AMPs completed corporate projects for corporate marketing, business development, and corporate giving. More detail on all of their work and the 2011 summer can be found at http://www.msquaredstrategies.com/assets/files/downloads/MSquared_AMPPProgram_2011_Students.pdf.

In addition to their projects this summer, the AMPs participated in many other facets of the Program. The training this summer included: Introduction to Process Design, Strategic Planning, Introduction to Project Management, and Working in the Beltway. Their excursions took them from Monticello to the Capitol and all over DC with Happy Hours in between! A special thank you to all our mentors this year that supported our AMPs! Finally, the newest component of the AMP Program brought Government Executives to the table with our AMPs. Over 7 luncheons, AMPs had the opportunity to learn through conversation what it is like to be a Government Executive and how to pursue a career in this field. All of these pieces contributed to a rich and fulfilling summer for all of our AMPs!

Some AMPs have continued work with M Squared beyond the allotted summer Program period. M Squared is fortunate to have Jenny Weng currently working as a full time employee as part of our marketing efforts as well as continuing support for VLER. It is because of the commendable work that Jenny and her team did that the VLER client has requested ongoing work from her and two other AMPs. Mark Buckley has also continued on at ITRM with the M Squared staff working on budget processes for Rom Mascetti. It is because of the dedication of the AMPs and their commitment to their clients that they have been recognized and asked to extend their time with us – thank you for all your hard work!

2011 AMP Program Reflections

AMPs at the Department of Transportation

The AMPs at the Department of Transportation recently wrapped up a successful summer. This summer the AMPs supported work in three areas: Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Development, Asset Management, and Customer Account Management (CAM). Each AMP was given a challenging project and quickly rose to the occasion in a very technical, changing, and sometimes-chaotic IT department.



Greg Feldman and Elena Foukes helped the technical writing team get SOPs in place to meet contractual obligations. Greg and Elena's hard work on over 40 SOPs in a 9-week period was not the only impressive thing they did; they also helped the team meet a tight August 31 deadline on Disaster Recovery SOPs.

Carl Urness assisted the Asset Management team by also writing SOPs. Carl was in a unique position, however, since many were produced from scratch. Carl took the initiative to become a subject matter expert, learning each of the Asset Management processes, which proved to be a significant advantage as he wrote the SOPs. He also performed a gap analysis that resulted in recommendations for managing inventory and improving both internal and external communications within the department.

Stacey Pollack supported the CAM team by working on several communications efforts and a model fact sheet template. She also took the lead on a software-packaging project. Her outgoing nature and people skills proved to be an asset in helping her acquire some much needed and hard to get information from clients for this project. Through her work, Stacey provided the CAM team with tools to facilitate their work as well as identified informational gaps with cost and timesaving potential.

The AMPs certainly demonstrated M Squared's excellent tradition of service. The prime contractor, ActioNet, and the government praised the AMPs for both their professionalism and quality of work, and consequently mentioned their desire to continue the AMP program at the DOT again next summer. Congratulations to the DOT AMPs for a job well done! You made your "DOT Mama" (and a host of others) proud!

– Erin Farr, DOT AMPP Team Lead

AMPs at the Department of Veterans Affairs

I had the pleasure of working with an excellent group of graduate students this summer. Alexandra Reames, Courtney Gleason, Ethan Palmer, and Rachel Brody all exceeded expectations and became subject matter experts in the contractor onboarding process and the budget formulation process for the Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record (VLER)



Initiative. Their exceptional ability to provide thorough analysis and recommendations were noted by the client, points of contact, and several participants at the VLER Integrated Project Team (IPT) meeting in Altoona, PA. Because of their commitment and dedication, the client and other stakeholders all voiced their interest in having the AMPs continue the work of implementing their recommendations past the original AMPP period of performance.

– Jenny Weng, VA AMPP Team Lead

Kudos from Prime Contractors

Over the past three months the Facilitation Service Line has received rave reviews from clients and prime contractors for facilitations in the Department of Veteran Affairs. M Squared facilitations are known not just for quality delivery on the day(s) of the meeting but also in the thorough preparation leading up to the facilitation itself. Clients are pleasantly surprised to see the robust level of effort that we provide to prepare for facilitations. Our attention to prepare for meetings makes our facilitations more effective for both the client and the prime contractor. The quality of work and success of meetings we facilitate are constant evidence to our prime contractor that we are experts in facilitation and driven to move the client's agenda forward.

The Facilitation Service Line is continuing to work on various contracts to bring more value to clients through preparation and enhance organizational performance during the facilitation. For more information about the Facilitation Service line, please visit <http://www.msquaredstrategies.com/facilitation>.



“Ruthless” Meeting Management

Since the end of May, Brian St.Sauveur has been supporting the Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Information and Technology's Ruthless Reduction Task Force (RRTF). With a goal of identifying upwards of \$130,000,000 in IT cost reduction for FY 2012, meetings take place Monday through Thursday, 7:30am-10:30am until the term of the Task Force expires on September 30.

The RRTF is chaired by Dr. Paul Tibbits, the Deputy CIO for Architecture, Strategy, and Design. Task Force members include employees from all VA staff offices and administrations, from technical specialists and engineers to multiple SES-level OIT leaders. Brian provides the full suite of M Squared meeting management support to Dr. Tibbits and the Task Force, including documenting notes, capturing action items, and eliciting stakeholder communication. In addition, Brian assists in the creation of RRTF briefings for a variety of audiences, which ranges from Mr. Roger Baker, who is the CIO of the VA, OIT SES executives, and other external stakeholders.

M Squared Strategies' focus on providing all employees with the knowledge base to successfully manage meetings regardless of size or scope allowed Brian to be successful in the high-intensity, high-visibility environment of the RRTF.

One VA EA Business Reference Model

M Squared Strategies has played a role in the creation and development of The One VA EA Business Reference Model, or BRM, by providing meeting management and logistical support, as well as providing meeting documentation. With a common set of process definitions to make the complex integration between business processes transparent, the BRM will support architectural analysis and is a resourceful tool for enabling innovation and transformation. Specifically, the BRM helps the VA to:

- Improve citizen services by highlighting opportunities to integrate operations and IT investment along common lines of business.
- Guide VA administrations in the development and submission of business cases, improving the quality of service and lowering costs.
- Provide IT vendors with a better understanding of the work done by VA administrations to allow them to provide products, and services that are more citizen-focused outcomes along functional lines.

The One VA EA BRM is the first ever-interactive Business Reference Model throughout the entire Federal Government. M Squared Strategies is proud to have played a role in this great accomplishment by the VA!

Facilitation Reborn

While the Facilitation Service Line has been a core offering at M Squared for some time, four of the company's new hires have been re-energizing its efforts and changing how M Squared defines a service line. Each member of the team brings something different to the table in terms of professional background and personality to round out the team and its entrepreneurial efforts to build a successful arm of the company. The team and Kendall have spent hours deliberating the service line's core principles, framework, and methodology in regular FSL build meetings and there is still much work to do. All of the time and effort will ultimately pay off with a source document that clearly outlines what it means to be a part of FSL, the service delivered to FSL clients, and the strategic direction for FSL's growth to address the needs of the market seen in recent solicitations. As FSL continues to mature, our team hopes that other service lines will turn to us if help is needed to jump-start their service lines or facilitate the build. We will continue to develop the service line with new team members, securing contracts, and strengthening our team collaboration.

The FSL staff has also been hard at work with new projects as subcontractors within HHS and VA. Nic Turrentine, Erin Bankey, and Selena Hunn are supporting different meeting management engagements at HHS within the CIO's office, while Justin is supporting the Stakeholder Enterprise Portal at the VA within VRM initiative.

HR Corner

Our HR processes and policies continue to evolve with three updates to report on. Firstly, our Deltek system has been updated to allow for the quarterly accrual of Comp Time. This will allow you greater flexibility in the use of your comp time. The system will now show your comp time balance in an easy-to-access drop down menu along with vacation and sick time balances. As always comp time can only be entered for approved projects and charge codes. Comp time will be zeroed out at the end of each quarter and any overage in billability will be reported to the executive for consideration in bonuses.

Secondly, we are currently testing the ADP Portal with several of our employees to explore additional functionality. Before the end of October all employees will have the option to access their current paystub electronically. In addition if it is preferred we can have your paper paystub cancelled and you can operate strictly from the Portal for pay information.

Finally, the Deltek system is set up to allow employees to request paid leave through your online access. This method makes it easier for both the requester and approver to view leave balances and formally approve the request. Communication with your manager will still be required, such as placing an out of office notice on your manager's calendar, however this functionality provides a useful and transparent step. Two Deltek User Manuals, one for all employees and one for supervisors, have been uploaded onto the HR SharePoint site under T&E and these manuals will assist you to use the updated functionality that we now have available.

Welcome, New Hires!



Jenny Weng's first experience with M Squared Strategies was in 2009 as an Applied Management Professional working at the Department of Energy. Since then, Jenny has earned a Master's degree in International Management from the University of California, San Diego and has worked as a consultant for a management consulting firm serving Fortune 500 clients. This summer, she returned to M Squared Strategies to serve as an AMPP Team Lead at the Department of Veterans Affairs and will now be supporting Whitney Starring in Marketing and Strategic Communications Service Line as well as providing M Squared with a proven talent for various opportunities on our horizon. During her free time, Jenny is actively searching for authentic Taiwanese food so she does not need to ask her parents for multiple care packages every month.



A warm M Squared welcome to our newest hire **Selena Hunn!** Selena is a native Californian; however, she spent most of her upbringing in Silver Spring, Maryland. She recently graduated from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law with a Juris Doctor Degree in May, 2011. While in law school, Selena was a visiting student at American University Washington College of Law, and gained experience as a judicial intern for the Honorable Darryl Derbigny in Orleans Parish Criminal District Court and the Honorable June Berry Darendburg in 24th Judicial District Court in Jefferson Parish, Louisiana. She also brings a considerable amount of research and writing experience to M Squared after serving as a health policy intern with the National Coalition on Health Care, and a research assistant with the National African American Drug Policy Coalition. In her last year of law school Selena was selected to serve as a student practitioner in Loyola's Mediation Law Clinic where she successfully settled an array of civil and domestic disputes. During her tenure as a student practitioner, Selena represented Loyola Law as a competitor in the American Bar Association's Representation in Mediation Competition. Selena is a proud alumna of the University of Maryland, College Park where she studied English and Philosophy. Selena is the newest addition to the FSL team and we are excited to welcome her to M Squared Strategies.

New Corporate Donor Program Director

M Squared is pleased to announce Justin Heineman as the Corporate Donor Program Director. M Squared has continuously and consistently supported the arts and various charities within the greater Washington metro area. Justin will be responsible for further increasing M Squared's involvement in the community as well as staff's participation in doing charitable work. As a part of the upcoming holiday season, M Squared will be contributing to Feeding America, a non-profit charity whose mission is to end hunger in America. If you have an interest in philanthropic work, contact Justin to find out more!

Happy Anniversary!

Thank you to **Andrew MacDonald** (3 years), **Whitney Starring** (3 years), **Alessandra Colia** (2 years), **Laurel Wemhof** (1 year), and **Wes Cronkite** (1 year) for your continued commitment and service to M Squared.

Support for the Arts Continues

The Shakespeare Theatre Company (STC) has once again recognized M Squared Strategies' continuous support in the arts. The 2011-2012 season kicked off with the Free For All, a free performance of Julius Caesar. In addition, M Squared Strategies is the sole sponsor of this season's STC Accessibility Program (http://www.shakespearetheatre.org/visit/lansburgh/special_needs.aspx) for people with disabilities. The Heir Apparent, Much Ado About Nothing, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, and Strange Interlude are just a few of the productions scheduled for this season. Come join us in our support for the arts!

