

Clement latest graduate of Division Leadership Program

Jay Clement, Team Leader, Maine Regulatory Project Office, recently completed the North Atlantic Division Executive Leadership Program (NAD ELDP).

A ceremony marking the event took place at NAD Headquarters in Fort Hamilton, New York on Nov. 4.

The year-long program strives to develop results-oriented, agile leaders with an enterprise perspective capable of effectively leading people and change in complex environments, according to the NAD ELDP Project Management Plan.

Stephen Dunbar is the New England District member on the NAD ELDP Project Deliver Team. "The program is one year with a 120-day tour of duty in a developmental position in another District within NAD or at NAD that requires leadership and gets the candidate outside their comfort zone," he said.

Clement went to Norfolk District's Water Resources Division for his developmental assignment. "For me this was by far the most worthwhile element of the entire ELDP," he said. "I was far removed from my home district, I was exposed to and actively engaged with each of the district's leaders, I worked on projects with real time application, and I was exposed to many unique and high profile missions within the district. In a word, this assignment was perfect."

In addition, candidates travel to the University of Maryland for a week. The training includes a 360 assessment by subordinates, peers and upward reports. It also includes a three-hour session with a leadership coach to review the assessment results and develop an action plan to improve.

According to Clement, the focus of the course is on self-awareness, learning agility, communication, influencing people, thinking and acting systematically and being resilient. "Active and passive listening skills and giving feedback are taught," he said. "The pre- and post-class assessment by you, your peers, your supervisor and others is detailed and informative. Daily interaction and team building exercises with government and non-government leaders broadens your Corps-myopic perspective."

As part of the program, participants take part in a team project. "We were tasked with determining if leadership in each district and at division actively engage with their employees on a regular basis, whether employees feel listened to and empowered by their supervisors and if they know their role in the organization's missions," said Clement on his project.

"In executing the assignment, the group researched employee engagement within government and non-government organizations. Each of us deployed and analyzed district specific and division questionnaires that were given to both employees and executive staff."

Clement said that their findings were presented to NAD senior leaders, executive staff and district commanders at the November 2016 Command Week event. He said the findings were well received and the findings will feed into NAD's Human Capital Plan for implementation.

The new graduate also had the opportunity to shadow Brig. Gen. Graham and several others during his time in the NAD ELDP. Clement said all the shadowing opportunities served to broaden his mission awareness.

According to Clement, in addition to the shadows and the University of Maryland training, participants also collectively choose one educational assignment for each quarter. The educational assignment could include leadership books, technology, entertainment and design talks, newspaper articles, personal stories or other media. Another part of the program included a multi-day training course in Washington, D.C., that offered an in-depth understanding of Congressional operations and its relationship with USACE. "In addition to a comprehensive look at congressional processes and the organization, participants received briefings on the current status and insider analysis of legislative issues of most interest and importance to the Corps," said Clement.

Participants attended a NAD Regional Management Board meeting, a Regional Command Council meeting and other Senior Leadership meetings in their own districts during shadowing sessions.

“Attendance at other Regional Governance Board meetings during the program is expected and highly encouraged,” said Clement. “The ELDP is very much a program of getting as much out of it as you put in.”

Clement said his participation in the program was time well spent, “it was one of the best, if not the best, experience of my career. The ELDP offered a tremendous and rare opportunity to break out of my Maine Project Office bubble and gain a much broader regional awareness of the missions and challenges that the division faces. The ELDP re-energized me personally and professionally and I would strongly encourage any eligible candidate to consider applying. Don’t wait 34 years like I did.”

Mike Bachand, District Levee Safety Program Manager, is the current NAD ELDP participant for New England District.