

Peers name Massie ALARA Employee of the Year

Analytical Services has selected Valerie Massie, a chemical technician with Fluor Hanford, as its “ALARA Employee of the Year.”

At Analytical Services, the ALARA (as-low-as-reasonably -achievable) Program is employee-driven and focuses on reducing exposure to radiation to the lowest practical level.

Massie spearheaded improvements in sample carriers used in the 222-S Analytical Laboratory — a complex process that has taken about three years. She received three separate nominations by her peers for her “willingness to assist others and dedication to improving processes,” said Analytical Services ALARA chairman Owen Berglund. “She has proven to be an instrumental part of maintaining the ALARA Program at the 222-S Laboratory.”

Massie led a task team with a mission of solving ergonomic issues created by the shielded sample carriers used in the 222-S Laboratory. The carriers hold radiological samples to be analyzed by the laboratory staff. Massie’s team has explored many options for improving the carriers to make them more efficient and easier to use, and to minimize repetitive motions in handling them. Samples of the improved carriers will be tested this month and the results evaluated.

“As the task-team lead, she was the driving force in designing, testing and implementing a new sample carrier,” Berglund said. “This lengthy project could not have been accomplished without her great energy and dedication. Valerie has worked very diligently to provide this laboratory with a safer way of doing business — one that will reduce personnel exposure for our workers for years to come.”

“She recently presented a paper on the new carrier at the ALARA Workshop,” Berglund added, “as an example of the Integrated Safety Management System and its worker-involvement component in action. She has accomplished all this while still carrying on her normal duties as a chem tech, which she does very well.”

“I was surprised,” Massie said after the award presentation Dec. 31. “I couldn’t have done it without everyone’s help. It’s been quite a journey.”

Don Hart, manager of Analytical Services Project Support, presented the award plaque during a morning staff meeting. He said the effort to improve the sample carriers has been a major Integrated Safety Management System initiative for the Analytical Services organization.

“Valerie’s team has been diligent,” Hart said. “Improving the sample carriers involved complexities of industrial safety, radiological control and productivity. Addressing all of these aspects has involved every part of our workforce, including the workers, engineers and radiological control.”

Heather Anastos, manager of 222-S Analytical Chemistry, told Massie, “I thank you for your stick-to-itiveness. You were the catalyst that pulled this team together, and teamwork is what has made it successful.” ■



Valerie Massie, a chemical technician at the 222-S Analytical Laboratory, has been named the Analytical Services ALARA Person of the year.