

# PREP NEWS

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## PREP Community Announcements

### In this issue:

- ANSI Audit
- PACE Alumni Spotlight - Zully Barrientos, PACE Cohort 6
- PACE Cohort 9
- PACE Social Event - Apple Orchard!

### ANSI Audit

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, PREP is required to complete a rigorous audit each fall in order to maintain our ANSI accreditation. Last week, all documentation for this year was submitted to ANSI after an intensive month of preparation. Stay tuned for an update on the audit results later this year.

### PACE Alumni Spotlight - Zully Barrientos, PACE Cohort 6

In our second PACE Alumni Spotlight, Zully Barrientos joins us to share insights and highlights in her professional life after PACE.



#### What work have you been involved in since finishing the PACE program and what do you currently do?

In terms of client work, I continue to be involved on the Program and Product Management (PPM) contract in the Office of Architecture Strategy and Design at the Department of Veterans Affairs. My primary role within this contract is to develop and integrate PPM's business processes with the Office's stakeholders and clients to ensure we are effectively supporting IT projects through their lifecycle. I have also done work supporting business requirements development and occasionally have facilitated strategy and planning meetings.

#### How has PACE prepared you for these professional functions?

Before coming to MPS my background was in research and education, and so the PACE program was my first introduction into the private sector as well as consulting. PACE taught me how to navigate the complex relationships inherent in our line of work including relationships with our clients, prime-contractors, fellow sub-contractors, and even MPS staff. Managing relationships is critical to success in federal consulting and those experiences has been very valuable to me.

#### What did you most like about participating in the PACE program?

What I liked most about participating in the PACE program was the institutionalized support system and network that the program provides. It is very comforting to, from the start, have a group of people to relate to that are in the same position as you. I also like the coaching sessions and periodic feedback given throughout the program because it allows you to understand your personal strengths and weaknesses and improve on them in a more targeted way.

#### What advice, if any, do you have for current PACERs and for young professionals?

My advice for current and future PACERs is to use their time in the program to experiment and try their hand at everything they can, whether that be in their contract work or on the corporate side of things. Exploring different opportunities is a great way to see if the company, and this line of work, will be a good fit, and they will probably be surprised at the things that find engaging and interesting. There is also the added benefit of a robust support system within PACE, making it a great time to test things out.

My general advice for young professionals is simple: Be bold. Leave room for the unexpected.

### PACE Cohort 9

We are excited to announce the start of our next PACE Cohort! On Monday, November 16, Cohort 9 will kick off their 25-week apprenticeship. We look forward to sharing their experiences and updates in the coming months!

### PACE Social Event - Apple Orchard!



The October PACE social was seasonally appropriate this year as the group layered up in flannel to pick apples at Homestead Farm in Maryland. PACE Cohorts 8 and 9 brought guests and significant others to the orchard to pick apples (and eat some along the way), browse the fresh produce, and select the perfect pumpkins for carving. Though the wind was a little rough at times, the group was able to enjoy good company and good conversation during this fun, outdoor activity.

Thank you for your support! Visit the MPS LinkedIn and Facebook pages for further information.

*These PREP updates will be sent out monthly to keep you informed about major program changes and announcements. If you would like to no longer receive this email, please respond to Semir Hasedzic requesting to unsubscribe.*