



John H. James, Jr.
Executive Director
Missile Defense Agency



Mr. James is the Executive Director of the Missile Defense Agency (MDA), Office of the Secretary of Defense, Pentagon, Washington, DC. He is the senior civilian advisor to the MDA Director on all issues relating to the Agency's operational and management activities. Mr. James provides oversight, leadership, direction and guidance to the MDA staff, ensuring the effective organization and integration of all MDA functions required to sustain an effective Ballistic Missile Defense program. He also serves as a key interface to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Services, and the Congress.

Mr. James previously served as the Director, National Security Personnel System (NSPS) Transition Office, within the Office of the Secretary of Defense. He was directly responsible for the Congressional mandate to transition approximately 228,000 employees from NSPS to an alternate personnel and pay system. He was also responsible for developing a DoD-wide revised performance management system under authorities granted to the Secretary of Defense in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2010.

Mr. James assumed these duties in January 2010 after more than 29 years with the U.S. Navy helping to construct and maintain the Nation's surface and subsurface fleet. He was selected for the Senior Executive Service in May 2000.

During his tenure with the Department of the Navy, Mr. James was assigned to the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) headquarters and staff of the Chief of Naval Operations. His work focused on several platforms to include Nuclear Aircraft Carriers, Nuclear Cruisers, and Ballistic Missile and Fast Attack Submarines. Prior to transitioning to the Senior Executive Service, Mr. James worked as a Nuclear Ship Superintendent at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard. At NAVSEA headquarters, Mr. James served as a Branch Head for Submarine Electrical Systems, Assistant Air Defense Systems Manager within the AEGIS Program Office, and Technical Director for Submarines. His first assignment as a Senior Executive was as Deputy Program Manager for Strategic and Fast Attack Submarines and then as Program Manager for Submarine Repair and Overhaul. He also served as Executive Director for the Undersea Warfare Directorate and Executive Director, Logistics, Maintenance and Industrial Operations Directorate; both within the NAVSEA Headquarters organization.

Throughout his career, Mr. James has been a leader in many Navy initiatives to increase diversity across the military and civilian work forces. He chaired the Department of the Navy (DoN) African American Senior Executive Service Advisory Committee advising the Under Secretary of the Navy on matters concerning diversity of the Senior Executive Service. He was a major player in leading joint NAVSEA/Office of Naval Research efforts to expand Navy related research partnerships with colleges and universities across the nation, especially with institutions that focus on the minority population such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities.



Mr. James was also deeply involved with Navy and NAVSEA initiatives to increase interest by the future workforce (elementary, high school and college students) in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Some of the awards, special recognitions and designations Mr. James received during his 30 year civilian career include the African American Federal Executive Association Distinguished Senior Executive Service award (2011), Black Engineer STEM Senior Executive Service award (2011), DoN Superior Civilian Service Award (2010), served as a Senior Advisor on Diversity to the Chief of Naval Operations (2008-2009), receipt of the National Society of Black Engineers Golden Torch Award for Lifetime Achievement in Government (2007), Presidential Rank Award (2006), Black Engineer of the Year Award – Special Recognition (2004), receipt of the DoN Nathaniel Stinson Equal Employment Opportunity Award for Leadership (2004), the David Packard Excellence in Acquisition Award, and Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development and Acquisition) Certificate of Excellence for Success in Acquisition Reform.

Mr. James received his undergraduate degree from Howard University and Master's Degree from Florida Institute of Technology. He has also attended the Harvard School of Business and the Keenan-Flagler Business School. He is a member of the Acquisition Professional Community.