



## **U.S. AbilityOne Commission Mourns Passing of Former Executive Director Tina Ballard**

WASHINGTON, D.C., January 24, 2023 – The U.S. AbilityOne Commission is mourning the loss of former Executive Director Tina Ballard, who passed away on January 20.

Ballard led the agency staff from 2008 to 2021, providing invaluable leadership during a period of unprecedented change. Her tenure at the Commission culminated a career of nearly five decades in Federal service.

“Tina was an exceptional leader and public servant, and the Commission and AbilityOne Program greatly benefited from her tireless commitment to our mission and ideals,” said Commission Chairperson Jeffrey A. Koses. “We extend our deepest condolences to her family.”

“Tina had a unique ability to connect with colleagues at all levels. She was a highly valued friend and generous mentor to countless people over the course of her extraordinary career,” said Executive Director Kim Zeich. “The AbilityOne family is greatly saddened, and we are keeping her loved ones in our thoughts.”

Ballard steered the Commission through major advances in the AbilityOne Program that included cooperative agreements that re-structured the relationship between the Commission and the central nonprofit agencies that help administer the Program; establishing the agency’s first Office of Inspector General; and helping to develop the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act Section 898 “Panel on DoD and AbilityOne Contracting Oversight, Accountability, and Integrity.”

Her leadership was instrumental in Commission and Program support for major national and international events and crises, including U.S. operations in Iraq and Afghanistan; the Ebola outbreak in West Africa; the disaster response to Hurricane Sandy; and the first years of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ballard served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Policy and Procurement) prior to joining the Commission. She directly supported the Army Acquisition Executive and the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistics and Technology), serving as the Army’s principal acquisition and procurement policy authority for all Army acquisition programs. Her responsibilities included the oversight of contracting operations, which encompasses the organizations, resources, policies, and procedures addressing the management and execution of Army contracting worldwide.



She was also the Functional Chief's Representative for the Army Contracting and Acquisition Career Program. As such, she was responsible for the recruitment, training, education, and professional development of the contracting professionals who are part of the Army's acquisition workforce. She was also assigned responsibility for the Army's industrial base policy.

Ballard originally joined the Federal civil service as a Stay-in-School participant and continued as a college Cooperative Education student. Upon graduation, she accepted a Contract Specialist position at Aeronautical Systems Division, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. The Air Force designated Ballard a Procuring Contracting Officer and later transferred her to the Air Force Plant Representative Office, Boeing Military Airplanes, Wichita, Kansas, where she was the Principal Administrative Contracting Officer and the Director of Contract Operations.

In 1994, she became the Director of Pacific/Caribbean Contract Operations at Defense Contract Management Agency International. In this position she was responsible for more than 200 personnel in six countries. Ballard served as a liaison to Air Force Materiel Command for four years. In January 1999, she accepted an assignment in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, where she led several projects for the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Ballard received the Office of the Secretary of Defense Award for Excellence, two Defense Logistics Agency Meritorious Civilian Service Awards, a Department of the Army Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service (2008), a Department of the Army Outstanding Civilian Service Medal (2003), and was named a Federal Executive Association Unsung Heroine.

Ballard earned a B.A. in English from the University of Dayton in Ohio, an M.S. in Management from Friends University in Wichita, Kansas, and an M.S. in National Resource Strategy from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National Defense University, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C. She completed the Industrial College of the Armed Forces Senior Acquisition Course and the Leadership for a Democratic Society program at the Federal Executive Institute.

### **About the U.S. AbilityOne Commission**

The AbilityOne Program is administered by the U.S. AbilityOne Commission, the operating name of the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled. The Commission is an independent Federal agency composed of 15 Presidential appointees: 11 represent Federal agencies, and four serve as private citizens who are knowledgeable about employment barriers facing people who are blind or have significant disabilities.

### **About the AbilityOne Program**

The AbilityOne Program facilitates the use of government procurement to provide employment in the United States for people who are blind or have significant disabilities. Approximately 40,000 individuals, including more than 2,500 veterans, are employed nationwide at approximately 450 nonprofit agencies from Maine to Guam. AbilityOne provided nearly \$4 billion in products and services to approximately 40 Federal government agencies in FY 2021.

