

Recognizing Military Veterans Across Utilities: How a Military Background Prepared Rachel Taow to Bring Toughness, Diversity to the Nuclear Field - [an Energy Central Power Perspectives™ Interview] | Energy Central

November 8, 2022



Army veteran Rachel Taow's career traversal from linguist to analyst to managing processes for nuclear energy contracts might baffle casual observers.

But her entry to the energy industry is a homecoming of sorts. She has always been interested in the potential and prospect for nuclear energy, says Taow.

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GAIN announces fourth round FY 2022 Nuclear Energy Voucher recipients

October 10, 2022

The Gateway for Accelerated Innovation in Nuclear (GAIN) announced today that three nuclear companies will be provided a GAIN Nuclear Energy (NE) Voucher to accelerate the innovation and application of advanced nuclear technologies. NE vouchers provide advanced nuclear technology innovators with access to the extensive nuclear research capabilities and expertise available across the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) national laboratory complex. This is the fourth and final award for FY 2022.

The businesses selected to receive a GAIN nuclear energy voucher for Round 4 FY 2022 are:

GAIN 2022 4th Round NE Voucher Recipient	Awarded Proposal	Partner Facility
Curio Solutions Washington, D.C.	Criticality Safety Analysis for NuCycle	Oak Ridge National Laboratory
Elementl Power LLC Greer, South Carolina	Elementl Power LLC	Oak Ridge National Laboratory
Tennessee Valley Authority Chattanooga, Tennessee	TVA Siting Study	Oak Ridge National Laboratory

GAIN NE voucher recipients do not receive direct financial awards. Vouchers provide funding to DOE laboratories to help businesses overcome critical technological and commercialization challenges. All awardees are responsible for a minimum 20 percent cost share, which could be an in-kind contribution.

The GAIN NE Voucher Program accepts applications on innovation that supports production and utilization of nuclear energy (e.g., for generation of electricity, supply of process heat, etc.) in the following general topic areas:

- Analysis and evaluation of, and for, advanced reactor concepts and associated designs, including development of R&D based licensing technical requirements or regulatory strategies
- Structural material and component development, testing and qualification
- Advanced nuclear fuel development, fabrication and testing (includes fuel materials and cladding)
- Development, testing, and qualification of instrumentation, controls, and sensor technologies that are hardened for harsh environments and secured against cyber intrusion
- Modeling and simulation, high-performance computing, codes and methods

Technical assistance from subject matter experts and/or data/information to support technology development and/or confirm key technical or licensing issues

Further information on the GAIN nuclear energy voucher program as well as current and all past awards may be found [here](#).

The U.S. Department of Energy Office of Nuclear Energy (DOE-NE) established GAIN to provide the nuclear community with the technical, regulatory, and financial support necessary to move innovative nuclear energy technologies toward commercialization while ensuring the continued safe, reliable, and economic operation of the existing nuclear fleet. Through GAIN, DOE is making its state-of-the-art and continuously improving RD&D infrastructure available to stakeholders to achieve faster and cost-effective development of innovative nuclear energy technologies toward commercial readiness.

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Message from GAIN Director, Christine King

October 3, 2022



This month, GAIN coordinated with DOE to unveil the coal-to-nuclear report prepared by the Systems Analysis and Integration Program. The report analyzed hundreds of coal sites in the U.S. that could site a nuclear reactor. In addition, it considered factors that make a site feasible for transition; factors that drive investor economics, such as technology, cost, and project timeline; and how this transition will impact local communities. GAIN will host a webinar to discuss the report's findings on October 4.

This report dovetails nicely with the three ongoing pilot studies on coal-to-nuclear transitions. First, in St. Johns, Arizona, where the Coronado Generating Station, owned by Salt River Project, will retire in 2032. Second, Warrior Run is a single unit station in Cumberland, Maryland. GAIN is coordinating efforts with Maryland Energy Authority and X-energy on a technical and economic analysis to potentially site a moderate-sized nuclear reactor there.

Finally, we are working with Louisville Gas and Electric (LG&E) and Kentucky utilities to analyze the Ghent Station, located on the Ohio River. This station is Kentucky's largest coal-fired plant, providing 1.9 gigawatts of electricity. Interestingly, the Ghent Station is not scheduled for retirement until the 2040s and it happens to be surrounded by industrial users. This is a perfect opportunity for us to look at serving the needs of large industrial customers.

We are excited about the progress being made to move innovative nuclear technologies toward commercialization.

FORMER ARMY INTELLIGENCE ANALYST EXPANDS NUCLEAR INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS AT GAIN

March 16, 2022

Government contracts are complex and difficult to decipher. For Rachel Taow, it's a language she mastered largely due to her training in the U.S. Army as a cryptanalyst, a Persian Farsi linguist and signals intelligence analyst.

At [GAIN](#), a U.S. Department of Energy initiative led by Idaho National Laboratory, Taow works on contracting mechanisms to speed up nuclear research. Her success in six years at INL includes negotiating various high-profile agreements with industry partners.

She is most excited about last year's passage of the [\\$1 trillion infrastructure legislation](#), which contains more than \$62 billion for DOE to deliver a "more equitable clean energy future," including investing in advanced nuclear projects. In the area of contracting modernization, it statutorily extends the protection period for Cooperative Research and Development Agreements between industry and labs from 5 years to up to 30 years.

"This is huge," Taow said. The nuclear industry lobbied for the change because it needed a longer protection period to perfect innovations.

GAIN Director Christine King credits Taow's persistence and passion for getting things done.

"It is not often that you find someone passionate about better processes and creating the win-win," King said. "Rachel is practical in her approach by listening to the needs of the DOE and private industry. She creates process solutions that help us move through contracting and doing the work in the lab faster."

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